

ST Science Group Evaluation 2024: Management Response

Evaluation title: [System Transformation Science Group Evaluation 2024](https://iaes.cgiar.org/evaluation/science-groups-evaluations), under Science Groups Evaluations
<https://iaes.cgiar.org/evaluation/science-groups-evaluations>. All recommendations copied from the Evaluation Report under endorsement by SIMEC.
Date of MR: 30 September 2024

Overall response to the evaluation: CGIAR thanks the evaluation team for their diligence in conducting this evaluation. Some Management Responses have been deferred for consideration by the incoming CGIAR Chief Scientist and 2025-30 Portfolio/ Program/ Accelerator leadership. In other cases, Recommendations have been partially accepted, with detailed actions to be defined by incoming Chief Scientist and 2025-30 Program/ Accelerator leadership, and other functions e.g. those overseeing CGIAR's country and regional engagement.

Person-in-charge for Follow-up to Management Response: CGIAR Chief Scientist; 2025-30 Portfolio/ Program/ Accelerator leadership
 See tracker of the implementation status: <https://www.cgiar.org/management-response-actions-tracker/>

RECOMMENDATIONS and ACTIONS: grouped temporally for individual SG as evaluand (short term), and for CGIAR Science Program teams and CGIAR management (mid to long term), to facilitate uptake and action

Recommendation 1 (for CGIAR's work on system transformation (ST) (for action by STSG and then hand over to Chief Scientist, end of 2024 and beyond): Develop a cross-CGIAR's system transformation strategy using learning from the SG implementation. The strategy should provide further clarity on ST principles, approaches, and processes.

- Use the ST Strategy to mainstream transformative policy research in a sizable number of countries beyond the focus countries. The countries should be determined based on country-specific needs, opportunities, and CGIAR's comparative advantage.
- Consolidate work on transformation of food, land and water systems, especially in countries where various initiatives are already engaged with a ST focus, by enhancing collaboration with national governments, research/policy institutions and development partners.
- Maintain and incentivize leadership on the topic of ST and build organizational capacity to conduct transformative research and policy work.

Management Response: <i>Deferred for consideration by the incoming CGIAR Chief Scientist and 2025-30 Portfolio/ Program/ Accelerator leadership</i>	Fully accepted <input type="checkbox"/>	Partially accepted <input type="checkbox"/>	Not accepted <input type="checkbox"/>
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Management Response (commentary): The recommendation is noted with thanks.

Brief explanatory statement if recommendation is rejected or partially accepted:

Management Follow-up

Actions to be implemented	Responsible	Timeframe	Is additional funding required to implement recommendation		If further funding required – how much and what is to be done if no funds available?
The merits of a stand-alone, cross-CGIAR Strategy on systems	CGIAR Chief Scientist;		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	

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transformation should be considered by the incoming CGIAR Chief Scientist working alongside the cross-Center Global Science Team and Program/ Accelerator leadership.	2025-30 Portfolio/ Program/ Accelerator leadership				
Recommendation 2 (for CGIAR’s work on system transformation (ST) (for action by STSG and then hand over to Chief Scientist, end of 2024 and beyond): Improve balance between thematic and geographic convergence as a strategy for improving synergy and impact, by undertaking periodic assessments of knowledge/research, policy, and capacity gaps in FLW systems in specific contexts and explore new opportunities considering thematic and geographic convergence options.					
Management Response <i>Deferred for consideration by the incoming CGIAR Chief Scientist and 2025--30 Portfolio/ Program/ Accelerator leadership</i>		<i>Fully accepted</i> <input type="checkbox"/>		<i>Partially accepted</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	
Management Response (commentary):		The recommendation is noted with thanks.			
Brief explanatory statement if recommendation is rejected or partially accepted:					
Management Follow-up					
Actions to be implemented	Responsible	Timeframe	Is additional funding required to implement recommendation		If further funding required – how much and what is to be done if no funds available?
The opportunities and need for the proposed periodic assessments will be considered in the context of the further development of the relevant 2025-30 Programs and Accelerators by the incoming CGIAR Chief Scientist working alongside the cross-Center Global Science Team and Program/ Accelerator leadership.	CGIAR Chief Scientist; 2025-30 Portfolio/ Program/ Accelerator leadership		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Recommendation 3 (for CGIAR, overseen by Chief Scientist): Develop incentives for interdisciplinary team collaborations across disciplines and centers to tackle interconnected issues effectively under the integrated management framework. Continue using platforms and communities of practice to promote collaboration across all science programs and accelerators, fostering a holistic approach to reducing food system vulnerabilities to climate change.					

