



CRP-commissioned External Evaluation of the CGIAR Research Program on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health (A4NH):

Management Response and Action Plan (September, 2015)

A4NH Management would like to thank the evaluation team and the many A4NH staff, partners and stakeholders who provided information, responded to questions, and gave feedback throughout the process. The findings and recommendations of the evaluation are thorough, thoughtful, and constructive.

Management notes with satisfaction the following findings of the evaluation:

- A4NH's leadership on agriculture, nutrition and health (ANH) issues across the CGIAR is recognized and appreciated by partners and stakeholders.
- A4NH has a relevant research agenda and a comparative advantage to implement it in collaboration with partners inside and outside the CGIAR.
- A4NH is making good progress in delivery and has already added value to ongoing work in a number of key areas including impact orientation, coordination, gender, and monitoring, evaluation and learning.
- The quality of A4NH researchers and research outputs is high.

Management also appreciates the effort the evaluation team made to understand the complex institutional and financial environment in which A4NH, and others CRPs, operate and to provide practical and realistic suggestions and recommendations.

This Management Response and Action Plan includes input from A4NH's Independent Advisory Committee and IFPRI's Management and BOT.

Responses to the 8 recommendations are organized around 3 recommendation areas:

Area 1. A4NH scope and focus (Recommendations 1-3)

Area 2. Science quality and research management (Recommendations 4-6)

Area 3: CRP management and governance (Recommendations 7-8)

Recommendation Area 1: A4NH scope and focus	Management response	Actions to be taken	Who Responsible for Action	Timeframe	Additional funding required?
<p><u>Recommendation A 1</u> Recommendation A 1 Establish clear boundaries around A4NH in the final Phase II proposal, clearly distinguishing two primary modalities of A4NH work: (a) A4NH’s ‘core’ research activities (R2) and (b) A4NH ‘value added’ activities, supporting ANH work in the CGIAR and elsewhere</p> <p>i. Resist ‘mapping’ of research activities to A4NH which do not fall into one of the two core areas of work or which do not meet CGIAR policies and standards.</p>	Accepted.	<p>Both research and value adding activities are specified in the Phase 2 pre-proposal. These will be further developed, in consultation with partners and other stakeholders, in the full proposal.</p> <p>Establish processes for determining which projects will be mapped to A4NH by partners centers and how W1/2 funds will be used to support new research</p>	<p>PMC, PMU</p> <p>PMC</p>	<p>August 2015-March 2016</p> <p>August 2015-March 2016</p>	No.
<p><u>Recommendation A 2</u> Build up a high-quality A4NH-branded core research program focusing on a few ‘centerpiece’ research areas linked to the CGIAR Strategy and Results Framework (SRF). (SRF).</p> <p>i. Prioritize a limited number of research areas as the ‘centerpieces’ of A4NH research in Phase II, and concentrate ‘core’ research mobilization efforts on these. Each proposed ‘centerpiece area’ should have a clear set of initial research questions based on a theory of change, identified evidence gaps and clear links to SRF Outcomes. The selection of centerpiece areas should follow a transparent prioritization process, overseen by the IAC/CRP governance body.</p>	Accepted. The process described is consistent with the guidance from CO on development of Phase 2 CRP proposals.	We will continue to develop the A4NH research program through the Phase 2 proposal process, in consultation with partners and stakeholders, around the CGIAR SRF. We will seek and incorporate input from IAC, and use the proposal to guide fundraising efforts.	CRP director, PMC	August 2015-March 2016	No.

<p>Recommendation A 3 Make a coordinated investment in support to 'A4NH value added', managed as a coherent program, with clear goals and targets, adequate funding and human resources.</p> <p>i. Create and support an ANH Community of Practice (CoP) across the CGIAR. This should focus on specific CGIAR technical (research) and institutional needs, and draw upon but not duplicate the work of relevant external communities of practice.</p> <p>ii. Conduct (or commission) regular technical reviews of ANH work undertaken across the CGIAR, and convene regular meetings with other CRPs to discuss learning and future opportunities.</p> <p>iii. Fund or co-fund innovative ANH research across the CGIAR. Set clear objectives and criteria for this support, and establish a transparent process for prioritization and allocation of funds. This support should be managed separately from the core A4NH research program.</p>	<p>Accepted.</p>	<p>Clearly define mechanisms and processes for adding value to other CRPs, including expected activities, outcomes and budgets. An initial draft—including CoPs—was prepared for the pre-proposal and will be further developed for the proposal, in collaboration with other CRPs and following CO guidance and subject to resource availability.</p>	<p>CRP director, PMC, leaders of Phase 2 flagships with value-adding activities</p>	<p>August 2015-March 2016</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
--	-------------------------	--	---	-------------------------------	-------------

