CGIAR STANDING PANEL ON IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The SPIA Approach to Use of Evidence

Author: Swetha Ramachandran

June 2026

Correct citation: Ramachandran, S. 2026. *The SPIA Approach to Use of Evidence*. Rome: CGIAR Independent Advisory and Evaluation Service (IAES)

Cover image: Shutterstock

The SPIA Approach to Use of Evidence

June 2026

Contents

Table of Acronyms

AR4D	Agricultural Research for Development
EMD	CGIAR's Executive Managing Director
GST	Global Science Team
IAFP	Impact Assessment Focal Points
MELIAF Grant	Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning, Impact Assessment and Foresight Grant
PCU	Project Coordination Unit
PPT	Portfolio Performance Team
CC	CGIAR Council (formerly the System Council)
SIMEC	Strategic Impact, Monitoring and Evaluation Committee
SO	System Organization
SPIA	Standing Panel on Impact Assessment

Introduction

SPIA's mandate, as an advisory body for the CGIAR Council (formerly System Council), focuses on expanding and deepening evidence of CGIAR research results across its five impact areas while fostering a culture of impact assessment within CGIAR. This mandate is distinctive in that SPIA generates evidence of reach and impacts of CGIAR, which is comprised of a set of Agricultural Research for Development (AR4D) centers and programs, that are themselves portfolios of research and development programs and projects (SPIA 2020). SPIA achieves its mandate through its workplan, which consists of three interrelated pillars:

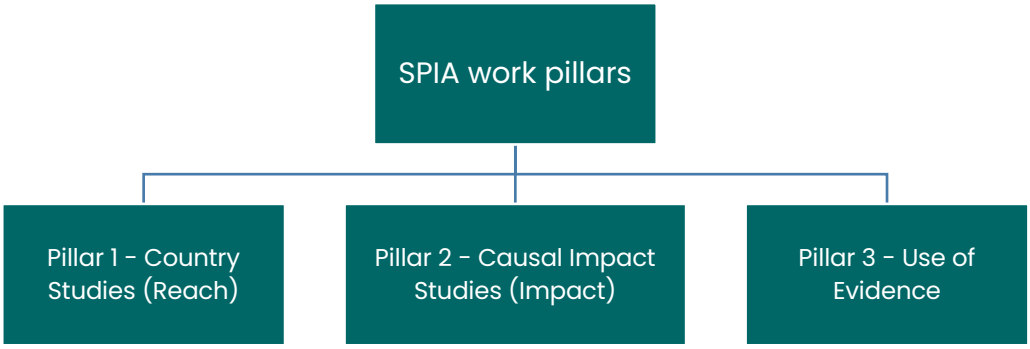

Figure 1. SPIA's work pillars

Pillar 1: Country Studies document the reach of CGIAR innovations at the country level, building a cross-country evidence base.

Pillar 2: Causal Impact Studies establish whether and to what extent CGIAR innovations produce measurable impacts through accountability studies (documenting long-term impacts) and learning studies (focused on innovations not yet widely adopted but have evidence of substantial benefits).

Pillar 3: Use of Evidence ensures that the findings generated through Pillars 1 and 2 are translated, synthesized, disseminated, and actively used to inform decision-making within CGIAR.

Together, these pillars serve a crucial function: Pillars 1 and 2 generate independent, rigorous, ex-post evidence on the reach and impacts of CGIAR innovations in various countries, while Pillar 3 creates the pathways through which this evidence actively informs priority-setting, strategic planning, learning and accountability across the CGIAR.

This document serves as a guiding strategy for the Use of Evidence (UoE) pillar, which was formally established with the approval of SPIA's new workplan and operational model in May 2023. The goal of UoE is to *translate SPIA's independent and rigorous evidence to inform decision-making within CGIAR and to advance evidence-driven policy debates on agricultural research for development.*

This strategy is developed in the context of CGIAR's evolving governance arrangements, including the recent review of CGIAR's advisory bodies (SIMEC 2025), which recommended that SPIA continue its engagement with decision-makers and ensure the evidence informs the system's strategic direction. UoE operationalizes this recommendation by engaging with questions of evidence translation, stakeholder engagement, and

organizational learning. This strategy is intended to guide SPIA's UoE work through 2030, in alignment with SPIA's current operational model (SPIA 2023).

