

## Background paper for science leaders meeting, Montpellier, June 2018.

# Introduction to proposed system-wide program performance standards, with draft of 'Long List' of topics and measures to be considered as potential CGIAR performance management standards

### Introducing program performance management standards

1. One of the innovations in the new business plan approach for CGIAR is the proposal that the System adopts **CGIAR Program Performance Management Standards**. This is a response to the challenges of performance assessment that are inherent in the nature of agricultural research for development and variety of the CGIAR Research Programs.
2. The key principle underpinning the standards is to *separate performance management for the current research program from reporting on results* (as the latter mainly relates to past research, particularly for outcomes and impacts). The logic behind this is outlined in Box 1 below. The idea of the standards is also inspired by, and incorporates learning from, the experience of a similar program to improve performance management in non-CGIAR international agricultural research centers (IARCs)<sup>1</sup>
3. The main objectives of the proposed CGIAR Program Performance Management Standards are:
  - a. To **provide assurance** to Funders and other stakeholders that program<sup>2</sup> management standards are high, and that they can invest with confidence.
  - b. To **improve program performance management** across CGIAR wherever needed.

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<sup>1</sup> Evaluation of DFID's Performance Management Funding of International Agriculture Research Centres, Landell Mills 2016, [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/517111/DFIDs-Perf-Man-Funding-Intern-Agri-Research-Centres.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/517111/DFIDs-Perf-Man-Funding-Intern-Agri-Research-Centres.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Purposely, this paper is about **program** performance management standards as a first priority in delivering an enhanced focus on performance in the CGIAR System. There is the prospect of agreeing and adopting performance standards more generally across the whole CGIAR System, and would be a topic to be taken up during the initial business plan implementation period, for inclusion in the next business plan.

- c. To **focus program efforts** on a limited number of well-defined high-priority areas identified jointly by key stakeholders, in each program cycle, to complement the more complex analysis carried out in program evaluations and appraisals.
4. The rationale behind each of these three objectives:
- a. **Providing assurance that high-quality performance management systems are in place** means ensuring for example that research design and partnerships are fully focused on delivering impact; that research is of high scientific quality; that research managers are taking tough decisions when necessary to stop funding some “dead-end” research lines and reallocating funding to others; and that other aspects of management systems are in place to promote a variety of agreed system objectives. The underlying ‘theory of change’ is that increased Funder confidence in CGIAR management systems, together with the reporting of a steady stream of credible, evidenced results (a separate workstream) and a credible system for strategic allocation of pooled funding, will lead to increased investment in pooled funding, with improved efficiency and consequently greater ‘aid effectiveness’.
  - b. **Improving program performance across CGIAR:** The requirement to meet the standards should serve as a guarantee that program performance management is consistently good across the whole CGIAR, and not just in the top-performing programs. Partnerships with CGIAR (including internally, e.g. between CRPs) are expected to benefit from increased confidence that *all* systems are robust.
  - c. The value of **focusing on a limited set of clearly-defined standards** is that they can shine a light on specific elements of interest to Funders and other stakeholders, which can sometimes get ‘lost’ in an overall appraisal with many elements to consider, where an overall judgment needs to be made about program quality. Examples of elements for focus include the implementation of key policies of interest (e.g. gender, or open data), as well as ‘boring but important’ areas of management (for example, the need for research project documentation to be available for others to read, or the need for high-quality evidence on results). From the research program management perspective, it is also more effective to have a few high priority areas to “fix” in a particular cycle, rather than having attention too dispersed. The ability to change the focus set of standards over cycles (see point e below) is also important, to continuously improve standards.

### Box 1: Why “Program Performance Management”?

In AR4D, unlike in many development projects, **there is no simple way at the system (Portfolio) level to use “results”** as a basis for judging the quality of research management. The reasons include:

- a) **The long period of time** required for much of AR4D uptake to get to practical outcomes and impacts, in the circumstances of rural low-income agriculture (often 5-20 years or more) – so that ‘currently measured outcomes’ flow from past research outputs and only indirectly (if at all) reflect the current research Portfolio<sup>3</sup>.
- b) Outcomes and impacts of CGIAR AR4D result from **complex chains involving multiple organizations**, so that the contribution of CGIAR cannot be simply ‘monitored’, but needs to be estimated via rigorous impact assessments (which are expensive and therefore employed selectively).
- c) By its very nature, research is a step into the unknown, and it is not expected that all lines of research will be equally successful<sup>4</sup>. The art of research management, rather than trying to ensure equal attainment of output targets across all research lines, is **to manage a portfolio of research to get the best overall return**, including supporting some ‘high risk, high return’ lines that are potential game changers but may take many years to deliver<sup>5</sup>. In terms of cost-benefit analysis, it has been demonstrated that a few high performing research innovations can yield returns that amply repay the cost of the entire CGIAR Research Portfolio<sup>6</sup>.
- d) The highly technical nature of most research means that **subject matter specialists who are in touch with the latest thinking and developments are needed to assess its scientific quality**, efficiency of design and (often) other aspects such as the appropriateness of partnerships. This argues against trying to micromanage R4D performance from a distance.
- e) There’s a very real risk of the issue becoming “what’s measured, matters”: **poorly chosen metrics can set up strong ‘perverse incentives’** (or ‘goal displacement’) for research programs and individual researchers to, for example, over-claim outputs and outcomes, to set R4D targets that are less demanding and include less ‘high-risk, high return’ work, and/or to focus their attention on deliverables such as publications, instead of outcomes. These ‘perverse incentives’ have been recorded from previous PBM attempts in CGIAR and elsewhere<sup>7</sup>. Excessive ‘command and control’ also runs the risk of penalizing creativity and demoralizing researchers, making it harder for CGIAR to attract and retain top talent.
- f) Finally, the **environment for AR4D is changing rapidly**, with new technologies and new types of skills required, and research personnel and programs may also (for other reasons) have changed from those who were responsible for past results. Thus, the historical success of past research outputs and outcomes from a particular R4D program may provide some general comfort to investors, but is not necessarily predictive of future outputs and outcomes.

