



**PIM Management Responses to the PIM 2020 Independent Review  
Commissioned by the CGIAR Advisory Services**

**January 2021**

The PIM program management unit would like to thank the independent evaluation team of Paul Engel and Fatima Laanouni and CGIAR Advisory Services (CAS), represented by Senior Evaluation manager Svetlana Negroustoueva. With strict timelines and limited resources, the evaluation team, under guidance from CAS, was able to review and analyze many documents, interview a wide range of PIM research managers and scientists, and draw relevant conclusions and recommendations.

As indicated in the table below, PIM management plans to implement four of the six recommendations directly addressed to PIM. The other two require discussion with the PIM management committee to identify the best approach for addressing them, taking into account the limitations of the PIM 2021 resources and the transition to One CGIAR.

We have also responded to the four 'lessons' listed in the review as well as to three specific points in the review that we either do not find entirely clear or disagree with.

**PIM Management responses to the recommendations and selected conclusions in the PIM 2020 Independent Review**

<b>Responses to lessons on PIM Management and Governance</b>	
<b>Lesson</b>	<b>PIM Management Response</b>
<p>1. Because PIM is an integrated, interdisciplinary research program oriented toward policy and institutional change, its research is embedded in partnerships and networks of research organizations, next users, and implementation partners. Each of these actors plays a role in the political landscape under scrutiny. PIM would benefit from intensifying its efforts to research and learn from its past experiences with regard to how effective partnerships and networks are built and maintained and how they have affected the planning, organizing, and outcomes of its policy influence, institutional innovation, and capacity-strengthening efforts.</p>	<p>Agreed. See response to recommendation 1.3 below.</p>
<p>2. Path dependence poses a risk to PIM's independent, open-minded role. However, while long-term multiannual funding is crucial to increase the predictability of PIM funding, this should not stand in the way of engaging partners, donors, and new investors in innovative lines of research and stakeholder interactions if the needs of next users and implementation partners so require.</p>	<p>PIM's blended sources of funding (W1, W2, W3 and bilateral) have provided many opportunities to engage with donors and partners to discuss how best to meet their needs and the needs of other users as well as to engage in blue sky research.</p>
<p>3. A thorough reflection on the balance between scientific and public outreach seems indicated. Such a reflection should be context-sensitive, as political, institutional, and communication cultures and processes differ from country to country and between the local, national, regional, and global levels. The reflections may include the prioritization of key messages, the choice of and balance between different media, the specification of the various audiences to be reached, and the timing and frequency of communication about PIM highlights. These reflections are probably best inserted in the strategic research and learning trajectory suggested in point 1 above.</p>	<p>Agreed. See response to recommendation 1.6 below.</p>
<p>4. Strengthening the capacity of the communication teams that provide communication and outreach support to PIM research teams needs to be considered for PIM to fulfill its potential.</p>	<p>Agreed. We cannot hire more staff in the PMU; however we have allocated additional resources for use of communication consultants and services.</p>

<b>Responses to recommendations</b>	
<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>PIM Management Response</b>
Recommendation #1.1: Continue to integrate and disseminate political economy analysis in, and beyond, the PIM program portfolio.	Agreed. In 2021 PIM will continue to fund the political economy research area (cluster 2.3). Political economy analyses are also planned in other parts of the portfolio. In addition, we plan to synthesize lessons learned from the CGIAR work on political economy to help inform One CGIAR.
Recommendation #1.2: Carry out and disseminate, through outreach and communication activities, a review of PIM's overall impact in selected countries, including the program's contribution to analyzing the COVID-19 crisis.	Though PIM did have geographical areas of emphasis, e.g. Africa South of the Sahara and South Asia, research teams were given the opportunity of identifying key geographical priorities based on relevance, need/demand, and potential for outcomes and impacts. Therefore, we think that a broader review of PIM's outcomes and impacts across geographies may provide more interesting insights. This study, which PIM will commission in 2021, could include deep dives into one or two country(ies) with concentration of work. In addition, PIM is co-leading an analysis of contributions to policies across all CRPs with the SO.
Recommendation #1.3: Carry out an independent review to collect lessons from PIM's partnerships within and outside of CGIAR and extent to which these contributed to achievement of policy changes and other outcomes.	Agreed. The PMU has already solicited internal reflections from flagship leaders on what made some partnerships successful and others less so. These will feed into an external review to be commissioned in 2021.
Recommendation #1.4: Carry out an independent review of PIM's collaboration with other CRPs, examining how joint efforts contributed to PIM's impact pathways.	Agreed but suggest that this be part of the partnership review (recommendation 1.3) given that CRPs are one of the partnership modalities within CGIAR.
Recommendation #1.5: Review the extent to which PIM has enhanced the capacity of researchers and research organizations through its policy outcomes and innovation ( <i>what</i> ) and the key factors that enabled or constrained results ( <i>how</i> ).	The PMU will reflect on different options to address this recommendation in a not-too-time-consuming way and with a view to being as useful as possible to One CGIAR.
Recommendation #1.6: Carry out a thorough reflection on the balance between scientific and public outreach in relation to PIM's partnership approach to achieving policy change, institutional innovation, and capacity development.	Agreed. As part of the external partnership review, we will aim to assess the usefulness of public outreach activities from the point of view of intended users. In addition, we will consider undertaking short surveys to understand the perceptions of the importance of outreach among scientists and the conditions under which outreach is most useful. Note that this topic was also addressed in the impact assessment of the IFPRI country programs co-led by PIM and IFPRI in 2018. Finally, it is important to recognize that the requirements attached to W3 and bilateral grants as well as the incentives given to researchers by center management strongly influence the nature of outputs produced by scientists.

<b>Responses to statements included in the review</b>	
<b>Statement</b>	<b>PIM Management Response</b>
<p>Executive Summary page 2, main report page 26, brief page 2:  “During the period covered by the review, youth issues were not a significant area of research but have gained traction since 2019.”</p>	<p>A youth focus was included in numerous PIM deliverables in 2017, 2018 and 2019, as reflected in the PIM annual reports. In the 2017 AR 8% of the PIM outputs scored 2 for youth (i.e. principal focus) and another 26% scored 1 for youth (i.e. significant focus). In the 2018 AR, CRPs were no longer requested to score deliverables for youth but PIM did list a large number of outputs and findings related to youth. We would agree that the attention to youth in PIM is less significant than the attention to gender, but we do not agree on youth issues “not being a significant area of research”.</p>
<p>Main report on page 27 (2.4.1, Future orientations)  .</p>	<p>Flagship 4 was not included in the discussion of the five “core outcomes”. There is no explanation of why this choice was made. PIM Management views Flagship 4 research as making an important contribution to achieving PIM’s objectives, and the draft CGIAR 2030 Research and Innovation Strategy gives explicit attention to social protection as part of the One CGIAR research agenda.</p>
<p>Main report page 25 (on milestones):  “The set excludes three milestones that could not be achieved because of design issues that resulted in the need for difficult counterfactual demonstrations...”</p>	<p>The PMU would like to make two clarifications related to this point. First, the three milestones in question referred to 2022, and as such became inoperative following the decision to close the CRPs at the end of 2021. Second, the design issues pertain to the challenges of measuring the milestones, which is different from an inability to achieve them.</p>