The remainder of this document is structured as follows: first, it establishes the problem that UoE aims to address and situates it within CGIAR's specific organizational context. Second, it sets out the guiding principles that shape SPIA's approach to evidence use. Third, it provides a detailed account of how UoE is operationalized within SPIA.

1 Situating the Problem

1.1 Evidence for whom?

Terms such as *evidence use*, *evidence-based policymaking*, and *evidence-informed decision-making* are increasingly commonplace. In an ideal world, scientific research identifying a problem would produce proportionate solutions, and end-users would select the most effective, evidence-backed option (Cairney 2016). Inherent to this is the assumption that decisions and policies based on evidence are likely to be better informed, more effective, and less expensive compared to those without evidence input (Strydom et al. 2010). However, in practice, there is a disconnect between the evidence and the decision-making process, a phenomenon dubbed the "research/science-policy divide" (Elouafi 2025; Wangchuk and Wangdi 2025; Preston et al. 2015).

This gap is premised on a knowledge management issue: one between the "generators" (i.e., scientists, researchers, academics) and "end-users" (typically policymakers, organizational leadership, funders, politicians) of evidence. The reasons for this divide are well documented. On the supply side, evidence generators have a reputation for producing research that may be too theoretical or technical (Fleming 2024; Smith-Merry 2020), takes too long, is written in an inaccessible way (Badley 2020; Kerr et al. 2015; Farmer 2010), entails eleventh-hour engagement with end-users (Warira et al. 2017; Oliver et al. 2014), and cannot provide precise, synthesized answers that policymakers demand (Topp et al. 2018; Greenhalgh and Russell 2009; Chalmers et al. 2002). There is also a deeper epistemological challenge: *ex-post* evidence, like the kind SPIA produces, can demonstrate that an innovation worked in a particular context. However, decision-makers often face an *ex-ante* question: *will it work here, given our conditions?* This is not a question that past evidence alone can definitively answer (Cartwright and Hardie 2012). SPIA's UoE strategy must therefore include a deliberate approach to bridging this gap, not by overstating the predictive power of past evidence, but by clearly articulating the conditions under which findings are likely to generalize (Labarta et al. 2025).

On the demand side, evidence end-users are typically time-pressed individuals who need to make complex decisions under strict timelines. Alongside evidence, they may rely on heuristics, trusted relationships, reasoning, and institutional habit (Evans et al. 2013; Jewell and Bero 2008). Furthermore, the end users may carry biases toward certain forms of evidence, shaped by their professional experiences and ideological predisposition, and the need to justify past decisions, priorities and investments to their stakeholders (Schippers et al. 2025; Banuri et al. 2019; Thompson 2003). Other factors such as divergent incentives between evidence generators and users (Campbell et al. 2009), poor timing of evidence availability (Smith et al. 2021; Lavis 2006) and blurred lines between evidence and advocacy further widen the divide.

Decision-making within CGIAR, which is a product of complex organizational structures, actors and processes, is not immune to these dynamics. In fact, SPIA's primary "end-users" of evidence are not a monolithic group but encompass distinct profiles with different relationships to evidence, each of which

shapes what effective evidence use looks like in practice. Box 1 below summarizes the profiles of the primary end-users internal to CGIAR.

Box 1: Primary internal stakeholder profiles

CGIAR Council (formerly the System Council)

Consists of CGIAR's funders and eligible countries. They serve a dual role: as users of evidence and as advocates who must justify AR4D investments to their own constituencies, including donor government ministers, parliaments, taxpayers, and endowments (in the case of private donors). SPIA evidence is not merely informational but instrumental to sustaining political support for CGIAR funding. They need credible evidence in digestible formats at the right moments, meaning concisely framed findings are a prerequisite for engagement.

SIMEC

Technical body supporting the CGIAR Council on topics relating to strategic impact, monitoring, and evaluation. While they share SPIA's keen interest in methodological rigor, the overlap with CGIAR Council membership means that the same evidence may serve as an advocacy asset for one audience and a methodological input for another.

