CGIAR Standing Panel on Impact Assessment

Credit: Nguyen Lam Tuan Anh

SPIA operational model and workplan (2023 – 2030)

May 2023

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INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SC 17 endorsed SPIA working with SIMEC in bringing a recommendation back on a new workplan & budget and a re-organized model to respond to new asks and ensure adequate and appropriately configured capacity. In the discussions at SC 17 there was "*strong support for the practice of applying the best of what we know through robust impact data*" and "*a recognition of the timeliness of considering SPIA's resources and capacity as CGIAR delivers on expanding demands for impact assessment.*" (points 102 and 103 of Meeting Summary of the 17th System Council meeting).

CGIAR requires an overall approach to impact evidence for accountability and learning at the System level. As CGIAR rolls out its ambitious research and innovation agenda, there are new asks for nuanced and rigorous evidence on the returns to the new investments in CGIAR research through 2030. A fit-for-purpose impact assessment approach for CGIAR needs to both strive to the highest standards of rigor and acknowledge the long and complex causal pathways to impact of CGIAR research, stemming from uncertainties inherent to the scientific progress, development processes, interactions between innovations within bundles or at System level, and rapidly changing climatic, agro-ecological, and socio-economic contexts. To be relevant and actionable, such evidence further needs to acknowledge the multi-dimensional nature of research outcomes and to capture the interactions between different types of research. As is the case for any innovation system, one should also expect returns to investments to be highly skewed, so that returns to some "big win" investments alone can exceed the total investment in the System. The onus then becomes to rigorously identify "big wins" from the research portfolio.

Hence, to understand the returns to CGIAR investments, first, reliable estimates of the "reach" of CGIAR research are needed, providing the rationale for SPIA's portfolio of country studies. These systematically

document the reach of CGIAR innovations and policy influences at the System level by taking stock, and then independently measuring and quantifying how many farmers, communities or other users in a given country are being reached by all the different CGIAR-related innovations that have scaled in that country. Tracking such reach in priority countries until 2030 can provide powerful evidence documenting progress towards impact and help understand adoption and dis-adoption decisions by different types of users. Evidence on whether key target audiences (women, youth, poor, remote farmers) choose to adopt these innovations is a first step to understanding impact.

Second, estimates of the benefit per person/community reached are also needed. These benefit estimates can be small for many innovations, and may even be negative for some, while a minority of research investments or specific innovation bundles may have benefits that are transformational for the people reached. These real-world impacts are not easy to predict, and likely contested by different parties, so they should be empirically and independently estimated through rigorous causal impact assessment studies. A well-functioning system of accountability by 2030 will have estimates of benefits in all five CGIAR impacts areas accounting for synergies and trade-offs among them. Significantly before 2030 evidence of progress towards impact is needed to feed into decision making and adaptive management at a high level – facilitating CGIAR's development as a learning organization.

To respond to increased demand for such independent evidence and to provide evidence-based advice to the System Council, CGIAR leadership and scientists, this document sets out a new operational model and a new workplan & budget for SPIA that would start in Q3 of 2023 and run until 2030, together with a revision of the financing mechanisms for such work. The latter would combine committed multi-year funding (until 2030) from System Council for the agreed workplan, with the possibility of flexible add-on funding coming later, for additional activities within the SPIA mandate upon the request of System Council members during the implementation of this workplan.

The proposed workplan comprises three pillars:

1. Country studies of CGIAR reach at the System level
2. Causal impact assessments
3. Use of rigorous evidence

The new operational model will keep a strong central role for the full SPIA panel to provide strategic advice on impact assessment approaches and use of evidence in CGIAR decision-making through engagement with System Council, CGIAR management and research leadership, and centralized decision making on the portfolio of studies. This will go paired with a decentralized implementation of independent evidence generation of reach and causal impact, methods development and capacity strengthening, with intellectual leadership of individual panel members for different work packages.

Starting the transition to the new operational model and workplan in the second semester of 2023 will be needed not only to assure that SPIA is in a good position to assure optimal use of the evidence generated under the ongoing work plan by the end of the current CGIAR budget cycle (2024), but also to scope and organize for new evidence on progress-to-impact to become available for decision making by the end of the next budget cycle (2027), and to plan for evidence at scale on the 5 impact areas by 2030.

1 Country studies of CGIAR reach at a System level

System level evidence of the reach of CGIAR innovations and policy influences in up to 20 countries can provide compelling evidence of CGIARs global footprint. Dynamically documenting the changes in reach as the CGIARs Research and Innovation Strategy is rolled out will provide unique evidence for learning and accountability, that will contribute to a new understanding of the returns to research investments. SPIA has developed and refined a process for collecting high-quality evidence on the reach of CGIAR innovations at the country level.

In response to demand for an expansion of this area of SPIA's work, the country study approach will scale both geographically and longitudinally through:

a) **A shift in the implementation of the country studies** to sub-contracts to research consortia, including partners in the study countries, thereby allowing both institutionalization of the work and the possibility of scaling-up;
b) Obtaining **dynamic evidence** of the reach of CGIAR through longitudinal nationally representative panel surveys as the OneCGIAR portfolio is being rolled out and through 2030 in the **four high-priority CGIAR countries where SPIAs country studies are ongoing**– Ethiopia, Uganda, Vietnam and Bangladesh;
c) Bringing **four new high-priority countries** into the program– Nigeria, India (a cluster of states, including Odisha and Bihar); Colombia and Egypt;
d) Carrying out initial **scoping work ("stock-taking only") in 12 further countries** (Ghana, Mali, Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, Malawi, Philippines, S India, Nepal, Morocco, Guatemala, Peru) with a view to potentially scaling-up activities to a data collection phase, to enable further scale up to 20 countries if/when demand arises;
e) Shifting the emphasis of SPIA staff working on country studies away from implementation, to providing global methodological and institutional advisory support to sub-grantees doing the implementation.

The rationale for country selection is discussed in Section 1.4.

2 Causal impact assessment

Systematic evidence of reach of CGIAR innovations and policy influences needs to be combined with rigorous causal estimates of the impact of these innovations and policies in the 5 impact areas targeted by the CGIAR Research and Innovation strategy. To speak to System level priorities, rigorous causal estimates are particularly relevant for possible "big-win" innovations and policies (i.e., those with large reach) and for interventions that help address last-mile delivery problems that may otherwise limit the potential to have impacts at scale. To identify and facilitate the implementation of the most relevant independent causal impact studies, SPIA will use a systematic scoping of potential causal "learning" and "accountability" studies through hands-on technical assistance and follow-up with CGIAR researchers, and a systematic effort to link CGIAR researchers with internal and external IA experts.

For **the accountability studies**, SPIA will scope the potential for rigorous designs using three complementary tactics:

a) Building directly on opportunities identified in the country studies portfolio;
b) Opportunities in either One CGIAR initiatives or large-scale bilateral projects to document the roll-out of scaling efforts with relevant administrative and/or monitoring data;
c) Scoping long-term follow-up studies (using primary or secondary data, and/or remote sensing), drawing on the research designs of earlier rigorous causal impact studies.

Together, these accountability studies will provide SPIA with causal impact estimates of the set of innovations with high reach, with the objective of providing a new type of global calculation of returns to One CGIAR's diversified portfolio by 2030, as suggested by the SPIA approach.

For **scoping the learning studies**, SPIA will engage CGIAR researchers in the identification of possible cases, focusing on testing common assumptions underlying the theory-of-change of different CGIAR innovations and studies testing solutions to last-mile delivery problems.

SPIA will then use **a combination of mechanisms to facilitate funding** of causal impact studies that have advanced through the design stage after scoping, including by providing peer review to increase the probability of obtaining external or internal funding.

3 Use of rigorous evidence

SPIA will encourage the use of evidence by different stakeholders through a multi-tiered approach. **Upcoming synthesis products** will focus on lessons from the SPIA portfolio, with an eye on delivering on the mandate to provide evidence at the System level. Such evidence syntheses will draw on rigorous studies from outside of SPIA's portfolio – by CGIAR researchers and by external researchers, when relevant and appropriate.

SPIA will engage CGIAR leadership in **promoting a learning agenda** for the System. This aims to orient the focus towards the value of learning not only from successes, but also from zero- or negative results for specific innovations. Such findings can provide valuable input for adjusting the research strategies or for updating the Theory of Change. Over time, the longitudinal results from the country studies will add evidence on the dynamics of adoption and dis-adoption at national-level, which will provide another diagnostic on how CGIAR-related innovations help farmers adapt to changing climatological and socio-economic conditions. Results from experimental learning studies are expected to provide evidence on last-mile delivery problems and opportunities.

Evidence at the System level provided by SPIA can **help prioritize future investments**. Demonstration of the usefulness and practical implications of such evidence is expected to increase the demand for rigorous evidence among science leaders. SPIA will adjust its existing webinar series to engage science leaders on the new developments on IA in the CGIAR – the new series will have a stronger focus on capacities for evidence use. Visits to the centers by SPIA panel members and SPIA technical support will also help increase the dialogue with several CGIAR actors.

As a result, SPIA will be in a better position to advise the System Council on the **use of the evidence for portfolio decisions**. During the first years, the focus will be on lessons and implications that can contribute to increase impact in the five impact areas, including synergies and trade-offs. Moving towards 2030, the evidence will increasingly focus on impact-at-scale resulting from the One CGIAR portfolio in the five impact areas.

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FULL NARRATIVE

This document provides a narrative for SPIA's proposed new operational model and workplan, organized in three parts, covering the country studies that document CGIAR reach at the System-level, the causal impact assessments for accountability and learning, and the use of evidence.

The current Terms of Reference of SPIA clearly defines its mandate: (i) Expand and deepen evidence of impact of CGIAR research investments on CGIAR Strategic Results Framework outcomes and associated Sustainable Development Goals, and (ii) Support CGIAR's strong commitment to embed a culture of impact assessment into the System. This document responds to new demands that have been communicated to SPIA within this broad mandate, namely: (a) expanding the number of countries where the reach of CGIAR-related innovations and policy influences is systematized, quantified, and tracked over time; (b) framing causal evidence of impact around One CGIAR five impact areas; and (c) continuing to support CGIAR in improving the generation and use of rigorous impact evidence. While these new asks fall within SPIA's mandate, they imply a change in the scope of the workplan. Operationally, the document responds to requests from System Council members for a flexible funding mechanism that allows SPIA to take on additional activities of independent impact assessment that fall within SPIA's mandate when interests arise. The new demands being made of SPIA require associated mechanisms for adaptive growth, as the current operational model and support structure do not allow for a response to the substantive new demands (see Annex 1 for more details).

To respond to the new demands and to allow for such adaptive growth, SPIA is proposing a new operational model and a new workplan & budget that would start in the Q3 of 2023 and run till 2030, together with a revision of the financing mechanisms of SPIA. The latter would combine committed

multiyear funding (till 2030) from System Council for the agreed workplan, with the dynamic possibility of flexible add-on funding for additional activities upon the request of System Council members during the implementation of this workplan. The principles for SPIA to accept such add-on funding would be that it is for activities within the SPIA mandate (as defined by the SPIA TOR), under full-cost recovery, and allowing for rapid decision-making. This will always be proceeded by a consultation with SIMEC.

The document is organized in three main sections, relating to the proposed pillars of a new SPIA workplan for 2023 – 2030, namely:

1. Country studies of CGIAR reach at a System level
2. Causal impact assessments
3. Use of rigorous evidence

Section 4 lays down the revised oversight and management modalities for the impementation of the workplan, while section 5 explains the budget. There are several annexes outlining further details, particularly on the rationale for selection of countries for the country studies' portfolio.

1 SPIA country studies of CGIAR reach at System level: A new operational model and workplan

System-level evidence of the reach of CGIAR innovations and policy influences in up to 20 countries can provide compelling evidence of CGIAR's global footprint. Dynamically documenting the changes in reach as the CGIAR's Research and Innovation Strategy is rolled out will provide unique evidence for accountability that will contribute to a new understanding of the returns to research investments. SPIA has developed and refined a process for collecting high-quality evidence on the reach of CGIAR innovations at the country level. To expand the geographic and longitudinal scope of such evidence, SPIA will shift its portfolio of country studies to a decentralized model of implementation with competitive subcontracts and centralized oversight and coordination. Scaling up this work package requires involvement of a greater number of experienced researchers with country expertise.

1.1 Current status

The country study approach that SPIA developed between 2015 and 2022 has allowed to provide new independent evidence of the reach of CGIAR at the System-level. Reporting from the country studies report on facts established through a systematic, integrated attempt to collect data that are representative of the target population. Such descriptive evidence establishing the "factual" status of the reach of CGIAR in high-priority countries provides powerful prima facie first stage evidence of the potential System-level impacts, as SPIA's first country-report on Ethiopia demonstrated. Such independent factual evidence is also needed to identify potential big-win innovations. The causal impact of those big-win innovations can subsequently be measured through "counterfactual" causal designs, similar to those supported in component 2 of the SPIA workplan.

The current country studies' portfolio is highly dependent on both the SPIA Chair and SPIA Senior Researcher being very active and hands-on in all countries, with most important decisions requiring a meeting with one or both, and many other decisions depending also on involvement of other panel members for specific countries (Visaria and Biradavolu in Vietnam; Emerick and Biradavolu in Bangladesh; Lybbert in Uganda). One advantage of the current approach is the intense sharing of learning and experience across teams as the approach was being developed, while operational risks were reduced by junior individuals receiving a lot of management facetime. Another advantage is that it is a low-cost model, drawing heavily on the talents and energies of young professionals from (and mostly based in) the Global South who work with SPIA for two / three years and then move on in their careers.

