

CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Core Team Members and Thematic/Regional
Experts
Evaluation of Capacity Development in the
CGIAR
January 2016



Independent
Evaluation
Arrangement

Background to the evaluation

In the CGIAR, agricultural research for development (AR4D) is implemented by 15 research Centers and their partners through CGIAR Research Programs (CRPs). A new 2016-2030 CGIAR Strategy and Results Framework (SRF) was approved in April 2015. The SRF identifies three strategic goals of system level outcomes to guide the work of the CGIAR through the CRPs: i) reduced rural poverty; ii) improved food and nutrition security for health; and iii) improved natural resources systems and ecosystems services. Underneath these high level goals, a set of 10 Intermediate Development Outcomes (IDOs) set out the operational results framework for the CRPs.

In the CGIAR, the Independent Evaluation Arrangement (IEA) Office is responsible for System-level external evaluations. The main mandate of the IEA is to lead the implementation of the CGIAR Policy for Independent External Evaluations¹, through the conduct of strategic evaluations of the CGIAR CRPs and institutional elements of the CGIAR and through the development of a coordinated, harmonized and cost-effective evaluation system in the CGIAR. The IEA's first four-year Rolling Evaluation Work Plan (REWP) 2014-17, approved in November 2013 by the Fund Council, foresees three thematic evaluations in 2016. One of them is the evaluation of Capacity Development in the CGIAR.

This evaluation is being undertaken at the time when the first phase of CRPs is being completed and will end in 2016 and CRPs new proposals are being formulated.

Capacity Development in the CGIAR

Capacity development in the CGIAR has evolved considerably over the last decades: in the 1970s and 1980s many Centers established training units; this was followed by establishing 'research support services' which embedded training directly into research programs, as well as approaches incorporating capacity development work under the care of new knowledge management or communication teams. The International Service for National Agricultural Research (ISNAR), the

¹<http://iea.cgiar.org/sites/default/files/CGIAR%20Evaluation%20Policy%20-%20Final%20Approved%20document%20effective%20February%202012.pdf>

CGIAR center that had a mandate on institutional capacity development, was closed in 2004. In the run up to the first Global Forum on Agriculture Research (GFAR) in 2010, new lines of thinking emerged on Capacity Development, with a growing focus on agricultural research for development, with an emphasis on social learning and innovation.

A Capacity Development Community of Practice (CoP) was created at the end of 2012 with the purpose of sharing ideas and capture lesson learned, as well as identifying a pathway to operationalize Capacity Development across the CGIAR. In 2015, the CoP drafted a Capacity Development Framework intended to provide guidance on the integration of Capacity Development activities into the second round of CRP proposals.

The new CGIAR SRF identifies “developing the capacity of national partners and beneficiaries” as a crosscutting theme on which CRPs need to focus in order to achieve the goals and target set out in the SRF. One IDO and four sub-IDOs have been identified to guide the work of CGIAR system in Capacity Development.

Evaluation purpose and scope

At a time when the first phase of CRPs is ending, the evaluation’s primary purpose is to help the CGIAR Centers, CRPs, and the CGIAR system to improve the relevance, comparative advantage, effectiveness and efficiency of their capacity development activities. It does this by taking stock of CD activities and efforts, by establishing transparency and reviewing their performance, and by collecting lessons learned on which CD interventions have worked, which haven't, and why.

The Evaluation will also have as secondary purpose to provide essential evaluative information to CGIAR partners and the wider expert community.

Importantly, this evaluation will assess where the CGIAR’s efforts are best placed given its comparative advantage and limited resources, including how the CGIAR is positioned to work on developing capacities for national development institutions and their management and what is its comparative advantage, relative to other organizations.

The evaluation will address Capacity Development at multiple levels—individual, organizational and institutional— taking into account that Capacity Development is intended to go beyond the mere transfer of knowledge and skills through training. The evaluation will assess strategies, approaches and relevance of capacity development in CRPs at its multiple levels and the extent to which Capacity Development has been effective. It will look at broad range of Capacity Development interventions that are carried out across the CGIAR. The evaluation will focus on determining the availability, quality and reach of those capacities the CGIAR centers are seeking to develop through their support and whether they have appropriate resources to develop these capacities.

