



# Advising on System-level research investment

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Independent  
Science and  
Partnership  
Council

# Development of an integrated and coherent set of CRPs

1. Global context
2. CGIAR context
3. Characteristics of an 'ideal' portfolio and CRP
4. Generic findings of reviews
5. Current status of quality of proposals
6. Additional considerations
7. Scorecard of progress towards ideal portfolio

# Global context of research

1. SDGs – need integrated evidence
2. Increased recognition of unintended consequences leading to increased need for inter-disciplinary, inter-sectorial research
3. Increased global interest in impact of publicly funded research - not just for R4D
4. Increased interest in partnerships/consortia linked research

## Advantages of CGIAR

1. Established geographic coverage and long-term presence
2. Credibility with key decision-makers in countries/regions/global policy
3. Strong and extensive partnership network
4. Existing 'System' which includes key disciplines and has an overarching strategy
5. Committed individuals



## Quote from SRF

**What will be done differently:**

**Strategically building** a more coherent and integrated portfolio of second generation CRPs that will **collectively deliver** System Level Outcomes by partners.

## Quote from Guidance Notes for Call

*'A **coherent** set of interconnected 2017-2022 pre-proposals to address the selected global challenges identified in CGIAR's 2016 – 2030 SRF'*

# Guidance notes built on Windsor meeting of DGs

## Changes from Phase 1 to Phase 2

- Designed 'portfolio'
- Ending of stand-alone 'systems' CRPs
- Instead 8 'Agri-food systems' CRPs
- Concept of integrating CRPs



## What is a Portfolio?

- Definition – ‘collection’, ‘selection’, ‘group’
- One level up from ‘program’
- *Collection* of programs - not inclusive or exclusive and can/should be dynamic

## 'Ideal' CGIAR Portfolio?

- Has forward looking vision
- Sets priorities at portfolio level
- Adaptable to critical needs
- Baseline funding security
- Builds on System comparative advantage
- Integrated research outputs (in terms of SLOs)
- Strong monitoring and evaluation

## 'Ideal' CRP

1. Has forward-looking vision of how research needs to evolve
2. Has strong and credible leadership team
3. Integrated and coherent collection of Flagships linked by a realistic ToC
4. Leverages partners/funding from outside CGIAR to add value to delivery of SLOs

# Generic findings

# ISPC role in CRP development

1. June 2015 to July 2016 – proposal development by CRP teams with 2-3 reviews by ISPC
2. August to September 2016 – assessment of CRPs

## During review part

- 69 Flagships reduced to 57
- Of 69: 16As, 34 Bs, 16 Cs, 3 Ds
- Of 52: 31 Strong, 15 Moderate, 6 Weak

*Although ratings don't mean quite the same*

## Comment on beneficiary/area targets

ISPC recognize donor requirement for targets (hence included in 'pen pictures' of CRPs but provide the following feedback from analyzing the proposals

- Numbers are not additive across CRPs (shared beneficiaries)
- CRPs with strong partnership strategies leverage non-CRP funding/in-kind contributions which contribute to target delivery
- Basis of estimations varies between CRPs – some are more realistic than others
- Agree with donors that effort on monitoring/evaluation/indicators needs to be increased

# Comment on ToC, Impact Pathways and Impact Assessment

- Considerable progress on ToCs and Impact Pathways although variable
- Culture of and commitment to impact assessment needs strengthening at Center/CRP level
- ‘Budget’ items on impact assessment very low – Center or CRP responsibility?
- ISPC role in Impact Assessment under review



# Comment on Capacity Building

- Some innovative thinking on capacity building but some way to go – could be more integral in ToC and Impact Pathways
- Perceptions of CGIAR capacity building out of date

## What do ISPC ratings mean - CRP?

- Quality of *proposal* within context of where W1 and 2 funding could add value
- CRP-level rating reflects vision, integration and coherence of CRP (including evidence of prioritization), focus on comparative advantage (and its evolution) and hence likelihood that W1 and 2 funding of this leadership team will deliver a whole which is significantly greater than the sum of the parts in terms of gender, youth, capturing synergies with other CRPs, refreshing the vision, evolving the CRP

## What do ISPC ratings mean - FP?

- Quality of science *within context of W1 and 2 funding* i.e. potential for extracting IPGs from W3 and bilateral projects (weak does not mean 'bad' science)
- Comparative advantage – not static but evolving as skills of partners evolve
- Strength of ToC and Impact Pathways in relation to CRP-level ToC

## ISPC Assessment of Revised CRP-II Full proposals 09-2016

	A4NH	CCAFS	PIM	WLE	FISH	FTA	LIVESTOCK	MAIZE	RICE	RTB	WHEAT
<b>CRP Overall Score/category</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A-</b>	<b>A-</b>	<b>B+</b>	<b>B+</b>	<b>B+</b>	<b>A-</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A-</b>
<b>FP1</b>	Moderate	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Strong	Strong	Moderate
<b>FP2</b>	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Weak	Strong	Strong	Moderate	Strong	Strong
<b>FP3</b>	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Weak	Strong	Weak	Strong	Moderate	Strong	Strong
<b>FP4</b>	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Strong		Strong	Moderate	Moderate	Strong	Strong	Moderate
<b>FP5</b>	Moderate		Strong	Weak		Strong	Weak	Weak	Strong	Moderate	
<b>FP6</b>			Strong								

A+: Outstanding – of the highest quality and at the forefront of research in the field (fully evolved, exceeds expectations; recommended unconditionally).

A: Excellent – high quality research and a strongly compelling proposal that is at an advanced stage of evolution as a CRP, with strong leadership which can be relied on to continue making improvements.

A-: Very good – a sound and compelling proposal displaying high quality research and drawing on established areas of strength, which could benefit from a more forward-looking vision.

B+: Good – a sound research proposal but one which is largely framed by 'business as usual' and is deficient in some key aspects of a CRP that can contribute to System-wide SLOs.

B: Fair – Elements of a sound proposal but has one or more serious flaws rendering it uncompetitive; not recommended without significant change.

C: Unsatisfactory – Does not make an effective case for the significance or quality of the proposed research.

## High-level observations - iCRPs

- All 4 were assessed as either 'excellent' or 'very good'
- They have potential to increase influence of System as a whole in important policy dialogues
- Need to be well integrated with other CRPs but CCAFS more advanced than others – has had longer to develop links and has clear global policy interface

## High-level observations – AFS CRPs

- All still struggling with what is an Agri-food system
- Rice and RTB have good long-term vision, prioritization, partnership strategies, proven leadership and coherence
- Maize and Wheat need to show how long-term vision will influence breeding and pre-breeding programs
- FTA lacks a sense of prioritization and coherence between FPs

## High-level observations – AFS CRPs

- Livestock and Fish are both sectors of rapidly increasing demand and dynamic supply sectors in some locations
- For Livestock the multiplicity of systems and complex impact pathways make scaling up a challenge
- For Fish while the potential for its contribution to the wider portfolio has been recognized, the linkages are still at an early stage

## What ISPC ratings **don't** include

- Benefits of 'balance' at portfolio level
- 'Maturity' of the CRP (e.g. CCAFS vs Fish)
- Appropriate 'risk-taking' by CRPs as they bring in new FPs
- Complexity of the challenge (e.g. A4NH vs PIM)
- Endorsement of the budget requests for W1 and 2



## Scorecard of progress towards 'Ideal' CGIAR Portfolio?

- Has forward looking vision - **emerging**
- Sets priorities at portfolio level - **emerging**
- Adaptable to critical needs - **?**
- Baseline funding security – **work in progress**
- Builds on System comparative advantage - **strong**
- Integrated research outputs (in terms of SLOs) – **potential is strong**
- Monitoring and evaluation - **work in progress**