



Fund

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IEA 2013 Preliminary Work Plan and Budget

(Working Document - For Discussion Only)

*Document presented for Agenda Item 4:
2013 System Entities Work Plans and Budgets*

Submitted by:

IEA

CGIAR
Independent Evaluation Arrangement (IEA)
Preliminary Workplan and Budget 2013

In response to a request from the Fund Office, the Head of the IEA prepared a preliminary workplan and budget for 2013 for consideration by the Fund Council at its 8th session which will take place in Punta del Este from 31st October to 1st November 2012. Given that the Head of the IEA took her position only recently, there was little time for consultation on developing the IEA activities, in particular, the evaluation plan. It was therefore agreed that a final workplan and budget would be submitted to the Fund Council for virtual approval by mid-December. Furthermore, similarly to other System entities, it is expected that the workplan and budget of the IEA be presented along the line of a scorecard structure against which achievements will be measured at the end of the year. In this start-up phase, this could not be done for the present workplan because of the many parameters that need to be defined first in consultation with stakeholders and the staffing capacity yet to be built. However, it is understood that from year 2 onwards, the IEA will plan and report using a scorecard template.

1. IEA: Core Mandate, Objectives and Activities

This workplan is derived from the CGIAR Policy for Independent External Evaluation approved by the Fund Council and, later on, endorsed by the Consortium. As defined in the Policy, the Independent Evaluation Arrangement (IEA) will “provide quality independent, external evaluation in a system which is coherent and adequately comprehensive in its coverage”. Furthermore, the IEA is defined as an “integrated system, with quality from the base to the apex [...]”. The IEA will be a central place in the CGIAR for leadership in evaluation and evaluation knowledge management.

In the context of the reformed CGIAR and the introduction of a results-based management model, the IEA interprets its broad mandate into two major objectives:

- **Objective 1: Quality evaluations that meet accountability requirements, support decision-making and contribute to institutional learning**

The first priority of the IEA office (IEAO) is to undertake evaluations: the evaluation of the CGIAR as a whole, the evaluation of the CRPs, institutional evaluations and demand-driven evaluations on specific cross-CGIAR issues and themes. While the evaluation work will largely be commissioned to external consultants, the IEAO is responsible for planning, initiating, and managing evaluations, quality control of evaluation processes and outputs, and dissemination of the results. The IEA is also responsible for drawing together from evaluations wider judgments for CGIAR value added and lessons for the future as well as for institutionalizing feedback and follow-up to evaluations.

- **Objective 2: Coordinated and Harmonized Evaluation Regime and Practices within the CGIAR**

The IEA operates in a multi-layered governance structure and does not have the exclusive responsibility for evaluation. Together with other evaluative studies, independent external evaluations within CRPs commissioned by the CRP lead centers form the building blocks for overall CRP evaluation. Evaluations should follow CGIAR evaluation standards as a means for quality management. In this context, the IEAO provides leadership in evaluation and knowledge management in the CGIAR with a view to developing an effective evaluation regime within the CGIAR which is well coordinated and harmonized.

Within these two broad objectives, the IEAO activities can be structured around the following groupings:

1. Conduct of Evaluations

2. Development and maintenance of detailed evaluation standards and guidance
3. Evaluation capacity development and facilitation of an evaluation community of practice (ECOP);
4. Facilitation of evaluation follow-up and learning
5. Quality management and assurance; and
6. Other Collaborative Activities

2. Establishing the IEAO Office and Building Capacity (2012-2013)

The plan for capital investment and staffing capacity should be conceived in line with the functions of the IEAO when it reaches its steady stage. This will happen gradually to account for the time needed for the IEAO to set the environment, including collaborative arrangements, processes, standards and guidelines, for fulfilling its functions within the broad mandate described above. In line with the spirit of the Evaluation Policy, the IEAO fixed costs, including staff, will remain within a reasonable percentage of total evaluation costs to avoid the evaluation office expanding at the expense of the actual conduct of evaluation work.

On that basis, a five-person team is estimated to be the minimum staffing level for the initial phase of the IEAO. It may be noted that this is considerably lower than the staffing of central evaluation in major international agencies addressing technical cooperation and other forms of normative global public goods. The number of evaluations being handled per professional staff member per year would be comparable to that for similar evaluation functions, in addition to the IEAO performance of important additional functions in the support of decentralized evaluation of CRP components and maintenance of a community of evaluation practice in the CGIAR.

