

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Review of CGIAR's Open Access/Open Data Policy and implementation support

2017



Independent
Evaluation
Arrangement

Background and context

Introduction

CGIAR is a global research partnership aiming to contribute to development outcomes through agricultural research. The 15 International Agricultural Research Centers (hereafter Centers) are independent research organizations that implement CGIAR research activities with their partners. Research is implemented through Centers, CGIAR Research Programs, (CRPs) and Platforms and guided by a Strategy and Results Framework (currently for 2016-2030).¹ The SRF identifies three strategic goals as system level outcomes (SLOs): i) reduced rural poverty; ii) improved food and nutrition security for health; and iii) improved natural resources systems and ecosystems services. CGIAR regards the results of its collaborative research for development activities as international public goods, and is committed to their widespread diffusion and use to achieve maximum impact on its goals, particularly for the advantage of the poor, especially smallholder farmers in developing countries.²

The CGIAR Independent Evaluation Arrangement (IEA) is responsible for System-level external evaluations of CGIAR. In the first four years of its operation, IEA focused on evaluations of the CRPs and cross-cutting themes. Drawing on the results of these evaluations, IEA is in 2017 organizing evaluations and reviews, including of selected System-wide policies, which will contribute to an evaluation of the System as a whole planned for 2018.

One of these policies concerns open access: CGIAR Principles on CGIAR Policy on Open Access and Data Management (hereafter OA/DM Policy), approved in October 2013.³ The OA/DM Policy builds on, and complements another System-wide policy, the CGIAR Principles on the Management of Intellectual Assets (IA Principles)⁴. The independent CGIAR Centers are custodians, producers, and users of intellectual and information products. Given the complementarity between these two policies, the timing of their reviews overlap for gaining synergy from the process and findings and avoidance of duplication.

¹ <https://library.cgiar.org/bitstream/handle/10947/3371/SRF%20October%2022.pdf?sequence=1>

² Annex A 'Guiding Principles for the Governance of the CGIAR System', CGIAR System Framework, June 2016.

<https://library.cgiar.org/bitstream/handle/10947/4371/CGIAR%20System%20Framework%20-%20WEB.pdf?sequence=4>

³ Open Access and Data Management Policy of CGIAR:

<http://library.cgiar.org/bitstream/handle/10947/2875/CGIAR%20OA%20Policy%20-%20October%202%202013%20-%20Approved%20by%20Consortium%20Board.pdf?sequence=4>

⁴ CGIAR Intellectual Assets Principles:

<https://library.cgiar.org/bitstream/handle/10947/3755/CGIAR%20IA%20Principles.pdf>

Description of the Policy

The OA/DM Policy was approved by the Consortium Board in November 2013. The Policy refers to, and is to be read in conjunction with, the “CGIAR Open Access and Data Management Implementation Guidelines”, to assist Centers in complying with the Policy.

The Policy aims to provide a common position and expectations for open access and data management across CGIAR. The Policy reaffirms CGIAR's commitment to generate global public goods for achieving large-scale impact on CRPs' objectives and CGIAR's high level goals. It is based on CGIAR's IA Principles, which recognize that restrictions to global accessibility may be necessary in some cases for targeting and accelerating impacts when more nuanced approaches are needed for managing intellectual assets, including through intellectual property rights and licensing arrangements. The OA/DM Policy expands on the IA Principles Article 6.1, which states that “the Consortium and the Centers shall promptly and broadly disseminate their research results, subject to confidentiality as may be associated with [certain] permitted restrictions, or subject to limited delays to seek IP Rights [(patents, etc.)]”.

In accordance with the CGIAR IA Principles, the Policy defines “openness” as:

“Best efforts to make all information products Open Access, subject always to the legal rights and legitimate interests of stakeholders and third parties, including intellectual property rights, confidentiality, sensitivity (including price and politically sensitive information), farmers' rights and privacy”.

“Open access” is defined as:

“the immediate, irrevocable, unrestricted and free online access by any user worldwide to information products, and unrestricted re-use of content (which could be restricted to non-commercial use and/or granted subject to appropriate licenses in line with the CGIAR IA Principles), subject to proper attribution.”

