



# CRP Review 2020: Policies, Institutions, and Markets



Advisory  
Services

October 2020

Evaluation Brief Number 4

The CGIAR CAS Secretariat is conducting independent reviews of the 12 CGIAR Research Programs (CRPs), including PIM.

## CRP Background

Policies, Institutions, and Markets (PIM) is one of four cross-cutting Global Integrating Programs in the CGIAR portfolio. PIM focuses its research and policy engagement on addressing the policy, institutional, and market constraints to sustainable and equitable economic development and rural transformation. PIM is carried out through six Flagship Programs (FPs): Technological Innovation and Sustainable Intensification (FP1); Economywide Factors Affecting Agricultural Growth and Rural Transformation (FP2); Inclusive and Efficient Value Chains (FP3); Social Protection for Agriculture and Resilience (FP4); Governance of Natural Resources (FP5); and Cross-cutting Gender Research and Coordination (FP6).

PIM is led by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). It brings together all CGIAR Centers as well as national, regional, and international partners. External managing partners include Royal Tropical Institute (KIT), Michigan State University, University of Oxford, Wageningen University, and World Vision International.

## PIM CRP Review

The PIM review provides information on quality of science (QoS) and effectiveness answering three questions. It covers part of Phase II, from 2017 to 2019, with a view to identifying lessons for future research modalities. It was conducted from 3 August to 26 October 2020.

Data and information sources included PIM program documents and databases on staffing and financial resources, annual planning and reporting on CGIAR common results reporting indicators; 34 interviews (23 individual and 3 group interviews) with PIM leaders, donors, staff, and partners); a sample of outcome impact case reports (OICRs), and bibliometric and Altmetric studies of peer-reviewed journal articles in Web of Science.

### Q1: To What Extent Does PIM Deliver Quality of Science (2017-2019 Work)?

PIM has a strong footprint in the scientific literature: published 395 articles in peer-reviewed journals during 2017–19, highly relevant to PIM's focus. Most top 25 h-indexed authors of PIM-related articles are PIM scientists within CGIAR and produce between two and five articles yearly. Author collaboration reaches across 60 countries. PIM policies and innovations represent a large variety of public goods: policy studies, analytics, and ensuing policy recommendations or strategic suggestions are directed toward decision-makers. Engaging PIM's next-stage users (government ministries and agencies, nongovernmental and private sector organizations, and multilateral agencies) in partnerships is standard practice at PIM. The 180 members of PIM's research team are diverse in terms of social science disciplines and gender.

### Q2: What Outputs and Outcomes Have Been Achieved, and What is the Importance of Those Identified Results?

Good progress has been made against three common outcomes across the flagships: (1) PIM has developed the research capacity of its

*Photo: Fruit market, Indonesia. Bioversity/F. De La Cruz*

institutional partners and the capacity of poor and vulnerable groups. Communities of practice have been strengthened in the areas of foresight, value chains, natural resources tenure, and governance, and gender; (2) PIM has contributed to a more gender-equitable control of assets and resources (main contributions from FP6, FP4, FP5, FP3, and FP2) based on the review of achievement of Planned Outputs and Outcomes (90% of more than 50 milestones) were completed (3) PIM has informed policymaking at the global, national, and subnational level, and to a lesser extent at the regional level. PIM plays a significant role in the delivery of system-wide public goods; however, capturing the full extent of its support to policy change is challenging (especially at the country level) owing to attribution and contribution issues. PIM's long-term partnerships between PIM and its next users foster PIM-related outcomes and impact, thanks to the multi-faceted and systemic character of PIM's engagement. PIM management encouraged cross-center learning through linking up with social scientists throughout CGIAR. However, synergies across FP portfolios and between OICRs cannot be easily traced.

PIM management operationalized the theory of change (ToC) and FP impact pathways through milestones, outcomes, and objectives, defining a de facto theory-in-use, with limited use of the TOC for internal learning and reprogramming.

### Cross-cutting themes

The CGIAR Collaborative Platform for Gender Research, housed in PIM's FP6, served the whole CGIAR gender research community. Most of the FPs contributed to **capacity development** and more **gender-equitable** control of assets, but the reporting documentation and indicators do not allow us to capture the impact, within organizations/services, of PIM's capacity development activities or the progress in strengthening the gender dimension in policies. The FPs have developed clear impact pathways for capacity development, which is one of their three common outcomes. **Youth** issues have not been a significant area of research. Nevertheless, youth issues have gained traction since 2019.

PIM has produced **climate change** research using foresight analysis to help shape global, regional, and national policies. Future regular foresight analysis could contribute to priority setting in a coordinated manner both within CGIAR and with country partners.

### Q3: Future Orientation

PIM's scientific work and stakeholder partnerships and networking efforts are robust and effective. Improvements in internal monitoring, knowledge management, and learning could contribute to PIM fulfilling its full potential. A thorough reflection on the balance between scientific output and public outreach is called for. To show impact at scale, PIM-commissioned syntheses, studies, and assessments should capture how well PIM is placed to contribute to future CGIAR impact areas and address shocks such as COVID-19.

### Key Lessons

As an integrated, interdisciplinary research program oriented toward policy and institutional change, PIM research is embedded in partnerships and networks of research organizations, next users, and implementation partners. Intensifying efforts to research and learn from its past experiences is necessary.

Path dependence is risky to PIM's independent, 'demand-driven' role, yet while long-term multiannual funding is crucial, it should not stand in the way of engaging partners, donors, and new investors, in innovative lines of research and stakeholder interactions.

A necessary reflection on the balance between scientific and public outreach may include the prioritization of key messages, the choice of and balance between different media, specifying various audiences, and the timing and frequency of communicating PIM highlights. These reflections are best inserted in the strategic research and learning trajectory. Strengthening the capacity of the communication teams needs to be considered for PIM to fulfil its potential.

### Recommendations for CGIAR

- Maintain the focus on policy and institutional change for sustainable and inclusive agricultural transformation.
- Better balance between pooled and bilateral funding may favor longer-term, strategic partnerships, in particular, to facilitate in-country outcomes.
- Intensify and further develop the emerging field of research concerned with stakeholder involvement, policy influence, and promotion of institutional change.
- Align outputs, milestones, and outcomes with desired impacts by using ToC more effectively.
- Redesign and streamline the programming, monitoring, and reporting systems.

Read the full report: [bit.ly/PIM-CRP2020](https://bit.ly/PIM-CRP2020)

