



## TERMS OF REFERENCE & CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

### CRP 2020 Independent Reviews of Quality of Science and Effectiveness

#### Background

In 2020, the CGIAR Advisory Services Shared Secretariat (CAS Secretariat<sup>1</sup>), through its evaluation function, is planning independent reviews of the twelve CGIAR research programs (CRPs<sup>2</sup>). The reviews, commissioned by the CGIAR System, will provide information on Quality of Science and Effectiveness in each CRP. The CAS Secretariat has been mandated to undertake this work as part of its role in providing independent evaluation and assessments to the CGIAR System<sup>3</sup>. The reviews are designed to be rapid (completed within 11 weeks) and produce top-level findings, but not to generate the range of in-depth information as would be obtained from an evaluation. Further, the reviews are entirely desk-based, and no travel is planned.

Between April and December 2020, teams of two external expert consultants will each review one CRP, relying on its documentation and a limited number of virtual (telephone or online) interviews with the CRP Program Leader, staff and key external stakeholders. An internet-based survey will also be conducted for CGIAR researchers and CRP donors and partners. Bibliometric analysis conducted by the CAS Secretariat will supplement the information available to the expert reviewers.

The CRPs were designed to run for six years, from 2017 to 2022, but have been curtailed by one year and are now scheduled to conclude in 2021. Each CRP is composed of 3 to 5 Flagship Programs (see Annex 1), which in turn operate clusters of activities for research. The CRP reviews will rely on data and information available for the period 2017-2019, and will inform future research modalities to be developed in 2021.

A key document for the CRP review is the program Theory of Change, which in many cases may be the version developed in the CRP proposal or its updates. In some programs the Theory of Change may be implicit or not completely documented. The external experts who will conduct the reviews will rely on additional sources (annual planning documents or interviews) to understand the Theory of Change in use by the CRP, which will be the basis against which the program will be reviewed. The Flagship Programs within the CRP each have their own Theories of Change, which are nested under the CRP Theory of Change. Together, the hierarchy of the CRP and Flagship Theories of Change form the key reference documents for the CRP 2020 Review.

As a desk-based review, this effort will attempt to minimize the burden on CRPs. In advance of the reviews, CRPs will prepare the set of reference documents for the review. At the start of each review, the CAS Secretariat will organize an initial briefing involving the team of expert reviewers and the respective CRP Lead and staff. During the data collection phase, the review team will conduct an interview with the CRP

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<sup>1</sup> See Annex 4 for a list of acronyms used in this Terms of Reference

<sup>2</sup> See Annex 1 for a list of the twelve CRPs and their associated Flagship Programs.

<sup>3</sup> The CAS Secretariat/Evaluation 2021 workplan will propose a similar review or evaluation of the CGIAR Platforms, creating a harmonized Terms of Reference that has been adjusted to Platform's characteristics and function. The Platforms are considered separately from CRPs in order to address aspects of their work that differ substantially from the CRPs.

Leader and a focus group discussion (FGD) with other members of the CRP management. The review team will provide a debrief discussing the preliminary findings with the CRP management and the CAS Secretariat, for validation and feedback. The draft report will be shared with the CRP Leader and staff for factual correction and final feedback. CRPs may choose to provide a formal management response to the review, though this is not a requirement.

In July 2020, the CAS Secretariat also will conduct an after-action review with the Program Leader and staff from the first three CRPs reviewed, to ensure that the approaches used to pursue the review questions are as streamlined and appropriate as feasible.

### **Purpose of the review**

The primary purpose of the CRP 2020 review is to assess the extent to which CGIAR research programs are delivering Quality of Science and demonstrating effectiveness in relation to their own Theories of Change (or other planning documents stemming from the Theory of Change set forth at program inception, in the event that the original Theory of Change has not been updated to reflect the current thinking behind the CRP's work). Within that primary purpose, the objectives of the independent CRP reviews are captioned below:

1. To fulfil CGIAR's obligations around accountability regarding the use of public funds and donor support for international agricultural research;
2. To assess the effectiveness and evolution of research programs' work under CRP 2017-2021;
3. To provide an opportunity for programs under review to generate insights about their research contexts and programs of work, including lessons for future CGIAR research modalities.

### **Expected uses and users of the CRP 2020 reviews**

The CRP 2020 reviews are a key step in the CGIAR System's demonstration of accountability. Accordingly, the primary users of the reviews will be the CGIAR System Council, with insights and lessons developed from the reviews for use by the programs themselves.

Recognizing the potential of these reviews to support Program Leaders and their teams, the CAS Secretariat will engage the expert review team to work with each Program Leader in defining any supplementary questions of specific interest to their CRP, which will be included in the scope of work for the respective CRP review, subject to the limitations of time and resources for the review. Interested consultants should keep in mind that the final scope of work follows the structure and process laid out in this Terms of Reference and for some CRPs may include 1-2 well-defined additional question(s) from the CRP under review.

Further, the CRP reviews may provide lessons that inform the transition to One CGIAR in 2022, based on the program-level findings and a synthesis of system-level findings in 2021; to that extent, the reviews will be a future reference for system management in the change process.

In the final report, the expert review teams are expected to identify findings, conclusions and recommendations that apply to CRPs for use in refining the 2021 Plans of Work and Budget (POWB) to the extent feasible in the remaining program year, and lessons to inform future research modalities.