The Policy sets common expectations with respect to open access for the following types of information products:

- peer-reviewed journal articles;
- reports and other papers;
- books and book chapters;
- data and databases;
- data collection and analysis tools (e.g. models and survey tools);
- video, audio and images;
- computer software;
- web services (e.g. data portals, modeling on-line platforms); and
- metadata associated with the information products above.

It also provides a short description for each and sets a time limit for when the open access compliance is expected to be fulfilled for each type. For example, peer-reviewed journal articles are “to be deposited in a suitable repository and made open access as soon as possible, and no later than 6 months from date of publication”. Implementation and compliance with the OA/DM Policy was to occur over a five year transitional period, with comprehensive implementation by Centers at the end of 2018.

Beyond defining the “types” of products, the Policy states that the information product needs to be of “value” – “some judgment therefore needs to be made over the information products that will be made open access”. It provides means and mechanisms for ensuring and maintaining “openness” of information products such as repositories, interoperability, data storage, and copyright and open licenses. In this, it supports the IA Principles concerning Article 5, “Sound management of intellectual assets and IP rights with regard to pre-empting Intellectual Property claims”. Furthermore, the OA/DM Policy recognizes the need for incentives, indicating that these would need to be devised, adopted and promoted.

The OA/DM Policy stipulates that an evidence-based review of the implementation will be conducted on an annual basis, to be used to develop institutional tools and guidelines for implementation. In addition, starting in 2015, the System Management Office (in consultation with the Centers) was tasked to conduct a biannual review of the Policy “in light of experiences gained”.

In 2014, the Fund Council (now System Council) approved funding to support foundational work for implementation of the Policy across CGIAR, with focus on “guidance, prioritization, and coordination of CGIAR’s current open environment”, led by the Consortium Office (now System Management Office). . Initially approved as a one-year project, the System Office received a no-cost extension for 2016 to continue their efforts.

During the two-year period, support provided to CGIAR Centers for implementation and compliance with OA/DM focused on:

- Conducting a broad inventory and assessment of CGIAR capacity in OA/OD, which included Center Policies, workflows, capacity, as well as publications, and repositories;
- Developing a legacy data prioritization framework to identify high-value outputs that could be made “discoverable”.
- Providing coordinated support to Centers and CRPs in their ongoing efforts towards OA/OD, and leadership for external efforts, which included advocacy for OA/OD; development of OA/OD guidance at the CRP II portfolio level; supporting implementation of OA/OD; enhancing discoverability of final research outputs; and development of the OA/DM Support Pack CGIAR Core metadata schema applicable across CGIAR repositories, and templates and guidance.
- Drafting a framework for assessing the impact of implementing OA/OD across CGIAR.

In 2016, the System Council approved a six-year (2017-2020) the Big Data Platform. The Platform includes three modules, the first of which “organize” incorporates and continues efforts to support CGIAR Centers in implementing and complying with the OA/DM Policy.

Purpose and users

The purpose of the review will be to assess to what extent the OA/DM Policy has been adopted and implemented during the transition period and is likely to be effective in terms of achieving its intended purpose of maximizing global accessibility of CGIAR research. Given that the Policy is still being rolled out and full compliance is not expected until end of 2018, it is too early to assess its contribution to impact from CGIAR research. The focus will therefore be in assessing the intent, appropriateness, clarity and coverage of the Policy and effectiveness of support provided. The review will provide lessons from the first years of supporting the implementation of the Policy and recommendations for enhancing full compliance and the efficiency and effectiveness of the Policy. The review has the following major players:

- System Organization
- CGIAR Centers and CRPs
- CGIAR Legal/Intellectual Property Network
- CGIAR Open Access Community, including Open Access Working Group and Data Management Task Force – DMTF
- Knowledge Management community
- System Council and donors
- CGIAR partners involved in generating knowledge products.
- End users of CGIAR data

Scope

The review will cover the OA/DM Policy in a comprehensive manner regarding coverage, adequacy and appropriateness of the Policy. The review will assess the extent to which support, including tools, guidance and support, has helped Centers in the short-term in laying the foundation for and promoting open access and global accessibility of information products. It will also assess efforts over the past three years to provide guidance and support to increase accountability, develop cost-efficient workflows, build tools, and encourage innovation. It will assess progress in implementation, and whether achievement of full compliance is likely in the schedule set. It will assess activities that were part of the implementation support, including the Implementation Guidelines and development of the Open Access Support Pack, for their focus, clarity and detail. It will assess the adequacy of support to the Data Management/Knowledge Managers across CGIAR.