CGIAR Management and Board

CGIAR Management and the Board are primarily concerned with operational delivery and accountability in ensuring the system performs against its commitments to donors. For this audience, SPIA's system-level evidence is most valuable when it speaks to portfolio-level questions such as which investments are generating impact, through what pathways etc. They are also a key relay point for SPIA evidence to reach CGIAR's internal planning processes.

Chief Scientist's Office, Global Science Team, Center Leadership

For the Office of the Chief Scientist, the Global Science Team (GST) and the Center leadership, all of which have highly scientific orientation, relevance and specificity are paramount. System-level findings need translation into what they mean for a given science program or center's portfolio decisions, resource allocation, research agenda (in terms of methodology and focus areas) and for ground-truthing assumptions.

Understanding these distinct profiles matters because effective evidence use cannot take a one-size-fits-all approach. A policy brief designed for CGIAR Council members making portfolio-level funding decisions serves a different function than a technical presentation to the Global Science Team seeking methodological insights. SPIA's UoE strategy is built on this recognition. Annex A provides a full breakdown of SPIA's stakeholders based on directness of engagement and official mandates. It must also be flagged that while these CGIAR stakeholders are considered end users, they ostensibly strive to represent a broader set of more diverse and diffuse external stakeholders.

The restricted scope of this strategy is deliberate: By mandate, UoE concerns the translation and uptake of SPIA's evidence first and foremost within CGIAR's oversight, governance and leadership structures.

Furthermore, questions of participation and equity in evidence generation sit upstream in the execution of Pillars 1 and 2 rather than in the UoE pillar.

1.2 Why does UoE matter?

Evidence that is produced but not used is not a neutral outcome; it has an associated cost. It consumes resources, and, if ignored, erodes the organizational credibility that makes future evidence production worth funding. This is the basic case for a UoE strategy: SPIA's value to CGIAR is realized at the point where the rigorous evidence informs a decision, a priority, resource allocation, or an untested assumption.

The challenge is that this rarely happens automatically. Non-use of evidence is not primarily a supply problem, but a demand-side structural one. Decision-makers operate under time pressures, with competing information sources, within organizational cultures that have their own momentum. Evidence that arrives too late in a decision cycle, that contradicts established commitments, or that requires more interpretive work than a busy oversight or governance actor can spare, risks not being used, irrespective of its rigor and quality. A UoE strategy needs to account for these realities and not assume a perfectly functioning model of evidence-to-decision pipeline.

Within CGIAR specifically, two features of the System exacerbate this challenge. First, the scale and diversity of the portfolio means that insights generated in one part of the system have no automatic pathway to the rest of it. The costs of this fragmentation compound over time whereby proven approaches may go unscaled, known failures could be repeated, and organizational memory resides in individuals rather than processes or systems. Second, CGIAR operates in a resource environment where donors increasingly expect organizations to demonstrate not just impact, but that they are learning from it. Producing rigorous evidence while failing to act on it risks undermining organizational credibility.

SPIA's role, through UoE is to help close this gap by ensuring that when consequential decisions are made, the best available independent and rigorous evidence on CGIAR's reach and impacts is available and legible to those using it.

2 Principles Guiding SPIA's Use of Evidence

The following principles reflect SPIA's current *aspirations* for how it approaches the use of its evidence. They are offered in the spirit of guiding rather than constraining SPIA's work: evidence use is more art than science, and the application of these principles will require ongoing adaptation as SPIA learns what works in practice.

2.1 Principle 1: Responsible translation without distortion

Translation of evidence is the process of "identifying, filtering, interpreting, adapting, contextualizing and communicating evidence so that it informs decision-making" (Results for Development 2018). In this process, conscious choices are made about *what* information is right, and *for whom* it is right (Freeman 2009). SPIA views evidence translation as the practical process of delivering tailored insights to stakeholders within CGIAR in synthesized formats that maximize use, without compromising the rigor or accuracy of the evidence.

In a noisy environment where advocacy often competes with evidence as a driver of decision-making, there is a systematic tendency toward *selective* communication (i.e., downplaying inconvenient findings or amplifying positive ones to serve organizational interests). SPIA is not immune to these pressures. Responsible translation therefore requires active attention to the risk of selective framing, whereby distortions can creep in subtly through tone, emphasis, and/or omission. Evidence translation demands a

degree of humility in acknowledging not only what the evidence shows, but what it does not and cannot show, and being transparent about uncertainty.