The major disadvantage of the status quo is that this centralized approach is too taxing on bandwidth of the SPIA panel (in particular, the SPIA Chair) and Senior Researcher, too demanding on administrative support from the SPIA secretariat, and hosting agreements with CGIAR centers often complicate in-country operational support, resulting in delays and extra costs, constraints on contracting, data collection activities, etc. As such, the status quo limits the ability of SPIA to respond to the funders' increased interest in/demand for country studies. The status quo is not scalable.

1.2 Shift to a new modality: towards evidence of reach in 20 countries

By extracting lessons learned from the period 2015 – 2022, a phased shift to a new modality for future work is envisioned, that builds on the strengths and advantages identified above, while addressing the weaknesses. In doing so, a new fit-for-purpose modality will allow to expand the scope both geographically and longitudinally.

Building on the longitudinal dimension of the datasets on which the SPIA country studies are based, SPIA will engage country study teams including national partners in CGIAR priority countries for a multi-year engagement until 2030. This will aim to dynamic track changes in the reach of CGIAR-innovations and policy influences as the One CGIAR portfolio is being rolled out, incorporate innovations from the new portfolio, and report on progress towards at-scale impacts on the five impact areas. Multiple rounds of DNA fingerprinting for the same crops built into those datasets will also allow objective measurement of varietal turn-over at national-level scale. During the process of generating such factual evidence, the country study teams will generate information and insights into the performance of the portfolio of CGIAR and NARS activity, including possible low take-up of innovations that were expected to have scaled. The integration of measures of the CGIAR-related innovations in existing nationally representative household panel surveys with rich socio-economic and geo-spatial information provides considerable scope for further evaluative content (synthesis reports, further analysis of data etc) to be generated.

In the period 2015 – 2022, SPIA developed and refined a set of common tasks that form SPIA's country study approach, and together result in comprehensive evidence of the reach of CGIAR at the country level. This set of tasks is outlined in Table 1 below. Two terms are worth explaining here. "Stocktaking" is a systematic inquiry into the scope of CGIAR research activity over the preceding 20+ years, with the goal of finding a longlist of CGIAR-related innovations and policy influence claims. This aims at identifying those expected to have scaled. Such an approach requires a combination of in-person engagement in country (can be carried out by early-career researchers) with the support of senior, experienced researchers for advice on methodology but also for the convening power and connections to open doors at a high level in government, within the donor community, CGIAR leadership etc.

The term "survey integration" refers to the incorporation of a range of data collection protocols into national-representative longitudinal surveys with the objective to rigorously measure adoption of CGIAR-related innovations[1]. Sampling plant material for DNA fingerprinting of varieties for the main crops of interest is central to this effort, as well as the incorporation of measurement tools for livestock, natural resource management and policy/institutional innovations. By incorporating the data collection for all CGIAR-related innovations expected to have scaled into an existing independent national representative survey, one obtains a unique system-level picture of CGIAR reach. As such, this is more ambitious than the standard of evidence that could be expected from any single project / initiative / center operating

[1] Kosmowski et al (2020) Ethiopia country study clarifies how the CGIAR-related innovation included in the country work are identified. "An innovation must have used input from research conducted by teams that included CGIAR scientists. An innovation must also be novel to its users. Finally, for our purposes, an innovation must have a distinctive, observable feature that makes it measurable in a survey." Given the objective is to measure the reach of CGIAR on the ground (i.e. with farmers, communities, consumers, etc.) innovations whose end users are other researchers are not considered, which is an important distinction with the coverage of innovations in the CGIAR results dashboards.

individually. It also adds independent information and insights, relative to that obtained from CGIAR researchers doing their own reporting or monitoring, evaluation and learning systems. Building on recognized high-quality surveys collected by national statististical institutes and their international partners is not only cost-effective, but also helps reinforce the public good such surveys provide, and assures that measures of agricultural innovations become available for widespread use.

SPIA intends to continue working in the current set of four countries (Ethiopia, Uganda, Vietnam, Bangladesh), which allows SPIA to dynamically track progress to impacts by 2030. These four countries continue to represent CGIAR priority countries, offering a diversity of agro-ecologies, and each with their own unique opportunities to track progress towards 2030 using panel surveys. All CGIAR centers have their research interests represented in this set of four countries, typically in more than one of the countries.

To bring new countries into the program while continuing to work in the current set of four countries, SPIA will engage and lead consortia for specific country studies. Each consortium, with leadership of a SPIA panel member, will establish a suitable partnership and propose the appropriate partnership model (e.g., a partnership between strong researchers based in a university in the host country and other local research institutes, including NARS; a partnership between a university in the global North and a university in the host country) for specific country studies, or for a small cluster of countries. This approach builds on the current modus operandum, in which individual panel members are already engaged with specific countries. It decentralizes the management and day-to-day decision making through consortia led by these individual panel members. SPIA would provide standardized protocols and mechanisms for carrying out the different tasks (per Table 1), with some well-defined deliverables; centralized standardization with decentralized implementation making it feasible to grow the evidence base. NARS partners are critical to this effort, particularly when it comes to examining the reach of CGIAR innovations in germplasm – notably in supporting the assembly of reference material for genotyping. Information obtained from the nationally representative surveys through the SPIA country studies also provide essential information for understanding NARS' own effectiveness in disseminating germplasm that farmers can adopt. An independent academic institution with a clear public good mission (one without anything to gain from positive results) will be in the lead in each country.

As Table 1 illustrates, the country study process is a six-year effort per country. The lead partner contracting mechanism will entail a three-year contract, renewable for a further three years, for implementation of a set of core research tasks: stocktaking, policy consultation, measurement pilots, survey integration in multiple years, analysis, and reporting. While this is akin to a franchise model, it would explicitly allow enough degrees-of-freedom for the researchers leading the sub-contracts to pursue follow-up research and related methodological improvements.

The subcontract would decentralize the evidence generation to the consortium/partnership contracted for a particular country (or group of countries) and include budget for the administrative and technical support necessary to implement the deliverables in that particular country. It would continue to involve early career scholars from the target countries, but now additionally increase collaboration between senior researchers in the partner university, NARS and the SPIA panel member.

Table 1. Tasks and timeline for SPIA country studies

Country X: Tasks	Year 0	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
		Contract period 1			Contract period 2		
Sub-contractor identification / contracting / hiring							
Stocktaking							
Policy consultation events							
Measurement pilots							
Survey integration							
Analysis							
Reporting							

Having individual SPIA panel members involved with each country study, while they also jointly serve on the panel, is purposely intended to assure each study optimally contributes to SPIA's mandate for speaking to CGIAR system level priorities. It will also help ensure synergies between study teams. To further ensure that the country study teams have access to CGIAR scientists and their partners to enable stocktaking, and that the implementation in each country optimally benefits from lessons learned during the 2015-2022 period and takes advantages of scale economies, a number of core technical support functions for the SPIA country studies would continue to be provided centrally (see section 1.5).

As evidence becomes available, SPIA's "use of evidence" support team will liaise with the country study support team and the consortia working on specific countries to assure different target audiences can engage with the evidence and its potential for use in decision-making and management, accountability, and learning. Target audiences range from the members of CGIAR System Council and their organizations, to senior science leadership and management of CGIAR, CGIAR centers and initiatives active in the country of study, CGIARs national government and research partners, etc. (see section 3 below for more details).

1.3 Criteria for selecting countries

SPIA considers four criteria for selecting countries with the highest priority for **the full model of implementation:**

1. Extent of existing claims of outcomes made by prior CGIAR research (using evidence from outcome-impact case reports 2017-2020: see Annex 2).
2. Extent of forward-looking relevance determined by country involvement in the portfolio of CGIAR initiatives (see Annex 3).
3. Regional and agro-ecological representation – to obtain a well-balanced overall portfolio of countries. In doing so, when considering all countries together, the activities of all CGIAR centers are also covered.

4. Income level and population – all else equal, greater weight is given to low-income countries and large countries as proxies for the potential for large-scale impact on the lives of people living in poverty.

A "full-model" for the SPIA country study approach is summarized in the table above, and broadly corresponds to the approach that led to the Ethiopia country report in 2020 and the updated evidence in 2023 (version 2 of the report is forthcoming).

In addition to pursuing this full model in a larger number of countries, and in response to demands from System Council members for a much wider set of country studies, SPIA proposes to also pursue **"stocktaking only"** studies. This would entail replicating the initial steps followed in Ethiopia (and other ongoing country studies), notably desk review and interview-based research to gather information from CGIAR and NARS researchers, government officials, extension experts, NGOs, representatives of funders, etc. to identify the set of CGIAR-related innovations and policy influences for which there are credible secondary sources of information suggesting that the innovation has scaled. By implementing an additional "stocktake only" approach, possible "big win" innovations can be identified in a wider set of countries, and vice versa also provide evidence of possible lack of scaling (or modest scaling). This approach would use the information from the reporting by the PPU, but also incorporate independent information from a wider set of sources, in line with SPIA's mandate of independence. This establishes the sub-set of innovations that are potentially at scale in each country. Such an exercise across a wide set of countries can also highlight areas of the research agenda that have no clear cases of successes at scale. And as there are multiple countries in each region, it also allows for a wider regional view.

The stocktake exercise provides value as a first level of evidence for a much larger set of countries in which CGIAR operates. It can also feed into a subsequent decision on whether to scale up to a full model. Because of the prioritization criteria, there is lower a priori expectation that innovations have reached scale in "stock-take only" countries – as such, the results of the stock-take may point in certain cases to revision of such priors. By having two lists of countries – those where the full model is being implemented and those with stock-take only – SPIA can upgrade countries from the "stocktake only" list to pursue the full model when the opportunity and funding is available. Similarly, if conditions in a particular country deteriorate or it proves too difficult to implement the full model (e.g., due to conflict, or due to discontinuation of panel surveys on which the data collection is built), a country may be downgraded to "stocktake only". These decisions will be made by the full SPIA panel.

1.4 Country selection and plans for implementation

Proposed scenario: Full country study in eight countries, plus 12 stocktakes

In 2024, SPIA makes the shift in operational model in the four countries where it is already operational – Ethiopia, Uganda, Vietnam, and Bangladesh. These become four separate sub-contracts, with two cycles of three-year contracts, bringing the work through at least two additional rounds of data collection by 2030.

The continuation in the four existing countries is motivated by the fact that the four countries will continue to represent priority countries (they rank in the top six of countries where most One CGIAR initiatives are active (see table below) and represent multiple agro-ecologies. With baselines of the country studies established under the 2019-2024 SPIA workplan, they present unique opportunities to track progress towards 2030 through longitudinal surveys.

In all four countries, the full model will be implemented, including methods experiments (to be decided in consultation with SPIA), maintenance and updating of the stocktaking exercises, maintained survey integration, an interim report after three years, and a full report by 2030. This approach consolidates the work already started in these four countries, with the repeated survey visits (on a cycle of approximately once every three years) allowing SPIA to document evidence on scaling as the One CGIAR portfolio is rolled-out over subsequent business cycles (and to have updated estimates by the end of each business cycle), and uncover adoption and dis-adoption dynamics in response to system-level changes, as well as possible climate, economic or social changes, shocks, or stresses.

In addition to the consolidation in the existing four countries, SPIA would begin the process of bringing new high-priority countries into the set, starting in 2024 with Nigeria and a cluster of between one and three states in India, followed by Egypt and Colombia, giving a set of eight countries with good geographic and agro-ecological balance and reflecting the investment priorities of CGIAR.

For the "stocktake only" set of 12 additional countries, a SPIA member will oversee a series of sub-contracts to consortia members for implementing "stocktake only" exercises in Ghana, Mali, Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, Malawi, Philippines, selected states in South India, Nepal, Morocco, Guatemala, and Peru.

Under the principle of adaptive management, possible binding constraints to implementation of the full model may mean that any one of the eight countries with the "full model" is downgraded to "stocktake only", to be replaced by another country being upgraded from "stocktake only" to "full model" status. Information from the stocktake would inform the choice of country to upgrade in the event that contingency measures are needed and/or if additional resources are provided. By having an entry point for this work in 20 countries, SPIA will be positioned to flexibly respond to future demands for evidence at a greater scale. As certain countries become more / less relevant to CGIAR over time, SPIA would then be able to scale up / down operations within this set.

Table 2. Priority countries for full model and stocktake only, by region, under SPIA's preferred scenario. Countries already in the country study program are highlighted in bold

	West Africa	East, Southern and Central Africa	SE Asia	S Asia	MENA	LAC
Full model	Nigeria	**Ethiopia** **Uganda**	**Vietnam**	**Bangladesh** N India	Egypt	Colombia
Stocktake only	Ghana Mali Senegal Cote d'Ivoire	Kenya Malawi	Philippines	S India Nepal	Morocco	Guatemala Peru

Fall-back option: Full model country studies in four countries plus 16 stocktakes

This scenario does not allow for new countries to be brought into the full model, but rather aims to implement "stocktake only" exercises in 16 additional countries while maintaining our work in the original four countries. This would not generate any new full country reports. However, it leaves open the possibility of upgrading countries from the stocktake only to the full model, in response to later System Council or bilateral demands.

