



Advisory Services



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May 2020

Fact Sheet 1

THE FUNCTIONS

At this time of transformational change, CGIAR requires evidence-based and independent advice more than ever. CGIAR's advisory services support the pathway towards One CGIAR. CGIAR advisory services include the activities of the Independent Science for Development Council (ISDC), the Standing Panel on Impact Assessment (SPIA), and the external evaluation function. The CGIAR Advisory Services Shared Secretariat (CAS Secretariat) coordinates and advances these services.

INDEPENDENT SCIENCE FOR DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

ISDC provides guidance for One CGIAR. Current ISDC support to One CGIAR comprises the following key activities.

- Active participation of the ISDC chair and members as invited guests in the ongoing deliberations of the Transition Consultation Forum (TCF) and multiple Transition Advisory Groups (TAGs). The TCF has requested ISDC to facilitate participation of additional, diverse experts in cases where the TCF or one of its TAGs has articulated a capability or knowledge gap, and for the chair to take on special, additional roles.

- Delivery of a foresight synthesis that draws on past foresight studies to define different scenarios for agri-food systems evolution over the next 10 to 25 years, and CGIAR's potential positioning in these. In May 2020, the foresight synthesis will be analyzed through trade-off research in preparation for sharing at the 10th meeting of System Council, as well as through Research TAG 2 and with science leaders.

STANDING PANEL ON IMPACT ASSESSMENT

SPIA offers CGIAR rigorous, strategic advice on efficient and effective impact assessment methods and practices and on innovative ways to improve knowledge and capacity on how research contributes to development outcomes. SPIA expands and deepens evidence of impact of CGIAR research investments and supports CGIAR's strong commitment to embed a culture of impact assessment in the System.

In support of the One CGIAR reform, SPIA therefore aims to continue to provide an empirical evidence base that offers confidence regarding the overall impact of investments in the system through accountability studies. Furthermore, SPIA tests specific parts of the CGIAR theory of change to understand which steps in

the causal pathway may prevent potential innovations from achieving impact at scale through learning studies. SPIA will make the lessons from these learning studies—where they are relevant for the One CGIAR priority areas—available to stakeholders in the system including via Research TAG 2, so lessons learned can be applied to the One CGIAR reform.

EVALUATION FUNCTION

The independent evaluation function of CGIAR is delivered through the CAS Secretariat (CAS/Evaluation).

In 2020, CAS/Evaluation is conducting reviews of the 12 CGIAR Research Programs (CRPs). The plan—in accordance with the needs expressed by System Council through its Strategic Impact, Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (SIMEC)—is to conduct reviews rapidly and with the production of top-level findings. As such, on an individual CRP-basis, and as their primary objective, the reviews support the System to fulfil accountability requirements to the Funders.

The first three CRP reviews include WHEAT, Grain Legumes and Dryland Cereals (GLDC), and Agriculture for Nutrition and Health (A4NH). They will be completed by late June 2020. The subsequent nine reviews will conclude by year end (Platforms are out of scope in 2020.)

In support of One CGIAR, any emerging cross-cutting recommendations from the reviews will be shared when relevant through the CAS Secretariat Director's invited guest role in the Cross-cutting Communication and Change Management TAG 1 and the ISDC Chair's role in Research TAG 2. After the reviews are completed in late 2020, CAS/Evaluation will feed system-wide and/or system-level observations generated through these reviews into 2021 research modality design and specific Project theories of change development.



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