### **Scope of the CRP 2020 review**

The CRP reviews will cover 12 CGIAR research programs from the proposal acceptance date in 2017 through 2019, making use of all the reporting and monitoring information available to date. The first three

reviews will rely on the CRP's 2019 draft annual reports, prior to their vetting and quality assurance by the CGIAR System Management Office, and the other nine reviews will use the finalized CRP annual reports. The scope will include the program of work of each CRP and its Flagship Programs, with the reviews guided by the CGIAR's Quality of Science and Effectiveness criteria, and the Theories of Change for the CRP and its Flagship Programs. The reviews will not assess individuals, teams, or institutes in which programs reside. Emphasis will be on the CRP's Sphere of Control, that is, the quality of inputs, activities and outputs, and Influence, that is, short and intermediate outcomes that are expected to lead to a development impact.

The CGIAR System defines outcome-level changes as Intermediate Development Outcomes (IDO) and System Level Outcomes (SLO), as described in detail on the CGIAR website<sup>4</sup>. The CRP 2020 Reviews will focus on the IDOs, including sub-IDOs, given the short span of time (three years) for the current phase of CRPs. Expectations of documented outcomes will be informed by (a) the amount of time the research has been conducted under the CGIAR and its centers, including research prior to the CRP in the case of legacy programs, and (b) whether the CRP's targeted first users of research outputs are within the research community or closer to market adoption. It is not expected that all planned outcomes will have been achieved by the CRPs at the time of its review, because the present reviews are to be conducted after three years of operation on five-year research programs (originally planned for six years). Where data on impacts have been reported in an Outcome and Impact Case study Report (OICR) these will be included in the review. To the extent feasible, the review of CRP effectiveness should assess the likelihood for achieving IDOs and/or sub-IDOs, based on the CRP's and its Flagship Program's documented performance in relation to their Theories of Change.

## **Review Criteria**

The CRP 2020 Review will be based on two of the six CGIAR evaluation criteria as defined in the CGIAR Evaluation Policy<sup>5</sup>, which comprise relevance, quality of science, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability. Because the CAS Secretariat/Evaluation Function has been directed to execute the external reviews in a compressed timeframe, the two criteria for assessing the CRPs that have been agreed with the System Council committee that is concerned with evaluation are Quality of Science and Effectiveness.

Quality of Science in the CGIAR is defined as the ways by which research is designed, conducted, documented and managed, in terms of the processes, inputs and outputs. The CGIAR's definition of Effectiveness aligns with that of OECD-DAC and other international bodies as the extent to which objectives have been achieved. An element of effectiveness present in the definition of impact is "a chain of events to which research outputs and related activities have contributed that are likely to contribute to impacts."<sup>6</sup> The application of these criteria in the CRP 2020 Review is further elaborated, below.

### *Review of Quality of Science*

The CRP 2020 Review will examine quality of science and looks both at the conditions that are in place for assuring high quality of science, and the conduct and outputs of research. A systematic and consistent review of science quality across research programs and program components has three dimensions:

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<sup>4</sup> [https://cas.cgiar.org/sites/default/files/ISPC\\_WhitePaper\\_SLOsIPs.pdf](https://cas.cgiar.org/sites/default/files/ISPC_WhitePaper_SLOsIPs.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <https://cgspace.cgiar.org/handle/10947/2762>

<sup>6</sup> <https://marlo.cgiar.org/glossary.do>

- Processes for assuring and enhancing science quality (staff recruitment, performance management and incentives; review processes used; codes of conduct; monitoring, evaluation and oversight for enhancing science quality);
- Inputs (quality of staff and research leaders, facilities and equipment, data management, research design);
- Outputs (volume and quality of publications, genetic materials, etc.).

The above dimensions are captured and elaborated in the review questions, below.

### *Review of Effectiveness*

Assessing effectiveness of a CRP includes documenting the achievement of outputs and outcomes based on program reports and interviews and surveys of people involved or in a position to observe these. Outcomes or impacts will be included when those have been reported in an OICR. The CGIAR reporting definitions of these terms, and a modification made in the definition of outcome for these reviews, are as follows:

- *Outputs*: Knowledge, technical or institutional advancement produced by CGIAR research, engagement and/or capacity development activities. Examples of outputs include new research methods, policy analyses, gene maps, new crop varieties and breeds, institutional innovations or other products of research work.
- *Outcome*: A change in knowledge, skills, attitudes and/or relationships, manifested as a change in behavior, to which research outputs and related activities have contributed.  
For the CRP 2020 reviews, the definition of outcome will be expanded to include innovations<sup>7</sup> that have entered into use. CGIAR defines innovation as follows: “development innovations are new or significantly improved (adaptive) outputs or groups of outputs - including management practices, knowledge or technologies. This could also refer to a significant research finding, method or tool. A significant improvement is one that allows the management practice, knowledge or technology to serve a new purpose or a new class of users to employ it ... .”<sup>8</sup>
- *Impact*: A change in state resulting from a chain of events to which research outputs and related activities have contributed. Some examples: crop yield, farm productivity, household wealth (state) income (flow), quality of water (state), water flow (flow).