1.5 Country study support team

A small core country study support team, directly supervised by the SPIA Chair (or members) and employed through CGIAR center hosting arrangements would provide the core technical support functions including:

- Liaise with CGIAR leadership and funders
    - Including scientists in target countries, but also those who were involved with CGIAR work in the target country, but have since moved on
- Liaise with core implementing partners and vendors (including LSMS, Genotyping services)
- Provide input to SPIA Chair and panel for adaptive management of country selection and partner organizations, as needed
- Define core methodologies with standard protocols etc, including but not limited to:
    - Stocktaking methodology
    - Plant / animal tissue collection protocols for farm surveys
    - Reference library collection
- Provide ongoing advice and technical backstopping to country teams
- Assist in interpretation of output – e.g., bioinformatics analytical capacity
- Provide quality assurance / quality control of work coming from subcontracts to prepare input for panel discussions on progress and adaptive management
- Assist in the dynamic definition of follow-up research and related methodological improvements
- Organize synthesis across countries / themes for use of evidence
- Organize synthesis of methodological lessons learned with objective to develop guidance for CGIAR researchers (and wider relevant audiences) on tools and methods

The team responsible for these functions and representing SPIA's interests would including a Principal Scientist with overall managerial responsibility for the work program; and advisors for scientific backstopping the consortia on cross-cutting specialized methodological issues such as bioinformatics, and common data collection tools and methods; and a lead for CGIAR-facing communications.

2 Causal impact assessments: A new operational model and workplan

Credible causal evidence is essential for both System-level accountability and for assessing the likelihood of future impact from a research program or initiative. A reorganization of the support for scoping and designing of causal impact studies aims to assure a larger volume of impact studies that speak to system-level priorities and are designed to provide rigorous evidence from which relevant lessons can be learned. This will help CGIAR researchers identify more cases for which rigorous accountability and learning impact studies can be developed, and facilitate collaborations with external impact assessment experts, to obtain independent causal estimates of impacts in the 5 CGIAR impact areas.

2.1 Current status and lessons learned on the generation of rigorous causal impact evidence

In the 2019-2024 workplan, the task of "generation of evidence of causal impacts of CGIAR-related innovations" was implemented through a suite of accountability and learning studies. Accountability studies aim at rigorously documenting impacts of investments in CGIAR research that have resulted in diffusion of innovations at scale. Learning studies use rigorous designs to test key assumptions of the theory of change of CGIAR research, and typically aim to test whether addressing constraints related to last-mile delivery would increase diffusion at scale and related impacts.

Under the current workplan, the process started with a scoping phase to identify potential innovations that may have scaled in countries where CGIAR operates, or relevant questions around the ToC that can inform the feasibility of the scaling of promising CGIAR innovations. SPIA members led the conceptualization of the scoping phase and worked together with the SPIA technical support staff and researchers of CGIAR centers and research programs in different scoping activities.

Each group of studies was identified through a competitive call for proposals, implemented in two stages. In the first stage, expressions of interest were submitted by CGIAR researchers. In a second stage, promising studies were invited to submit full proposals. This invitation also came with the offer from SPIA to facilitate matchmaking with academic researchers to strengthen the quality of the research project. This was an intensive process and revealed limitations in many CGIAR centers regarding the design of rigorous impact assessment studies. In a subset of cases, SPIA supported further (financially and through further advice) some promising studies to gather comprehensive data on innovation dissemination and to improve the design of the studies. EoI were reviewed internally by SPIA while each full proposal was refereed by three external reviewers.

Each study is being implemented through an LOA prepared by the SPIA secretariat and monitored by the SPIA technical support team (to address technical questions coming to SPIA and to facilitate the review of technical deliverables). This process has proved to be very demanding on the small technical support team, due to the numerous interactions with study teams required to monitor their progress. With many challenges faced during the implementation of the studies, ranging from COVID-induced delays to political unrest and so forth, many studies requested no-cost extensions to their contracts. Results will be synthesized by 2024 and provide new evidence on system-level priorities including new scaling strategies, digital tools, environmental trade-offs and synergies, and long-term large-scale evidence of "big win" innovations, while providing new rigorous evidence focused on the 5 impact areas.

Further, the launch of One CGIAR initiatives implied a new engagement in providing technical support to CGIAR researchers to help identify potential rigorous causal impact assessment studies and link them to IA experts to work together on rigorous design and resulting studies. SPIA first engaged in several bilateral and group discussions with initiatives to think through their IA plans and to define the next steps for advising interested initiatives. SPIA then deployed the strategy of organizing matchmaking events to bring together CGIAR initiative researchers and academic researchers (pairs of early-career and more senior researchers) with experience in impact assessment. These events allowed the formation of teams to identify potential impact assessment questions that could lead to rigorous learning impact assessments. After the events, the majority of the 14 matched teams continue to work towards the design of rigorous studies. These potential rigorous studies tended to focus on learning studies to test assumptions in the Theory of Change.

The successful experience of the matchmaking has created a larger demand among initiatives and SPIA is already receiving requests for more of these opportunities. Organizing the matchmaking events implied a significant investment of time of the lead panel member and the operational support team (preparing, implementing, and following up the events). To maintain this successful experience a different, fit-for-purpose organization of such activities is needed.

The technical support for the generation of causal evidence in the SPIA workplan has come from different members of the team (Program Leader and Senior Officer at the SPIA Secretariat, and Senior Researcher and Remote Sensing Consultant in the Country team). As described in Annex 1, the ad-hoc system to support the SPIA members has become unsustainable and requires a different operational model.

2.2 Shift to a new model with stronger early investments

In the new model, SPIA proposes to engage through a more systematic scoping of potential learning and accountability studies. SPIA will first focus on hands-on technical assistance and follow-up beyond the initial discussions with CGIAR researchers, and a systematic effort to link CGIAR researchers with internal and external IA experts, with the goal of increasing the overall support to CGIAR to better design the causal impact assessments.

For accountability studies, SPIA will scope the potential for rigorous designs, with priority for studies focusing on big wins, in a number of complementary ways. A designated SPIA panel member will lead a work package responsible for such scoping activities.

1. Building directly on the country studies that can identify innovations with large reach and information related to different scaling efforts. This will allow SPIA to provide technical assistance to identify possible designs for long-term large-scale studies.
2. Identifying and pursuing opportunities in either One CGIAR initiatives or large-scale bilateral projects to document the rollout of scaling efforts with relevant administrative and/or monitoring data. The rollout data would be used subsequently for the design of long-term large-scale studies. This will involve working prospectively with scaling partners to know where, when, for whom, and why scaling efforts rolled out, in coordination with the Portfolio Coordination Unit (PCU), building on discussions on such possibilities that started in 2022.
3. Scoping the possibility of long-term follow-up studies (using primary or secondary data, and/or remote sensing), focused on synergies and trade-offs between CGIAR's five impact areas, including possible spillovers and indirect effects, by drawing on the designs of earlier rigorous causal impact studies. An initial desk-review that started under the ongoing workplan has

revealed a number of important opportunities for such studies to answer first-order questions for CGIAR.

Together, these accountability studies will provide SPIA with causal impact estimates of the set of innovations with high reach, with the objective of providing a new type of global calculation of returns to CGIAR's diversified portfolio by 2030, as suggested by the SPIA approach.

For the learning studies, SPIA will engage CGIAR researchers (both biophysical and social scientists) in the identification of potential studies. Under the guidance of a dedicated SPIA member and support of the technical staff, several interactions with the impact assessment focal points (IAFP) from initiatives and centers are expected.

1. It would start with an inventory of impact assessment needs and opportunities, as well as key learning questions emerging from research initiatives and bilateral projects. The inventory will build on efforts taking place within the impacts assessment plans of the initiatives as well as efforts planned by the CGIAR Portfolio Performance Unit to update the database of innovations of CGIAR.
2. The next step will be to guide the IAFPs and their teams in initiatives and centers in documenting the level of maturity of the innovations, the relevant questions around key assumptions of the ToC of initiatives or large bilateral projects, the plans for scaling innovations, the possible constraints to last-mile delivery, and the role and responsibilities of CGIAR and partners in the piloting and rollout of these innovations.
3. Together, this set of learning studies will be strategically chosen to complement planned/on-going IA in initiatives, to provide evidence of learning and progress towards impact in CGIAR's five impact areas. The dedicated SPIA panel member, supported by the SPIA technical staff, will document all the possible studies scoped, as well as the reasoning for why specific ones were pursued further.

With a more ample set of potential accountability and learning studies, SPIA will use four mechanisms to facilitate funding of causal impact studies that have advanced through the design stage after scoping. Each of those reflect mechanisms currently in use, though possibly with different weights than in the current portfolio:

1. Competitive calls around key common questions speaking to system-level needs for learning evidence are expected to emerge as a direct result of the scoping efforts. Proposals submitted will continue to go through a peer review process by external researchers (both IA experts and biophysical scientists) and approved by the SPIA panel.
2. SPIA will commission individual studies that speak to System-level priorities where time-sensitive opportunities arise, and/or where opportunities are identified to measure the impact of innovations with large reach ("big wins"), including those identified through the country work. For accountability and transparency, commissioned studies will be subject to peer review by external researchers. Approval of the studies will be made by the SPIA panel using input from the peer reviews.
3. SPIA will organize peer-reviews of research designs and proposals for impact studies involving CGIAR researchers and academic experts outside of SPIA-initiated calls and commissioned studies:

a. to increase the probability of obtaining funding through the networks and resources available to the academic researchers that are matched with CGIAR researchers to help crowd-in external resources.
b. to help increase the quality and the possibility of funding from internal CGIAR resources (including those from Initiatives) while also crowding in funds available in bilateral projects (e.g., by working with M&E teams in large bilateral last-mile delivery projects to ensure roll-out monitoring data is built in appropriately for possible later causal impact studies).

For each of these mechanisms, SPIA will facilitate matchmaking activities through a network of external and internal impact assessment researchers who are interested in the research questions of CGIAR.

Finally, this work will link to a potential new network for impact assessment research to help CGIAR answer relevant IA research questions on its portfolio, if confirmed. A BMGF-SPIA convening was held on Feb 22, 2023 that brought together academic researchers, CGIAR researchers, funders and other stakeholders working on IA activities related to CGIAR research and innovations to explore interest in such a network. With the input from the event participants, a model to support a wider network of researchers to increase evidence on last-mile delivery questions that can help increase impact at scale and on the impact of CGIAR research itself is being proposed (see Annex 4). This will help to further strengthen IA capacity through learning by doing, via collaborations between CGIAR and partner scientists and IA experts from the Global South and North, including early career researchers. If that effort materializes, it would be funded as a potential add-on to the SPIA workplan and budget.

2.3 SPIA core support to scoping and designing rigorous impact assessments of CGIAR research

To complement the administrative support and oversight of contracts for causal impact studies managed by the SPIA Project Management Unit, the technical support capacity for this component will be expanded and reorganized to help SPIA deliver this mandate. SPIA will have a small core causal evidence support team, directly supervised by SPIA, and employed through CGIAR center hosting arrangements.

The support team for causal impact evidence would be responsible for the following functions and representing SPIA's interests:

1. Engage with CGIAR science leaders, the system IA community of practice, and the network of researchers working with SPIA in the generation of causal impacts of CGIAR, to facilitate SPIA advice for identifying relevant and rigorous causal impact assessments.
2. Facilitate intensive scoping for studies, follow-up support to design rigorous impact assessment studies, and stronge linkages to the country studies.
3. Facilitate interactions with science leaders to increase the use of evidence, in coordination with the use of evidence support team.
4. Support SPIA in the technical monitoring of the whole portfolio of causal impact assessments and facilitate ongoing advice and technical backstopping to causal studies in the SPIA portfolio.
5. Support the organization of matchmaking events to facilitate interactions between CGIAR researchers and external or internal impact assessment experts.

6. Facilitate SPIA quality assurance/quality control of work coming from subcontracts for causal impact studies.

This team will have a Principal Scientist and a Postdoctoral Research officer working together with dedicated SPIA members. These two positions will be posted at major CGIAR hubs in the Global South and will be mobile to assure synergies with the country work and to facilitate the generation of ideas for relevant causal impact studies across all countries with CGIAR engagement and across the CGIAR research portfolio.

3 Use of rigorous evidence: A new operational model and workplan

In the current workplan, SPIA's objective to support CGIAR to build a culture of impact has focused on improving the CGIAR capacity to design and implement rigorous impact assessments. As a result of those investments and of the SPIA country work the amount of rigorous evidence is expected to grow and assuring use of this new evidence is an important part of SPIAs mandate. A strong culture of IA also means funders, science leaders, researchers, managers and other CGIAR stakeholders are using the rigorous evidence available. Additional bandwidth is needed, as well as a stronger strategy for promoting use of rigorous evidence in different CGIAR decision-making processes.

3.1 The implementation of SPIAs mandate on advice under the 2019-2024 workplan

To date, SPIA's work to enhance CGIAR impact assessment capacity through a strategy of advising CGIAR researchers on methodology, has integrated insights from the SPIA country studies and portfolio of causal impact evidence. Interactions with the CGIAR extended impact assessment community of practice built on lessons learned coming from the portfolio of causal IA studies and from the implementation of new measurement approaches in the country work. The support of the Remote Sensing consultant to facilitate a better use of RS approaches in rigorous impact assessment allowed to support a variety of IA studies trying different RS approaches and bringing important lessons about the strengths and limitations of using these approaches.

SPIA launched a webinar series to support early career impact assessment researchers in the system, with the goal of fostering greater rigor in the design of impact assessment studies. In this process, SPIA has identified a lack of a critical mass of early-career IA researchers in most CGIAR centers.