By mid-2013, it is therefore expected that the IEAO initial team will include:

- IEAO Director D1
- Senior Evaluation Officer P5:
- Evaluation Officer P4
- Junior Evaluation Analyst P2/P3 for basic research and data analysis, website maintenance, etc.
- Support staff G5: Duties including administrative contracting of consultants, travel and budget management.

In the above configuration, the Director will be assisted by a senior evaluation officer and an evaluation officer. Between them, with the direct involvement of the Evaluation Director as necessary, they will handle all the commissioning of evaluations, interaction with the Centers for the decentralized evaluation, quality assurance, maintaining the evaluation feedback system, etc. Given the small size of the team, it is not expected that each team member will be specialized and the working arrangements within the team should be flexible. However, profiles and functions of each member of this initial team will be developed in 2012 and selection of the support staff, senior evaluation officer and junior evaluation analyst will be well advanced (and for two of the staff likely completed) by the end of 2012 as approved by the Fund Council.

At the end of 2013, the achievements will be reviewed and a new workplan and budget of the IEAO will be defined for 2014. The first priority for additional staffing once additional budget is available will be for an evaluation officer responsible for developing the community of evaluation practice, knowledge management and learning.

3. Priority Activities for 2012

A “start-up” budget of US\$ 283,000 was approved by the Fund Council in August 2012 to cover the expenses linked to the establishment of the Office, including inception missions for the Head of the Office, office and equipment for the IEAO team and initial recruitment of staff.

In the three months following her appointment, the Head of the IEAO will undertake the following major activities:

- Inception and consultation missions by the IEA Head to the CGIAR Consortium Office, and the CGIAR Fund Office;
- Setting up the IEA office including office procedures;
- Definition of staff profiles and initiation of the recruitment of IEAO staff according to FAO Rules and Regulations;
- Defining collaborative arrangements with the Fund Council, the Consortium, the Centers as well as with the ISPC and the SPIA;
- Reviewing and finalizing the Draft Procedures for Evaluation Planning and the Rolling Evaluation Work-Plan (REWP) and Budget for submission to the Fund Council for approval;
- Consultations with funders, major partners, centers’ DGs and CRP leaders, GFAR, ISPC and SPIA on evaluations to be included in the three-year REWP;
- Reviewing the IEA Guidance Note on the Community of Practice on Evaluation and developing a draft Action Plan in consultation with key stakeholders;
- Developing the 2013 draft IEA work plan and budget, and draft evaluation plan and submit to Fund Council for approval;
- Participation in the GCARD2, CGIAR Funder Forum and CGIAR Fund Council;

It is expected that by the end of 2012, the following will have been achieved:

- Office fully established, including office space; equipment and office procedures;
- GS staff recruited and two Professional Staff selected for a start of duty during the first quarter of 2013;
- Collaborative arrangements with Fund Council, Fund Office, Consortium Board and Office as well as with the ISPC and SPIA well defined and agreed;
- First evaluation to be initiated in 2013 defined and approved by the Fund Council;
- Three-Year Rolling Evaluation Work-Plan¹ (2013-2015), developed in full consultation with all entities of the CGIAR system and to be submitted for approval at the 9th Fund Council meeting;
- Budget and Workplan for 2013 approved by the Fund Council;
- Draft Action Plan for CGIAR Community of Practice for Evaluation developed.

4. Activities and Budget for 2013

2013 will be the first year of operation of the IEA. The workplan for 2013 takes realistic account of the needs of the work program and the time taken to recruit staff, set up offices, etc. It is based on the assumption that operational procedures will be in place, office equipment procured and staff recruited during the first part of 2013. It is likely that a first strategic evaluation will not be initiated before mid-2013. The period until then will concentrate on getting decentralized evaluation better established and supporting the conduct of such evaluations.

Given that the ISPC and the IEA are co-located in FAO, operational synergies will be sought for, in addition to collaborative arrangements on themes of common interest.

¹ The first Rolling Workplan will have a three year perspective (rather than two years as per the IEA policy) to account for the start-up phase in 2013 during which it is likely that one major evaluation will only be initiated.