The review will provide lessons both on the implementation of the OA/DM Policy by the Centers and the intended and unintended effects of its implementation in Center operations and communications, and relations with partners, CGIAR System-level decisions and reputation at all levels. It will assess management practices in the Center, CRP and System levels, as promoted for successful implementation of the Policy. It will also review the governance of the policy to date, and oversight exercised by the former Consortium and the former Fund Council.

The review will limit its query to the Policy and support provided until the end of Open Access. Data Management support in the run up to the development of the Big Data Platform. It will review

activities proposed as part of the Platform in order to inform next steps. It will not, however, assess the Platform, which is starting its activities this year.

This review is planned in parallel with the review of the Intellectual Assets Principles, the findings and analysis of which it seeks to build on. The two review teams will consult with each other to share information, especially on implications that each policy has on the other.

Review criteria and questions

A set of evaluation questions is presented below. They will be refined and elaborated by the review team in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

Appropriateness

1. Does the OA/DM Policy represent a concise and clear policy for OA/DM management across Centers and CGIAR System Organization?
2. Is the scope of the OA/DM Policy appropriate given the CGIAR mandate and range of its information products and reflecting the complexity of different types of data and their respective open access issues?
3. Do the Implementation Guidelines and associated templates for Centers and CRPs provide adequate clarity to support Centers and CRPs in moving towards full implementation of the policy?
4. Has the support provided assistance to Centers in identifying data “of value” and prioritization of legacy data?
5. Are the Implementation Guidelines and the templates appropriate in terms of coverage and detail for clarifying the intent of the Policy?
6. Does the OA/DM Policy and implementation support reflect latest developments in open data and knowledge management to provide reasonable, cost-effective approaches for open access?

Effectiveness and efficiency

7. Have the OA/DM efforts (Policy, Implementation Guidelines, and support provided enhanced good practice and built a common understanding, harmonization and structure for Open Access in CGIAR?
8. To what extent have the OA/DM efforts already led to more active dissemination and improved accessibility of CGIAR information products?
9. To what extent have implementation support activities and resources provided been sufficient for helping Centers and CRPs move towards full implementation of the policy in 2018?
10. Have implementation and support activities for open access received adequate resourcing and necessary capacity?

11. Has the implementation support and guidance assisted Centers in prioritization for compliance with Open Access?
12. Are the planned processes for implementing and reporting efficient and transparent?
13. To what extent have challenges and specific requirements been identified in preparation for compliance to the Policy and are they being addressed (these relate to, for example, resources and transactions costs, issues of capacity and existing practices among CGIAR staff and partners)?
14. Is there sufficient and appropriate linkages with CGIAR communities of Intellectual Assets and Knowledge Managers?

Review approach and methods

The review will be primarily summative assessing the OA/DM Policy on basis of early implementation and what its effects have been moving towards full implementation of the Policy in 2018. The review will be desk-based relying primarily on document review and interviews. The review will capitalize on possibilities to interaction with CGIAR staff involved in OA/DM in their events face-to-face or virtually. While preserving the review team's independence, the review will be conducted in close collaboration with the Open Access focal points at the SMO and in consultation with focal persons nominated by Centers.

Document review will cover all documentation on the current policy and some historic documents, including:

- Open Access/Data Management Policy and implementation guidelines
- Center implementation plans for Open Access/Data Management (when available)
- Implementation support proposal and progress,
- Open Access Support Pack and templates, and guidance provided for supporting implementation
- Data Managers annual meeting records
- Minutes of CGIAR governing bodies' meetings concerning reporting on Policy and implementation support
- Other CGIAR policy documents that have relevance to the review, IA Principles in particular
- Background documents relevant to or preceding the policy

Interviews will be done with several stakeholder groups, some of which will be covered comprehensively and others through sampling. The following is a tentative list of groups to be covered in interviews:

- Center Data and Knowledge Managers
- Senior research managers – representatives from Centers and CRPs
- Selected donors for whom open access matters are of particular interest
- Selected partners knowledgeable about or dealing with open access with CGIAR

- Staff at SMO concerning research, data management, partnerships, IA and legal issues and auditing
- External experts knowledgeable about open access issues

Collecting evidence through Questionnaires will be used if certain information needs to be collected in a systematic manner from large number of informants.