The Ethiopia country study brought the opportunity to expand the use of data collected by SPIA supported studies and open further avenues for additional research that would be of interest for CGIAR and SPIA. A model of small grants targeted a broad audience of early career researchers (mainly PhD students in both Global South and North) supported by mentors (who had a relatively light engagement and did not receive financial compensation). Although the 14 research reports were completed, and the three publications (to date) in lower-tier academic journals were a positive outcome, the limited bandwidth of SPIA members and the support technical team did not allow to pursue this further.

The current organization and staffing of SPIA has proven to be even more challenging with the new demands for SPIA to advise CGIAR researchers on IA methods and approaches within the One CGIAR initiatives. From the coordination with CGIAR PPU to provide general guidelines for IA plans, to the tailored advice for the ideas on the IA plans of the initiatives, and links to external IA experts for more intensive advice and co-design, this engagement demanded a lot of time from SPIA and the technical support staff.

SPIA also provided guidance through technical notes and other products through the SPIA webpage, and additional communication campaigns (Twitter, newsletter, emails to SPIA network, etc.). While the current dissemination means and communication services that SPIA can access have performed adequately so far, with a larger number of products in the pipeline, the operational support for the use of

rigorous evidence would face challenges. The translation of SPIA messages and dissemination of rigorous evidence is coordinated on a part-time basis by the SPIA Senior Officer (that also supports other SPIA workplan components). In addition, the SPIA Senior Officer has to liaise with the other Independent Advisory and Evaluation Service (IAES) workstreams (that have different objectives and expectations) regarding dedicated time from the communications' consultant engaged by IAES. This has sometimes created misunderstandings about what SPIA needs, adding additional workload on the SPIA Senior Officer to clarify the situation.

3.2 Shift to stronger focus on use of rigorous evidence in CGIAR

The new wave of evidence on the reach and causal impacts of CGIAR-related innovations offers opportunities to refine the strategies for a better use of evidence by different CGIAR stakeholders. Given the different audiences to be targeted, SPIA will use a combination of strategies. One first action will be to assess different options to encourage use-of-evidence by different stakeholders and the effectiveness of SPIA's synthesis products from the 2019-2024 period.

Upcoming synthesis products will focus on key lessons that can be drawn from combinations of different studies in the SPIA portfolio, with an eye on delivering on the mandate to provide evidence at the System level. They will draw on rigorous evidence generated outside of SPIA's portfolio by CGIAR researchers and by external researchers, when relevant and appropriate (in particular, considering the independence principle).

One general objective will be to engage CGIAR research leaders in promoting a learning agenda for the system. This aims to shift the focus of research leadership on generating and communicating only evidence of positive results, and to see the value of learning from zero or negative results for some innovations that may have not worked as expected. Such unexpected findings can provide valuable input for adjusting the research strategies or to update the Theory-of-Change of different innovations. As the Ethiopia study has shown, the country studies are likely to show limited scale for a number of innovations and may also point to innovations not being adopted by the target population (e.g., innovations adopted less in agro-ecologies where they were thought to have the highest value added). Such findings can be the starting points to revisit the traits of the innovations as well as the scaling strategies. Over time, the longitudinal results from the country studies will add evidence on the dynamics of adoption and dis-adoption at national-level, which will provide another type of key diagnostic on how CGIAR-related innovations help adapt to changing climatological and socio-economic conditions. Results from experimental learning studies are expected to provide evidence on last-mile delivery problems, and as such can also provide key input for CGIAR researchers and their national parties on possible strategies for further scaling.

To encourage a dialogue and reflection on findings from the reach and impact studies, SPIA will engage the science leaders, the research community in CGIAR, and the national partners and stakeholders more broadly. A combination of seminars/discussion groups and SPIA briefs may provide the starting points for these discussions. Lessons drawn from the portfolio of learning and accountability studies will be discussed directly with the relevant global science director and their team. PPU is also expected to draw on them for the 3-year portfolio reporting. Country study results will be disseminated and discussed through national stakeholder events, with participation of CGIAR science leaders active in the country, researchers, NARS, Ministry of Agriculture and other relevant national partners, representatives of

funders, etc. Where reach is lower than expected, discussion will focus on possible implications for adaptation of scaling strategies as well as possible complementary interventions and/or research efforts. SPIA will also selectively propose that research leaders provide management responses to findings from completed reports.

With a better buy-in of the evidence generated, the evidence at the System level provided by SPIA could also be used in stage-gating processes. In addition, demonstration of the usefulness and possible practical implications of such evidence is expected to increase the demand for rigorous evidence among science leaders. To complement these efforts, and assure that such demands are channeled appropriately, SPIA will use the webinar series to engage science leaders on the new developments in IA in the CGIAR; the current webinar series with practitioners has been extremely useful to deliver on the mandate related to methods, the new series will have a stronger focus on capacities for evidence use that underpin a culture of impact. It is expected that visits to the centers by SPIA panel members and visits/positioning of SPIA technical support will also help increase the dialogue with several actors of the CGIAR.

By systematically following the engagement approaches described above (which builds on earlier one-off experiences by SPIA), SPIA will be in a better position to advise the System Council on the use of the evidence for portfolio decisions. During the first years, the focus will be on lessons and implications that can contribute to increase impact in the five impact areas, including synergies and trade-offs. Moving towards 2030, the evidence will increasingly focus on actual impact-at-scale resulting from the One CGIAR portfolio in the five impact areas. Lessons from the learning and accountability studies, and from each country study, will be shared with System Council members as they become available. Evidence on big-wins, system-level evidence of reach, and impact learning lessons will be highlighted, and made available to System Council members in appropriate formats. Beyond sharing of findings, SPIA will assure that the reflections that followed those findings in the different dissemination events, and the management response (where relevant), will be shared with System Council members. SPIA will also organize more in-depth "on-demand" discussion of results and implications with System Council members and their teams, as was done for the first Ethiopia country report. Finally, SPIA will ensure global dissemination through relevant international fora, again following the practice established for the first Ethiopia report.

Complementing these activities, SPIA will continue to engage in advising the System in rigorous methods and approaches to IA, which will be integrated in the country work and the causal impact assessment work. Proof-of-concept studies in the causal impact studies' portfolio and measurement advances resulting from the country studies will result in additional technical notes and guidance documents. The SPIA webinar series will continue, adapting to the growing IA community of practice and needs for advice in the system.

3.3 SPIA core support for use of rigorous evidence in CGIAR

The expanded ambition for this component of the new SPIA workplan will require a dedicated and better resourced operational support. Commitment to use-of-evidence engagements will be built into the subcontracts with institutions and PIs responsible for specific work packages. SPIA panel and support staff members will follow up with IA teams upon the completion of their project to revisit the use-of-evidence plan. Core support will be needed to assist the SPIA Chair to liaise with work package leads on all use-of-evidence activities, to assure the organization and monitoring of the different events and outreach activities, link optimally to the different CGIAR stakeholders, and to work with communication specialists. The SPIA Senior Officer will lead the dedicated support to SPIA in this component and will coordinate with the other components of the SPIA operational and technical support.

4 Oversight & Management of SPIA Workplan

4.1 Current status

As described in SPIA's ToRs, SPIA has the overall oversight of its workplan. While panel members make decisions on how to implement and adapt different components of the workplan they are leading, decisions on the deployment of resources and on addressing asks from System Council and other CGIAR stakeholders are taken by the entire panel convened by the Chair, on a consensus basis. Currently the Panel has three standing members (including the Chair) and four special initiative panel members.

The SPIA technical and operational support team supports the decision-making process and its implementation. This support team is spread between the SPIA Secretariat within the Independent Advisory and Evaluation Service (IAES) (2.7 FTE) and a few CGIAR centers hosting the SPIA country teams. SPIA also has access to additional shared resources within IAES and limited corporate services provided by hosting CGIAR centers. Although these shared/additional resources have helped SPIA to operate on various fronts, competition for accessing these resources/services can pose challenges to access them timely.

To facilitate the input for decision-making and the management of the workplan, SPIA has established a de facto management team led by the SPIA Chair that includes the lead of the country work and the entire SPIA Secretariat. This management team meets weekly for two hours and centralizes the coordination to implement the different components of the SPIA workplan and to interact with different stakeholders reaching out to SPIA. Additional coordination mechanisms within the country teams and other members of the SPIA team are also in place. While this centralized coordination has facilitated the delivery of the advice and rigorous evidence coming from SPIA, this has concentrated most operational decisions into this small team, slowing down the workplan implementation and challenging the coordination with external partners and stakeholders involved in the SPIA workplan and mandate.

4.2 Shift to a new model

With an increasing number of new asks and expansion of the SPIA workplan, SPIA needs to modify the oversight and management of its workplan. As described in Annex 1b, part of the activities under SPIA's mandate will shift towards a more decentralized model where the generation of rigorous evidence of the reach and impacts of CGIAR research will be implemented through subcontracts by research consortia. Research consortia will be built under the leadership of a SPIA member and will bring together researchers from the Global South and North. While the day-to-day support required by each research consortium will be built into the subcontracts, SPIA will keep the oversight and management of the overall workplan centralized.

The panel, with different members leading different components of the workplan, will make centralized decisions on resource deployment and consortia selection and advise the CGIAR on the use of rigorous evidence resulting from the SPIA workplan. To assure an efficient oversight of the expanded workplan, the SPIA panel will be directly supported by a Project Management Unit (PMU) for the management of the subgrants, in making sure that these sub-contracts comply with CGIAR policies and regulations, and to liase with the technical SPIA support team. The PMU will also provide other operational support including preparation and monitoring of different contracts, hiring consultants, supporting the hiring, induction and

operations of panel members, coordinating access to resources needed for the SPIA operations, coordinating the financial reporting as requested by CGIAR procedures and organizing SPIA events.

SPIA will only have one type of panel member and a Chair, and each panel member and the Chair will have clear ToR, each a) with well-defined responsibilities for the oversight and implementation of different components of the SPIA workplan, and b) at the same time serving as member of the panel for centralized decision making on the portfolio of independent evidence generation and to provide strategic advice on IA approaches and use of evidence to the System Council and other CGIAR stakeholders. The revised SPIA ToRs state that SPIA will be composed of at least six panel members, and the number could grow if the implementation of the workplan and the delivery of its mandate so requires.

To build on the coordination and internal communication mechanisms that SPIA already has in place and to facilitate the management of the entire work plan, a management team will continue to meet regularly. This management team will continue to be led by the SPIA Chair and be composed of the Leads of the country work and causal evidence technical teams, the Senior Manager of the PMU and the Senior Research Officer of the use of evidence team. To assure central oversight by the SPIA panel on different components of the workplan, a monthly panel meeting will be organized virtually. The PMU will be a small team under the leadership of a Senior Manager, who will supervise 1 or 2 administrative/finance officers who will cover all operational support needed. An online internal communication system will keep internal clarity on strategy and rationale behind activities implemented and decisions made and facilitate time-efficient updates on activities between teams and the identification of synergies between workstreams.

4.3 Mechanisms for selection of subcontracted research

The country studies and the causal impact studies rely on subcontracted work to consortia and individual institutions. To assure rigor, transparency and value-for-money, subcontracts will be selected based on competitive peer-review.

For all subcontracts, SPIA will ensure (1) accountability and transparency about use of funds in arrangements offering best value for money, (2) institutional buy-in of sub-recipients (research consortia) to the programmatic, administrative, and financial requirements, (3) intellectual leadership and oversight by one panel member, (4) maintainance of the independent public goods nature of the work. In all cases, as is currently the case, and to allow SPIA to optimally benefit from the panel members' expertise, panel members are eligible to serve as co-PIs. When this occurs, these panel members will recuse themselves from SPIA deliberations on those specific subcontracts. The aim is to support a decentralized model responding to continuing and new asks for high level, rigorous evidence of CGIAR impact and more intensively engage and deploy the expertise of the SPIA panel members. Furthermore, the mechanisms are set up to ensure appropriate levels of control for the sound management of the subcontracts and appropriate incentives for panel members to take on the thought leadership role with consortia.

The criteria for contracting will vary between country studies and causal impact studies, reflecting the fact that the latter can be both smaller in scope and more time sensitive. Key features for the selection of each type of studies are discussed below, while Table 3 provides a comprehensive overview of criteria.

For the country studies, SPIA will use two potential mechanisms that will set a transparent selection of the consortia for country-study work based on competitive processes and provide flexibility to respond to opportunities identified by SPIA members to implement the required work in specific countries. For the first mechanism, SPIA will request expressions of interest (EoI) within a competitive two-step selection process. EoIs will be reviewed by SPIA members and selected EoI will be invited for full proposals. Full proposals will be sent for peer review, with the final decision being taken by the full SPIA panel based on the reviews. For the second mechanism, to be used when SPIA foresees the need for a particular constellation of partners to be convened, work will be commissioned to a specific SPIA member, who will lead the identification of potential partners in the consortia based on competitive processes. In all cases, assurances on academic freedom and independence of the consortia partners will be needed, and transparent and auditable processes for identification of partners and contracting, followed by preparation and administration of contracts would be supported by the SPIA Project Management Unit. The Unit will support all record keeping and budgeting/financial management processes of country consortia contracts.

In some cases, a PI of a consortia for country-study work, may be proposed as a new SPIA member. This will follow the regular procedure established by the ToRs of SPIA for new SPIA members.

These processes will help minimize risks related to the expanded country work. SPIA also reflected on how best to respond and adjust plans based on contingency discussions around other risks that remain inherent in the different organization of the country studies through principles of adaptive management. While these contingencies and potential adaptations are not described in this narrative, SPIA is open to develop or discuss them further.