The evaluation will focus on CD targeting individuals, groups, organizations and institutions outside of the CGIAR. Human resource development and institutional CD in Centers, CRPs and on the system level are not covered by this evaluation.

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The evaluation will use various methodologies to take stock of CD activities as well as to assess the relevance, results and the processes followed in CGIAR's CD activities, including: logic models; participatory and systems approaches; and benchmarking against good practices and lessons learned. The methodology will be described in more detail in the Inception report and it will draw, to the extent possible, on existing studies, impact assessments, records and other data for conducting meta-analysis of available evaluative information and estimating the achievements from past research. This approach will be complemented by other means such as gathering perception information and stakeholder interviews. The forward-looking component will review, inter alia, program design and processes, progress made so far towards results, gender mainstreaming, governance and partnership aspects.

The evaluation period covers the first cycle of CRP, starting in 2011. However, the assessment of the results of past CD activities started before the CRPs and still relevant to CRP current strategies will draw lessons, including on good practices.

This evaluation will be carried out by a team: an evaluator, who has been already appointed; and 2-3 Team Members and Regional/Thematic Experts whose qualifications are listed below.

Evaluation timing

The evaluation is scheduled to take place between March and December 2016. A preparatory phase has started with the appointment of a team leader in January 2016. The evaluation will consist of an inception phase (March-2016), an inquiry phase (March-August) and a reporting phase (September-November).

Phase	Period	Main outputs	Responsibility
Preparatory Phase	Dec 2015 – Feb 2016	Final ToRs Evaluation team recruited	IEA
Inception Phase	March 2016	Inception Report	Evaluation team
Inquiry phase	March 2016 – August 2016	Various reports and analysis products as defined in inception report	Evaluation team
Presentation of preliminary findings	Sep 2016	Presentation of preliminary findings Feedback from main stakeholders	Evaluation team IEA
Reporting phase			
Drafting of Report	Sep 2016 – Nov 2016	Draft Evaluation Report	Evaluation team
Final Evaluation Report	Dec 2016	Final Evaluation Report	Evaluation team

Full terms of reference for the evaluation are being developed by the IEA in consultation with stakeholders.

Core Team Members profiles

The IEA Office is looking for Evaluation Core Team Members that will work with the Team Leader on all aspects of the evaluation.

Core Team Members tasks will include data gathering (desk review, databases, interviews) and evaluation analysis (document synthesis, qualitative analysis, developing and testing hypothesis, triangulation of findings).

Qualifications of Core Team Members:

- Experience in evaluating programs, including research, at international level;
- Experience with evaluating CD interventions;
- Experience with research and development institutions and with the regional/national contexts in which the CGIAR works;
- Strong analytical and research skills and “team analysis” (document review, ability to synthesize solid evaluative findings out of raw evidence);
- Excellent record of working in teams.

Desirable additional qualifications:

- Strong academic background in one or several areas of research of the CGIAR
- Extensive experience in developing countries

The assignment of the Team Members will require approximately 50 working days, including travel and work at home-station, spread over a period of approximately 7 months from the inception phase of the evaluation.

Profiles of Regional/Thematic Experts

For questions requiring deep thematic and regional knowledge and experience, the evaluation core team will be supported by several Thematic/Regional Experts.

The Thematic/Regional Expert tasks will include writing a synthesis report on different dimensions of relevance of the CGIAR’s CD activities in various scientific disciplines and regional contexts. This may include conducting selected interviews. In addition, Thematic/Regional Experts will also provide a qualified expert opinion on other evaluation questions.

Qualifications of Thematic/Regional Experts:

- Expertise on one or more research disciplines with relevance for the CGIAR, such as:
- Plant breeding
- Development of tools and methods for sustainable agriculture
- Analysis of national or international policies
- Gender
- Relevant regional expertise in (sub-Saharan) Africa and/or Asia

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The assignment of Thematic/Regional Experts will be defined during the inception phase; it will be approximately 10 days at home-station, spread over a period of approximately 6 months from the inquiry phase of the evaluation.

Application

Interested persons should send their CV and a short cover letter outlining for which position they would like to be considered (Core Team Members or Regional/Thematic Experts), by **15 February 2016** to Manuela Bucciarelli, Evaluation Analyst at the IEA: manuela.bucciarelli@fao.org