RTB Gender
Research Agenda 2019-2021

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**ACRONYMS**

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<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>CoP</td>
<td>Community of practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRP</td>
<td>CGIAR Research Program</td>
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<td>EIB</td>
<td>CGIAR Excellence in Breeding Platform</td>
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<td>FP</td>
<td>Flagship Project</td>
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<td>GBI</td>
<td>CGIAR Gender and Breeding Initiative</td>
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<td>GREAT</td>
<td>Gender-Responsive Researchers Equipped for Agricultural Transformation</td>
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<td>IPM</td>
<td>Integrated pest management</td>
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<td>ISC</td>
<td>Independent Steering Committee</td>
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<td>MC</td>
<td>Management Committee</td>
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<td>MEL</td>
<td>Monitoring, evaluation, and learning</td>
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<td>PMU</td>
<td>Program Management Unit</td>
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<td>CGIAR Research Program on Roots, Tubers, and Bananas</td>
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<td>SO</td>
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The goal of the CGIAR Research Program on Roots, Tubers and Bananas is to improve food security and reduce poverty among users of these crops worldwide. Consequently, RTB innovations often need to be gender-responsive to realize their full impact. The RTB Gender Research Agenda (2019–2021) lays out priorities for achieving this result in the remainder of this Phase.

The Agenda draws on earlier initiatives and documents: after its launch in 2012, RTB adopted a gender strategy, and RTB’s Phase 2 proposal (2017–2022) included a gender strategy, a CGIAR system-wide requirement. In 2018, RTB’s Independent Steering Committee made several recommendations for gender research. These efforts together provide a foundation for the current Agenda that presents the research approach, the priorities, and the governance required to address its three objectives, namely to:

- Promote equality of opportunity in access to RTB innovations that lead to improvements in livelihoods among women and men end-users at local, national, regional, and global scales;
- Increase the positive impact on gender equity of RTB’s innovation;
- Ensure that the development and scaling of RTB innovations and its assessment are informed by high-quality and efficient research on gender.

The current Agenda highlights three key areas, namely breeding, seed systems and scaling, identified as important for the concentration of efforts and collaboration with technical biophysical teams. It also emphasizes the need for close interaction with biophysical research areas and outlines some monitoring and evaluation parameters to support crosscutting gender research for 2019–2021.
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. IMPORTANCE OF GENDER FOR THE MANDATE OF RTB

The CGIAR Research Program on Roots, Tubers and Bananas (RTB) was launched in 2012 to harness the untapped potential of these crops to improve food security, nutrition, income, and climate change resilience of smallholders, especially women and youth. RTB crops are important staples that supply key nutrients in the diet of the world’s poor. Women are commonly an important segment of producers and processors of RTB crops, but many face different constraints from male producers and use the crops differently. Although women’s unequal access to agricultural technology leads to pervasive underperformance of the sector, increased gender equality can enhance its productivity and contribute to poverty reduction (World Bank 2012; FAO 2011). RTB’s own evaluations show that men and women do not always equally benefit from RTB technologies. Thus, understanding men and women’s gender-based challenges, opportunities, capacities and interests is crucial for the design, adaptation and scaling of RTB innovations that can positively contribute to the livelihood strategies of targeted beneficiary populations.

1.2. BENEFICIARIES

Gender research is essential for RTB’s work worldwide, to understand and prioritize the target beneficiary groups for concentrated investment in RTB innovations. Social targeting involves understanding men and women’s gender-based challenges, opportunities, capacities and interests through analysis of the intersection between gender and other social attributes, in particular youth, ethnicity and poverty levels. Gender-differentiated beneficiary groups that require further characterization to understand their relative importance include, but are not limited to:

- Women producing and trading in value chains that are mainly operated by women;
- Women and men producing for and trading in high added-value, specialty marketing chains;
- Women, men, male and female children providing unpaid family labor;
- Women, men, male and female children supplying off-farm wage labor in production and postharvest processing, at either micro- or industrial scales;
- Women and men owner-operators in small, semi-subsistence farms and small-scale agro-enterprises;
- Men and women engaging in seed production and marketing at different levels and scales.

Box 1. Who do we work with and for?