For the causal impact studies, there would be two modalities:

1. A subcontract model (similar to the one suggested for the country work) that allows a dedicated SPIA member to lead the call and include a support team to technically, operationally and financially take up responsibilities for managing the call and eventually monitor funded studies. Under this model, several system-level causal IAs could be implemented through a subcontract with the home institution of the SPIA member leading a call, or with another academic institution that has linkages to that SPIA member. Likewise, a commissioned study identified through the country work could be managed under the subcontract related to that priority country.
2. A centralized granting model where a SPIA panel member leads the overall design of the call, technical input, and quality control. The administrative support and study progress monitoring is provided by the SPIA Project Management Unit and the Technical support team for the scoping and design of causal IA respectively. A better-resourced SPIA operational support allows for more efficient causal IA calls.

The choice of modality for specific work packages or studies in the causal impact portfolio will be determined based on cost-effective trade-offs involving institutional capacity, overhead, and synergies with country studies.

Table 3. Comprehensive overview of criteria for the selection of studies

	Country studies- competitive calls for EoIs	Country studies- commissioned to a SPIA member but partners selected competitively	Causal impact studies - competitive	Causal impact studies – commissioned
*Assured academic freedom and independence of recipients	x	x	x	X
*Transparent and auditable processes of recipients	x	x	x	X
*Acceptance of SPIA designated caps on overhead	x	x	x	X
*Global south representation in consortia	x	x	(desired)	(desired)
* proposal for the work has been submitted against a competitive call	x		x	
* Partners selected on a competitive basis	x	x	x	x
*Proposal has been subject to independent peer review and agreed by the SPIA panel	x	x	x	x
*Requirements both for research delivery and operational support are met by the lead recipient	x	x	x	x
*Direct management by Panel member (as co-PI)	Optional	x		(when relevant)
*There is a lead contractor with sub-contracts	x	x	x	(when relevant)

5 Budget for the new 2023 – 2030 workplan

For the new operational model and workplan, SPIA is presenting a 7.5 year budget covering a timespan from the 2nd semester of 2023 to 2030, in order to align the SPIA workplan with the CGIAR business cycle.

The budget required to implement the new SPIA workplan differs between the proposed scenario and the fall-back option for the country work as outlined in section 1.4 "Country selection and plans for implementation". The proposed scenario - Full country study in eight countries, plus 12 stocktakes – is referred to as Scenario 1, whereas the fall-back option - Full model country studies in four countries plus 16 stocktakes – is referred to as Scenario 2.

Under **Scenario 1 the average budget per year is USD 6.6m**, whereas under **Scenario 2 the average budget per year is USD 4.6m**. This budget includes the personnel cost for 3 FTE SPIA professional support staff plus admin support that is currently included in the IAES core budget. The budgeted cost for overheads and hosting costs are based on estimated costs at the Alliance office in Rome. This budget reflects an increase in the budget allocated to the country work, reflecting System Council's interest in expanding this area of work in particular, while keeping the rest of the SPIA budget similar to that under the current 6-year workplan. Scenario 1 corresponds to 0.75 percent of the CGIAR 2023 annual budget; while Scenario 2 corresponds to 0.5 percent.

Under Scenario 1, the budget for the 7.5 year workplan totals USD 49.5m, whereas under Scenario 2 the total budget is USD 34.6m. In both cases, for 2023 only a small budget of USD 125,000 is requested to start organizing the implementation of the new model. In 2024 the budgets under both Scenarios increases to over USD 2m as the implementation of the workplan begins. In 2025, 2026, 2027 and 2028 work will be fully underway with budgets around USD 8m in Scenario 1 and USD 6m in Scenario 2. In 2029 and 2030 the budgets in both Scenarios will reduce as the synthesis work begins.

The table below shows the annual budget for both Scenarios. The total budget as well as the budget breakdown for each year over the 7.5 year workplan is shown in Annex 1b.

Table 4. Average annual budget for the 2023 – 2030 workplan

Average annual budget in $	2023-2030	2023-2030
SPIA Objectives	Scenario 1	Scenario 2
1.1 Institutionalization of SPIA full country-level approach in original 4 countries	1,333,333	1,333,333
1.2 Scaling SPIA full country-level approach to 4 new countries	2,026,667	-
1.3 Scoping and stocktaking in 12 or 16 new countries	440,000	586,667
1.4 SPIA core support to Obj.1	581,253	417,360
1 Institutionalizing and scaling country-level data on CGIAR reach	4,381,253	2,337,360
2.1 Learning Studies	247,333	247,333
2.2 Accountability Studies	268,000	268,000
2.3 Proof of Concept Studies	177,600	177,600
2.4 Causal IA related to country studies	134,000	268,000
2.5 SPIA core support to Obj.2	376,213	376,213
2 Expanding and deepening evidence of causal impacts of CGIAR research	1,203,147	1,337,147
3.1 Strengthening the use of rigorous impact evidence	125,333	125,333
3.2 SPIA core support to Obj.3	301,893	301,893
3 Strengthening the use of rigorous impact evidence	427,227	427,227
4.1 Managing the workplan	308,933	299,600
4 Program Management	308,933	299,600
0 CGIAR Overheads	205,097	154,583
0 CGIAR Hosting Costs	73,333	54,667
0 CGIAR Overheads and Hosting Costs	278,431	209,250
GRAND TOTALS	**6,598,991**	**4,610,583**
GRAND TOTAL excluding personnel costs currently covered by IAES core budget	**6,071,657**	**4,083,250**

Credit: Nguyen Lam Tuan Anh

ANNEXES

Annex 1a: An overview of SPIA's current operational model

The 2019-2024 SPIA workplan was approved by SC7 with three main objectives to allow SPIA to deliver its mandate: 1) support CGIAR to embed the culture of impact assessment in to the system, 2) expand and deepen evidence of impact of CGIAR research investments and 3) improve and institutionalize collection of diffusion/use data of CGIAR innovations in national systems. This workplan was supported by an approved budget coming from W1 mechanisms.

The start of this workplan broadly coincided with changes in the way SPIA was operating in providing strategic advice to CGIAR on impact assessment and in generating system-level evidence of CGIAR impacts. From being a sub-group of ISPC (now ISDC), SPIA was encouraged to play a more visible advisory role and to support the culture of impact assessment in the system. However, this change had to be implemented in a very short time frame (between the approval of the workplan in November 2018 and the start of implementation in January 2019). To make SPIA operational, a combination of a new setup and the use of existing institutional arrangements in the CGIAR were used.

Initial ToRs were put in place to outline the operational model for SPIA, and to facilitate its organization and staffing. The ToRs framed the composition of SPIA as having three standing members (including the Chair) and up to three special initiative members. It was expected that the Chair would commit 50 days to SPIA, the other standing members 20 days, and the special initiative members 15 (total of 150 days/year or 0.6 FTE). The definitions on the membership and the number of days of each member, was an adaptation of what was required by ISPC members and ad-hoc practices that were adopted by SPIA when it was functioning as a sub-group of ISPC. However, having different membership definitions and time commitments may not have reflected SPIA's needs well, nor been the most efficient way to engage the panel members in leading the implementation of the workplan. With the increasing demand for advice and rigorous evidence, the implementation of the workplan brought a heavy burden on the SPIA Chair (requiring much more than the committed 50 days), and the need to request surge capacity (bringing an additional panel member and expanding the number of days of some of the current panel members).

On several occasions, individual funders expressed interest in supporting and expanding the current workplan, to help SPIA deliver its renewed mandate. However, SPIA had very limited ability to respond to such interests as lack of flexible funding mechanisms and the current operational structure of SPIA did not allow it to implement its workplan and respond to additional demands, that were increasingly coming to SPIA from different CGIAR stakeholders. This lack of flexibility restricts the delivery of the SPIA mandate.

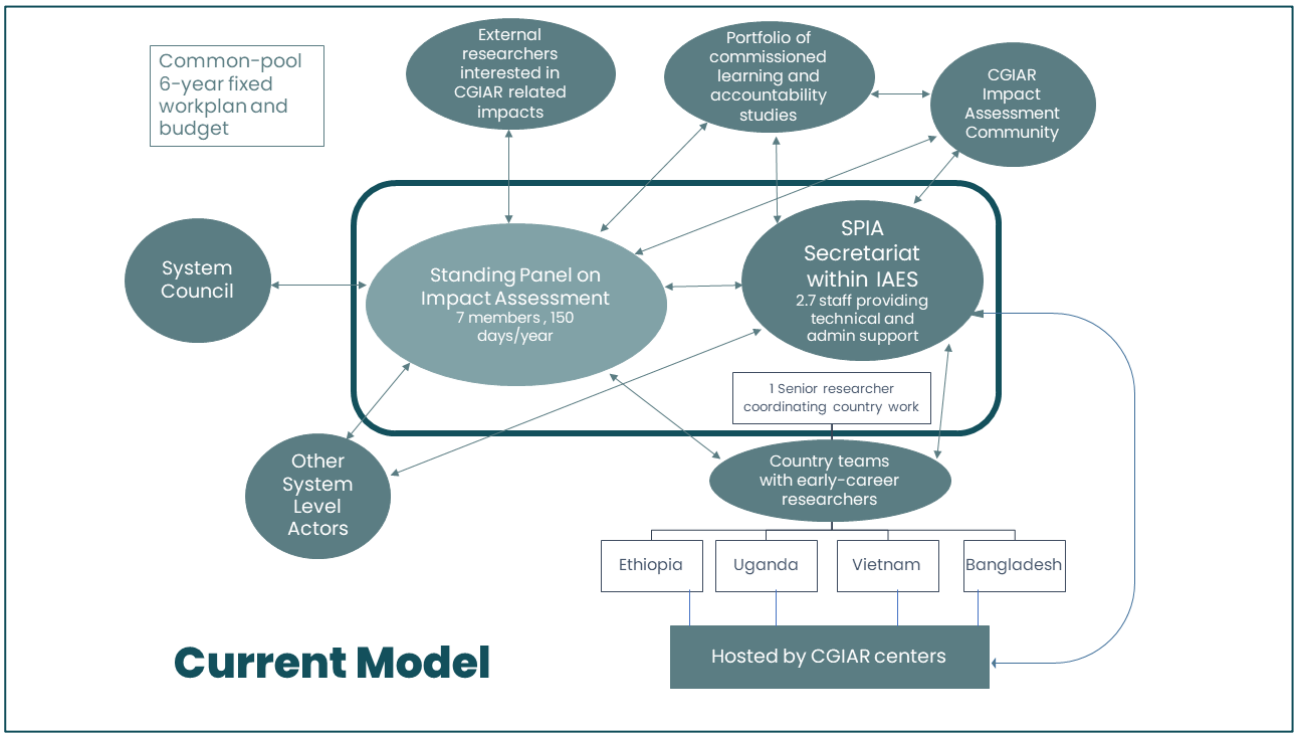
In 2019, the operational support team for SPIA also had to be quickly re-organized to respond to the imminent start of the workplan. To operationalize the support team, SPIA had to rely on some existing institutional arrangements in the CGIAR system. Part of the SPIA operational support was kept at the CGIAR Advisory Service Shared Secretariat in Rome (now Independent Advisory and Evaluation Service) including the SPIA Program Leader, the SPIA Senior Manager Programs & Administration (0.7 FTE) and the SPIA Senior Officer, which followed the tradition of the former ISPC Secretariat. However, given the renewed mandate and new objectives in its workplan, SPIA required additional technical operational support to improve and institutionalize collection of data on diffusion and use of CGIAR innovations in national data systems designed to track progress on SDGs. This team included a Senior Researcher, three researchers (one post doc) stationed in SPIA priority countries, one postdoctoral consultant expert

in remote sensing, and up to six pre-doc researchers posted in different countries where SPIA operates. This small team did not fit in the traditional Secretariat concept and was posted in CGIAR priority countries under different CGIAR centers hosting agreements. Despite being an instrumental part of the SPIA operational support, this type of arrangement did not provide enough institutional visibility to this team.

With the launch of the current workplan, SPIA started to adapt its operational model to first respond to well-known challenges (COVID pandemic), to new asks, and demands coming from the One CGIAR reform. The first step was to better integrate the different components of its widespread operational support team, by clearly defining the responsibilities of each member of the team and putting in place a variety of coordination and internal communication mechanisms. In spite of the different institutional arrangements and locations to make the team operate formally, the de facto arrangements allowed different members to contribute jointly to different components of the SPIA workplan and to monitor progress made on the workplan, facilitating the oversight of SPIA and the delivery of its mandate.

The current set up of SPIA has led to a centralized management that overloads the SPIA Chair, the panel members, the SPIA operational support and the country team lead (Figure 1). Thus, the current operational model is not sustainable, but this is a good moment for SPIA to reflect on the lessons learned and propose a new operational model to deliver its mandate, and build in flexibility for effective adaptive management.

Figure 1. Current SPIA operational model



The way SPIA operates currently has allowed for good interaction with System Council and SIMEC but has not allowed the different panel members to engage sufficiently with different CGIAR stakeholders. While SPIA pre One CGIAR reform had regular engagements with the group of DDGs and CRP directors, SPIA interactions with the broad set of CGIAR science leaders have become more fragmented. Where such interactions did occur (under the current model typically by the Chair) they have proven to be much appreciated and productive, pointing to the promise of wider engagement to fulfill the SPIA mandate.

The current funding model for SPIA, that focuses only on a common-pool funding mechanism, has signaled an increasing ownership of the system in investing in rigorous evidence of the reach and impacts of CGIAR research. However, the lack of flexibility in the funding modality has not allowed SPIA to react to new asks, even when clearly within the mandate and even when additional funding may be available.