A specific dimension of this relates to the nature of evidence. Because SPIA's evidence is ex-post, translating it responsibly means being explicit about the conditions under which findings may or may not transfer to new settings (Cartwright and Hardie 2012) and highlighting the "why" underpinning the evidence (i.e., the mechanisms and enabling environment). SPIA will not claim that its ex-post evidence justifies future decisions without clearly articulating the nature of extrapolation and its limits. Where possible, SPIA seeks to synthesize evidence across contexts and provide decision-makers with structured frameworks for contextual judgement, rather than false certainty. This includes strategic attention to how evidence is selected, interpreted, framed and presented based on the end-user in question, without overhyping claims (Taster 2025).

2.2 Principle 2: Propositional, not prescriptive

An evidence generator such as SPIA faces a critical choice about how far to guide its end-users in applying the evidence it produces. At one end of the spectrum, SPIA could produce evidence and leave decision-makers to interpret and apply it as they see fit. However, this position risks misinterpretation or selective use. At the other end, SPIA could prescribe exactly which evidence to prioritize and how to act on it, but top-down prescription is rarely effective (Honig 2020) and leaves little room for decision-makers to weigh evidence against their own priorities and constraints.

SPIA occupies a middle ground of being *propositional rather than prescriptive* (Dercon 2024). This means SPIA translates and contextualizes evidence extensively, making the implications clear, highlighting what has worked and what has not, and presenting findings in ways that illuminate decision options. However, SPIA does not provide explicit recommendations to the CGIAR Council, SIMEC, CGIAR Board or the CGIAR leadership on which innovations or research areas to fund.

There is an important caveat here, rooted in the epistemological challenge described earlier. SPIA is acutely aware of the longstanding caution in the evidence-use literature about applying past evidence to guide future decisions. Being propositional is therefore not simply a matter of respecting organizational boundaries, but also epistemically warranted. SPIA provides a compelling, evidence-grounded case, while end-users determine appropriate action. Should this approach prove insufficient for meaningful evidence use, SPIA may revisit its position on it in the future.

2.3 Principle 3: Working with, not against, organizational incentives

Decision-making within CGIAR, as in any international organization, is an inherently political process marked by trade-offs and compromises (Head 2016). SPIA's UoE strategy recognizes that working *with* institutional incentives and bureaucratic processes is a prerequisite for evidence uptake (Dercon 2024) within politicized processes. This means aligning evidence products with existing decision points, understanding what motivates different stakeholders within CGIAR, and positioning evidence to complement the timing of high-level decisions and governance meetings involving the CGIAR Council, SIMEC, CGIAR Board, and others.[1]

[1] See 2026 CGIAR governance calendar: https://cgspace.cgiar.org/items/1f188423-f9f0-440a-abdf-0803c0d1b000

This involves timing *how* and *when* SPIA shares its evidence to maximize the chances of serious engagement by end-users. It should not be mistaken for selective presentation of only positive results or suppression of critical findings. Rather, it means that SPIA will remain a critical yet constructive voice that can deliver both favorable and unfavorable evidence through the right channels and at moments when it can inform decision-makers within CGIAR.

When the evidence is discouraging, SPIA's efforts are directed towards learning from failures. Unfavorable findings are treated not as reputational risks to be managed but as opportunities for organizational learning. Understanding why an innovation, program, or intervention underperformed is as valuable for CGIAR as documenting what has worked.

2.4 Principle 4: Meaningful influence

SPIA aims to serve as a "broker" between its evidence and the end-users. It acts as both a "problem broker", assisting decision-makers in framing challenges, and a "knowledge broker", supplying concise, relevant evidence tailored to specific decision contexts (Mintrom 2000; Meyer 2010). This dual brokerage role ensures that SPIA's evidence does not merely exist but meaningfully informs how problems are understood and addressed within CGIAR.