**Does this mean that results are not important? On the contrary**, research managers are expected to ‘have an eye to impact’ at all times, and to commission appropriate studies to both evidence and understand their results. Outputs, outcomes and impacts are regularly reported at system level. But a simplistic ‘comparison of results’ of complex research programs doing very different things is not a basis for performance management.

<sup>3</sup> Another big difference from development projects is that the target geographical area for R4D outputs is normally much larger and more diverse than the actual operational area where the research is carried out and may not even be known at the beginning of a research program.

<sup>4</sup> “The business of science is intensely frustrating. Most experiments fail, most great ideas come to nothing, and most genuine discoveries turn out to be of modest importance. Years of effort can easily be wasted on what turns out to be a mirage.” Dr Rupert Beale, University of Cambridge (2018), London Review of Books in an article on CRISPR

<sup>5</sup> Examples of high risk, high return lines are attempts to develop a malaria vaccine, or C4 rice. See also Perrin, B (2002) How to—and how not to – evaluate innovation. Evaluation: 8: 13-28

<sup>6</sup> Raitzer, D; Kelley, T (2008) Benefit–cost meta-analysis of investment in the International Agricultural Research Centers of the CGIAR, *Agricultural Systems* 96:108-123

<sup>7</sup> For relevant CGIAR experience, see Immonen S, Cooksy LL (2014): Using performance measurement to assess research: Lessons learned from the international agricultural research centres Evaluation 20: 96–114 An example of an indicator which has been shown to result in goal displacement is “percentage of outputs achieved”.

5. The main elements of the proposal on adopting CGIAR Program Performance Management Standards include:
- a. Agreement between key stakeholders (primarily the System Management Board with the System Council/Funders and research leaders) on a short set (indicatively 5-6<sup>8</sup>) of priority programmatic performance topics and measures<sup>9</sup> for each 3-year business cycle.
  - b. Topics and measures will be clearly defined, linked to CGIAR's risk management and Quality of Research For Development (QoR4D<sup>10</sup>) frameworks, and focused primarily on current management and systems, not on 'results' (for the reasons given in Box 1). The chosen measures should also be under direct or indirect control of the programs being assessed, should work to align program incentives with system goals and objectives, and should not impose a disproportionate additional management burden on researchers.
  - c. Assurance of meeting CGIAR standards can be provided by independent assessment (specific roles for system advisory bodies are under discussion). The idea is for only one assessment to be made per three-year cycle, most likely in mid-cycle. There will be no ranking of research programs.
  - d. Failing to meet any particular standard will lead to an agreed action plan, with specific improvement areas flagged that must be met to achieve 'quality at entry' for the next cycle. However, no financial penalties will be applied 'within cycle' for not meeting the standards. The aim is to maintain stable and predictable funding within the three year cycle for researchers and partners to be able to work with confidence.
  - e. The final decision on CGIAR standards will take place at the end of a cycle/beginning of new proposals, as part of the quality at entry assessment (by the System Council's science advisory processes). To minimise the burden of assessment, one idea is to ask any research programs which did not meet all the standards in the mid-cycle assessment to provide a self-assessment on how they have made improvements to meet the standards since then – and the independent advisory bodies could then have the right to carry out an independent check in case of any doubt.

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<sup>8</sup> At the recent SIMEC meeting, Funders looked at the zero draft Long List, and expressed their concerns that 5-6 topics would be insufficient for the first cycle – they wanted to bring in many more topics. This will be an important area for discussion.

<sup>9</sup> Measures can be qualitative or quantitative – see Long List in annex for examples

<sup>10</sup> [https://ispc.cgiar.org/sites/default/files/pdf/ispc\\_brief\\_62\\_qord.pdf](https://ispc.cgiar.org/sites/default/files/pdf/ispc_brief_62_qord.pdf)

- e. The specific set of topics and measurements chosen for the CGIAR standards will change/ increase over funding cycles. For example, the required standard to meet could increase over cycles from “20% of publications published with open data” in the first cycle to “80% of publications published with open data” in the third cycle; or the specific topics in focus could change.
6. A secondary, but important set of questions is the ‘who, how and when’ for assessing standards. This will be addressed during the exploration process over the coming months – in close collaboration with CGIAR’s advisory services since it is anticipated they will have a role in the assessment processes.

### Next steps on program performance management standards

7. The April 2018 System Management Board meeting and the May 2018 SIMEC meeting both discussed papers on performance management, and gave a green light for further development of the performance standards. CRP leaders, advisory bodies and the Monitoring Evaluation and Learning Community of Practice have already commented on a zero draft of the Long List (comments can be seen in Annex).
8. The proposed next step is for Research Leaders and Funders (represented by SIMEC) to hold discussions on the specific standards to be covered in the forthcoming business cycle, and how they should be measured. The aim is to have a set of standards and measures, responsibilities and processes fully defined and agreed for use in the next 3-year business plan cycle. Final approval of the standards would be by the System Council at its meeting in November 2018 in accordance with Article 6.1(v) of the CGIAR System Framework, upon the recommendation of the System Management Board.
9. The Research Leaders meeting is requested to:
  - have a first look through the Long List of Standards, and
  - agree how Research Leaders as a group would like to manage their contribution to the above process.