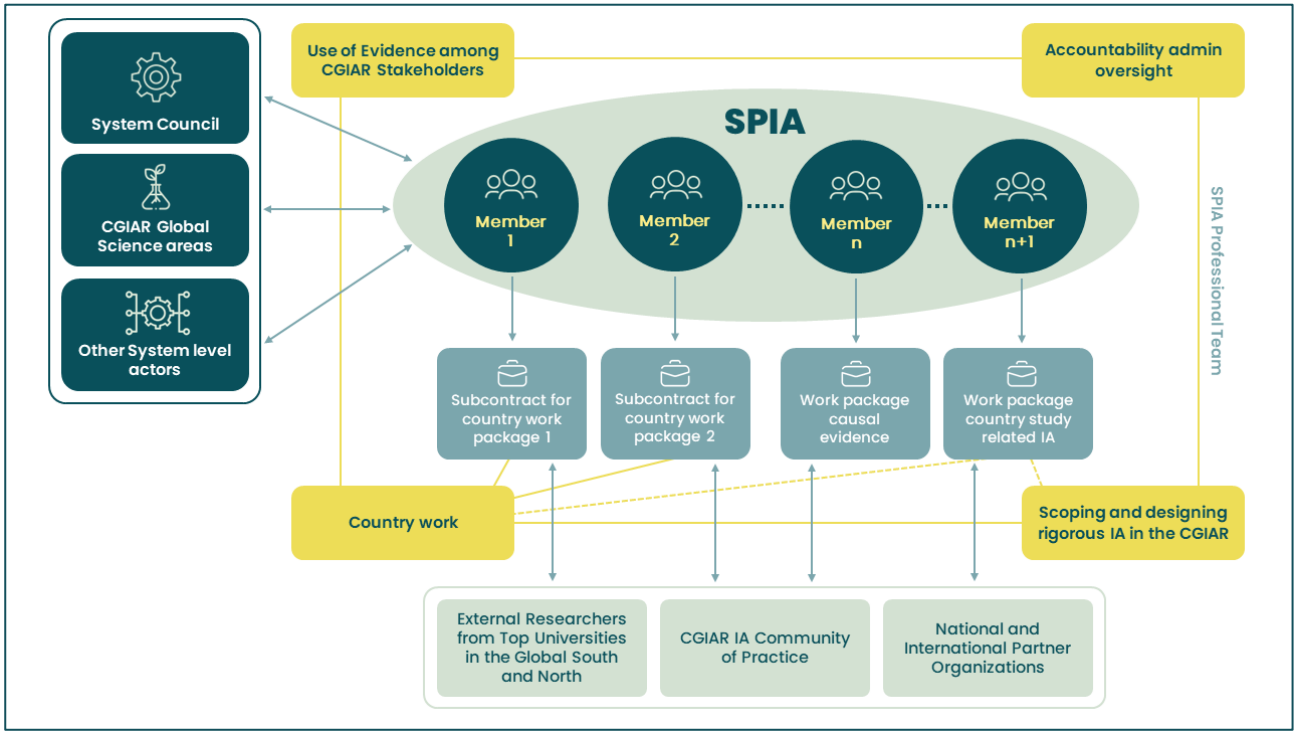
Annex 1.b: SPIA's new operational model and budget

In response to the new asks to SPIA coming from CGIAR funders and other stakeholders, and reflecting on the strengths and challenges of the current operational model, SPIA proposes a new operational model.

The revised SPIA ToRs keeps its mandate to (i) Expand and deepen evidence of the reach and impact of CGIAR research investments on the five impact areas, and (ii) Support CGIAR's strong commitment to embed impact assessment into the System. To deliver its mandate, SPIA has organized the new workplan around three pillars: 1) country studies of CGIAR reach at a system level, 2) causal impact assessments, and 3) use of rigorous evidence.

As described in Annex 1a, the current operational model has generated several strains that makes it unsustainable. The new operational model (Figure 2) is proposed to address the challenges identified in the current model while keeping the formal or de facto procedures that have worked well in the current operations of SPIA.

Figure 2. The SPIA new operational model



In particular, to keep the independence and efficiency principles at heart of the new model, SPIA will keep a centralized oversight of the entire workplan and a direct engagement with CGIAR governance, management and research leadership. SPIA will continue to use several mechanisms to reach out to

these stakeholders and will continue to be accountable to System Council. At the same time, for the implementation of the rigorous evidence generation SPIA will shift to more decentralization through sub-contracting arrangements.

The new asks to SPIA and the larger scale of operations of SPIA will require an empowered panel with panel members having a more prominent leading role of different components of the workplan. As described in Figure 2, some panel members will lead consortia of the country work; other panel members will lead the causal evidence generation while another panel member will lead the use of evidence component. Decisions on budget allocation and strategies to engage with System Council and other CGIAR stakeholders will be made by the entire panel convened by the Chair, on a consensus basis. Given the decentralized nature of most of the implementation of the new workplan, monthly panel meetings are envisioned to take periodically stock on progress made in the workplan, and to discuss potential adjustments to guarantee the delivery of the different evidence and advisory outputs.

In the new model, a Professional team will provide the technical and operational support to SPIA to implement its workplan and deliver its mandate. A small team of social scientists will support the scientific backstopping to the implementation of the workplan, while a small operational support team, will facilitate the oversight and management of SPIA operations. The SPIA Professional team will cover four functional responsibilities (Figure 2) and will primarily be posted in the Global South under hosting agreements with the CGIAR.

The support to country studies will be supervised directly by SPIA and will have a Principal Scientist with overall managerial responsibility of the work program. This team will bring together a group of advisors to support the country work consortia on cross-cutting specialized methodological issues such as bioinformatics, common data collection tools and methods.

The support to the scoping and design of causal impact studies will be supervised by a SPIA member and will have a Principal Scientist and a Postdoctoral researcher providing hands-on technical assistance to CGIAR researchers and partners. This team will facilitate a systematic scoping of potential "learning" and "accountability" studies and the potential link of CGIAR researchers with internal and external IA experts to design rigorous impact assessments.

While use-of-evidence engagements will be built into the subcontracts with institutions and PIs responsible for the generation of rigorous evidence in the workplan, SPIA requires a dedicated small team to follow up with study teams after completion of the projects and to liaise with science leaders, researchers and managers in the CGIAR on several activities that will promote the use of evidence. The SPIA Senior Officer with the support of required consultants will assist SPIA in delivering this functional responsibility.

The Project Management Unit (PMU) will be responsible to provide operational support to SPIA on accountability, administrative oversight and on a smooth functioning of the panel to deliver its mandate. The PMU is an integral part of the SPIA Professional Team and will be actively engaged in optimizing coordination and internal communication mechanisms to improve the efficiency in the implementation of the SPIA workplan. The PMU will be led by a Senior Manager and will have one or two other administrative/finance officers.

Finally, as described in Figure 2, SPIA will continue working collaboratively with the CGIAR impact assessment Community of Practice, with national and international partner organizations, and with a wide network of academic researchers from both the Global South and North.

SPIA 2023-2030 budget

Table 5. Average annual budget for the 2023 – 2030 workplan

Average annual budget in $ SPIA Objectives	2023-2030 Scenario 1	2023-2030 Scenario 2
1.1 Institutionalization of SPIA full country-level approach in original 4 countries	1,333,333	1,333,333
1.2 Scaling SPIA full country-level approach to 4 new countries	2,026,667	-
1.3 Scoping and stocktaking in 12 or 16 new countries	440,000	586,667
1.4 SPIA core support to Obj.1	581,253	417,360
1 Institutionalizing and scaling country-level data on CGIAR reach	4,381,253	2,337,360
2.1 Learning Studies	247,333	247,333
2.2 Accountability Studies	268,000	268,000
2.3 Proof of Concept Studies	177,600	177,600
2.4 Causal IA related to country studies	134,000	268,000
2.5 SPIA core support to Obj.2	376,213	376,213
2 Expanding and deepening evidence of causal impacts of CGIAR research	1,203,147	1,337,147
3.1 Strengthening the use of rigorous impact evidence	125,333	125,333
3.2 SPIA core support to Obj.3	301,893	301,893
3 Strengthening the use of rigorous impact evidence	427,227	427,227
4.1 Managing the workplan	308,933	299,600
4 Program Management	308,933	299,600
0 CGIAR Overheads	205,097	154,583
0 CGIAR Hosting Costs	73,333	54,667
0 CGIAR Overheads and Hosting Costs	278,431	209,250
GRAND TOTALS	**6,598,991**	**4,610,583**

Table 6. Total budget for the 2023 – 2030 workplan

Total Budget in $ SPIA Objectives	2023-2030 Scenario 1	2023-2030 Scenario 2
1.1 Institutionalization of SPIA full country-level approach in original 4 countries	10,000,000	10,000,000
1.2 Scaling SPIA full country-level approach to 4 new countries	15,200,000	-
1.3 Scoping and stocktaking in 12 or 16 new countries	3,300,000	4,400,000
1.4 SPIA core support to Obj.1	4,359,400	3,130,200
1 Institutionalizing and scaling country-level data on CGIAR reach	32,859,400	17,530,200
2.1 Learning Studies	1,855,000	1,855,000
2.2 Accountability Studies	2,010,000	2,010,000
2.3 Proof of Concept Studies	1,332,000	1,332,000
2.4 Causal IA related to country studies	1,005,000	2,010,000
2.5 SPIA core support to Obj.2	2,821,600	2,821,600
2 Expanding and deepening evidence of causal impacts of CGIAR research	9,023,600	10,028,600
3.1 Strengthening the use of rigorous impact evidence	940,000	940,000
3.2 SPIA core support to Obj.3	2,264,200	2,264,200
3 Strengthening the use of rigorous impact evidence	3,204,200	3,204,200
4.1 Managing the workplan	2,317,000	2,247,000
4 Program Management	2,317,000	2,247,000
0 CGIAR Overheads	1,538,230	1,159,375
0 CGIAR Hosting Costs	550,000	410,000
0 CGIAR Overheads and Hosting Costs	2,088,230	1,569,375
GRAND TOTALS	**49,492,430**	**34,579,375**

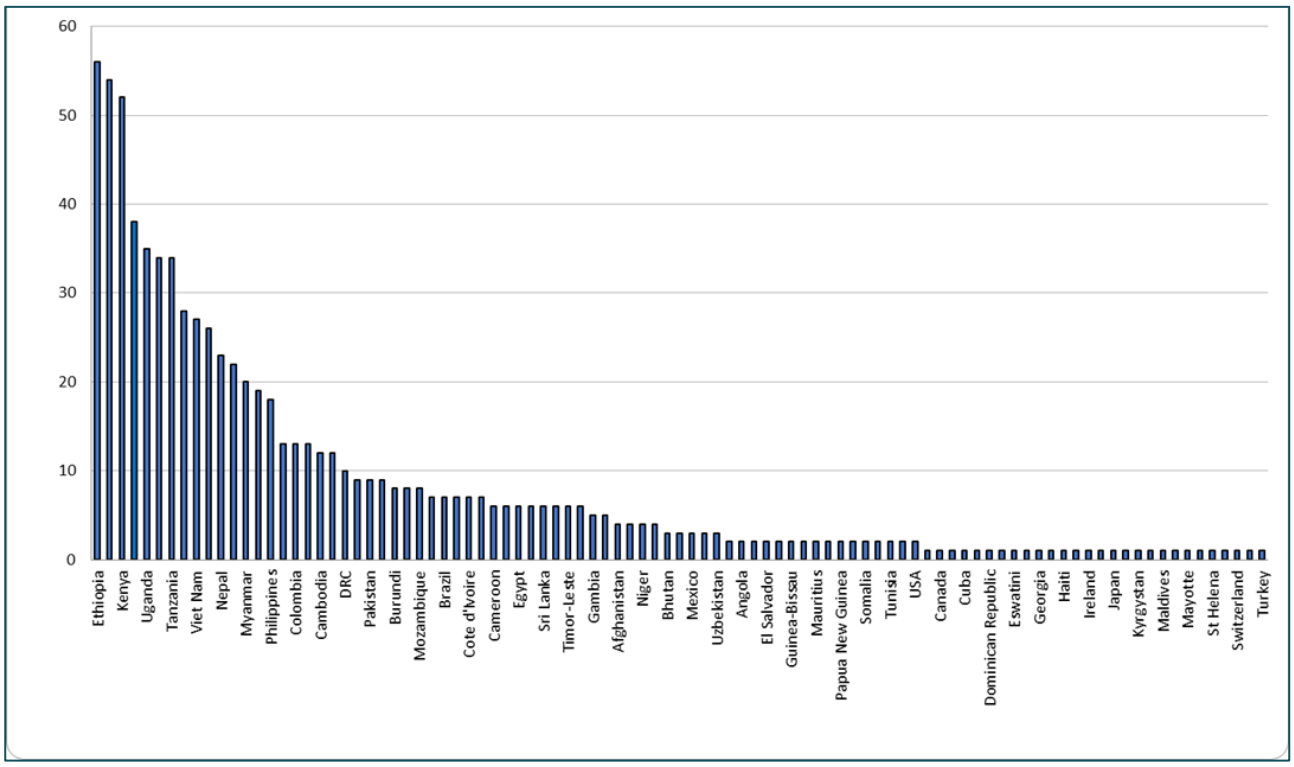
Table 7. SPIA 2023 – 2030 budget per year