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Management Response		<i>Fully accepted</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Partially accepted</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<i>Not accepted</i> <input type="checkbox"/>
Management Response (commentary):		The recommendation is noted with thanks.			
Brief explanatory statement if recommendation is rejected or partially accepted: Detailed actions to be defined by incoming Chief Scientist and 2025-30, Program/ Accelerator leadership, and functions overseeing CGIAR's country and regional engagement					
Management Follow-up					
Actions to be implemented	Responsible	Timeframe	Is additional funding required to implement recommendation		If further funding required – how much and what is to be done if no funds available?
The 2025-30 Portfolio of Programs and Accelerators and the associated management arrangements are being designed for coherence and synergies across Centers as well as across Programs/ Accelerators. Mechanisms and incentives to achieve this will be further defined during the Portfolio transition and inception phase through early 2025, under the leadership of CGIAR's incoming Chief Scientist and 2025-30 Portfolio/ Program/ Accelerator leadership. The level of detail at which synergies can be reported; and joint work explicitly rewarded; will require further review and consideration.	CGIAR Chief Scientist; 2025-30 Portfolio/ Program/ Accelerator leadership	TBC	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Recommendation 4 (for CGIAR, overseen by Chief Scientist): Enhance systematic inclusion of partners in the portfolio design, implementation, and scaling as per the 2024 Partnership & Advocacy Framework to raise visibility and strategic positioning of CGIAR at country level. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop country strategies for more coherent and coordinated planning among CGIAR centers, to ensure mobilization of national and sub-national stakeholders in implementation. 					

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b. Strengthen CGIAR's country-level leadership and coordination capacity (including budgetary provisions) for effective engagement with stakeholders to advocate for a transformative research and policy agenda. Continue with regular listening sessions and monitor and evaluate stakeholders' needs and perceptions.				
Management Response		Fully accepted <input type="checkbox"/>	Partially accepted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not accepted <input type="checkbox"/>
Management Response (commentary):		Building on Listening Sessions and other engagements with partners and stakeholders, the new 2025-30 Programs and Accelerators are being designed to respond to relevant priorities at the local, national, and regional levels. The recommendation for an inclusive approach will be considered in the development of CGIAR's upcoming Partnership Strategy. The feasibility and prioritization of country-level strategies and results frameworks will need to be reviewed as a function of available resources and the roles and responsibilities of CGIAR's new country and regional engagement functions.		
Brief explanatory statement if recommendation is rejected or partially accepted: Detailed actions to be defined by incoming Chief Scientist and 2025--30, Program/ Accelerator leadership, and functions overseeing CGIAR's country and regional engagement				
Management Follow-up				
Actions to be implemented	Responsible	Timeframe	Is additional funding required to implement recommendation	If further funding required – how much and what is to be done if no funds available?
(a)The recommendation is noted with thanks. This is being addressed through a dedicated Scaling for Impact Program, the widespread use of the Innovation Packages and Scaling Readiness (IPSR) protocol, and the emerging country and regional engagement structure overseen by three Continental Convenors. Further details on decision tools, feedback loops, and cross-Portfolio engagement will be developed further during the Portfolio transition and inception phase through	CGIAR Chief Scientist; 2025-30 Portfolio/ Program/ Accelerator leadership; Country and Regional engagement functions	TBC		

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early 2025, under the leadership of CGIAR's incoming Chief Scientist and 2025--30 Portfolio/ Program/ Accelerator leadership.							
(b) The recommendation is noted with thanks, and will be considered in the definition of the roles, responsibilities, and resourcing of CGIAR's new country and regional engagement functions.	CGIAR Chief Scientist; 2025-30 Portfolio/ Program/ Accelerator leadership; Country and Regional engagement functions	TBC	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>			
<p>Recommendation 5 (for CGIAR, overseen by Chief Scientist): Revise PRMF, strengthen MELIA processes and capacities to ensure that these capture how ST SG outputs (present) and future system transformation-related outputs link to outcomes and impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Review and rationalize PRMF and MELIA processes: indicator number/quality (e.g., implement standard definitions of what is an output and outcome) to ensure they are fit-for-purpose b. Develop and apply improved qualitative and quantitative approaches for measuring scientific quality, policy influence, and the effectiveness of capacity development in the research for development environment. c. Address internal capacity gaps in data management, monitoring and reporting. 							
Management Response		Fully accepted <input type="checkbox"/>		Partially accepted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Not accepted <input type="checkbox"/>	
Management Response (commentary):		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Standard definitions of output, outcome and impact have been available and in use since 2021, are baked into the Performance and Results Management System (PRMS), reporting guidance, the Technical Reporting Quality Assurance process, and are publicly available through the CGIAR Results Dashboard. It is not clear what the basis of this recommendation is. b) It is unclear what there is to gain from a quantitative approach to policy influence, and we have reasonable approaches for qualitative policy influence. Scientific quality measurement is a broad objective and we can work to develop a meaningful and right sized approach to this. Assessing the effectiveness of capacity development in the 					