Poor root, tuber and banana producers are cultivating small plots on marginal land in extremely challenging and risky agro-ecologies. Heavily dependent on off-farm employment to make ends meet, they rely on unpaid family labor for crop production, with little or no mechanization. Their work is physically arduous, and their workday is long, especially for women who have domestic and child-rearing responsibilities as well as farm-work. Their access to information and use of modern farm inputs is highly variable. Consumption of part of the crop is essential to their household’s fragile food security; engagement in diverse forms of post-harvest processing and sale of RTB crops is common. They are handicapped by low levels of market organization, poor infrastructure and limited transportation; and so typically have difficulty in supplying the volume or quality of products needed for successful marketing. They are women and men, young and old, with different assets, cultures and ethnicities. All these characteristics intersect with gender to influence their opportunities, constraints and expectations and ultimately, how they use and benefit from RTB innovations.
1.3. RTB’S PREVIOUS WORK ON GENDER AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 2018 REVIEW

During RTB Phase 1, the program adopted a gender strategy that sought to integrate research on gender comprehensively across the entire CRP and to conduct strategic research addressing the knowledge gap on how gender affects the uptake of RTB innovations. Although gender research was broad and expert capacity was spread thin, the program made good progress in several areas. Participation in the GENNOVATE research initiative provided a learning process, capacity development, research and publications that improved understanding of what gender roles and norms imply for RTB innovation. Gender efforts also contributed to build internal capacity for gender research, produce new knowledge, methods and tools. In its Phase 2 proposal, RTB management strengthened strategic gender research and capacity development with a crosscutting Flagship Project 5 (FP5) including a dedicated cluster (CCS.3) that conducts cross-cutting strategic research on gender-equitable development and youth employment. Subsequently, a review led by the RTB Independent Steering Committee (ISC) in 2018 made several recommendations including (1) the creation of critical mass for integrated gender research, together with performance incentives for improvement of research quality (publication and enhanced use of mixed-method social science approaches); (2) more attention to communicating, learning, and applying findings from gender research that can contribute to RTB’s impact among flagships and donors; (3) more proactive monitoring of progress, risks, and funding to make sure gender research remains on track and appropriately resourced. These recommendations provide an important foundation for the current RTB Gender Research Agenda.

1.4. CAPACITY BASELINE

Specialized capacity for gender research consists of the gender, monitoring and evaluation officer (social scientist, full time) based in the Program Management Unit (PMU) and four individuals (social scientists) who act as RTB gender focal points located in the partner CGIAR centers, and whose professional terms of reference involve conducting research on gender. Other researchers engaged include both gender researchers from partner centers and other scientists coming from different areas of expertise who are involved with or support the implementation of gender research.

RTB FP5, which coordinates strategic gender research, also involves economists responsible for RTB’s social targeting, foresight analysis, impact assessment, and scaling research, all of which require analysis of gender differences. The FP5 team is considered part of the extended gender team, in particular scientists from Cluster 5.1, who engage in foresight and impact assessment and scientists from Cluster 5.4, who work on the science of scaling.

Research conducted jointly between gender specialists and social scientists from other clusters should result in more effective gender research by enhancing RTB’s use of mixed-method approaches and by integrating gender into targeting and scaling processes. Therefore, the success of the Agenda depends on shared responsibility for its implementation among social scientists directly conducting gender research and those working in other areas for whom gender research is of particular relevance.
Box 2. Key Concepts and Definitions

**Gender** refers to the social behavior, roles, and status of women and men, girls and boys, and the relationships among them. **Sex** refers to biological differences.

**Gender analysis** studies the social relationships among men and women, girls and boys. In farming, gender analysis focuses especially on how these relationships affect access to and ownership of productive resources for farming, who does the work, and how farm products and income from them are distributed. **Sex-disaggregation of data** is essential, but on its own does not constitute gender analysis.

**Gender-responsive** approaches are designed to meet the needs of both women and men, to ensure that both will benefit and that neither will be harmed, usually within existing gender norms and constraints.

**Gender-transformative** approaches involve intentional efforts to change unequal gender relations that are obstacles to a desired innovation and its related gender-equity objectives. These interventions typically involve change in prevailing gender norms to increase women’s agency and empowerment—and sometimes that of men as well.

**Gender equity** means fairness of treatment for women and men according to their respective needs. The treatment of women and men, although it may be identical or different, aims at equality of opportunity. It may involve specific innovations relevant to women or compensation for their social disadvantages.

**Gender equality** refers to the rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. It means that people’s rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity among them. Gender equality is therefore, a concern for men as well as for women.