## ANNEX 1 – DRAFT LONG LIST

### Introduction

This following table contains a first draft of a 'long-list' of possible topics and measures to form the basis of an agreed set of CGIAR performance management standards for the initial CGIAR business plan 3-year cycle, and providing an opportunity to consider evolving performance management standards for the following 3-year cycles.

In particular:

1. The right-hand column of the table summarizes views received from CRP leaders (and one DDG-R), a number of Centers' Monitoring Evaluation and Learning Community of Practice ('MELCoP') members, the CGIAR System Internal Audit Function, ISPC and IEA and the CGIAR gender group: verbatim when possible, but sometimes edited down for clarity or taken from track changes. (Please note that many of these comments refer to the zero draft and where possible have already been incorporated into this new draft - whether these adequately respond to the comments is something to check.)
2. The Long List is intended to be as comprehensive as possible, as it is intended to demonstrate that the full range of potential areas of performance management have been considered, even if not all have been selected. **We would therefore welcome additional topics for the Long List**, whether they are high priority or not. Some have already been raised by people commenting on the zero draft: these are listed in the final rows of the table.
3. The table is ordered according to the order of the CGIAR risk framework, starting with 'relevance'. In the left-hand column, a color-coding system is used to indicate potential priority for each 'topic' identified, reflecting comments received, **as a basis for discussion** (please note that these categories are not fixed)
  - a. **Green** indicates a potential top priority topic for Cycle 1 (although further work may still be needed on definitions and measures);
  - b. **Yellow** indicates a Cycle 2 (or later) priority topic, and
  - c. **Grey** indicates an area where more work is needed to clarify whether/how this should be included as a distinct performance management topic.

4. The word 'program' is used in the table to indicate a CRP or other research program. (Some of these topics/measures may not be appropriate for Platforms.) **The initial brief for this work was to concentrate on performance management of CRPs. However, many of the topics are in the 'locus of management control' of Centers. How to handle this is an important topic for discussion.**
  
5. Some of the measures refer to 'projects'. A project is defined in this table as the *lowest level of management of research, consisting of a time-limited set of activities/intended outputs with a common objective and a single locus of management. A project may have one or more than one funding source.* This is not necessarily the same meaning as elsewhere in CGIAR, for example a "project" in the MARLO MIS system is a common set of activities with common objectives, but not necessarily managed as a single unit or by a single manager. One of the points of debate on the zero draft of this long list was whether a project (as defined here) is a suitable level of focus, for both conceptual and practical reasons. Furthermore, there are many difficulties in 'retrofitting' standards to ongoing projects. *For this reason, topics in the long list relating to project assessment (e.g. topic no. 1) were put into the 'yellow' category for second or later cycles.*

**Table 1 Draft Long List of Topics and Measures to consider for Program Performance Standards**

No <sup>11</sup>	TOPICS: Possible topics to consider for <u>Long List</u>	Rationale /assumptions for measuring this as a program performance topic <sup>12</sup>	MEASURES: Potential measures (for Cycle 1)	LOCUS OF MANAGEMENT CONTROL	Points to clarify <sup>13</sup>	Comments received <b>on previous (zero) draft</b> from CRP leaders/ advisory bodies (please note that <i>these have already been incorporated if possible</i> )
1	<b>Relevance:</b> Projects in program have credible documentation	While programs should have approved impact pathways at higher	At least XX% of the Program's projects document: - a clear and credible	Center/funders for W3/bilateral projects	<b><i>For all project level measures: it is more realistic to start with new projects and not</i></b>	- "This is absolutely essential for PBM" - Don't try to retrofit to old projects (i.e. this topic

<sup>11</sup> Topics have been numbered for convenient reference when commenting on this draft, but please note that the order may change in the next draft.

<sup>12</sup> Rationale/ assumptions about the value of the chosen measure should be based on the best evidence available and could be further tested over time.

<sup>13</sup> In addition to the 'who, how and when' of measurement

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	<p>of objectives and assumptions, and clear explanation of how they are aligned with program objectives.</p> <p><i>A project is defined in this table as the lowest level of management of research, consisting of a time-limited set of activities/intended outputs with a common objective and a <u>single locus of management</u>. A project may have one or more than one funding source.</i></p>	<p>levels (CRP/FP /cluster), it is equally important that individual projects reflect this and clearly contribute to these.</p> <p>Checking documentation is a cost-effective, non-invasive means to check a clear 'outcome focus' as well as whether assumptions are credible and aligned with program objectives<sup>14</sup>.</p>	<p>explanation of objectives and assumptions, with a clear product and linkage to delivery pathway in mind (as appropriate to stage of maturity of research)</p> <p>- a clear explanation of how it contributes to the research program Theory of Change ToC), or to a cross-CGIAR ToC, e.g. through outputs, testing causal links etc.</p> <p>- (as relevant) clear explanation of how it fits relevant policy priorities (national or international)</p>	<p>CRP for W1/W2 projects (in most cases)</p> <p>Partial control/leverage by CRP for co-funded (W1/2 plus bilateral) projects (in most cases)</p>	<p><b>retrofit all of them – so these measures should be introduced in cycle 2.</b></p> <p>Verification of a random sample - sample size, resampling etc</p> <p>Agree quality criteria</p> <p>Agree XX (%)</p>	<p>should be introduced only from Cycle 2).</p> <p>- This requirement should be at the 'MARLO project'/ MEL mini-cluster level, not the level of the individual project/grant (there are many).</p> <p>- For the initial phase, this should focus on a ToC for each major outcome/output, which usually map to a CoA. Later it can be cascaded down to smaller shorter-term projects.</p> <p>- Only include projects that have W1/2 funding or co-funding, as there is no CRP leverage over bilateral projects</p> <p>- Only include projects over a certain size e.g. \$5M as there are hundreds of grants</p> <p>- Make clear that the</p>