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			<p>research for development environment is also a broad objective and can work to develop a meaningful and right sized approach to this.</p> <p>c) Further training, guidance and support will be provided in the period 25-30, supported by enhanced digital systems embedding AI tools.</p>		
Brief explanatory statement if recommendation is rejected or partially accepted: See above relating to a) and b).					
Management Follow-up					
Actions to be implemented	Responsible	Timeframe	Is additional funding required to implement recommendation		If further funding required – how much and what is to be done if no funds available?
The Technical Reporting Arrangement for 2025-30, currently under development by a cross-CGIAR working group in collaboration with Funders, will provide the basis to optimize MELIA and future Technical Reporting.	Portfolio Performance Unit (PPU), Project Coordination Unit (PCU)	2024	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Recommendation 6 (for CGIAR, overseen by Chief Scientist): Address funding shortages and inefficiencies in financial and human resource management through a regular review and feedback mechanism involving internal stakeholders and informing external partners of changes. Improve budget transparency and accountability through outcome-based budgeting and related reform measures to maximize transformative and sustainable impact from CGIAR's investments (in concert with global finance and HR responsible offices).					
Management Response		Fully accepted <input type="checkbox"/>		Partially accepted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not accepted <input type="checkbox"/>
Management Response (commentary):		The recommendation is noted with thanks			
Brief explanatory statement if recommendation is rejected or partially accepted: with detailed actions to be defined by incoming Chief Scientist and 2025-30 Portfolio/ Program/ Accelerator leadership					
Management Follow-up					
Actions to be implemented	Responsible	Timeframe	Is additional funding required to implement recommendation		If further funding required – how much and what is to be done if no funds available?
The recommendation is noted with thanks and will be considered as the	CGIAR Chief Scientist and	TBC	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	

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management arrangements including resource allocation processes for the new 2025-30 Portfolio are developed further and operationalized; and taking into account relevant outcomes of the ICI process. Ultimately, while management can mitigate the impacts of funding shortages, it does not control the level of funding available	2025--30 Portfolio/ Program/ Accelerator leadership; Finance; People & Culture				
<p>Recommendation 7 (Recommendations for portfolio 2025-30/science programs (for Science Program proposal authors/program management): Build on CGIAR’s comparative advantages in climate resilience research: mainstream climate adaptation and mitigation across the entire portfolio by continuing to provide evidence of the transformative impacts of national policies and strategies in building the resilience of FLW systems to climate change, using integrated systems frameworks.</p> <p>a. Strengthen the ability to forecast climate related trends and impacts on food systems, using evidence-informed scenario approaches.</p> <p>b. Integrate solutions to climate change across value- and stakeholder chains, using multi-scale systems approaches.</p>					
Management Response		Fully accepted <input type="checkbox"/>		Partially accepted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Management Response (commentary):		The recommendation is noted with thanks			
Brief explanatory statement if recommendation is rejected or partially accepted: Detailed actions to be defined by incoming Chief Scientist and 2025-30 Portfolio/ Program/ Accelerator leadership					
Management Follow-up					
Actions to be implemented	Responsible	Timeframe	Is additional funding required to implement recommendation		If further funding required – how much and what is to be done if no funds available?
The recommendation is noted with thanks and will be considered in the further development and roll-out of the new, 2025-30 Portfolio of Programs and Accelerators. In addition to the Climate Action program, significant CGIAR research on climate change related policies and	CGIAR Chief Scientist; 2025-30 Portfolio/ Program/ Accelerator leadership	TBC	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	