The CRP 2020 Reviews will assess CRP effectiveness from two perspectives. The first will compare planned versus completed outputs and outcomes as provided by the programs in annual Plans of Work and Budget and Annual Reports for 2017, 2018 and 2019. The second perspective is to assess reported achievements against the CRP’s and its Flagship Programs’ Theories of Change, which articulates the pathways from outputs to a sequence of outcomes and impact, to be tested in the course of program implementation. As noted earlier, the CRP’s Theory of Change is either the original version from its proposal with any updated documentation or, if that Theory of Change has not been followed, an implicit theory in the CRPs annual work plans (POWB). The Flagship Programs’ theories of change supplement the CRP Theory of Change as additional reference documentation.

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<sup>7</sup> CGIAR glossary (<https://marlo.cgiar.org/glossary.do>) defines an innovation as an output while most research evaluation defines an innovation as a new or improved technology, product, process, or business model that has been put into use (OECD/Eurostat 2005).

<sup>8</sup> <https://marlo.cgiar.org/glossary.do>

The likelihood of future progress is a further aspect of effectiveness to be examined in the 2020 reviews. Whether or not there is a pipeline of innovations, which are reported by stage such as “ready for take up” and policies influenced by sphere of influence, will be determined. Reports of capacities developed, environment enabled, and key partnerships in place for development will also be considered as will opinions of research managers and key partners. Another important factor in future effectiveness, and a common question asked in CGIAR external evaluations, is about the management and governance that is in place in the CRP. Evidence gathered will include presence of a learning environment, addressed and unaddressed challenges to success, and integration across other CRPs’ work.

#### **Cross Referencing to the CGIAR Quality of Research for Development Frame of Reference**

The CRP 2020 review will cross-reference and map Effectiveness and Quality of Science to the CGIAR’s broader Quality of Research for Development (QoR4D) frame of reference. The QoR4D frame of reference encompasses all review criteria and indicators, albeit organized in a different fashion and with a stronger emphasis on how each CRP positions its research and outputs for development outcomes and impact. In deploying two out of six of the evaluation criteria (i.e., as defined in CGIAR’s 2012 Evaluation Policy and its accompanying Guidelines), while also bridging with the QoR4D frame of reference adopted by CGIAR in 2017, the review will overtly map the query areas and indicators to the QoR4D frame of reference so that the CRP 2020 Reviews speak to the QoR4D frame of reference. For more information, refer to the QoR4D brief on the CGIAR website: <https://cas.cgiar.org/isdc/publications/quality-research-development-cgiar-context>

#### **Questions for the CRP 2020 Review**

To guide the planning and implementation by the expert review teams contracted to complete the CRP 2020 Reviews, questions for the review have been provided below. These questions were developed based on the definitions of the two review criteria (Quality of Science and Effectiveness), existing self-reported program data and internally funded studies by external experts. This set of review questions will be applied in each CRP review. As noted earlier, the CAS Secretariat will arrange for an initial briefing between the expert review team and the CRP under review, which will include a discussion to define 1-2 supplementary questions of interest to the CRP itself, if any.

##### *Quality of Science*

1. To what extent does the CRP deliver Quality of Science, based on its work from 2017 through 2019?
  - 1.1. To what extent does the CRP benefit from sufficient high-quality inputs (with reference to the research environment and project designs)?

*The review should look at productivity and engagement of scientists; diversity of teams and partnerships, in relation to planned outcomes; quality of facilities, equipment and other tools for research; and the level and predictability of CRP funding during the review period.*
  - 1.2. To what extent do the CRP management processes ensure the quality of science, including credibility, legitimacy, relevance to next stage users, and potential effectiveness, of the research and operations?

*The review will consider the CRP’s periodic re-assessment of the demand and quality of research; the research work environment as enabling QoR4D; research ethics, transparency and procedures for conflict of interest; and use of learning mechanisms to inform current and future research, for ultimate users of the research.*
  - 1.3. In what ways are the research outputs, such as germplasm, knowledge tools and publications, of high quality?

*The review will assess external recognition of CRP outputs as high quality; collaboration for innovation with next stage users and/or beneficiaries; value of outputs in developing capacities for researchers, next stage users and partners.*

#### *Effectiveness*

2. What outputs and outcomes have been achieved and what is the importance of those identified results?

2.1. To what extent have planned outputs and outcomes been achieved by 2019?

*The review should examine the CRP's own targets and deliverables (outputs, milestones, and outcomes) as listed in the program's Plan of Work and Budget (POWB) and annual reports or in the OICRs; as well as contributions to cross-cutting issues, and integrated work with other CRPs.*

2.2. What is the importance of achieved outcomes, with reference to CGIAR intermediate development outcomes (IDOs) and sub-IDOs, cross-cutting issues (Capacity Development, Climate Change, Gender and Youth), and partners' objectives, with consideration for predictability of funding and legacy time frame for the CRP?

