

# IEA workshop on evaluating quality of science

10-11 December  
FAO, Rome



Independent  
Evaluation  
Arrangement

## BACKGROUND

All CGIAR evaluations with focus on research will need to formally assess the quality of science (QoS), not only because the CGIAR is a research organization, but also because, together with relevance, QoS is an important determinant of the potential effectiveness of research programs for development outcomes. In the external evaluations of CGIAR research programs (CRPs), QoS is one of the key evaluation criteria used, the other criteria being relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.

In the past, the External Program and Management Reviews (EPMR) of Centers covered quality of science, but there was limited discussion on which dimensions of research should be included in the assessment. Publications have been a traditional measure of scientific output, and bibliometric analysis has been the most common method in assessing quality of science in the past.

By the end of 2015, IEA will have completed an evaluation of 10 CGIAR Research Programs (CRPs). It has provided quality assurance advice to further 5 CRP evaluations commissioned by the CRPs themselves. The IEA has adopted a broad framework for evaluating quality of science (Annex 1), which has been broadly followed in the 10 recent CRP evaluations.

Quality of science was also raised as an issue for CGIAR to address in the 2013 Mid-Term Review that highlighted the ISPC's role in advising the System on issues of science quality and promoting high quality of science. The extent to which science quality can be addressed in program proposal appraisal vs. program evaluation is somewhat different, as are the parameters that be assessed, but these processes are closely linked.

## PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP

The IEA is organizing a 1.5 day workshop for discussing approaches and experiences, primarily in evaluation in the CGIAR, for assessing science quality. The overall purpose of the workshop is to consolidate and strengthen the IEA's approach to evaluating quality of science in the CGIAR considering evaluation framework, evidence used, interpretation of findings and lessons for users of evaluation. Given the experience accumulated through the recent evaluations, this workshop aims at feeding into the broader ISPC-led discussion on QoS in the CGIAR, and for future research evaluation. Through its work, the IEA also aims at enhancing the conceptualization of QoS in the R4D framework at CGIAR centers and programs.

## Evaluating quality of science

The workshop has the following specific objectives:

- Against the experience gained, assess the actual implementation of the IEA QoS evaluation framework in CRP evaluations completed;
- Critically review strengths and weaknesses for generating evidence and its interpretation in evaluations regarding the various dimensions and indicators;
- Learn from reflection of experience elsewhere within and outside CGIAR;
- Strengthen QoS evaluation in the CGIAR, as part of a broader set of evaluation criteria, for improving its usefulness;
- Drawing broader lessons for the CGIAR with the aim of preparing guidelines for evaluation of QoS.

### **PARTICIPATION**

Workshop participants: Total of up to 15 participants, to include representatives of the IEA and its evaluation teams, the ISPC, IDRC, a CRP and a donor.

### **ANNEXES:**

Annex 1: Summary agenda.

Annex 2: Participants

Annex 3: Summary of the IEA framework for evaluating quality of science.

## Annex 1: Agenda

	Day 1 (THURSDAY, 10 <sup>th</sup> December) Setting the context and reflecting on other experiences	Responsibility
<b>9:00 - 10:00</b>	<b>SESSION 1: Setting the context – Assessment of Quality of Science (QoS) in IEA evaluations</b>	<b>Chair: Rachel Sauvinet-Bedouin</b>
9:00 – 9:15	Introduction to the workshop and to Agenda Introduction of participants	<b>Rachel Sauvinet-Bedouin</b>
9:15 – 10:00	Presentation of the IEA QoS evaluation framework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Background to the development of the IEA's QoS evaluation framework</i></li> <li>- <i>What the QoS evaluation framework covers</i></li> <li>- <i>Scope of QoS and link to the other evaluation criteria</i></li> </ul> Questions for clarification (and raising issues for further consideration during workshop)	<b>Sirkka Immonen</b>  <b>All</b>
<b>10:00 – 12:00</b>	<b>SESSION 2: Learning from IEA experiences</b>	<b>Chair: Regina Birner</b>
10:00-10:30	Presentation of how QoS was assessed in IEA evaluations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Methods used across evaluations</i></li> <li>- <i>Programme specific adjustments in approach</i></li> </ul> Questions for clarification (and raising issues for further consideration during workshop)	<b>Sophie Zimm</b>  <b>All</b>
10:45-11:15	Lessons learned from CRP evaluation synthesis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Patterns of findings and recommendations relating to QoS</i></li> <li>- <i>Lessons from interpretation of evidence</i></li> <li>- <i>How was QoS linked to overall CRP evaluation?</i></li> </ul> Questions for clarification (and raising issues for further consideration during workshop)	<b>Christian Roth (skype)</b>  <b>All</b>
11:15 - 12:15	Panel discussion – experiences from IEA evaluations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- on designing the QoS framework for evaluations (from ToR to Inception Report)</li> <li>- on implementing the framework (data collection, analysis, interpretation, etc)</li> </ul>	<b>Evaluation team members and managers</b>
<b>13:15-15:00</b>	<b>SESSION 3: Learning from other experiences on QoS assessment</b>	<b>Chair: Tim Kelley</b>
13:15-13:45	Presentation: ISPC assessment of QoS in proposal appraisals Questions for clarification (and raising issues for further consideration during workshop)	<b>Maggie Gill</b> <b>All</b>
13:45-14:15	Presentation: IDRC experience Questions for clarification (and raising issues for further consideration during workshop)	<b>Tricia Wind</b> <b>All</b>