<sup>14</sup> For a practical example of how this type of analysis has previously been used in evaluating a CRP, please see Figure 8, p.27 in <http://a4nh.cgiar.org/files/2015/01/Volume-1-FINAL-REPORT-Evaluation-of-A4NH.pdf>



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						<p>“explanations” do not need to be long and complex (provide an example).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Projects may also respond to cross-CGIAR objectives and not specifically to the main CRP ToC, especially for integrating CRPs.</li> <li>- <i>(this comment also applies to no. 2)</i> This should not simply about be weeding out bilateral projects that are clearly peripheral to the CRP. Does it really make a difference if a bilateral project not requiring W1/2 is aligned to a CRP/Flagship or not, if it isn't using any CRP resources?</li> </ul>
2	<p><b>Relevance:</b></p> <p>Program has a credible management process for selection, prioritization and design of new projects added to program</p>	<p>Participatory design and review will improve the likelihood of well-designed projects which are linked to the Theory of Change of the program</p>	<p>Qualitative pass/fail judgment about the decision <u>process</u> and its operation in practice, based on document review (of decision processes) and agreed criteria, for example: existence of structured decision process; documentation of logic for decisions, peer review of new projects by adequately qualified individuals; documentation of adequate</p>	<p>CRP or FP Management</p>	<p>Agree quality criteria for process – taking into account proportionality and the need for simplicity, not cumbersome processes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This goes to the very core of the PBM system and should be regarded as important, as far as capacity allows.</li> <li>- Peer review and committee structures will impose a considerable burden on smaller CRPs; there should be a formal decision process, but proportionate to resources.</li> <li>- This should apply to</li> </ul>

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			consultation with key stakeholders; consideration of CGIAR 'comparative advantage', gap analysis and fit to strategies etc			W1&2-funded projects, activities only, which relate to existing and new bilaterals (e.g. linked to specific CoAs) - Funders' tight time lines work against this. Instead of defining cumbersome project review criteria that cannot be implemented, ensure that new projects are aligned with the CRP agenda. - A practical issue here is that decisions of mapping to CRPs for bilateral grants sometimes need to be made very quickly as the center scientist has a deadline to make and is running late.
3	<b>Relevance/ all areas of QoR4D:</b>  Program governance structures provide an effective scientific challenge and verification function for management prioritization of research, including	Program governance structures, supported by scientific advisory bodies, are the correct body to provide technical oversight and challenge for CRP	Qualitative pass/fail judgement based on agreed criteria, <i>for example</i> : 1. Governance structure has sufficient expertise, powers, time and resources to review issues and make judgments 2.Roles and responsibilities are clear between different governance structures (clear ToR etc)	CRP/PTF Lead Center Management and Board of Trustees, supported by scientific advisory/steering committees empowered to	Criteria need agreeing and defining precisely.  Other aspects of governance e.g. financial oversight addressing risks are equally important and may require listing as a separate	- There are some challenges inherent in current governance structures, including the relationship between the ISCs and Boards, that still need some working out. Should assess whether there is clear delineation of roles and responsibilities between the various governance

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	consideration of future scenarios	management decisions.	<p>3. There is documented evidence that structure has operated effectively to examine and challenge decisions, including following up “must have” recommendations from advisory bodies</p> <p>Evidence: Analysis of structures, processes, records of meetings (and interviews if resources allow?)</p>	make recommendations to BoT	topic to be assessed	<p>structures that are responsible for CRP delivery and that the balance between challenge, independence and authority is appropriate, enabling effective delivery and lower transactions.</p> <p>- Could we mention here the follow up on the “must haves” from ISPC commentaries</p>
4	<b>Relevance/effectiveness</b> Program theory of change is regularly reviewed and updated by Program management and logical decisions are taken about (re)prioritization of W1/2 funding, including which areas of research activities to expand or cut back.	Good research management requires this.	<p>Qualitative pass /fail with agreed criteria, for example:</p> <p>Documentation of regular transparent review process, including key stakeholders (e.g. annual review meeting)</p> <p>Evidence: minutes etc.</p>	CRP Management for W1/W2 funding	Criteria need to be developed and agreed	<p>- We have countless project-based stakeholder consultations and reviews, all requested by the same funders that are part of the SC. In addition, CRP proposals have been sent to stakeholders for input. We can build in fewer, better and more systematic approaches provided funders strongly increase the proportion of W1&amp;W2 within the portfolio. If not, we cannot agree to additional reviews and stakeholder consultations. At this stage, we are thoroughly over-governed.</p>