To effectively play these roles, SPIA actively seeks opportunities to influence CGIAR decision-making processes, rather than waiting passively for evidence to be requested. This involves not just producing evidence, but strategically *amplifying* insights when windows of opportunity arise. This involves deliberate judgment in determining which issues, methods, and findings receive attention for framing. SPIA's focus on specific countries, themes, and methods reflects these choices.

SPIA recognizes that the bandwidth available to end-users of evidence may be more limited than the depth of the evidence itself. The commitment to meaningful influence therefore requires meeting decision-makers at their level of interest and bandwidth to engage.

3 Operationalizing SPIA's Use of Evidence

UoE is operationalized through the following main activities:

3.1 Translating and synthesizing evidence products

SPIA's approach to evidence products starts from the audience: who needs to know about this SPIA evidence, what decision or question does it answer, how much time do they have to engage, and what format and framing gives the evidence the best chance of landing? When done well, this process preserves the integrity of the rigorous evidence while making it accessible for decision-makers.

To this end, SPIA translates evidence across a range of formats, each matched to a specific purpose and audience profile. These formats include, but are not limited to: technical reports, synthesis reports, methods notes, policy briefs, blogposts, webinars, newsletters, infographics, and videos. Depending on the end-users, the framing and content are further calibrated for each format. Below is a simple illustration of how some of these formats are conceptualized vis-à-vis the technical depth it is intended to capture and the ease of using it.

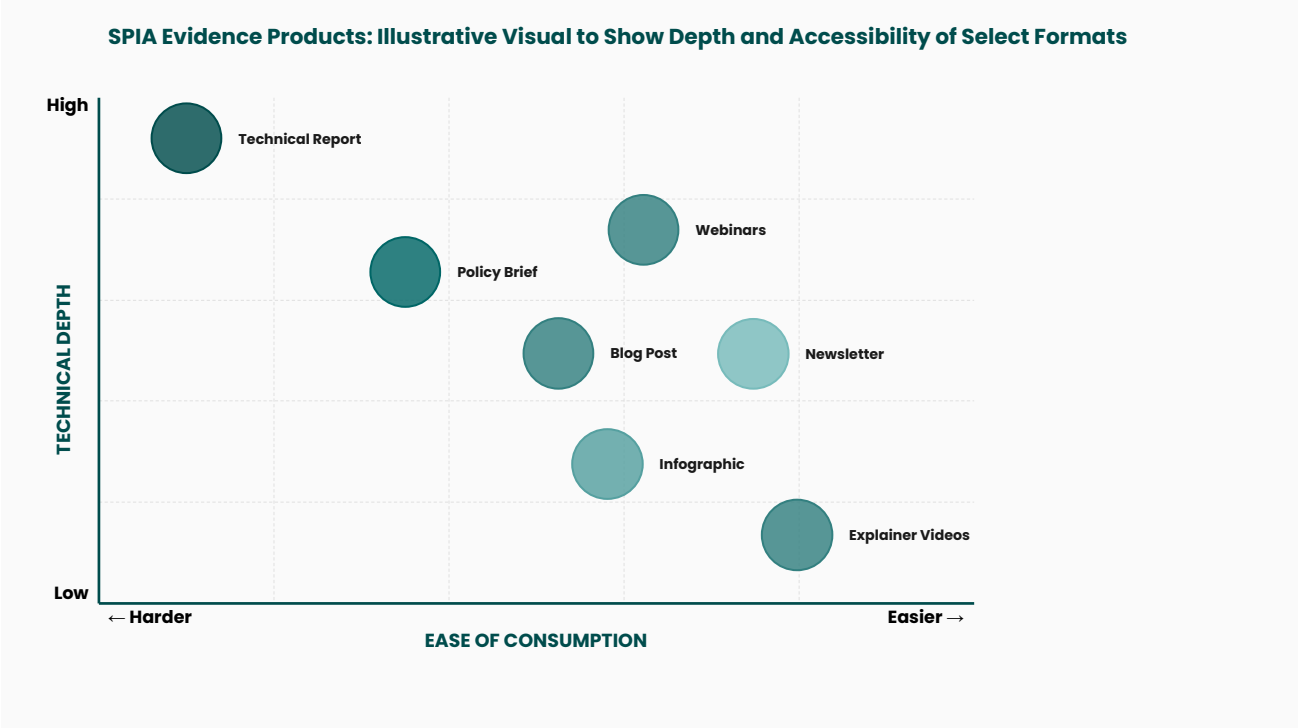

Figure 2. Ease of Use of select SPIA evidence products

Furthermore, syntheses across a range of cross-cutting topics (such as climate change, biofortification, systems transformation) are produced periodically to provide a framework for cross-country comparisons.