*The review will focus on IDOs and sub-IDOs and other unanticipated outcomes reported by the CRP, whether positive or negative; the program's engagement with cross-cutting issues, namely gender, capacity development, innovation and partnerships; the program's age and maturation (with research in some cases preceding the current CRP cycle) and the context of its work; and achievements in relation to partners' expressed needs.*

2.3. How have the program's management and governance supported the CRP's effectiveness in research?

*The review will consider changes and adaptations in the program's activities, objectives, and strategy based on lessons learned; unaddressed changes in context or other challenges; and risk management planning and mitigations by the CRP.*

2.4. To what extent has the CRP and its Flagship Programs made progress along their Theories of Change?

*The review will assess how the program has used its TOC, if at all, or developed an alternative program logic; progressed along the defined impact pathways; and adapted its TOC (explicit or implicit) based on learning and evidence.*

#### *Future orientation*

3. To what extent is the CRP positioned to be effective in the future, seen from the perspectives of scientists and of the end users of agricultural research (such as policy-makers, practitioners or market actors)?

3.1. What programmatic evidence exists for future effectiveness within the life of the program (through 2021), considering the comparative advantages of the CRP and its Flagship Programs and drawing on the CRP's and its Flagship Programs' progression according to their Theories of Change?

*The review will assess the readiness for adoption of the program's deliverables at the IDO and sub-IDO levels; and changes in the program's enabling environment, capacities and partnerships that prepare its research outputs for successful use by next users and beneficiaries.*

As noted, 1-2 supplemental questions may be developed by the expert review team and senior scientists and leadership from the CRP under review, with guidance from the CAS Secretariat. These limited questions will align within the three primary review questions as shown above, and will not constitute additional, stand-alone review questions.

## Methods and data sources

The reviews will rely extensively on CRP documentation and interviews with Program Leaders and external groups including research partners, national policy-makers and donors, and FGDs with CRP staff. Additionally, bibliometric analysis of CRP research products (publications) will be conducted by the CAS Secretariat and provided to the expert review team. The primary sources of data and information for the reviews comprise the following:

*Documents from the CRP:* These include CRP proposals (2016-2018) including the CRP's Theory of Change as well as any documented updates or revisions, the CRP's Flagship Program Theories of Change, program independent steering committee reviews, CRP Plans of Work and Budget (POWB), Annual Reports for 2017 through 2019 (the 2019 annual report will be drafted by April and finalized by July 2020), the internal program MARLO data system or the Measurement, Evaluation and Learning Platform of the CGIAR MEL organization, the most recent CRP independent, external evaluation report (for CRPs that had such an evaluation), impact studies from the past five years (for CRPs that have had such a study) and other relevant program documents.

*CGIAR Results Dashboard:* The results dashboard is an online portal that summarizes each CRP's reported results, including innovations, capacity development, policies and partnerships, as a quantitative supplement to the CRP annual report.

*CGIAR database of Output Impact Case Reports (OICRs):* OICRs are short reports describing and documenting the contribution of CGIAR research to development outcomes and impact, searchable by geographic location, level of maturity along the impact pathway, or by their contribution to CGIAR's IDOs. The benefit of the OICR analyses is its critical review of the development effectiveness of the CRP's work, in generating lessons learned based on concrete cases, for the design of future research arrangements.

*Interviews with CRP Leaders, donors and partners,* including CRP Program Directors and levels of management above them. Their wide perspective will be particularly helpful for key accomplishments now and projected for the future and challenges faced. The expert review team will conduct these short (approximately one hour) interviews by phone or video conference call.

*Focus group discussion (FGD) with CRP management,* to assess aspects of quality of science and the research environment, and to obtain broader views on management and governance. The expert review team will conduct FGDs through a virtual (webinar with video) setting.

*External Expert Studies:* Any outcome and impact assessment studies conducted or commissioned by the CRP itself, as well as external assessments on other subjects including those that cross-cut programs, are also available.

The CAS Secretariat will conduct pre-analysis on the datasets captioned below, and provide the outputs to the review team for inclusion in the analysis of the CRP. The review team does not need to access these data sources directly. These include data and information from the sources below.

*Bibliometric and Altmetric and Other Studies of CRP Publications and Other Outputs:* These studies are done mostly by CRP or CGIAR staff. Sources of information about outputs such as datasets, innovations, contributions to policy-making and decision support tools include literature and website reviews.

*Survey of Researchers* in CGIAR and research partners. To avoid researchers receiving multiple surveys, a master list will be compiled of researchers and the programs/flagships each is involved with. Individual

programs could add a few program-specific questions to the general battery of general interest questions such as opinions of the research environment.

*Survey of Partners*, defined as a relationship with CGIAR with specific objectives (fund, joint planning or implementation). To avoid partners receiving multiple surveys, a master list will be compiled of partners and the programs/flagships each is involved with. Individual programs could add a few program-specific questions to the battery of general interest questions such as satisfaction with joint efforts with CGIAR.

## **Overview of Methods and Analysis**

These reviews will use mixed methods, quantitative and qualitative, so that analysts can triangulate perspectives, both internal (CRP) and external (partners, next users, etc.) in analysis. When assessing a CRP's quality of science, the expert review team will derive findings from existing CRP documents, bibliometric analysis and reports of any external expert reviews, and from primary data collection from questions on surveys of researchers and partners, interviews with CRP leader (also Principal Investigator) and external stakeholders, and focus group discussions with others in the CRP management.

Publication data collection, bibliometric and Altmetric analyses, and a set of analyses of CRP results are done internally by the CAS Secretariat and CRPs. Analysis of the quantity and quality of research outputs, the number of publications in peer-reviewed journals and other outlets, and the citation of those publications by other scientists will be provided to the expert review team for triangulation of findings.