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5	<p><b>Relevance:</b></p> <p>Gender equality is appropriately mainstreamed into the program</p>	<p>“to help achieve more gender-equitable distribution of food and income [CGIAR researchers] must urgently find more effective ways for enabling poor women as well as men to benefit from the adoption and sustained use of innovations resulting from research”.</p> <p><i>Mainstreaming Gender in the CGIAR</i><sup>15</sup></p>	<p>A number of suggestions have been made, of which the simplest is:</p> <p>All/at least XX% of projects are tagged using the agreed OECD gender scoring system (1,2,3) - with verification of a random sample to check that the scores are appropriately assigned</p>	<p>Project managers, with guidance from CRP management/ Independent Steering Committee and CGIAR gender network</p>	<p>Further discussion is required of measures. A variety of more complex measures have also been suggested – see comments and also the gender group’s ‘Mainstreaming Performance Indicators’.<sup>16</sup></p> <p>Canada and Australia have noted particular requirements in this area (to follow up)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Self-assessment CRP-MC reviewed by CRP-ISC, based on tracking of               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- # FTE gender research / mainstreaming</li> <li>- # gender components in proposals</li> <li>- # projects, total budget (any source) for strategic gender research, % total, % W1&amp;2 budget (otherwise, no basis for comparison across CRPs)</li> <li>- # CRP/Partner staff trained in Gender-related skills, total budget deployed, % total CRP budget &amp; % total W1&amp;2 budget (otherwise, no basis for comparison across</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<sup>15</sup> [https://cgspace.cgiar.org/bitstream/handle/10947/4657/CGIAR%20Gender%20Research%20Action%20Plan-Overview\\_Brief1.pdf?sequence=2](https://cgspace.cgiar.org/bitstream/handle/10947/4657/CGIAR%20Gender%20Research%20Action%20Plan-Overview_Brief1.pdf?sequence=2)

<sup>16</sup> [https://gender.cgiar.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Gender-mainstreaming-performance-indicators\\_July2016.pdf](https://gender.cgiar.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Gender-mainstreaming-performance-indicators_July2016.pdf)

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						<p>CRPs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Track CRP-internal use of gender research/mainstreaming tools</li> <li>- Quite a number of scientists need to have their capacity strengthened to effectively understand the gender implications of their research. Therefore, setting indicators or targets will be challenging and may end up tick box – but perhaps could be more nuanced to include capacity building?</li> </ul>
6	<p><b>Relevance:</b></p> <p>Climate change is appropriately mainstreamed into the program</p>	<p>Climate change is mainstreamed into all CRP proposals (with support from CCAFS as the integrating CRP)</p>	<p>Requires further investigation. If each program produces reports on progress, these could possibly be qualitatively assessed.</p>	<p>CRP management</p>	<p>Requires further investigation (including with CCAFS) on appropriateness, measures etc</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Similar comments to gender (re. need for researcher capacity development)</li> <li>- Each flagship produced a statement of the relevance of climate change in the approved proposal. At three-year intervals the CRP should report on a flagship basis against the work described in the proposal.</li> <li>- Why do you want to track what CRPs/PFs are doing by</li> </ul>

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						themselves, apart from their involvement in CCAFS? So, everybody can say they do Climate Change? This is nonsense and provides the wrong incentives.
7	<p><b>Delivery/Effectiveness:</b></p> <p>Research and MELIA<sup>17</sup> are strategically used by the program, including for testing assumptions in impact pathways.</p>	<p>Monitoring, evaluation, translational /operational research and outcome/impact assessments are essential tools to test assumptions and improve program approaches.</p>	<p>Qualitative pass/fail judgment based on agreed criteria... for example</p>	<p>CRP management (with limited resources)</p>	<p>Criteria need more investigation to determine if a clear (fair) pass/fail bar is possible. Resources for MELIA are vital and judgment should not be based on lack of resources.</p>	<p>- Criteria could include for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MELIA multi-year plan approved, budgeted and progress monitored</li> <li>- MELIA (learning, evaluation) tools made available to CRP and partner scientists (via different channels, including Project Management training)</li> <li>- Some form of tracking of tool use in place</li> <li>- I would limit CRP testing of impact pathways to the point where the research first interacts with the SRF. Testing the assumptions built into of the SRF (sub- IDOs to IDOs to SLOs)</li> </ul>

<sup>17</sup> 'Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Impact Assessment'

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						would be a huge undertaking to do properly and if at all attempted by CGIAR should be done collectively. - MELIA requires significant financial resources.
8	<p><b>Delivery/Effectiveness:</b> Program works effectively and efficiently with all "Program Participants" (co-managers)<sup>18</sup></p> <p>(Note that nos. 8 and 9 could be merged, but there is a good argument to separate out the specific issues faced by this small, critical group of management partners)</p>	Good partnership practices among Program Participants are essential to promote effectiveness and efficiency of delivery of outputs.	Qualitative pass/fail judgment based on agreed criteria (tbc). For example, a) do the PPAs reflect good partnership practices, including for example clearly defined lines of communication; agreed appeal /mediation processes?; b) is performance of all participants reviewed and documented regularly (e.g. annually)? c) Do these reviews highlight any major problems?	CRP management	Like some other measures in the Long List, there are choices to make about the depth vs cost of data collection. This could be measured cheaply through checking documentation, or in depth (e.g. via interviews) in an evaluation/review. This will be discussed after shortlisting topics.	<p>- This seems like an aspirational goal, but not something that can be captured meaningfully in a pass/fail judgment.</p> <p>- Disagreement comes at the budget allocation stage, and no participating partner is satisfied with the allocation. Care should be taken to avoid setting up formulaic rules for allocation of the budget. The ISC should ultimately pronounce on whether the MC and PMU have used good process and judgment in assigning budgets.</p>
9	<b>Delivery/Effectiveness:</b>	Selecting and managing external	Criteria to be decided, for example:	At project level (the majority of	Investigate and agree	- CRPs all have partnership strategies so perhaps this

<sup>18</sup> Program Participants are the small set of internal and sometimes external partners who come together to manage the Program and its Flagships.

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	<p>Program selects appropriate external partnerships and manages these appropriately to promote delivery of outputs and outcomes, linked to the impact pathway</p>	<p>partnerships appropriately is key to delivery of all CGIAR research programs. Partnerships can be at any phase of research, from discovery stage to delivery at scale.</p>	<p>At least XX% of projects document appropriate partnerships for key links in their delivery pathways, appropriate to their objectives and stage of maturity.</p> <p>Partnerships meet standards of good partnership practice (see ISPC study)<sup>19</sup></p> <p>Program has/implements a partnership strategy</p>	<p>partnerships):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-CRP for W1/W2 projects</li> <li>-Center/funders for W3 projects</li> <li>-Partial control/leverage by CRP for co-funded (W1/2 plus bilateral) projects</li> </ul>	<p>pass/fail criteria – making use of ISPC partnership framework (see footnote) and partnership strategies</p>	<p>could be linked to the quality and implementation of those strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There must be some consideration of difference between projects funded by W1/2 and bilateral – in some cases there are not so many 'free choices' which partnerships can be pursued.</li> <li>- To make the right partnerships for <u>scaling</u> implies a significant shift in the allocation of [CGIAR] resources from research to development. If this is something the system truly wants us to prioritize then by all means make this a cycle 1 standard, however, this needs to be phased.</li> <li>- CGIAR has already piloted various good mechanisms to assess partnerships; don't reinvent the wheel. e.g.: Partnership self-assessments and checks by CRP-SC; CGIAR Partnership</li> </ul>

<sup>19</sup> [https://ispc.cgiar.org/sites/default/files/ISPC\\_StrategicStudy\\_Partnerships.pdf](https://ispc.cgiar.org/sites/default/files/ISPC_StrategicStudy_Partnerships.pdf)



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						/ Stakeholders Surveys; CRP scientists' networks analysis (started by ILAC)
10	<p><b>Delivery/Effectiveness:</b></p> <p>Capacity development (CapDev) is appropriately designed and delivered in support of the Program Theory of Change.</p>	<p>CapDev is an essential aspect of research and delivery. (It goes beyond individual training and is often a two -way process.)</p>	<p>Qualitative pass/fail judgment based on agreed program-level criteria, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Program has systems and checklists in place for oversight of plans for [formal] capacity development [above a certain value].</li> </ul> <p>Items that could be on such a checklist could include (proportionate to the level of investment)<sup>20</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- fit with program/project Theory of Change</li> <li>- needs assessment/analysis</li> <li>- clear objectives and targets</li> <li>- consideration of most effective and efficient roles for CGIAR and partners based on 'comparative advantage' of each</li> <li>- consideration of organizational as well as individual CapDev</li> </ul>	<p>Mostly at project level (see notes under #1)</p>	<p>Work is needed on measures that are reasonable and proportionate, linked to CapDev strategies and learning from the CapDev Community of Practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Link to CRP Cap Dev strategies and to the indicators from the CapDev CoP.</li> <li>- There must be a recognition of resource \$ scarcity and lack of funds for doing such work concomitant with a lack of influence over the internal mechanisms of some bilaterals as they are governed by the calls issues by bilaterals.</li> <li>- We all know that CapDev is important and we all know (I hope) that this must be undertaken largely with development funding. Just to flag this so that expectations that CGIAR is going to remove capacity constraints all along the impact pathway do not form.</li> </ul>

<sup>20</sup> See [http://iea.cgiar.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/CapDev\\_Eval-Report-Vol-I--Report.pdf](http://iea.cgiar.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/CapDev_Eval-Report-Vol-I--Report.pdf)

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			- monitoring immediate effects and (strategically) later follow up			
11	<p><b>Reputation/Legitimacy</b></p> <p>Key program <u>and project</u> documents are available to be viewed by key stakeholders, including CGIAR advisory bodies and the CGIAR System Organization</p>	<p>Availability of project-level documents is a 'boring but important' necessary step for internal assessments of aspects such as impact pathways (above).</p> <p>It is also the first step towards more challenging standards such as compliance with the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI)</p>	<p>Key research project documents covering at least XX% (80%?) of program budget (across all funding Windows) are available electronically on a central MIS system (e.g. MARLO, MEL) or another system that is accessible by central system advisory bodies</p>	<p>Storage of project documentation is often the responsibility of Center Management, although many CRPs also upload project documentation on MIS</p>	<p>Availability of documents checked.</p> <p>Agree definition of 'research project'</p> <p>Agree definition of 'key' project documents.</p> <p>Agree XX%</p>	<p>- Existing and new projects: all projects in the first cycle should be required to upload into MARLO core project documentation, and a short paragraph explaining how it fits into the CRP's impact pathways/TOC.</p> <p>- Not worth its own item, integrate into others</p> <p>- Agree we should definitely be working towards IATI standards</p>
12	<p><b>Reputation/Legitimacy:</b></p> <p>Program progress reporting to CGIAR (annual reports, common reporting indicators) is substantially complete</p>	<p>Transparency is an important part of accountability to funders and other stakeholders.</p>	<p>Completeness – measures to be determined.</p> <p>Evidence – check a sample of common reporting indicators and statements in annual reports.</p>	<p>CRP Management – for W1/2 projects funded or substantially cofunded by W1/2. Funders – for W3</p>	<p>Needs more work on:</p> <p>Scope of reporting from project level</p> <p>Determination of completeness.</p>	<p>- Reporting and evidence are two different issues. Evidence can be time-consuming and expensive to gather (see comments on 16).</p> <p>- You have other ways to deal with this and it is not</p>