**Innovations** refer to combinations of novel technology (such as crop varieties or fertilizer) with new institutions (e.g., new pricing systems or legislation) and new forms of organizing people (such as cooperatives or supply chains).

**Intersectionality** refers to the ways in which more than one social category, such as race and gender or class and gender, can be used to characterize an individual or group. It also refers to how the individual or group can be affected by several overlapping and interdependent systems of disadvantage or discrimination.

1.5 **Objectives of the Gender Research Agenda**

The goal of RTB is to improve food security and reduce poverty among users of RTB crops worldwide. This goal requires innovations that support or promote gender equity and that are relevant, accessible, and useful to the women and men among the poor who produce, process, and consume RTB crops.

RTB’s three-year Agenda (2019–2021) has three objectives:

- Promote equality of opportunity in access to RTB innovations that lead to improvements in livelihoods among women and men end-users at local, national, regional, and global scales;
- Increase the positive impact on gender equity of RTB’s innovation;
- Ensure that the development and scaling of RTB innovations and its assessment are informed by high-quality and efficient research on gender.
2. APPROACH TO GENDER RESEARCH

RTB’s portfolio includes two types of research: “integrated” and “strategic gender research.”

2.1. INTEGRATION OF GENDER INTO RTB RESEARCH

To integrate gender into RTB research requires a two-part approach for (1) working collaboratively with bio-physical scientists to adjust, adapt and develop methods and tools that make it practical for the technical research in FPs to consider gender in innovation design and delivery, and (2) integrate learning from strategic gender research and impact studies to positively influence how RTB innovations affect and are affected by gender considerations.

Integrated gender research involves making sure that RTB FPs consider the utility of RTB innovations for women and men among target beneficiaries as well as the potential positive and negative implications for gender equity. This requires gender experts to support the adaptation and development of suitable tools and information for applying findings from gender analysis at relevant points in the project cycle.

2.2. STRATEGIC GENDER RESEARCH

Strategic gender research focuses on (1) significant gender differences in the constraints faced by a given FP’s target beneficiaries, and (2) how gender differences affect technology choice, scaling of innovations and livelihood outcomes. RTB proposes to collect and analyze large-scale comparative data in order to generate lessons that can be generalized across regions, crops, and livelihood typologies.¹ Much strategic gender research of this type was conducted by GENNOVATE in the past and is currently conducted by partners, especially in academia; it is not specific to RTB users. Therefore, RTB undertakes the specific strategic research, supported by advanced research partnerships needed to build the foundation for integrating gender considerations effectively into the FPs.

3. PRIORITIES FOR GENDER RESEARCH

3.1. THE IMPORTANCE OF FOCUS

The technical challenges prioritized in RTB’s Phase 2 proposal provide a hugely diverse array of research tasks for gender research across the different Flagship Projects. All the important technical constraints confronting the development of roots and tuber crops (e.g., declining soil fertility, insufficient planting material, lack of well-adapted varieties, prevalence of pests and diseases, need for climate change adaptation) have a gender dimension. Gender also has to be considered in questions of how to develop more inclusive seed systems and value chains. Added to this, gender implications for FPs cannot be understood or prioritized in isolation from other dimensions of social difference—notably social characteristics related to poverty, ethnicity and youth, all of which are targeted in RTB’s expected impact. The breadth of this research agenda makes it imperative to concentrate efforts on priority RTB innovations for which consideration of gender is likely to have a significant payoff. A key issue for the RTB is how to focus the resources available for gender research effectively: How will gender research deliver a critical mass of work, sufficient to make sure that RTB

¹ RTB. 2016. pp. 142.
is gender responsive where impact really matters? To help answer this question, RTB has identified a set of priority topics for the Agenda.

### 3.2. Priority Topics

RTB has identified breeding, which is involved in both FP1 and FP2, seed systems, and scaling as the principal focus areas of crosscutting gender research for 2019–2021. Varietal development and deployment (via seed systems) are strategic areas that need to increase their gender-responsiveness and relevance. Women and men benefit from breeding when improved varieties incorporate or maintain traits that they value, such as traits that reduce the drudgery of specific tasks traditionally assigned to women or men, such as weeding, harvesting and processing. Women and men also benefit from breeding that incorporates or maintains specific post-harvest traits that are critical for their processing activities and enterprises, affecting the profitability and the income generated by processing. Women and men’s work, status and even income are profoundly affected by changes in seed systems because of their differential roles and engagement with informal seed systems. Women as well as men will be key decision-makers as well as beneficiaries when new seed system models are introduced.