## Annex 1: Agenda

14:15-15:00	Discussion on IEA evaluation in light of other experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>What are the main issues from IEA experience to-date (IEA, team and user perspectives)?</i></li> <li>- <i>What lessons from outside the IEA are most relevant to be brought to the discussion?</i></li> </ul>	All
<b>15:00 – 17:30</b>	<b>SESSION 4: Working groups</b>	
<b>15:00 – 17:30</b>  Coffee break included	<b>Working Groups</b> Introduction to Working Group assignment Breakout groups to discuss the three dimensions of IEA framework (inputs, management, outputs)	All
<b>Day 2 (FRIDAY, 11<sup>th</sup> December)</b> <b>Looking forward and planning for the future</b>		<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>9:00-10:30</b>	<b>SESSION 4 CONTINUED: Working group results</b>	<b>Chair:</b> <b>Brian Belcher</b>
9:00 – 9:40	Reporting back from working groups (around 10 min each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Ideas coming back from groups</i></li> </ul>	
9:40-10:30	Discussion: Bringing different QoS dimensions together	
<b>11:00 – 12:30</b>	<b>SESSION 5: Conclusions and way forward</b>	<b>Chair: Sirkka Immonen</b>
11:00 – 12:30	Conclusions for strengthening evaluation of QoS for improving its usefulness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>What should evaluation of QoS include and what areas should be strengthened to help decision making for improving QoS?</i></li> <li>- <i>Developing IEA Guidelines for improving QoS evaluation: evidence, interpretation and linking findings to overall evaluation (what should they cover, which issues should they address, how prescriptive should it be)</i></li> <li>- <i>Linking IEA QoS evaluation to the broader discussion of QoS in the CGIAR</i></li> <li>- <i>Closure</i></li> </ul>	<b>Rachel Sauvinet-Bedouin</b>

## Annex 2: Participants

Name	Position	Organization	Contact
<b>EXTERNAL</b>			
Brian Belcher	Senior Associate Scientist	CIFOR	<a href="mailto:B.Belcher@cgiar.org">B.Belcher@cgiar.org</a> brian.belcher@royalroads.ca
Regina Birner	Chair of Social and Institutional Change in Agricultural Development	University of Hohenheim	regina.birner@uni-hohenheim.de
Marlene Diekmann	Research Advisor	GIZ Advisory Service on Agricultural Research for Development	marlene.diekmann@giz.de
Philippe Ellul	Senior Science Officer	CGIAR Consortium	p.ellul@cgiar.org
Julie Fitzpatrick	Director	Moredun Research Institute	Julie.Fitzpatrick@moredun.ac.uk
Margaret Gill	Chair	ISPC	m.gill@abdn.ac.uk
Tim Kelley	Senior Agricultural Research Officer	SPIA	Timothy.Kelley@fao.org
Christian Roth*	Research Program Manager	CSIRO	Christian.Roth@csiro.au
Rachid Serraj	Senior Agricultural Research Officer	ISPC	Rachid.Serraj@fao.org
Tricia Wind	Senior Program Officer Corporate Strategy & Evaluation Division	IDRC	twind@idrc.ca
<b>IEA</b>			
Rachel Bedouin	Head	IEA	Rachel.Bedouin@fao.org
Manuela Bucciarelli	Evaluation Analyst	IEA	Manuela.Bucciarelli@fao.org
Federica Coccia	Evaluation Analyst	IEA	Federica.Coccia@fao.org
Sirkka Immonen	Senior Evaluation Officer	IEA	Sirkka.Immonen@fao.org
Sophie Zimm	Evaluation Analyst	IEA	Sophie.zimm@fao.org
Jenin Assaf	Communications Officer	IEA	jenin.assaf@fao.org

\*On skype

## Annex 3: IEA framework

IEA framework for evaluating quality of science is multidimensional focusing on inputs, outputs and management processes. The dimensions under each component are largely consistent across CRP evaluations, as are sources of evidence (records, documents, perceptions) and methods (bibliometric, interviews, peer assessment, surveys). In CRPs that engage in plant breeding, the quality and efficiency of breeding process and germplasm output are assessed as part of the QoS evaluation.

### INPUTS

- Human researcher resource; leadership, teams
- Research partnership
- Facilities and resources
- Data management
- Research design
- Evaluative assessments

### MANAGEMENT PROCESSES

- Overall management of QoS
- Processes in place for enhancing and assuring science quality
- Incentives

### OUTPUTS

- Research publications
- Non-publication outputs
- Research processes e.g. (breeding, synthesis)