These sources of evidence will be used to collect data and information on a final set of review questions to be developed on the basis of the tentative questions in these TORs. In reaching its findings and conclusions, the team will triangulate the evidence.

Organization and timing

The review will be conducted by three independent experts, one of them a team leader. The team members will have expertise on information and content management system, research information management and communication, and information technologies. At least one team member will have specific expertise in scientific communication, trends and practices in open access related to knowledge and data sharing and publishing, dissemination, access and disclosure. The team will have knowledge of the agricultural research for development context and some familiarity with CGIAR.

While the review is independent, it will be organized, including development of the TORs, and conducted in consultation with the CGIAR System Organization and the Centers. Table 1 also includes a plan for consultation with these stakeholders.

Table 1. Schedule and phases of the review

Phase	Period	Main outputs	Responsibility
Preparatory Phase	March-April 2017	Terms of Reference Review team recruited Consultation with Centers/SMO	IEA
Inception Phase	April-May	Inception Report	Team and IEA
Inquiry phase	June-July	End of phase: presentation of preliminary findings	Review team
Reporting phase	August-September	Draft review report circulated for comment Final Review Report	Review team

Preparatory phase

Preparatory Phase is the responsibility of the IEA and involves consultation with the SMO and Center/CRP focal points as key stakeholders. It includes the following:

- Finalize the Terms of Reference reflecting feed-back received;
- Search and select of review team leader and member;
- Collect preliminary documentation for desk review.

Inception phase

The inception phase is the responsibility of the review team in collaboration with IEA. During the inception phase, the review team will (i) revise and finalize the set of review questions; and (ii) elaborate on the methods including confirming the scope of document review, interview lists and questions, and use of any other methods, such as surveys, questionnaires and site visits. The tasks during the inception phase include:

- Review and synthesis of key documents;
- Refinement of the review questions, development of an analytical framework for the review, and development of a review matrix that identifies means of addressing the questions, including document sources and key informants for each question;
- Plan for consultation regarding preliminary findings and draft report;
- Indicative review report outline and division of responsibilities among team members.

These elements will be drawn together in a brief inception report that expands the TOR and, once agreed between the team and the IEA, represents the basis for the team's work.

Inquiry phase

During the inquiry phase, the team will follow the review plan as specified in the inception report. It will focus on collecting data and information following the review design, analysis of the evidence and formulation of findings. At the end of the inquiry phase, the team will share its preliminary findings with the Centers/CRPs and the SMO.

Review Governance

The review team leader has final responsibility for the review report and all findings and recommendations, subject to adherence to CGIAR evaluation standards. The team leader is responsible for submitting the deliverables as outlined in Table 1.

The IEA will be responsible for planning, initial design, and management of the review. An IEA Senior Evaluation Officer will manage the review and an IEA Evaluation Analyst will support the team in coordination, information gathering and providing inputs to analysis. The IEA will also be responsible for quality assurance of the review process and outputs, communication about the review to stakeholders and dissemination of the results.

Dissemination of findings

The Review Report is the main output of the review. It will present the findings, conclusions, and recommendations, based on the evidence collected during the inquiry phase. The recommendations will be informed by evidence, clearly formulated, strategically relevant and targeted to specific stakeholders in CGIAR for guidance and action. The main findings and recommendations will be summarized in an executive summary.

Presentations will be given by the team leader for disseminating the report and its findings to targeted audiences, as agreed with the IEA. The form of these presentations will be planned during the inception phase.

The IEA will interact with the System Management Board and Office for development of a management response. In the response, action items could be identified for addressing recommendations that may be specifically targeted to specific bodies of the System or collectively across System actors. The System Council will be the ultimate recipient of the review report. The review report and the response will be public documents. IEA will develop a dissemination strategy during the review process in consultation with the SMO.