Three general methods will be utilized in assessing programs on both effectiveness and quality of science: content analysis, descriptive and statistical analysis, and synthesis of existing external evaluations. More information on each of these follows.

- **Content Analysis.** Quantitative and narrative descriptions of achievements and programmatic actions are found in the CRP documents for the review, particularly the proposal, annual plans, annual reports and selected OICRs. Content analysis of individual reports and cross-report analysis can summarize findings for many of the review questions, including production and utilization of non-publication outputs such as datasets and training events. This could include preliminary analysis of trends observed, given the low number of available data points in the period under review.
- **Surveys and Interviews with Statistical and Content Analysis.** Representative samples of both researchers and partners will be developed for surveys. Interviews will be done with the CRP manager and selected partners, and an FGD will be conducted with the CRP management and staff. Qualitative analysis will be done on open-ended questions. As with any survey, statistical analysis will be completed with survey responses where that is feasible.
- **Synthesis.** The content of existing external studies will be aligned with stated objectives of the program and findings in these studies summarized. In a few cases, the studies themselves provide a synthesis across studies to draw more general conclusions.

Methods for documenting the CRP's effectiveness and responses to challenges rely on examining the Theories of Change or alternative program logic at the program and flagship levels in relation to the CRP's reported results from monitoring data (reported on CGIAR's MARLO and/or MEL platforms) and outcome/impact case reports (i.e., OICRs).



- *Comparison of achieved results versus proposed objectives/milestones.* Because each CRP uses annual work plans (POWB) and produces annual reports, it will be relatively straightforward to compare planned outputs against reported completed deliverables (some CRPs may also use milestones, along with or instead of deliverables). The reports also record when deliverable deadlines slip, with explanations for that lack of expected progress. Tagging innovations by stages will also help with year to year comparisons.
- *Comparison of operational or proposed theories of change with reported achievements:* As programs are not asked to report progress along their specific theories of change, the expert review teams will map reported achievements against the expected sequence of achievements along the elements of the CRP and Flagship theories of change (or alternative program logic models). With that, the review team will be able describe what and where progress has been made toward reaching stated objectives and link these to learnings about the theory to change and influencing factors. The benefit of this approach is that it describes the program progress toward objectives more clearly than counts or lists of deliverables, providing a better understanding of (a) the plausibility of cause-effect linkages within the program logic and (b) the contribution of the CRP to development outcomes.
- *In-depth analysis of selected outcomes and impacts.* The expert review team will select one or two Outcome and Impact Case Reports (OICRs) for each CRP, in consultation with CRP leadership. The review will analyse the selected OICR(s) in greater depth, looking at the contribution of the CRP's research in successfully addressing a given development objective, mapping the reported outcome or impact within the Theory of Change at the Programme and Flagship level. This work will be done through analysis of documents from the CRP and from next users of the research, such as national government policies, and interviews with key informants (both within the CRP and equally importantly the next users of the research, e.g., external stakeholders in NARS and national policy-makers) who may assist in better understanding the nature and importance of the CRP's contribution, as reported in the OICR. A specific reporting template for the OICRs analysis will be provided to the review team.
- *Contextual analysis.* For many reasons related to context within the program or the context of those who would move the research forward to development and scale up, research for development projects and programs may progress at a different pace. At a minimum, context of a program will be characterized by the age of the program including all earlier phases of similar research, total amount of budget, quality of funding, and the CRP's typology as a Global Integrating Program or Agri-food System Program.
- *Analysis of management and governance.* There are several sections in the Annual Reports in which CRPs report aspects related to learning lessons as the research evolved and challenges that arose and how those were handled. The annual POWB discusses changes, if any, in the theories of change. The review team will supplement these sources with responses from surveys, interviews and focus group discussions. The analysis will triangulate information from these sources to identify how the CRP has managed and governed its research program in the context of the challenges faced over the period of review.

### **Deliverables and consultation for the CRP Review**

The review team is expected to produce the following deliverables:

1. A preliminary findings matrix, for discussion midway through the review process, to check the progress of the review and to provide a basis for early course correction if required. The CAS Secretariat will provide the review team with a template for the preliminary findings matrix.

2. A brief presentation of preliminary findings, for the debrief with the CRP management and the CAS Secretariat for validation, factual corrections, and feedback.
3. A draft report of the CRP review, for review by the CRP management and the CAS Secretariat for final feedback. The CAS Secretariat will provide a template for the draft and final reports.
4. A final report of the CRP review, following the report template with a maximum of 20 pages, a 2-3 page executive summary, and a set of annexes with additional information apart from the main body of the report.
5. A PowerPoint presentation covering the main points of the review, including purpose, methods, findings, conclusions, recommendations and additional notes relevant to the review. The CAS Secretariat will provide a template for this presentation.

Templates for the preliminary findings matrix, draft and final report, and the presentations will be provided to the review team in the first week of the review.

The review team will engage with the CAS Secretariat and the CRP under review at the following key points:

- Initial discussion with the CAS Secretariat to start the review and clarify questions from the review team;
- Briefing at the start of the review between the review team and CRP management, facilitated by the CAS Secretariat;
- Interview with the CRP Leader and a focus group discussion (FGD) with other members of the CRP management during data collection;
- Debrief presentation of the preliminary findings led by the review team, for validation, clarifications and feedback by the CRP management and the CAS Secretariat;
- The draft report will be shared with the CRP Leader and staff for factual correction and final feedback.