4.1 Activities

4.1.1 Evaluation(s):

Once the IEAO has reached full capacity, CRP evaluations will be conducted at the rate of 2-3 per year, allowing all CRPs to be covered in 6-7 years, in line with revision of the CRPs. The period until then will concentrate on better establishing decentralized evaluation capacity (?) and supporting the conduct of such evaluations.

On demand evaluations may also be undertaken, including of emerging operational issues and support provided to the Consortium and Lead Centers in establishing CRP performance monitoring. The first system wide evaluation is envisaged as beginning in 2014 for completion in 2015².

During the first year of operation, it is expected that *one major strategic evaluation will be initiated for completion in 2014*.

Other specific evaluative studies (e.g. synthesis of evaluations) may be carried out by the IEAO staff itself (see section 4.1.4).

Tentative criteria for selecting first evaluation(s) include:

- CRP which largely contains research sub-programmes for which implementation started before the SRF;
- CRP for which a large proportion of resources come from Windows 1 and 2;
- Some time elapsed since the programme was evaluated in-depth;
- Availability and coverage of CCCEs and other relevant studies which will form part of the basis for the overall evaluation of the CRP;
- Meeting evaluation needs of funders, consortium members and research partners.

A budget of US\$ 200,000 has been allocated for initiating a strategic evaluation for the preparatory work and to pay for external consultants and travel costs (IEAO staff, evaluation consultants and Peer Review panel) as well as consultative events during the first phase of the evaluation³.

4.1.2 Development and Maintenance of detailed Evaluation Standards and Guidance

During the first part of 2012 and as part of the preparatory work prior to establishing the IEA, a set of documents, including (i) the evaluation policy; (ii) the evaluation standards and annexes and (iii) guidance notes, have been drafted by a team of consultants in consultation with CGIAR stakeholders. While the Evaluation Policy has been finalized and approved by the Fund Council and the Consortium, the standards and guidance notes have been left in draft form for the Head of IEA to review and finalize.

The standards are a tool to promote external and independent evaluations and form the basis for evaluation quality assurance. They set out the standards for contracting staff responsible for managing external evaluation and also delineate responsibilities of those who manage evaluations, evaluators and those being evaluated. In that respect, the standards should be seen in tandem with the Evaluation Policy.

² The exact timing of the first system wide evaluation will be defined in the two-year rolling work plan developed in full consultation with all entities of the CGIAR system and will be submitted for approval at the 9th Fund Council meeting.

³ The total cost of a CRP evaluation is estimated to be at a minimum of US\$500,000.

It is therefore proposed to give priority to the review, finalization and dissemination of the evaluation standards and annexes. In fact, the review will have started in 2012. However, finalizing the standards and disseminating both the policy and standards will involve CGIAR stakeholders through a participatory process including virtual or face-to-face workshops.

The guidance notes represent a set of good practices and practical guidelines on various aspects of the planning, conduct or management of evaluations. They have been extensively commented upon by many interlocutors of the consultants involved in their preparation. In the next step, it is important to ensure a common understanding and agreement with stakeholders in particular with those who will manage evaluation. Therefore, it is planned to finalize these guidance notes in the later part of 2013 to allow time needed for involving the yet to-be-established Evaluation Community of Practices (ECoP) within the CGIAR (see section 4.1.3). They will form a comprehensive set of guidelines for all those having some responsibilities over evaluation and will be part of the tools used for developing evaluation capacity further within the CGIAR.

These activities will mostly involve staff time. A total allocation of US\$ 10,000 will pay for peer review, final editing on the guidance notes and activities related to the diffusion of the Policy and the Standards.

4.1.3 Evaluation Capacity Development and Facilitation of an Evaluation Community of Practice

Under objective 2, a key role of the IEAO will be to develop and facilitate an ECoP within the CGIAR with memberships open to those significantly involved in evaluation. This will be done with inputs from the Standing Panel on Impact Assessment (SPIA). Establishing and operationalizing an evaluation network across the Centers will be instrumental to an effective evaluation regime within the CGIAR. Such an evaluation network across all the CGIAR centers will provide advice, quality control to evaluation work as well as backstop and provide knowledge and learning from and on evaluations as interface between each Centre, the network and the CGIAR at large.