3.2 Stakeholder engagement and dissemination

SPIA recognizes that a wide range of evidence products can create opportunities for information exchange. But converting it into evidence use requires active engagement, translation, synthesis and dissemination. SPIA's engagement activities are therefore planned around decision cycles, budget processes, strategic oversight and governance review points, and synced (to the extent possible) with the SPIA evidence production process.

This engagement takes several forms. At the governance level, SPIA presents findings at key CGIAR Council and SIMEC meetings, aims to periodically brief the CGIAR leadership, EMD, the Office of the Chief Scientist, CGIAR Board, GST, and Center-level leadership, and contributes to System-wide strategic initiatives including the Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning, Impact Assessment and Foresight (MELIAF) project. At the operational level, SPIA convenes the Impact Assessment Focal Points and Center researchers for capacity-building initiatives and to elicit feedback on strategic topics. The ongoing country study partnerships with national actors, CGIAR centers, private players, and academics extend this engagement into contexts where SPIA evidence is generated.

3.3 Evidence discoverability

Evidence that cannot be easily located is harder to use. A core part of SPIA's UoE work therefore focuses on the backend infrastructure that makes its evidence discoverable by keeping it organized, accessible, and surfaced at the right moment for the right audiences.

In practice this entails managing and regularly updating the SPIA website; launching and maintaining newer tools that allow stakeholders to navigate findings easily; ensuring that replicable datasets and methods documentation are accessible on platforms such as GitHub and linked from the website; and sustaining an active social media presence. SPIA will also explore how AI-assisted tools can improve discoverability of its evidence base.

4 What does success look like?

Measuring SPIA's UoE is complex as evidence rarely changes decisions in a single, traceable moment. Its effects are cumulative in ways that leave limited paper trails. Thus, any measurement for SPIA's UoE must be honest about this while still committing to observable indicators that can be tracked over time.

SPIA's KPIs for this work pillar are organized into two tiers: access indicators, which signal that the conditions for timely evidence access exist; and influence indicators, which signal that SPIA evidence products are being used across CGIAR.

Access indicators

- SPIA evidence products being downloaded, shared, and engaged with across key dissemination channels (including the SPIA website, CG Space, and Evidence Finder tool)
- CGIAR leadership, Center leadership, and governance bodies accepting invitations to SPIA briefings, convenings and workshops
- SPIA being proactively invited to CGIAR-wide strategic initiatives, planning processes, and governance sessions to brief leadership
- Greater engagement from IAFPs and Center-level staff actively using SPIA repositories and methods guidance

Use indicators

- Any SPIA evidence cited in CGIAR governance documents, portfolio decisions, strategic plans, partner and funder documents
- Briefings and engagements generating follow-up requests for deeper analysis (signaling that SPIA evidence created further demand)
- Stakeholders reporting that SPIA findings informed their priority-setting or resource allocation decisions
- Instances where end-users can point to assumptions, conceptual understanding or decisions being revisited, refined, or validated, owing to contribution of SPIA evidence

The influence indicators involve some degree of attribution, which is necessary. That said, the goal is not to demonstrate sole-credit narratives, but rather to build a cumulative record of how SPIA evidence has contributed to decisions and priorities over time. This will help SPIA understand internally how its evidence is being used and where the gaps remain.

5 Conclusion

The UoE work pillar represents SPIA's commitment to ensuring that its rigorous reach and impact evidence fulfils its intended purpose: informing decision-making within CGIAR. In a complex system where evidence can easily remain siloed, SPIA's UoE pillar creates deliberate channels for translation, dissemination and uptake.

This strategy document outlines SPIA's approach as of early 2026 and is intended to guide the UoE pillar through 2030. The principles set out here are aspirational, not prescriptive: they represent SPIA's current best understanding of how to navigate the evidence-use challenges and will be refined as experience accumulates and CGIAR's decision-making architecture continues to evolve.

