

Extract from

GUIDANCE for Section 6: Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Impact Assessment (MELIA)

Introduction

The MELIA section of the Proposal template consists of:

1. Results framework – table
2. MELIA Plan – 500-word narrative
3. Planned MELIA studies and activities – table

The MELIA section of the Proposal template will be assessed against [ISDC Quality of Research for Development \(QoR4D\) criteria 16 and 17](#), namely:

QoR4D criteria #	Criteria for proposal assessment	QoR4D Elements
16	Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan for the Initiative is clearly defined, with flexibility to adapt. M&E plan supports effective management and learning, including baseline data collection, and evaluative and review processes corresponding to stage-gates and course-correction decisions. M&E occurs during the life of Initiative and is used proactively to reflect on and adapt the Theory of Change, where appropriate.	Credibility, Effectiveness, Legitimacy
17	Well-defined plan for Initiative-level evaluation and impact assessment based on expected end-of-Initiative outcomes and impacts. Links between the impact assessment plan and indicators in the Theory of Change are clear	Effectiveness, Relevance

Narrative for Impact Assessment research plans

- Provide a plan for Initiative-level impact assessment based on expected End-of-Initiative outcomes, and projected future impact, with clear links to the Initiative and Work Package ToCs. This will need to go beyond documenting reach.
- Identify learning questions around key assumptions underlying the ToC that will be tested through causal impact assessment research during the 3-year cycle. As per the PRMF, it is expected that most Initiatives will be able to, and benefit from, incorporating such research.
 - These learning studies should be part of the overall Initiative research portfolio to provide evidence in support of the ToC or contribute to the improvement of the ToC. Explain how the results and learnings of these studies can lead to better and clearly evidenced long-term (10+ years) impacts across the relevant Impact Areas, including through adjustments of the innovation and scaling strategies to achieve targeted outcomes and impacts.

- Identify specific questions and related outcome indicators that can be answered in the 3-year timeframe, and describe longer-term learning from the proposed studies.
 - Describe the methodological approaches that will be used to provide rigorous answers for each of the identified learning questions (experimental or non-experimental quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods) as precisely as possible. Describe data sources and measurement approaches for key outcomes. Motivate the choice of methods, metrics and scale based on the research questions, the impact pathways, the type and the stage of the research, and the activities in the Initiative.
 - Describe the team to conduct the IA research, including partnership with CGIAR or non-CGIAR IA experts
- Describe plans for tracing activities and policy advice aimed at improving the scaling (readiness) of innovations and innovation packages, to lay the groundwork for, and use as input into the design of potential long-term, large-scale impact studies.
 - Plans for agreeing with scaling partners on the monitoring/data collection activities to document where and how CGIAR innovations are used at scale, and by whom. Relevant for Initiatives that actively invest with partners in scaling of innovation.
 - Describe how, when and by whom policy advising activities will be documented and plans to trace policy influence. Relevant for Initiatives with such activities.
 - Although the timeframe for these activities could be 10-year or more, the IA plan should explain plans to start tracing scaling activities and policy advice from the start of the initiative.