In 2013, a step-by-step approach will be followed, including a first phase during which an overall assessment will be made and information shared; a second phase will aim at establishing an evaluation network or Evaluation Community of Practice through a first workshop.

During the first part of the year, the IEAO will carry out the following activities: a survey of staff involved in evaluation; capacity development needs assessment; evaluation mapping ; developing an evaluation data base and web repository.

A core activity to be undertaken during the second half of 2013 will be a workshop with selected participants from all Centers (about 30 participants in total) who will become part of the evaluation network. The purpose of the workshop will be to discuss the architecture, content, management and functions of the network as well as to build a strong team through the practice and modeling of proactive network behaviors and working culture. The workshop will review the CGIAR context and the evaluation functions in all its aspects. It will also focus on evaluation policy, norms, standards, guidelines and accountability and learning functions. The workshop will also offer soft skills training and practice for network and evaluation work (facilitation, mediation, coordination, communication, peer review and feed-back skills, etc).

Once the network is established after the workshop, the IEAO will ensure that the appropriate web-based platforms and technology are available. The facilitation and moderation role of the network as well as a charter, terms of references and strategies or other normative, strategic and functional

directions will have been established during the workshop itself. The IEAO will ensure support and coordination as required by the network at large.

As mentioned above, a more detailed draft Action Plan for CGIAR Community of Practice will be developed in 2012.

In 2013, IEA budget will cover the costs of short-term consultancies (web repository, communication) and that of the workshop (mainly travel and residential costs for participants and facilitators). A total of US\$ 150,000 is allocated for these activities.

4.1.4 Facilitation of Evaluation Follow-up and Learning

During this first year, the IEA will develop mechanisms for institutionalizing evaluation, a formal Management Response to be prepared for each evaluation, complemented later by a Follow-up Report on the implementation of the management response.

As part of the IEAO's role of facilitating the dissemination of evaluation learning, the IEAO will, among other activities, prepare synthesis reports, drawing common findings and lessons learned from evaluative studies carried out so far within the CGIAR. In 2013, it is proposed to conduct a first light synthesis report on capacity development, one of the three cross-cutting themes of the CRP portfolio with gender research and in-situ conservation of agro-biodiversity. While progress has been made in mainstreaming/ integrating the latter two themes in the CRP, capacity development is less advanced. The Consortium Office plans to develop a first draft of a strategy on capacity strengthening in 2013. Synthesizing knowledge from evaluations and other related evaluative studies will assemble evidence of practices so far and inform the strategy. However, the usefulness of such a synthesis will partly depend on the evaluation materials available and their quality. A first step will therefore consist in assessing reports available, after which the plan to undertake a synthesis will be confirmed.

These activities involve mostly staff time.

4.1.5 Quality management and assurance

An important part of an effective evaluation function are the mechanisms put in place for quality management and assurance, the basis of these being the evaluation policy, standards and good practices.

In 2013, this will consist of the development of a quality assurance system for (i) the IEA (central evaluation function) and (ii) all evaluations (process and reports) carried out in the CGIAR. The latter will largely depend on the success achieved in establishing an operational and effective ECoP (see section 4.1.2 above).

These will involve both internal and external quality assurance mechanisms and processes. One such mechanism considered in the Evaluation Policy is the setting up of a small independent external virtual panel for an *ex post* check on the quality of evaluations commissioned directly by the IEAO.

In 2013, this activity involves mostly staff time. In the future, the cost of the external virtual peer panel will have to be budgeted.

4.1.6 Collaborative activities

In 2013, collaborative activities will be undertaken with the ISPC, essentially in two main areas:

- (i) Development of the new SRF: accountability framework and respective roles of monitoring, performance management and evaluation in the new RBM context; and
- (ii) SPIA: regular inputs in the framework of the SIAC Steering Committee⁴ and Impact Assessment Community of Practice.

The IEA Head will also liaise with evaluation professional networks outside the CGIAR, in particular with the UNEG (United Nations Evaluation Group) to which observer status for the CGIAR IEA will be requested. Between the IEAO staff, liaison with other evaluation professional networks will be made, including NONIEs, IDEAS and the EES.

The costs of collaborative activities include staff time and travel costs.