Additional discussions between the review team, the CRP management and the CAS Secretariat may be scheduled based as needed during the course of the review.

### **Schedule of the reviews**

The reviews will be conducted in a phased, stepwise manner, so as to enable due support from CAS Secretariat throughout the review process. The first three reviews will take place between April and June 2020. Thereafter, in late June, CAS Secretariat will conduct an ‘after-action review’ involving the Program Leaders from the first three CRPs reviewed, for fine-tuning of the review process in enhancing learning and minimizing the burden on CRPs. While refinements to the review process may be made, the fundamental review parameters will remain harmonized for all CRP reviews through the year. Substantive changes on questions and sub-questions are not foreseen from the after-action review. The subsequent nine CRP reviews will be conducted in the second half of the year, commencing in August 2020.

The first set of reviews, scheduled for April through June 2020, includes three CRPs - one global integrated program and two agri-food system programs. This initial selection of CRPs for review is based on (a) two Agri-Food Systems and one Global Integrated Program, (b) the length of time since the last independent evaluation conducted for the CRP and (c) CRPs with and without substantial changes in program and/or structure from Phase I to Phase II. CRPs that had requested to be included in the first set of reviews were prioritized, within the above criteria. The working schedule of CRP reviews is attached as Annex 2. For each review, an indicative time frame of deliverables and milestones for the review is provided in Annex 3.

## Qualifications for the expert review team

Each review team is anticipated to include (1) a senior subject matter expert with in-depth subject matter expertise related to the CRP under review, and (2) a senior evaluator with experience in agriculture, natural resources management, food systems or nutrition. Of the two team members, one must serve as the team leader, who will bring relevant experience in that evaluation leadership and be the lead author for the report and accountable for the review team performance.

The estimated number of days of effort for each role in the review is provided below:

- Senior Subject Matter Expert: 40 days;
- Senior Evaluator: 30 days;
- Team Leader (additional to one of the above roles): 10 days.

The qualifications for each role are outlined below. **This is a desk-based review and no travel is envisaged.**

Qualifications for the senior subject matter expert include the following:

- Excellent understanding and knowledge of the key issues in agriculture, natural resources management, food systems and/or nutrition, as related to the CRP to be reviewed;
- 15 or more years (preferably, over 20 years) of work experience in the domain(s) related to the CRP to be reviewed;
- Strong knowledge of the main international institutions and mechanisms involved in the areas of research and development that are the focus of the CRP to be reviewed;
- Academic background relevant to the CRP's areas of research;
- Excellent understanding and knowledge of the international debate on the key issues related to the CRP to be reviewed;
- Depth of knowledge of areas of research and development that are the focus of the CRP to be reviewed;
- Knowledge of the CGIAR and/or the CRP to be reviewed.
- Strong English writing and verbal communication skills.

Qualifications for the senior evaluator include the following:

- 8 or more years of experience leading evaluations, preferably including international programs or research on agriculture, natural resources management, food systems and/or nutrition;
- Extensive experience with theory-based evaluations, including analysis of effectiveness in relation to a Theory of Change with potential implicit adaptations;
- Preference for evaluation experience in one or more research areas specific to the CRP;
- Preference for knowledge of the CGIAR and/or the CRP to be reviewed.
- Strong English writing and verbal communication skills.

In addition, the consultant (from one of the above two positions) who will also serve as Team Leader must demonstrate the following:

- Experience leading evaluation of complex programs, preferably in international agricultural research;
- Demonstrated accountability in terms of timeliness and quality of deliverables and responsiveness in communication;

- Academic background or experience in evaluation and/or an area relevant to the CRP's work;
- Strong project management skills;
- Experience working virtually (online) in successfully conducting interviews and facilitating discussions with senior managers, researchers, practitioners and policy-makers;
- Excellent English writing and verbal communication skills.
- Excellent presentation and report writing skills, including for executive and multicultural audiences and remote/virtual presentations.

Alternative team configurations may be considered, and the CAS Secretariat will discuss options presented by the proposed consultants.

Applications are encouraged from teams of two consultants with the qualifications and experience outlined above for the senior subject matter expert and the senior evaluator, clearly indicating which individual is proposed for the team leader role. Individual consultants may also apply for the subject matter expert or evaluator roles, with the intent to be matched with a suitable counterpart from the roster of other applicants.