References

Badley, Graham Francis. 2020. "Why and How Academics Write." *Qualitative Inquiry* 26 (3–4): 247–56.

Banuri, Sheheryar, Stefan Dercon, and Varun Gauri. 2019. "Biased Policy Professionals." *The World Bank Economic Review* 33 (2): 310–27.

Cairney, Paul. 2016. *The Politics of Evidence-Based Policy Making*. Springer Nature.

Cairney, Paul. 2018. "Three Habits of Successful Policy Entrepreneurs." *Policy & Politics* 46 (2): 199–215.

Campbell, Danielle M., et al. 2009. "Increasing the Use of Evidence in Health Policy." *Australia and New Zealand Health Policy* 6 (1): 21.

Cartwright, Nancy, and Jeremy Hardie. 2012. *Evidence-Based Policy: A Practical Guide to Doing It Better*. Oxford University Press.

Chalmers, I., L. V. Hedges, and H. Cooper. 2002. "A Brief History of Research Synthesis." *Evaluation & the Health Professions* 25 (1): 12–37.

Dercon, Stefan. 2024. "The Political Economy of Economic Policy Advice." *Journal of African Economies* 33 (Supplement 2): ii26–38.

Elouafi, Ismahane. 2025. "Bridging the Divide: Why the Science-Policy Interface Matters for Global Food Systems." *Science* 388 (6752): eady6713.

Evans, B. A., H. Snooks, H. Howson, and M. Davies. 2013. "How Hard Can It Be to Include Research Evidence and Evaluation in Local Health Policy Implementation? Results from a Mixed Methods Study." *Implementation Science* 8 (1): 17.

Farmer, Rick. 2010. "How to Influence Government Policy with Your Research." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 43 (4): 717–19.

Fleming, Bruce. 2024. *Academia versus the World Outside*. Routledge.

Freeman, Richard. 2009. "What Is 'Translation'?" *Evidence & Policy* 5 (4): 429–47.

Greenhalgh, Trisha, and Jill Russell. 2009. "Evidence-Based Policymaking: A Critique." *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine* 52 (2): 304–18.

Head, Brian W. 2016. "Toward More 'Evidence-Informed' Policy Making?" *Public Administration Review* 76 (3): 472–84.

Honig, Dan. 2020. "Navigating by Judgment." CGDev Working Paper.

Jewell, C. J., and L. A. Bero. 2008. "'Developing Good Taste in Evidence': Facilitators of and Hindrances to Evidence-Informed Health Policymaking in State Government." *The Milbank Quarterly* 86 (2): 177–208.

Kerr, Eve A., Melissa Riba, and Marianne Udow-Phillips. 2015. "Helping Health Service Researchers and Policy Makers Speak the Same Language." *Health Services Research* 50 (1): 1–11.

Labarta, R., T. J. Lybbert, A. B. Melaku, M. Walker, and C. Yang. 2025. *Interpolating and Extrapolating Impact Estimates: Implications of Ex Post Impact Evaluation Evidence for Projecting Benefits Ex Ante*. Technical Note N.13. Rome: SPIA.

Lavis, J. N. 2006. "Research, Public Policymaking, and Knowledge-Translation Processes: Canadian Efforts to Build Bridges." *Journal of Continuing Education in the Health Professions* 26 (1): 37–45.

Meyer, M. 2010. "The Rise of the Knowledge Broker." *Science Communication* 32 (1): 118–27.

Mintrom, Michael. 2000. *Policy Entrepreneurs and School Choice*. Georgetown University Press.

Oliver, Kathryn, et al. 2014. "A Systematic Review of Barriers to and Facilitators of the Use of Evidence by Policymakers." *BMC Health Services Research* 14: 2.

Preston, Benjamin L., Johanna Mustelin, and Megan C. Maloney. 2015. "Climate Adaptation Heuristics and the Science/Policy Divide." *Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies for Global Change* 20 (3): 467–97.

Results for Development. 2018. "Evidence and Policy: A Translator's Brief." R4D.

Schippers, M. C., K. P. Kepp, and J. P. Ioannidis. 2025. "Biases and Debiasing in Policy Decision-Making." *European Journal of Clinical Investigation* 55 (9): e70064.