<p>Recommendation Area 2: Science quality and research management</p>	<p>Management response</p>	<p>Actions to be taken</p>	<p>Who Responsible for Action</p>	<p>Timeframe</p>	<p>Additional funding required?</p>
<p>Recommendation A 4 Adopt CGIAR standards of research quality as soon as these become available. In the meantime, set out clear expectations of the minimum research management processes required for all A4NH-supported research, making reference to these in key contractual agreements (eg PPAs), research program strategies, and in the Phase II proposal.</p> <p>i. A4NH should require Centers to adequately document all research projects supported by A4NH, showing what science quality processes have been followed. This would apply both to core A4NH research and that supported under the A4NH wider 'value added' program.</p>	<p>Accepted. A4NH can support improvements in these areas in relation to nutrition and health issues.</p>	<p>State expectations and related processes in Phase 2 proposal.</p> <p>State expectations clearly in PPAs</p>	<p>PMC, PMU</p>	<p>August 2015-March 2016</p>	<p>No for A4NH; yes for centers.</p>

<p>Recommendation A 5 Adopt key CGIAR policies as soon as these become available, making reference to them in key contractual agreements (eg PPAs), research program strategies, and in the Phase II proposal. A4NH should follow Consortium policies wherever possible, or in their absence, should adopt policies from the Lead Center or other suitable sources.</p> <p>i. These should cover at least the following areas: Conflict of interest (including institutional COI), Gender and social equity; Environment research ethics; Partnerships; Working with the private sector; Intellectual property; Data management and open data</p>	<p>Accepted. A4NH can ensure that its processes and strategies are consistent with relevant policies, standards and guidelines (e.g., CGIAR, lead center) and with best practice (e.g., for partnerships).</p>	<p>Review relevant policies, standards and other guidance with regard to suggested areas and ensure consistency with A4NH processes and strategies</p> <p>Revise A4NH strategies (e.g., Partnerships, Gender) as needed.</p>	<p>CO, PMU</p> <p>CRP Director</p>	<p>August 2015-March 2016</p> <p>August 2015-March 2016</p>	<p>No.</p>
<p>Recommendation A 6 Make a commitment to systematically address social equity issues, including attention to disaggregated data and social analysis.</p> <p>i. Include ‘attention to social equity’ as a basic quality expectation for A4NH research, wherever relevant.</p> <p>ii. Build researcher capacity on social equity issues in ANH.</p>	<p>Accepted. Since 2013 A4NH has had an IDO on “Empowerment of women and other marginalized groups” that requires focus on social equity.</p>	<p>Incorporate equity into project management, building on synergies between attention to gender and other aspects of social equity</p> <p>Conduct a review of how best to integrate equity in A4NH</p>	<p>PMU, CRP Director</p>	<p>August 2015 – December 2016</p>	<p>Yes.</p>

Recommendation Area 3: Management and governance	Management response	Actions to be taken	Who Responsible for Action	Timeframe	Additional funding required?
<p><u>Recommendation A 7</u> Strengthen the A4NH monitoring and evaluation function</p> <p>i. Work with CO and other stakeholders to agree and adopt a harmonized CGIAR/CRP research project monitoring system that meets management and reporting needs and sets minimum standards of basic information required for all research projects in Phase II.</p> <p>ii. Implement the plans for a regular rolling program of CRP-Commissioned External Evaluations (CCEEs) of different Flagships and key areas of work, with sufficient resources to allow technical areas to be investigated in depth.</p> <p>iii. Invest in strategic evaluations, including impact evaluations, of research which is in the ‘adoption phase’. Develop a clear strategy for prioritizing such evaluations.</p> <p>iv. Make institutional arrangements for oversight of all A4NH evaluations to safeguard their independence from those promoting the interventions being evaluated. Oversight should include inputs into questions to be addressed in the evaluation.</p>	<p>Accepted. A4NH is committed to monitoring, evaluation and learning. Delays in implementing the 2013 evaluation plan were primarily due to the unexpected requirement to fund and manage the present evaluation, (at a cost to A4NH over approximately \$360,000.)</p>	<p>Work with CO and other CRPs on developing a shared monitoring system/platform through participation of PMU in IEA-supported Evaluation community of practice and CRP-supported Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning community of practice.</p> <p>Update and implement the A4NH evaluation plan, in line with IEA guidance.</p>	<p>PMU</p> <p>PMU, IAC</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>December 2015</p>	<p>No.</p>

<p><u>Recommendation A 8</u> Strengthen A4NH governance and management to support the above agenda</p> <p>i. Conflict of Interest policies should be operationalized in management and governance structures.</p> <p>ii. The CRP governance structure should be adequately resourced to carry out its agreed structure and functions (following Consortium/Fund Council agreements). Inter alia it should take on the oversight of A4NH M&E, with this responsibility allocated to nominated individuals.</p> <p>iii. Strengthen the A4NH management structures, in alignment with central CRP agreements.</p> <p>iv. Strengthen the Program Management Unit to support the A4NH agenda, in particular resource mobilization and communication.</p>	<p>Accepted.</p>	<p>Operationalize conflict of interest policies in management and governance</p> <p>Comply with CO guidance regarding governance structures for CRPs in Phase 2</p> <p>In Phase 2, we propose to involve representatives of center management in the A4NH management committee and to redefine the role of Center Focal Points to be more technical than managerial.</p> <p>Conduct an assessment of internal and external communications needs to support key CRP management functions</p>	<p>CRP Director</p> <p>CO, IFPRI, CRP Director</p> <p>CRP Director</p> <p>PMU</p>	<p>December 2016 (all)</p>	<p>Yes</p>
---	-------------------------	---	---	----------------------------	------------