SPIA Objectives / Budget in $	Add-on Budget 2023	Budget 2024 Scenario 1	Budget 2024 Scenario 2	Budget 2025 Scenario 1	Budget 2025 Scenario 2	Budget 2026 Scenario 1	Budget 2026 Scenario 2	Budget 2027 Scenario 1	Budget 2027 Scenario 2	Budget 2028 Scenario 1	Budget 2028 Scenario 2	Budget 2029 Scenario 1	Budget 2029 Scenario 2	Budget 2030 Scenario 1	Budget 2030 Scenario 2
1.1 Institutionalization of SPIA full country-level approach in original 4 countries	-	833,332	833,332	1,666,668	1,666,668	1,666,668	1,666,668	1,666,668	1,666,668	1,666,668	1,666,668	1,666,668	1,666,668	833,328	833,328
1.2 Scaling SPIA full country-level approach to 4 new countries	-	-	-	2,533,336		2,533,332		2,533,332		2,533,332		2,533,332		2,533,336	
1.3 Scoping and stocktaking in 12 or 16 new countries	-	-	-	1,100,000	1,100,000	1,100,000	1,100,000	550,000	1,100,000	550,000	1,100,000				
1.4 SPIA core support to Obj.1	-	383,800	208,200	662,600	487,000	662,600	487,000	662,600	487,000	662,600	487,000	662,600	487,000	662,600	487,000
1 Institutionalizing and scaling country-level data on CGIAR reach	-	1,217,132	1,041,532	5,962,604	3,253,668	5,962,600	3,253,668	5,412,600	3,253,668	5,412,600	3,253,668	4,862,600	2,153,668	4,029,264	1,320,328
2.1 Learning Studies	-	-	-	355,000	355,000	660,000	660,000	470,000	470,000	270,000	270,000	95,000	95,000	5,000	5,000
2.2 Accountability Studies	-	-	-	105,000	105,000	445,000	445,000	735,000	735,000	545,000	545,000	175,000	175,000	5,000	5,000
2.3 Proof of Concept Studies	-	-	-	5,000	5,000	373,000	373,000	388,000	388,000	368,000	368,000	193,000	193,000	5,000	5,000
2.4 Causal IA related to country studies	-	-	-	52,500	105,000	222,500	445,000	367,500	735,000	272,500	545,000	87,500	175,000	2,500	5,000
2.5 SPIA core support to Obj.2	-	364,000	364,000	409,600	409,600	409,600	409,600	409,600	409,600	409,600	409,600	409,600	409,600	409,600	409,600
2 Expanding and deepening evidence of causal impacts of CGIAR research	-	364,000	364,000	927,100	979,600	2,110,100	2,332,600	2,370,100	2,737,600	1,865,100	2,137,600	960,100	1,047,600	427,100	429,600
3.1 Strengthening the use of rigorous impact evidence	-	50,000	50,000	90,000	90,000	90,000	90,000	190,000	190,000	90,000	90,000	90,000	90,000	340,000	340,000
3.2 SPIA core support to Obj.3	-	220,000	220,000	340,700	340,700	340,700	340,700	340,700	340,700	340,700	340,700	340,700	340,700	340,700	340,700
3 Strengthening the use of rigorous impact evidence	-	270,000	270,000	430,700	430,700	430,700	430,700	530,700	530,700	430,700	430,700	430,700	430,700	680,700	680,700
4.1 Managing the workplan	125,000	321,000	311,000	321,000	311,000	321,000	311,000	356,000	346,000	321,000	311,000	321,000	311,000	356,000	346,000
4 Program Management	125,000	321,000	311,000	321,000	311,000	321,000	311,000	356,000	346,000	321,000	311,000	321,000	311,000	356,000	346,000
0 CGIAR Overheads															
0 CGIAR Hosting Costs	-	70,000	50,000	80,000	60,000	80,000	60,000	80,000	60,000	80,000	60,000	80,000	60,000	80,000	60,000
0 CGIAR Overheads and Hosting Costs	-	70,000	50,000	80,000	60,000	80,000	60,000	80,000	60,000	80,000	60,000	80,000	60,000	80,000	60,000
GRAND TOTALS	**125,000**	**2,242,132**	**2,036,532**	**7,721,404**	**5,034,968**	**8,904,400**	**6,387,968**	**8,749,400**	**6,927,968**	**8,109,400**	**6,192,968**	**6,654,400**	**4,002,968**	**5,573,064**	**2,836,628**

Annex 2: Prioritization based on prior reports of CGIAR results (i.e., backward-looking)

The chart below shows the extent of geographical concentration in CGIAR results, proxied by the number of outcome-impact case reports that were submitted in total between 2017 and 2020. This zoomed-out view supports the rationale of the SPIA country studies – that by carefully studying a relatively small number of high-priority countries, one can account for a majority of CGIAR research results.

Figure 3. Outcome-Impact Case-Reports (OICRs) 2017-2020, by country



NOTE: x-axis only list names of a subset of countries for illustration purposes. For the full list of countries with highest number of OICRs, see map and table below.

Figure 4. Outcome-Impact Case Reports

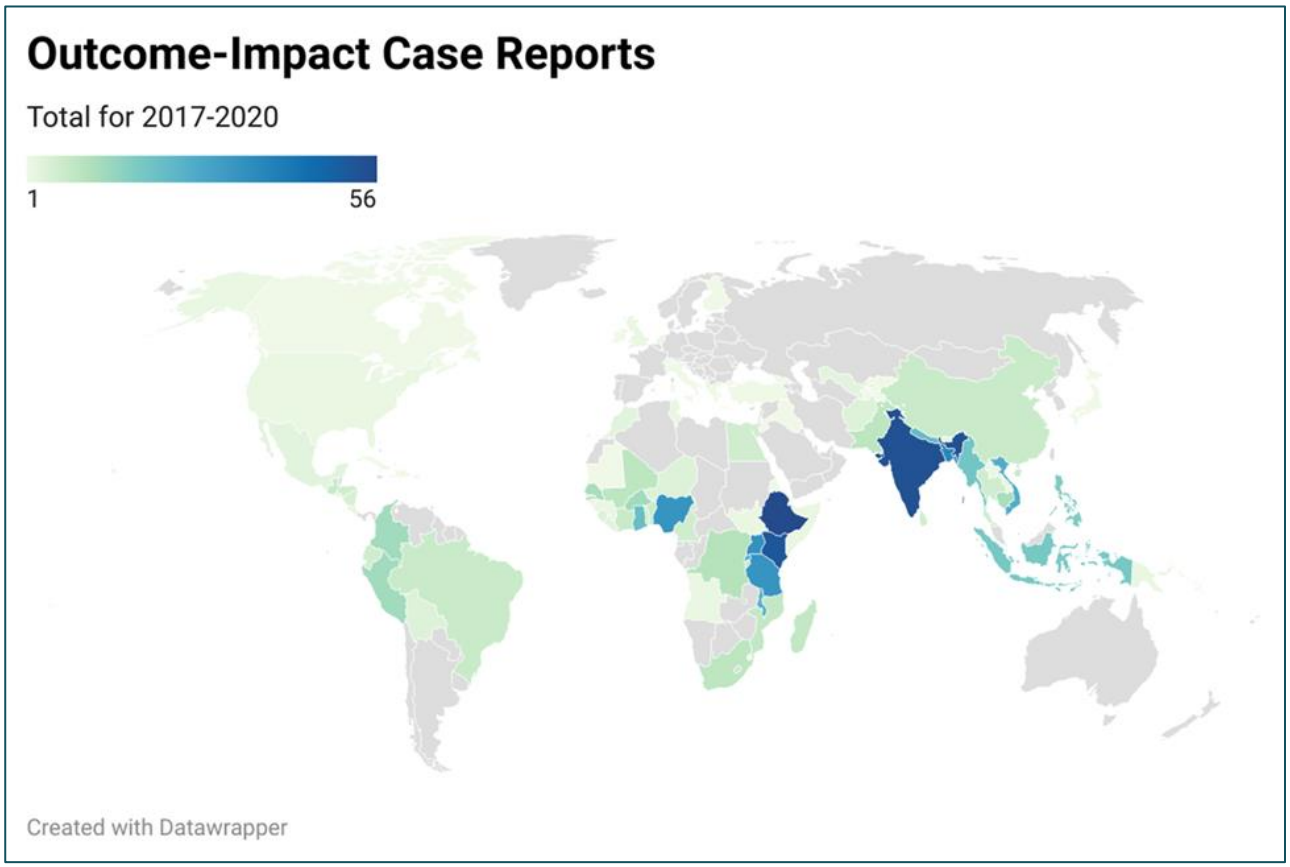
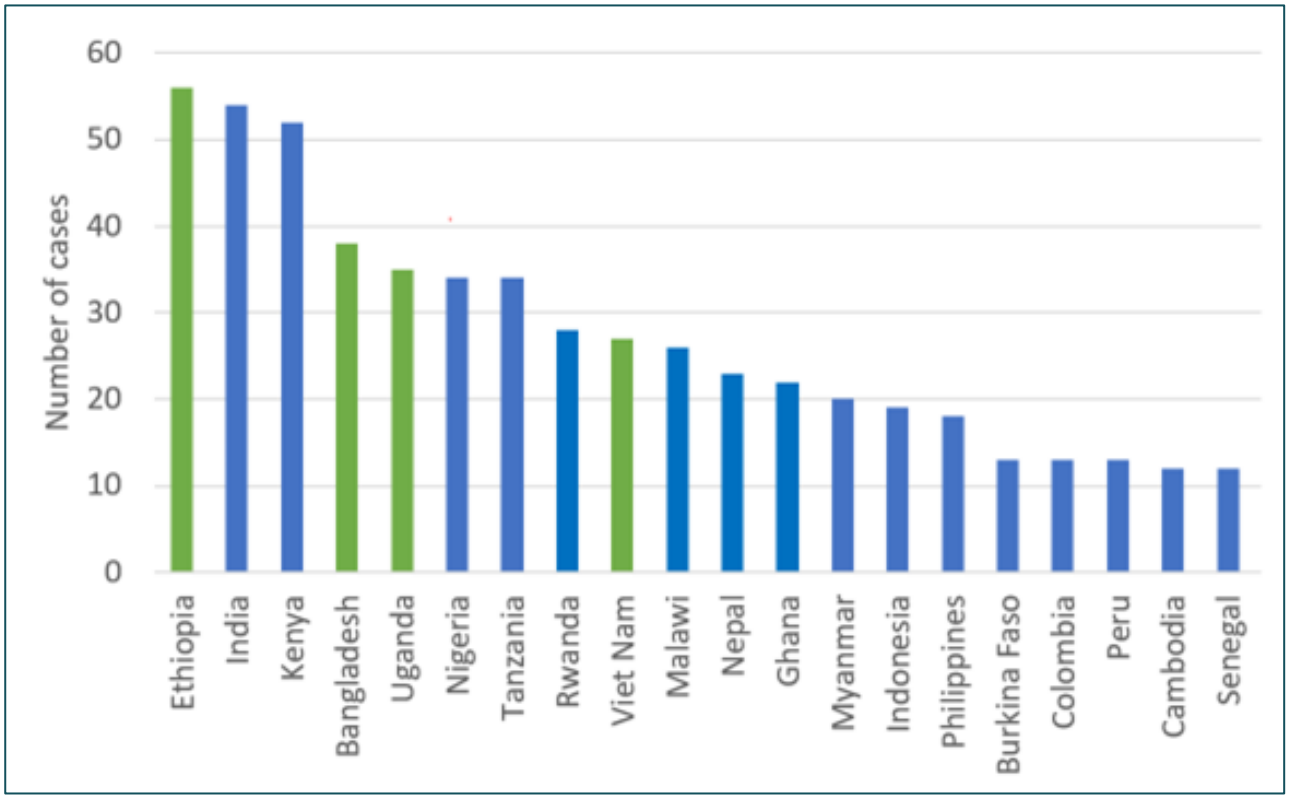


Figure 5. Outcome-Impact Case-Reports (OICRs) 2017-2020, by country

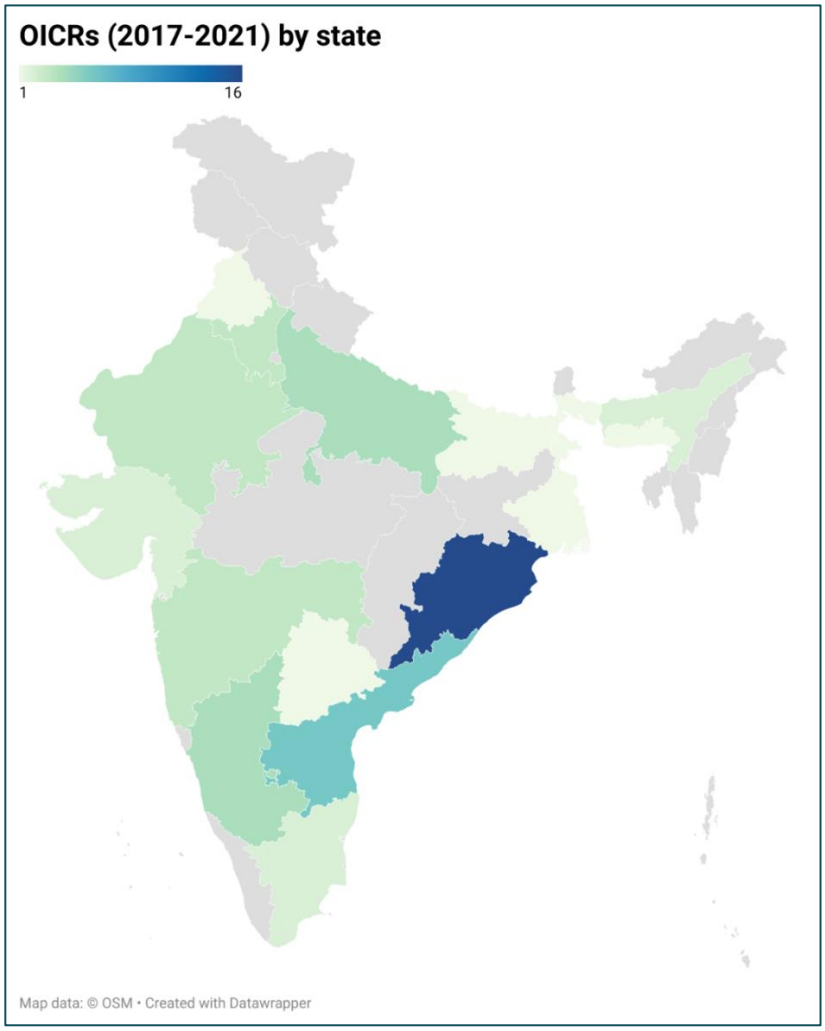


Given the vastness of the Indian subcontinent, both geographically and in terms of population, the preferred approach is to prioritize within a small cluster of states in India. Backward-looking, Odisha stands out in the recent years, but there are other historical clusters in the Indo-Gangetic Plains and in Southern India.