### **Application process**

Interested teams and individuals should send their CV and a cover letter indicating the role to which s/he is applying and the CRP(s) in which s/he is qualified to serve as a reviewer (see Annex 1 for an overview of the CRPs and their flagships and also the full [CRP profiles on the CGIAR website: https://www.cgiar.org/research/research-portfolio/](https://www.cgiar.org/research/research-portfolio/) ). The CV and cover letter should include information on the applicant's:

- Proposed role (Senior Subject Matter Expert or Senior Evaluator) and intended CRP(s) for the review, with both the role and intended CRP(s) clearly stated in the subject line of the email and the cover letter;
- Demonstrated expertise in the technical research areas relevant to the CRP to be reviewed;
- Experience in evaluation;
- Expected daily fee rate (demonstrable with evidence of rates on previous assignments);
- Location and time zone of her/his work location;
- Email, telephone and Skype contact details of the applicant(s);
- Names and contact information (email, telephone and postal address) for three (3) referees, who will be contacted for short-listed candidates;
- Availability for the CRP review based on the schedule provided in Annex 2, as well as more generally over the period April through December 2020.
- List of publications (including peer reviewed work and past evaluations/reviews authored)

Interested teams or individuals meeting the above criteria should send their application by email to [CAS-Evaluation@cgiar.org](mailto:CAS-Evaluation@cgiar.org) . Applications are accepted on a rolling basis, and the CAS Secretariat will contact short-listed candidates for follow-up at an early date, for potential scheduling of the relevant CRP review. Regrettably, we are unable to respond to all applicants, but will retain CVs and contact information on file for those who meet the above criteria.

*The Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT is an equal opportunity employer and strives for diversity.*

## **Contract and payment schedule**

The CAS Secretariat is hosted at the Alliance of Bioversity International and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture<sup>9</sup>, at the offices in Rome, Italy. Consultancy contracts will be issued by the host institute of the CAS Secretariat. The members of the review team are expected to abide by the Conflict of Interest and Safeguarding policies of the CAS Secretariat and its host institutions, and must maintain independence in fact and appearance from the CRP under review throughout the duration of the assignment. Each review team member must sign and return statements indicating their understanding and compliance with the policies of the CAS Secretariat and its host institutions.

Payments under the contract are scheduled as below:

- 25% on signing of the contract;
- 25% after the midterm check-in discussion and delivery of the preliminary findings matrix, subject to satisfactory approval by the CAS Secretariat;
- 50% on delivery of the final review report, subject to satisfactory approval by the CAS Secretariat.

This is a short-term consulting opportunity with the level of effort as indicated for each consultant role. All consultancy fees and conditions will be administered in line with the Alliance for Bioversity International and CIAT's approved policy for consultants.

## **Contact at the CAS Secretariat for the CRP 2020 Review**

The CAS Secretariat has appointed an Evaluation Consultant, Dr. Ravi M. Ram, to manage the CRP review process, along with CAS evaluation staff and a consultant providing senior technical advice, under the overall direction of the CAS Secretariat Director, Allison Grove Smith. Questions regarding this Terms of Reference should be directed to [r.ram@cgiar.org](mailto:r.ram@cgiar.org).

## **Who we are**

CGIAR is a global research partnership for a food-secure future. CGIAR science is dedicated to reducing poverty, enhancing food and nutrition security, and improving natural resources and ecosystem services. Its research is carried out by 15 CGIAR Centers in close collaboration with hundreds of partners, including national and regional research institutes, civil society organizations, academia, development organizations, and the private sector. These 15 Centers have close to 10,000 staff based in over 50 countries.

Each Center has its own governing instrument, board of trustees, director general, and staff. CGIAR Research Centers are responsible for hands-on research programs and operations.

The CAS Secretariat supports and facilitates the CGIAR's independent advisory services, comprising the Independent Science for Development Council (ISDC), the Standing Panel on Impact Assessment (SPIA) and an independent evaluation workstream.

In 2020, CGIAR is embarking on an ambitious reform, One CGIAR, to streamline governance and operational structures and processes across CGIAR. More information can be found [here](#)<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> Bioversity International and CIAT are CGIAR Research Centers. For further information consult the websites at <https://www.bioversityinternational.org> and [www.ciat.cgiar.org](http://www.ciat.cgiar.org)

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.cgiar.org/how-we-work/strategy/cgiar-system-reference-group/>

Annex 1: CRPs and Flagship Programs

CRP	Flagship Programs				
Agri-Food System Programs					
<b>Fish</b>	FP1 Sustainable Aquaculture	FP2 Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries	FP3 Enhancing Contribution of Fish to Nutrition and Health		
<b>Forests, Trees and Agroforestry (FTA)</b>	FP1 Safeguard TGR breed	FP2 Livelihood Systems	FP3 Value Chains	FP4 Landscapes	FP5 Climate Change
<b>Grains, Legumes and Dryland Cereals (GLDC)</b>	FP1 Priority setting & Impact acceleration	FP2 Transforming Agri-food systems	FP3 Integrated Farm & Household Management	FP4 Variety & Hybrid Development	FP5 Pre-breeding & Trait Discovery
<b>Livestock</b>	FP1 Livestock genetics	FP2 Livestock Health	FP3 Livestock Feeds & Forages	FP4 Livestock & Environment	FP5 Livelihoods & Agri-food Systems
<b>Maize</b>	FP1 Enhancing R4D strategy for impact	FP2 Diversity and Tools for genetic gains	FP3 Stress tolerant & nutritious maize	FP4 Sustainable intensification for better livelihoods	FP5 Adding value for producers, processors
<b>Rice</b>	FP1 Impact & Equity acceleration	FP2 Value chain upgrading	FP3 Sustainable farming systems	FP4 Global rice array	FP5 New rice varieties
<b>Roots, Tubers &amp; Bananas (RTB)</b>	FP1 Enhanced genetic resources	FP2 Adapted productive varieties and quality seed	FP3 Resilient crops	FP4 Nutritious food and added value	FP5 Improved livelihoods at scale
<b>Wheat</b>	FP1 Inclusive & profitable opportunities	FP2 Diversity & tools for genetic gains, efficiency	FP3 Better varieties reach farmers faster	FP4 Sustainable Intensification	
Global Integrating Programs					
<b>Agriculture for Nutrition and Health (A4NH)</b>	FP1 Food systems or healthier diets	FP2 Biofortification	FP3 Food safety	FP4 support policies, programs, enabling action	FP5 Improving human health
<b>Climate Change and Food Security (CCAFS)</b>	FP1 Priorities and policies for climate smart agriculture	FP2 Climate smart technologies and practices	FP3 Low emissions development	FP4 Climate services and safety nets	
<b>Policies, Institutions, and Markets (PIM)</b>	FP1 Technological innovation and sustainable intensification	FP2 Economy-wide factors affecting ag growth and rural transformation	FP3 Inclusive and efficient value chains	FP4 Social protection for agriculture and resilience	FP5 Governance of natural resources
<b>Water, Land, and Ecosystems (WLE)</b>	FP1 Restoring degraded landscapes	FP2 Land and water solutions for sustainable intensification	FP3 Sustaining rural-urban linkages	FP4 Managing resource variability, risks, competing uses for resilience	FP5 Enhancing sustainability across agricultural systems