Overall, for any of the five FPs, gender analysis is imperative for accurate social targeting and scaling. Social targeting informed by gender analysis helps to define whose actual or future demand for gender-responsive or gender-transformative innovation is worth RTB investment. Gender-responsive scaling strategies can enhance more equitable access to and benefit from RTB innovations.

There are fundamental gender issues in other RTB FPs that will benefit from the availability of tested gender research tools developed for work on breeding, seed systems, and scaling. These tools can be readily adapted and applied to other areas.

### 3.3. Coordinated Management of Gender-Relevant Data

To enhance the existing evidence-base regarding on gender, it will be essential for RTB to maximize the efficient collection, processing, and storage of sex-disaggregated and other both qualitative and quantitative gender-relevant data.

Successful implementation of the Agenda requires coordinated, RTB wide planning for management of sex-disaggregated and gender-relevant data, in compliance with the *CGIAR Open Access and Data Management Policy* (OADM Policy). This coordination requires engagement of staff within and beyond the gender team to share planning and resources for this purpose, including:

- Harmonization and standardization of the relevant data collection instruments among CGIAR centers and partners;
- Coordination of annual research plans of work and budget that involve collection of gender-relevant data, to harmonize target location, sampling population, data collection, documentation, and storage;
- Coordinated data warehousing for all gender-relevant data.

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2. RTB. 2018.
3. RTB. 2018.
4. GOVERNANCE TO SUPPORT GENDER RESEARCH

Effective implementation of the Agenda requires accountability, with responsibilities for oversight formally assigned at different levels of the RTB governance. Oversight is designed to ensure that research leadership, funding, staffing, and risks are managed so that gender research delivers impactfully, as required by RTB’s mandate. For this oversight to function, the following management processes have been defined:

4.2. INCLUSION OF GENDER IN WORK PLANS AND BUDGETS

- Work plans and budgets at the cluster, flagship project and CRP level include formal sections on gender research and allocate the necessary resources.
- Cluster leaders and designated gender researchers meet regularly to plan and monitor the implementation of gender research conducted as part of the annual plan, particularly when earmarked funds have been allocated.

4.3. MONITORING OF PROGRESS

- Progress of the Agenda is included as an item of the Management Committee’s meeting agenda as needed.
- Monitoring looks specifically at how effectively the FPs and clusters are integrating gender aspects into their work and how well gender research is meeting their requirements in terms of applied research and capacity development.⁴
- In line with CGIAR common monitoring and reporting framework, gender relevance of results achieved is reported every year by clusters and flagship projects and consolidated in the CRP annual report.
- Updates on the implementation of the Agenda are included in the programmatic updates during the ISC face-to-face and in the virtual meeting as needed.
- Updates on the implementation of the Agenda are included in the annual report presented by the ISC to the CIP BoT.

4.3. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT TO ENSURE UPTAKE OF GENDER RESEARCH FINDINGS THROUGHOUT THE PROJECT CYCLE

- RTB’s PMU and gender researchers engage in regular communications with FPs to ensure broad familiarity with the results from applying tools designed for gender-responsive technology development, delivery and scaling.⁵
- Gender research is included in reports to donors whenever relevant.
- Program-level annual reviews, reports, and related knowledge-sharing activities routinely include a formal session on findings from gender research.

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4.4. **Staffing and Performance**

- Maintain a gender position in PMU to facilitate engagement with focal points and monitoring processes.
- Support publication in high-impact journals. To foster publication, adequate time needs to be allocated to write up publishable research findings. Support an internal gender network and provide formal performance incentives and recognition for staff participation in the network and their contributions to gender research and capacity development. Support publication, plus broad-based recognition for contributions to gender research, knowledge-sharing, or fund-raising such as board-level commendation, performance bonuses, and team prizes open to all staff.

5. **Expected Results of the Agenda**

The impact pathway for gender research in RTB is shown in Figure 1. This pathway is expected to evolve as the Agenda progresses. Implementation in a three-year time frame will involve RTB scientists and the gender researchers in an evidence-based assessment of end-user demand for gender-responsive technology in the prioritized areas of breeding, seed systems, and scaling. As a result, the FPs involved will have characterized their innovations in progress as gender neutral, gender responsive, gender transformative, or in need of further assessment for lack of evidence. This analysis will provide feedback to researchers in order for them to identify opportunities for innovation, with the potential to increase inclusiveness and benefits for women and men and among target beneficiary groups. As a result, gender-differentiated trait preferences will be incorporated into breeding strategies (Figure 1). This will lead to the development and release of varieties with traits that are better fitted to the demand and needs of gender-differentiated beneficiaries. As a result, RTB expects increased adoption of varieties and changes in livelihoods overall as RTB innovations respond to the needs and preferences of gender differentiated beneficiaries.