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<p>programs will be taken up by the Policy Innovations and Food Frontiers Programs, as well as the Gender Equality and Inclusion Accelerator. As is the case for other Impact Areas, the mechanisms and modalities for mainstreaming climate change mitigation and adaptation will need to be considered by the incoming CGIAR Chief Scientist and Portfolio/ Program/ Accelerator leadership</p>					
<p>Recommendation 8 (Recommendations for portfolio 2025-30/science programs (for Science Program proposal authors/program management): Invest in local capacity development for integrated systems research. Enhance in-country research capacity to apply integrated systems approaches to research. Develop mechanisms to regularly assess and refine innovations on the ground, in collaboration with local communities, ensuring technical soundness and social acceptance before wider implementation.</p>					
Management Response		<i>Fully accepted</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Partially accepted</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>Not accepted</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	
Management Response (commentary):		All 2025-30 Programs and Accelerators have significant plans for capacity sharing. In addition, the Innovation Packages and Scaling Readiness approach provides a mechanism for engaging local stakeholders in defining contextually appropriate scaling pathways.			
Brief explanatory statement if recommendation is rejected or partially accepted: Detailed actions to be defined by incoming Chief Scientist and 2025--30 Portfolio/ Program/ Accelerator leadership					
Management Follow-up					
Actions to be implemented	Responsible	Timeframe	Is additional funding required to implement recommendation		If further funding required – how much and what is to be done if no funds available?
<p>This recommendation will be further considered in the continued development and roll-out of the new Portfolio, overseen by the incoming CGIAR Chief Scientist and Portfolio/ Program/ Accelerator leadership.</p>	<p>CGIAR Chief Scientist; 2025--30 Portfolio/ Program/ Accelerator leadership</p>	<p>TBC</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	

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Recommendation 9 (Recommendations for portfolio 2025-30/science programs (for Science Program proposal authors/program management): Elevate nutrition and diet diversification across the entire Science Program portfolio, and not relegate this critical work to a single program.					
Management Response		Fully accepted <input type="checkbox"/>	Partially accepted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not accepted <input type="checkbox"/>	
Management Response (commentary):		While the Better Diets and Nutrition Science Program is intended as the focal point for research related to consumers and food environments with an additional emphasis on urban food systems from Food Frontiers diets and nutrition related science and innovations can be found across several other Programs and Accelerators.			
Brief explanatory statement if recommendation is rejected or partially accepted: Detailed actions to be defined by incoming Chief Scientist and 2025--30 Portfolio/ Program/ Accelerator leadership					
Management Follow-up					
Actions to be implemented	Responsible	Timeframe	Is additional funding required to implement recommendation		If further funding required – how much and what is to be done if no funds available?
As is the case for climate change and other Impact Areas, mechanisms and modalities for strengthening CGIAR's offer on nutrition across the Portfolio as a whole will need to be considered by the incoming CGIAR Chief Scientist and Portfolio/ Program/ Accelerator leadership.	CGIAR Chief Scientist; 2025-30 Portfolio/ Program/ Accelerator leadership	TBC	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Recommendation 10 (Recommendations for portfolio 2025-30/science programs (for Science Program proposal authors/program management): Expand the research focus on consumer demand, food environments, food safety, loss and waste, and connect supply to demand across value chains.					
Management Response		Fully accepted <input type="checkbox"/>	Partially accepted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not accepted <input type="checkbox"/>	
Management Response (commentary):		The recommendation is noted with thanks.			

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Management Follow-up					
Actions to be implemented	Responsible	Timeframe	Is additional funding required to implement recommendation		If further funding required – how much and what is to be done if no funds available?
Several 2025-30 Programs will address these topics, including Better Diets and Nutrition, Climate Action, Multifunctional Landscapes, and Food Frontiers. These will be considered further and strengthened as appropriate in the continued development and roll-out of the relevant Programs/ Accelerators.	CGIAR Chief Scientist and 2025--30 Portfolio/ Program/ Accelerator leadership	TBC	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Recommendation 11 (Recommendations for portfolio 2025-30/science programs (for Science Program proposal authors/program management): Science programs should develop joint research activities and innovations for responding to global polycrises at national, sub-regional and global levels with strategic research partners.					
Management Response		<i>Fully accepted</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Partially accepted</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>Not accepted</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	
Management Response (commentary):		The recommendation is noted with thanks.			
Brief explanatory statement if recommendation is rejected or partially accepted: Detailed actions to be defined by incoming Chief Scientist and 2025--30 Portfolio/ Program/ Accelerator leadership					
Management Follow-up					
Actions to be implemented	Responsible	Timeframe	Is additional funding required to implement recommendation		If further funding required – how much and what is to be done if no funds available?
Plans for joint work across Programs and Accelerators will be developed in further detail during the Portfolio	CGIAR Chief Scientist and 2025--30	TBC	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	

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<p>inception phase through early-2025. An early example of such a collaboration is the Policy Innovations Science Program, which is planning joint studies with other programs and accelerators to address multiple challenges.</p>	<p>Portfolio/ Program/ Accelerator leadership</p>				