Further information about the CRPs is available on the CGIAR website:

<https://www.cgiar.org/research/research-portfolio/>.

Annex 2: Working schedule of CRP 2020 reviews

<b>CGIAR Research Program (CRP)</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Review period</b>
Fish	Agri-Food System	Sep-Nov
Forests, Trees and Agroforestry	Agri-Food System	Aug-Oct (*)
Grain, Legumes and Dryland Cereals	Agri-Food System	Apr-Jun
Livestock	Agri-Food System	Aug-Oct (*)
Maize	Agri-Food System	Sep-Nov
Rice	Agri-Food System	Oct-Dec
Roots, Tubers and Bananas	Agri-Food System	Oct-Dec
Wheat	Agri-Food System	Apr-Jun
Agriculture for Nutrition and Health	Global Integrated Program	Apr-Jun
Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security	Global Integrated Program	Aug-Oct (*)
Policies, Institutions and Markets	Global Integrated Program	Oct-Dec
Water, Land and Ecosystems	Global Integrated Program	Sep-Nov

(\*) Reviews for these CRPs may be advanced to April, depending on the availability of expert review teams

Note: this working schedule may be modified. When submitting an Expression of Interest, expert consultants are advised to indicate a range of dates for which they are available for conducting the reviews. The schedule for all 12 reviews spans April to December 2020.

Annex 3: Indicative time frame of deliverables and milestones for the CRP 2020 review

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Deliverables / Milestones</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Start of CRP Review</b>	Week 1	<b>Start-up discussion with the CAS Secretariat</b>	CAS Secretariat Review team
	Week 1	<b>Consultation with CRP</b> (reference documents and supplemental questions, if any)	Review team CRP Management CAS Secretariat
Data collection and analysis	Weeks 2-8	Document review Interviews and FGD Analysis based on OICRs & Results dashboard, and MEL/MARLO data	Review team
Bibliometric analysis	Week 3	Report of CRP bibliometric and Altmetric analysis, and other standard analyses from the CAS Secretariat	CAS Secretariat
Mid-review check-in	Week 5	<b>Preliminary Findings Matrix</b> Quality assurance on methods, preliminary findings and the OICR analysis. Clarifications on unavailable data sources, missing data Preparation for analysis Quality assurance based on preliminary findings matrix Course correction, if required	Review team CAS Secretariat
End of data collection check-in	Week 9	Discussion of preliminary findings and interim conclusions, limitations of the review	Review team CAS Secretariat
Presentation of preliminary findings	Week 9	<b>Presentation of preliminary findings</b> Factual corrections, validation, additional sources of evidence QA by CAS Secretariat	Review team CRP Management CAS Secretariat
<i>Reporting phase</i>			
Drafting of Report	Week 9	<b>Draft Review Report</b>	Review team
Feedback on draft report	Week 10	Feedback on draft, including final factual corrections and QA by CAS Secretariat	CRP management CAS Secretariat
Final Review Report & presentation	Week 11	<b>Final Review Report and PowerPoint Presentation</b>	Review team

Each review is expected to be completed within an 11-week period of review, with 80 days of effort allocated to the two consultants on the review team over the review period.



Annex 4: Table of Acronyms

CAS	CGIAR Advisory Services
CGIAR	(formerly: Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research)
CIAT	International Center for Tropical Agriculture
CRP	CGIAR Research Program
FGD	Focus group discussion
FP	Flagship Program
IDO	Intermediate Development Outcome
ISDC	Independent Science for Development Council
MARLO	Managing Agricultural Research for Learning and Outcomes
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning
OECD-DAC	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development – Development Assistance Committee
OICR	Outcome and Impact Case study Report
POWB	Plan of Work and Budget
QoR4D	Quality of Research for Development
QoS	Quality of Science
SLO	System Level Outcome
SPIA	Standing Panel on Impact Assessment
Sub-IDO	Sub-Intermediate Development Outcome
TOC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference