



CRP Review 2020: Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security



Advisory Services

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The CGIAR CAS Secretariat is conducting independent reviews of the 12 CGIAR Research Programs (CRPs), including CCAFS.

CRP Background

Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CAAFS) CRP is one of four cross-cutting Global Integrating Programs within the CGIAR portfolio. It addresses challenges of climate change and food security by mobilizing CGIAR and partner science and expertise to achieve positive change with respect to climate-smart agriculture (CSA), food systems, and landscapes. Research activities are carried out through four Flagship Programs (FPs) and two cross-cutting Learning Platforms (LPs): Policies and Priorities for CSA (FP1); Climate-Smart Technologies and Practices (FP2); Low-Emissions Development (FP3); Climate Services and Safety Nets (FP4); Gender and Social Inclusion (LP5); and Scaling Climate Smart-Agriculture (LP6).

CAAFS is a partnership of all the CGIAR Centers, led by the Alliance of Bioversity International and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), with 27 non-CGIAR strategic partners.

CAAFS CRP Review

The CCAFS review presents evidence on the quality of science (QoS), effectiveness, and future preparedness. The review covers Phase II (2017 to 2019) and was conducted from August 3 to October 20, 2020.

Quality of science was assessed by the quality of inputs, processes, and outputs. Effectiveness was assessed in terms of achievements versus plans, and by progress against the theory of change (ToC). Methods included content review, semi-structured interviews, deep dive studies of Outcome Impact Case Reports, and a Most Significant Outcomes analysis. Key sources of data were CCAFS program documentation and management data; 40 interviews with CCAFS program leadership and staff, donors, and partners; bibliometric data on 400 scientific journal articles; and other publications and communication materials. Limitations include the short timeframe for the study and weaknesses in the reporting system.

Q1: To What Extent Does CCAFS Deliver QoS (2017-2019)?

CAAFS benefits from high-quality inputs from its research leaders and research teams. Through its network of partners, the skill base is also diverse in terms of countries of origin and affiliation (lead authors of CCAFS articles are based in 48 countries), which enhances CCAFS's legitimacy. CCAFS's processes and partnerships ensure that its research is relevant to a variety of next users and is both credible and legitimate. Bibliometric and direct assessment of research outputs shows a wide range of high-quality and original research across the FPs and LPs. CCAFS articles are published in a wide and generally appropriate range of high-quality journals. Technical publications and communication products also show high quality and high relevance to users.

Q2: What Outputs and Outcomes Have Been Achieved, and What is the Importance of Those Identified Results?

CCAFS planned outputs and outcomes have been assessed as effective. In terms of progress against the ToC, some challenges were encountered with the quality and synthesis of evidence. Based on the available assessment, it is judged that CCAFS is producing important global public goods on climate, agriculture, and food security. It successfully balances strategic research with the facilitation of sustained science-policy interactions across scales. CCAFS delivered 58 policy contributions and has influenced policies and investments at different scales; contributed to raising climate and agriculture up the international agenda; and helped to strengthen relevant actors' capacity and improved policies, and investments. Additionally, it has produced 74 innovations in research and communications methodologies and tools. CCAFS's approach has enabled it to develop and test CSA technologies and to facilitate science-policy interactions, achieving an array of significant outcomes in terms of both CSA implementation and policy and institutional change. Impact evidence to date centers upon four contribution cases, linked to SLOs 1 and 3, respectively. Further impact evaluations are underway.

Cross-cutting Themes

CCAFS is itself the primary vehicle for CGIAR research on the cross-cutting theme of **climate change**. **Capacity development** is central to the CCAFS approach, and achievements on capacity strengthening are significant. CCAFS has facilitated high participation in capacity development activities across all regions and FPs, across categories of stakeholders, and across technical and policy issues. Work on **gender** within CCAFS has advanced in Phase II, with collaborative work in all the FPs. Advancement of conceptual frameworks and understanding of gender and climate-smart agriculture (CSA); related monitoring and learning; research on new themes such as climate information services (CISs) and gender; sharing of CCAFS gender and CSA research with donors, government policies, and global investments; and synthesis of lessons learned on gender and climate change to build a research agenda. All the FPs address **youth** issues in different ways and with variable levels of expertise.

Most significant outcomes identified relate to the facilitation of individual and collective youth

agency and livelihood benefits from CAS, through participation in Climate-Smart Villages and their scaling through mainstreaming processes.

Q3: Future Orientation

CCAFS is currently synthesizing lessons, to align with the upcoming COP26. The CRP has strong prospects for achieving change in the remaining year as it continues to contribute to the global debate on transforming food systems. However, a stronger political economy analysis is desirable, including the delineation of targeted systems.

Key Lessons

High-quality science is crucial for the increasingly urgent global response to climate change. Sustained interactions with decision-makers are critical to ensure the relevance of research, to enable capacity-strengthening support to be provided, and to support uptake of scientific research by policy and investment decision-makers. CCAFS demonstrated the importance of building awareness and capacity among decision-makers (public, private, and civic) on the relationship between climate and agriculture. Agility in working across scales enables CCAFS to effectively draw up lessons and perspectives from the field and to catalyze opportunities that open at one level (e.g., global, regional, national, or subnational) for improving the use of evidence in decision-making at other levels. Sustained interactions with decision-makers, agile cross-scale work, and strong scientific and science-policy engagement expertise, combined with a focus on climate change and strong communications, can deliver a global presence for CGIAR and amplify research impact in policy and practice. More transformative approaches rely upon engagement with diverse actors and root causes of challenges: diversifying partners and skills, such as drawing in sustainable finance expertise or engaging with the humanitarian sector.

Recommendations for CGIAR

- Continue to fund targeted research and science-policy engagement on climate-smart agriculture, possibly as part of a broader, integrating effort on transforming food systems, rather than tackling climate change solely through mainstreaming in CGIAR.
- Integrate the climate change and nutrition agendas more closely.
- Significantly strengthen the incorporation of theory-based work into planning, monitoring, evaluation, and learning.

Read the full report: bit.ly/CCAFS-CRP2020