4.2 Estimated Budget - 2013

As per Evaluation Policy, “The target and ceiling budget to be progressively achieved for the central IEA evaluation budget will be in the order of one percent of CGIAR Windows 1 and 2. [...]. The IEA budget covers all IEA central functions, including evaluation of CRPs as a whole, the overall evaluation of the CGIAR and facilitation of the Community of Practice. Setting a target in this way helps to ensure the independence of evaluation and reduce the work of annual budget definition.”

The operational budget for 2013 mirrors the work plan of this start-up phase and is estimated at **US\$ 1.383 million**, well-under the 1% target. It is expected that the budget will increase significantly in the second year of operations.

As mentioned above, initial staffing of the IEAO will be done gradually with the expecting starting date for the staff to be recruited as follows:

- Administrative staff: November 2012;
- Junior Staff (P2/3): March 2013
- Senior Evaluation Staff (P5): March/April 2013
- Evaluation Officer (P4): July 2013

Provision for recruiting a junior consultant in 2013 will be made to cover needs until the time the selected Evaluation Analyst (P2/3) is recruited.

In addition, short-term consultants will be hired in 2013 for specific activities regarding:

- Community of practice: workshop facilitation and proceedings;
- Editing/publishing standards (and guidance notes);
- IEA Website; and
- Web-evaluation repository.

80 days are tentatively allocated for short-term consultants.

Given the locally dispersed structure of the CGIAR and that many of the activities during this first year will be carried out by the IEAO staff, US\$ 80,000 is allocated for staff travel. The latter is divided into three types: (i) Liaising with CGIAR entities (mostly the IEA Head prerogative); (ii) missions relating to the first evaluation (preparatory work) and (iii) participating in technical meetings.

As mentioned above, it is expected that most of the capital cost of office equipment and computers will be covered under the 2012 budget⁵.

⁴ Strengthening Impact Assessment in the CGIAR System

⁵ The final budget proposal will be revised taking into account additional expenses linked to computer and office equipment if need be.

2013 Operational Budget and Expenditures of the CGIAR IEA
in US\$000

Expense Item	2012 Approved Budget (Aug-Dec)	2013 Budget
Core Activities		
1. Evaluations		200
2. Policy, Standards, Guidelines		10
3. Evaluation Capacity Development		150
4. Facilitation of Evaluation Follow-up and Learning		0
5. Quality Management and Assurance		0
6. Collaborative Activities		0
Sub-Total		360
Sub-Total		
Personnel Costs		
Professional Staff		688
Administrative Staff		115
Long term Consultant		60
Short term Consultant		40
Sub-Total	237	903
Number of staff (Full Time Equivalent)		
Administrative Support		1
Professional Staff		4
Number of Long Term Consultants		1
Total FTE		6
Travel		
Staff Travel - Liaison with CGIAR Entities		20
Staff Travel Participation to evaluation missions		20
Staff Travel - Workshops/Technical Meetings		40
Sub-Total	18	80
Operating Expenses		40
Communications		
Shared Services and Admin		
Sub-Total	28(1)	40
Overhead Charges		
IT Charges		
Rent		
Legal Services		
Corporate Services		
Sub-Total		0
TOTAL	283	1,383

ude also capita cost of computers, printers, office furniture, telecommunications.

Allocation of 2013 Fund Office Financial Resources to Activities
In US \$000

	Planned Results	Allocation \$
1	High quality strategic evaluations <i>1 evaluation- Phase 1</i> <i>1 evaluation planned: TORs prepared; prepratory work;consultants selected</i>	200
2	Standards and Guidelines <i>Evaluation Standards finalized</i> <i>Policy and standards disseminated</i> <i>Selected guidance notes prepared</i>	5
3	Evaluation Capacity Development <i>CGIAR Evaluation Community of Practice established</i> <i>Central evaluation data base developed</i> <i>Guidance notes completed</i>	150
4	Learning from evaluation* <i>1 Evaluation Synthesis Report</i> Evaluation Management Response Follow up System developed	20
5	Quality Management and Assurance* <i>Evaluation quality assurance system for the IEA and for the CGIAR well defined</i>	20
6	Collaborative and Liaison Activities*	40
7	Communication <i>Evaluation Website developed</i>	5

* In order to be consistent with the total budget (less staff and operating cost), the staff travel costs have been arbitrarily allocated to three activities, all mostly carried out by IEA staff under items 4,5 and 6.