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	and adequately evidenced					really part of good research management
13	<p><b>Reputation/Legitimacy:</b></p> <p>Projects in program have appropriate ethical approval and ethical training of staff and contractors when required</p>	<p>Ethical approval processes (IRB), training and checks are an important part of ensuring ethical work with human and animal subjects, and appropriate safeguarding.</p>	<p>Agreed criteria e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Percentage of projects with documentation of ethical checks/IRB (where relevant – i.e. when working with human or animal subjects).</li> <li>- Inclusion of appropriate clauses (IRB and training) in PPAs and contracts</li> <li>-Training records</li> </ul>	<p>Ethical approval processes (IRB) are the responsibility of Centers. Training is often a project responsibility (see note on projects). Centers, not CRPs, manage contracts with partners. CRPs can promote the inclusion of appropriate clauses in PPAs, but may not be able to enforce them.</p>	<p>The question to address is not whether ethics is an important topic (all agree it is) but whether it should be tackled some other way (e.g. see first comment at right, in italics).</p> <p>If agreed for the first cycle, the measures need to be carefully selected</p>	<p><i>- The IRB issue should be handled differently. The CGIAR should just demand directly to all centers that they implement this and give them a deadline, without involving CRPs. It is also the centers that contract with partners and can enforce that ethics are handled by partner organizations.</i></p> <p>-- A primary concern here is to avoid the duplication of ethics review. Perhaps the easiest approach is simply to require new projects to submit documentation supporting their ethics review process [regardless of where it was conducted]. This could be a simple pass/fail criteria for projects.</p> <p>- Managed by centers so maybe only look at projects mapped to the CRP. Rather</p>

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						than the process, you could look at share of [projects mapped to the CRP that have IRB approval.
14	<p><b>Scientific credibility/Legitimacy</b> The program has processes in place to ensure that research methods are sound, that perspectives of intended users have been considered and that research findings are robust, logically interpreted and clearly presented.</p>	<p>The CGIAR aims to produce consistently high-quality research. Low quality research is a poor use of resources and a reputational risk.</p>	<p>Qualitative pass/fail judgement, based on agreed criteria, for example: peer review of outputs and publications by adequately qualified individuals, against a clear set of quality criteria, and evidence that perspectives of potential users /those affected have been considered</p>	<p>Scientific review of outputs and publications is mostly at Center level. CRPs have variable influence through PPAs.</p>	<p>Further work required – see comments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Unpack these (issue in first column) since the processes might be different. Also, for this don't you want evidence that processes are used rather than just that they are in place?</li> <li>- Responsibilities of the Centers for quality assurance of research products should be emphasized.</li> <li>- The argument has always been that peer-review publications provide this filter and hence why they are considered the gold standard</li> <li>- Peer reviewed publications could be a proxy.</li> <li>- This could be an appropriate topic for an IEA commissioned external evaluation, but not an annual pass/fail standard as</li> </ul>

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						part of PBM. [ <i>note: standard is not intended to be applied annually</i> ]
15	<p><b>Scientific Credibility/Reliability</b></p> <p>Program has made adequate progress towards open and FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) data.</p>	<p>Transforming the agricultural sector is increasingly dependent on mining, aggregating, visualizing large quantities of data whose value increases through reuse and recombination. FAIR data also enables increased efficiency and reduces duplication.</p>	<p>Improved interoperability via CG Core metadata for data and metadata for all new datasets and publications; controlled vocabularies and ontologies to describe variables within at least 75% of new CRP data sets.</p> <p>Improved data quality via digital data collection, particularly for agronomic and socioeconomic data, with digital tools employing metadata/vocabulary/ontology standards to maximize data interoperability, reuse, and the quality of the science generated.</p> <p>Improved data reusability via machine-readable licenses and clear terms of use for at least 50% of new CRP data and all new publications.</p>	<p>Center as hiring entity (via data and information specialists) for W1/2/3 projects</p> <p>CRP leads and principal investigators for W1/2/3 projects.</p>	<p>Needs further work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Controlled vocabulary and/or ontology terms may not exist for all variables in all disciplinary domains.</li> <li>- May need to rely on GARDIAN as well as MARLO for verification of interoperability, assuming that MARLO uses the same algorithms as GARDIAN to assess a FAIR score.</li> <li>- Standards-compliant digital data collection tools (e.g. Agronomy Fieldbook developed via Big Data Platform efforts)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Requires the CRP to have adequate financial resources.</li> </ul>