SIMEC (2025). High-level review of CGIAR's Advisory Bodies. *CGSpace*. https://cgspace.cgiar.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/cb8f9a9b-8124-47e8-a8ab-49a67da5e3cf/content

Smith, K., S. Fernie, and N. Pilcher. 2021. "Aligning the Times: Exploring the Convergence of Researchers, Policy Makers and Research Evidence in Higher Education Policy Making." *Research in Education* 110 (1): 38–57.

Smith-Merry, Jennifer. 2020. "Evidence-Based Policy, Knowledge from Experience and Validity." *Evidence & Policy* 16 (2): 305–16.

SPIA (2023). SPIA operational model and workplan (2023 – 2030). Rome: *Standing Panel on Impact Assessment (SPIA)*.

SPIA (2020). SPIA's Approach to Impact Assessment for CGIAR. Technical Note N.8. Rome: *Standing Panel on Impact Assessment (SPIA)*.

Strydom, Wilma F., et al. 2010. "Evidence-Based Policymaking: A Review." *South African Journal of Science* 106 (5/6).

Taster. 2025. "Does Hype Really Sell Claims of Research Impact?" LSE Impact of Social Sciences Blog, February 4.

Thompson, Carl. 2003. "Clinical Experience as Evidence in Evidence-Based Practice." *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 43 (3): 230–37.

Topp, L., D. Mair, L. Smillie, and P. Cairney. 2018. "Knowledge Management for Policy Impact: The Case of the European Commission's Joint Research Centre." *Palgrave Communications* 4 (1): 87.

Wangchuk, Kesang, and Jigme Wangdi. 2025. "Bridging the Science-Policy Divide in Bhutan's Agriculture Sector." *Development in Practice* 0 (0): 1–7.

Warira, Diana, Eunice Mueni, Elizabeth Gay, and Marlene Lee. 2017. "Achieving and Sustaining Evidence-Informed Policy Making: Effective Communication and Collaboration Can Go a Long Way." *Science Communication* 39: 382–94.

Annex A: Stakeholder Map

The map on the following page organizes SPIA's stakeholders into three tiers based on directness of engagement and centrality to SPIA's mandate.

Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
SPIA accountable to by mandate	*Evidence reaches by design and deliberate outreach*	*Broader influence; opportunistic engagement*
CGIAR Council Evidence user + advocate for AR4D investments. Need credible, accessible tools to justify past investments and build constituencies for future CGIAR funding.	**CGIAR Board and Management** Operational decision-makers for system-wide resource allocation and strategy. Need evidence linked to portfolio priorities and resource decisions.	**Academic community** Researchers in agriculture/development economics. Engage through publications, conferences, methods guidance.
SIMEC Technical body with analytical bandwidth. Partial overlap with SC creates a blended audience	**Chief Scientist's Office, GST, Center Leadership** Scientific leadership. Engage on agenda-setting, portfolio strategy, and the credibility of CGIAR's evidence base to external audiences.	**International organizations** IOs working on food security, agriculture, and development. Evidence contributes to shaping sector-wide knowledge products.
	PPT and PCU (under Chief Scientist's Office) Coordination layer as a part of MELIAF grant and beyond. SPIA findings can inform MEL data processes and planning cycles.	
	IA Focal Points Center-level staff responsible for impact assessments. Key nodes for embedding SPIA methods and findings in center practice.	
	CGIAR Scientists Research staff within centers. SPIA methods and findings can inform research design and priority-setting at the science program and center levels.	
	ISDC / IAES-Evaluation Function Coordination avoids any potential duplication and strengthens the overall CGIAR's independent evidence ecosystem.	

	Country stakeholders Government, CGIAR centers, NARES partners in countries covered by SPIA country studies. Partners in producing and learning from country-level evidence; engaged via SPIA country study implementers.	
SPIA Affiliates & study partners Cross-cutting: serve as both evidence producers (Pillars 1 and 2) and dissemination nodes within country contexts		

Independent Advisory and Evaluation Service - SPIA
Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT
Via di San Domenico, 1 00153 Rome, Italy
IAES@cgiar.org
https://iaes.cgiar.org/spia