Table 8. OICRs by Indian States

State	OICRs (2017-2021)
Odisha	16
Andra Pradesh	6
Karnataka	4
Uttar Pradesh	4
Rajasthan	3
Maharashtra	3
Haryana	3
Assam	2
Gujarat	2
Tamil Nadu	2
West Bengal	1
Meghalaya	1
Bihar	1
Punjab	1
Telangana	1

Figure 6. OICRs by Indian States



Annex 3: Prioritization based on number of CGIAR initiatives that each country is featured in (i.e., forward-looking)

The top seven countries are unchanged from Annex 2. Looking down the list somewhat for the top-ranked countries in LAC and MENA gives Colombia and Egypt respectively. Colombia and Peru are of equal importance by these measures, with Colombia given higher weight given its larger population.

Table 9. Country prioritization

Case country	Number of cases	Initiatives featuring	Rank (OICRs)	Rank (Initiatives)	Comments
Kenya	52	20	3	1	
Ethiopia	56	16	1	2	Existing SPIA focus
India	54	14	2	3	**Priority – S Asia**
Bangladesh	38	13	4	4	Existing SPIA focus
Nigeria	34	11	6	5	**Priority – W Africa**
Uganda	35	9	5	6	Existing SPIA focus
Tanzania	34	9	6	6	
Viet Nam	27	9	9	6	Existing SPIA focus
Ghana	22	9	12	6	
Colombia	13	9	17	6	**Priority – LAC**
Peru	13	9	17	6	
Zambia	15	8	16	12	
Malawi	26	7	10	13	
Philippines	18	7	15	13	
Senegal	12	7	20	13	
Zimbabwe	7	7	29	13	
Rwanda	28	6	8	17	
Nepal	23	6	11	17	
Guatemala	7	6	29	17	
Mali	9	5	23	20	
Cote d'Ivoire	7	5	29	20	
Egypt	6	5	35	20	**Priority – MENA**
Cambodia	12	4	20	25	
Mozambique	8	4	26	25	
DRC	10	3	22	27	
South Africa	9	3	23	27	
Myanmar	20	2	13	30	
Burkina Faso	13	2	17	30	
Pakistan	9	2	23	30	
Benin	7	2	29	30	
Indonesia	19	1	14	37	
Madagascar	8	1	26	37	
China	7	1	29	37	
Burundi	8	0	26	N/A	
Brazil	7	0	29	N/A	

Figure 7. Number of CGIAR initiatives by country

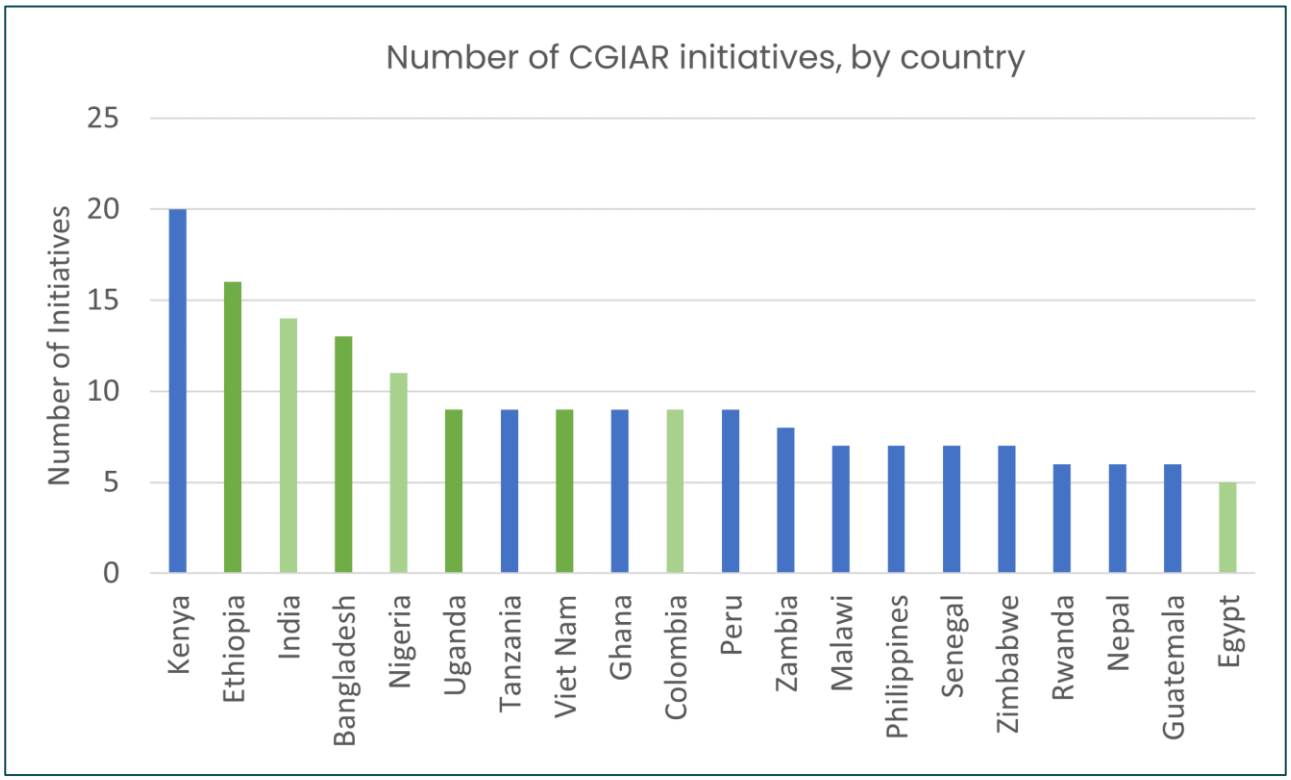
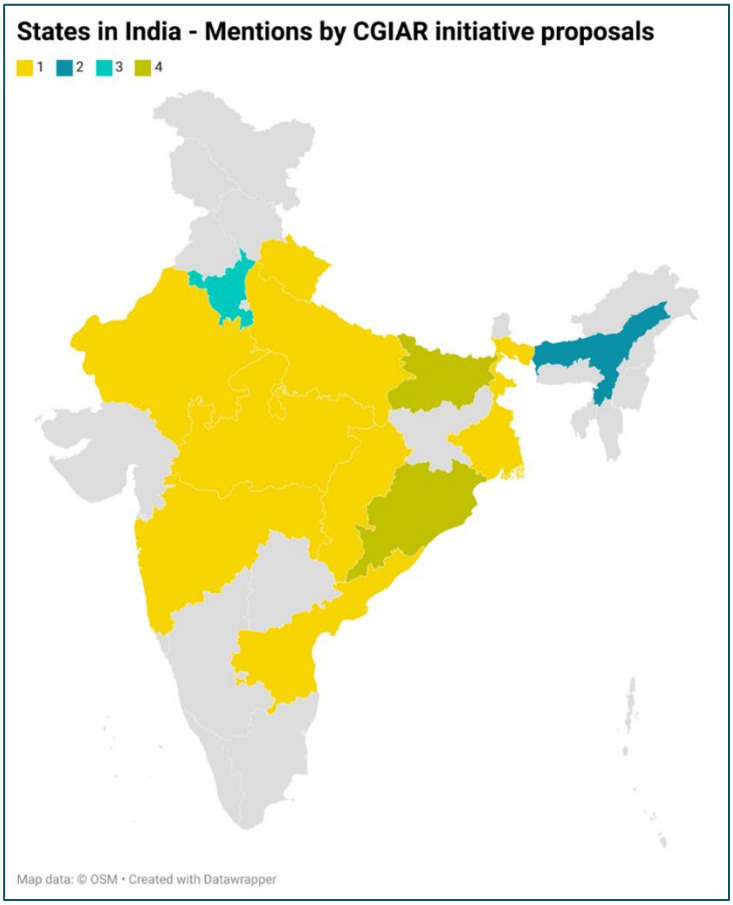


Table 10. Initiatives featured in Indian States

Indian State	Initiatives featured in
Bihar	4
Odisha	4
Haryana	3
Assam	2
Andhra Pradesh	1
Chhattisgarh	1
Madhya Pradesh	1
Maharashtra	1
Rajasthan	1
Uttar Pradesh	1
Uttarakhand	1
West Bengal	1

Figure 8. Initiatives featured in Indian States



Annex 4: A network of impact assessment research

One CGIAR aims to have ambitious impacts at scale across a range of impact areas. CGIAR innovations target multiple global challenges however realizing their potential requires addressing a range of last-mile delivery issues using the best tools of impact assessment research grounded in local realities. The modern toolkit developed for causal impact studies is ideally suited to provide information to help policy and decision makers inside and outside CGIAR to better understand real-world constraints to scaling and to co-design, fund and implement effective scaling strategies.

Generating the evidence base to inform these types of decisions will require significantly increased investment in impact assessment. Rapidly increasing the number of high-quality, causal impact studies will also require increasing the number of IA researchers working on CGIAR-related issues.[2] Key to achieving this will be better connecting the CGIAR to impact assessment expertise in advanced research institutes (ARIs), in particular to the growing community of early-career IA experts based in the Global South. While availability of funding is an important way to attract top researchers, putting together a strong proposal requires a familiarity with CGIAR that is relatively uncommon among ARI IA specialists, even those in the Global South.

As part of its mandate, SPIA works to build linkages between CGIAR and external impact assessment specialists, including matchmaking between IA experts in ARIs and CGIAR to jointly conduct causal impact studies. The initial results are promising, however the efforts need to be scaled up. To implement this, SPIA proposes to combine funding for impact studies with an effort to consolidate and strengthen a network of IA researchers in ARIs, CGIAR centers and NARS focused on CGIAR IA priorities. The core of the network will be strong, productive research partnerships in which CG and external IA experts jointly identify topics of mutual interest, develop proposals, implement studies and disseminate results. It will be achieved by raising awareness of CGIAR among faculty and recent graduates of top ARI programs and by facilitating substantive and sustained interactions between external IA specialists and researchers in CGIAR. The approach builds on the lessons from SPIA's matchmaking efforts and complements ongoing and planned investments in data collection.[3]

The goal of the network of IA research will be to expand the evidence base on the impacts of CGIAR research by increasing the number of high-quality IA researchers and research teams working on CGIAR priorities and topics. This network is expected to generate:

- ***Impact evidence*** – By funding major causal impact assessments as well as pilot studies and proposal development grants through competitive processes
- ***A network of IA researchers*** from CGIAR, NARS and ARIs, especially early-career researchers in the Global South, who know the CGIAR and work on CGIAR priority issues

To consolidate and make it operational the network SPIA proposes the following activities:

1. ***Support design and implementation of causal impact studies of CGIAR research***

[2] This could include increasing capacity inside CGIAR however this has been an ongoing challenge as described by Barrett et al 2009

[3] For example, SPIA's country work

- During year 1, identify priority topics and geographies for impact assessments. Prioritization can be refreshed in subsequent years.
- By the end of year 1, issue an initial RFP for impact assessments requiring collaboration between CGIAR and its partners and external researchers. An early RFP will take advantage of existing or nascent partnerships to begin generating impact evidence while reserving funds for future RFPs that would incentivize and build on the network. Funding would be available for proposal development activities, pilot studies and full IAs, for both learning and accountability studies.
- Manage RFP process using standard SPIA process (external reviews, technical support to teams).

2. Consolidate and strengthen the network of ARI, CGIAR and NARS researchers working collaboratively on causal impact assessment of CGIAR-related research

- Support relationship building between CGIAR and external IA experts through a range of mechanisms that enable selected researchers to get to know each other, identify common research interests, design joint studies and develop joint proposals. Recognizing that IA specialists in CGIAR, ARIs in the north and ARIs in the south face very different institutional arrangements and professional incentives, the project will need to maintain flexibility to design exchange programs that are effective in terms of the project objectives and attractive to the different types of researchers that the network seeks to include.
- Hold regular events, including a major conference, to share progress, results and lessons. While focusing on researchers involved in project-funded studies and exchanges, the events would be open to a wider range of participants interested in becoming involved in the network.
- Establish and facilitate an open network of CGIAR researchers, established IA researchers in ARIs, and recently trained researchers from and/or working in the Global South. The network will undertake a basic set of activities designed to help members share information and learn about each other at individual and institutional level.

Standing
Panel on
Impact
Assessment