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16	<p><b>Reputation/Legitimacy:</b></p> <p>The Program produces high quality evidence of its claims for outcomes and impacts</p>	<p>Lack of high quality evidence for claims, linked to System goals, poses a reputational risk, as well as the risk that future research will be based on misleading assumptions of uptake and impact.</p>	<p>&gt;XX% of outcome/impact case studies submitted by the program<sup>21</sup> are considered to have good or excellent supporting evidence, including on linkages between outcomes/impacts and the innovations produced by the program.</p> <p>- Where studies have used indicators</p>	<p>CRP Management (with limited resources), in partnership with others</p>	<p>It would be appropriate to delay assessment of this potential program performance management standard until there is a sufficient number of outcome / impact case studies to assess (see footnote). Adequate resourcing is also vital (see first comment).</p>	<p>- CRPs would need to significantly increase spending towards evidencing outcome/impact case studies, but these funds are very scarce, and this is particularly challenging for smaller CRPs. Pass/fail should not depend on availability of funding.</p> <p>- The requirement of high quality evidence will trade off against real time reporting of outcomes. That is, studies that provide good evidence for outcomes may come a year after the outcome took place (e.g. a 2018 study that confirms a 2016 or 2017 outcome). The lag will be even greater for impact studies. Just want to make sure that this is understood and acceptable.</p>

<sup>21</sup> The outcome/impact case study template introduced in 2018 (for annual reporting and through Management Information Systems) requires a narrative of outcome/impact, with supporting evidence for statements. The type of evidence requested is greater for claims made about impact at scale than for claims about early outcomes (change in behaviour of next users). Once a sufficient body of outcome/impact case studies is on file, this provides an opportunity for independent quality checks on the evidence for statements made.

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17	<p><b>Reliability/</b></p> <p>Program effectively plans and manages budgets</p>		<p>Qualitative pass/fail judgment, based on agreed criteria, <i>for example:</i> Approved budget for every project before it starts being implemented; Budgetary targets monitored on a quarterly basis (or monthly for projects shorter than one year); Transactions recorded in financial systems at minimum weekly/fortnightly.</p>	<p>Centers – W3/bilateral</p> <p>CRPs – for W1/2 budgets?</p>	<p>Does this cover only W1/2?</p> <p>How often is a realistic standard for reporting, recording transactions etc ?</p>	<p>N/A (suggestion for additional topic, received during first round of comments)</p>
18	<p><b>Reputation/legitimacy:</b></p> <p>Program registers and regularly monitors risks</p>	<p>As well as reducing the likelihood of unforeseen risks to the program, this provides confidence that there is adequate oversight and assurance around key risks</p>	<p>Qualitative pass/fail judgment, based on agreed criteria, for example: Program has a risk register and documents (at least six-monthly) a periodic review of program-level opportunities and risks and adopts actions to monitor and/or address key risks within the overall risk appetite of the CGIAR System and the program</p>	<p>CRPs (as well as Centers)</p>		<p>N/A (suggestion for additional topic, received during first round of comments)</p>

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19	<p><b>Delivery:</b> Intellectual assets appropriately managed</p> <p>(more detailed wording to be agreed, <i>for example:</i> Adequate use of intellectual property and licensing tools maximizes accessibility and/or impacts including via the production of international public goods (IPGs))</p>	<p>The CGIAR Intellectual Assets Principles provide a permissive framework to facilitate the delivery of IPGs. Despite that environment, very few innovative licenses are agreed.</p>	<p>See points to clarify</p>	<p>CRPs/Centers</p>	<p>This may not be an appropriate topic for performance standards as it may duplicate an existing process. To be discussed.</p>	<p>N/A (suggestion for additional topic, received during first round of comments)</p>
20	<p><b>Reputation/legitimacy:</b></p> <p>Program has adequate measures in place to manage the risk of fraud and scientific fraud</p>		<p>Qualitative pass/fail judgement, based on agreed criteria, for example: Documentation of fraud management maturity assessment; documentation of fraud risk assessment and scientific fraud assessment using system self-assessment tools at least once per business cycle; mechanisms in place for reporting potential fraud by project/program staff and partners</p>	<p>?</p>	<p>Could separate these two topics (fraud and scientific fraud)</p>	<p>N/A (suggestion for additional topic, received during first round of comments)</p>



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21	Program has systems in place for capturing learning, including managing data effectively and appropriately		Qualitative pass/fail judgement, based on agreed criteria, for example: Program meets at least Level 2 maturity set out in the Research Data Management good practice note <a href="https://www.cgiar.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/GPN-Research-Data-Management-Sept-2017.pdf">https://www.cgiar.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/GPN-Research-Data-Management-Sept-2017.pdf</a> ;	Centers	Does this duplicate the topic of FAIR data (number	N/A (suggestion for additional topic, received during first round of comments)
TBC	<b>ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR PERFORMANCE TOPICS FOR LONG LIST MADE BY PEOPLE WHO COMMENTED ON DRAFT ZERO<sup>22</sup></b> a) Efficiency: e.g. program regularly reviews opportunities to make efficiency savings? b) Leadership – possibly not suitable for pass/fail standards, covered better by evaluations? c) Implementation of other agreed policies/priorities for CGIAR, e.g. on youth? d) Various aspects of Human Resources, for example staffing in relation to the program of work; retention; clarity on roles and responsibilities; performance systems which reflect program objectives, and gender equality in terms of salary and terms and conditions e) Other aspects of program governance (e.g. financial, risk oversight) - see note on 'points to clarify' under Topic 3 above.					

<sup>22</sup> These recently-made suggestions are useful but need further time to think through – please give them consideration.