Other FPs, in particular integrated pest management (IPM) may apply adaptations of the tools and methods developed for breeding and seed systems to characterize the potential contributions of key innovations for gender differentiated users. This will lead to improved design and increased use of their innovations.

Project leaders responsible for breeding and seed systems will have invested in the capacity development and staffing needed to develop tools and apply them for gender-equitable RTB seed systems (Figure 1) of gender-responsive varieties and seed systems.

Scaling of RTB innovations will be informed by research on gender of high-quality and efficiency. Scaling will incorporate approaches that demonstrably improve women’s and men’s equality of opportunity of access to RTB innovations, resulting in the increased use of scaled RTB innovations by both men and women.
6. MONITORING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GENDER RESEARCH AGENDA

Monitoring is essential for learning from implementation of the Agenda. Systematic and rigorous monitoring and documentation of the difference made by integrated gender research in product development, scaling, and final impact are important for justifying the investment in gender research with the FPs. The monitoring covered in this section is designed to enable the Program to keep track of what needs to be done to implement the Agenda and important milestones: it is not intended for monitoring outcomes or impact.

Monitoring should contribute to a stream of regular and frequent knowledge-sharing about gender research, reinforcing understanding that consideration of gender in RTB is everyone’s responsibility to different degrees. The relevant outcomes and impacts of gender research should be reported by each research area in which gender is an integrated activity; these should also be documented in dedicated section in the RTB’s annual report. Progress toward expected outcomes and impacts resulting from implementation of the Agenda should be integrated into the principal annual institutional reviews and activities conducted for knowledge-sharing, reflection, and learning.

The indicators for monitoring the Agenda shown in Table 1 are organized by objectives and are based on the integrated RBM framework for CGIAR (monitoring, evaluation, and learning community of practice [MEL CoP]) and make use of the language and standards agreed with the system.
RTB Gender Research Agenda 2019-2021

organization (SO) for common indicators. Monitoring the effectiveness of gender research with the indicator for integration of gender into RTB innovations by research projects and Programs must be a routine task of Program management unit: the gender researchers provide technical expertise for the implementation of integrated gender research but the authority for holding clusters accountable for the result, resides with PMU.

Table 1. Performance Indicators for Monitoring Implementation of the Agenda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Area</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
<th>Indicator of Achievement</th>
<th>Detail of assessment</th>
<th>Time Frame</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Integration of gender into innovations by research projects and programs.</td>
<td>Gender researchers</td>
<td>No. and percent of RTB innovations at different levels of gender responsiveness, by stage. For example, number and percent of breeding product profiles that include traits with positive value for both women and men end-users.</td>
<td>For each RTB innovation, at a given stage of development -1 = No use of gender approach or tool to design or deliver the innovation 0 = Specified innovation has been assessed for gender relevance and deemed to be gender neutral 1 = Sex-disaggregated data relevant to the innovation were collected and analyzed, consistent with minimum standards for gender research 2 = Gender-responsive objectives for the innovation were identified and addressed by the technical team</td>
<td>Bi-annual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic gender research</td>
<td>CC 5.3 Gender team</td>
<td>Quality of strategic research publications⁷</td>
<td>0 = No publications that meet the agreed standard 1= Two or more RTB research papers published in peer-reviewed journals with gender as keyword 2 = Evidence of dissemination, uptake, or application of published strategic research findings identified in RTB</td>
<td>Annual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity development</td>
<td>RTB management and gender team</td>
<td>No. of people trained to integrate gender in their research and development interventions</td>
<td>No. of people in RTB projects and partner organizations in formal training, co-events, knowledge exchange, scaling activities, trials and studies, or other (see SO categories)</td>
<td>Annual</td>
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Objective 2: To promote equality of opportunity in access to RTB innovations that lead to livelihood improvement among women and men end-users at local, national, regional, and global scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Area</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
<th>Indicator of Achievement</th>
<th>Detail of assessment</th>
<th>Time Frame</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equality of opportunity in uptake of RTB innovations by end- users</td>
<td>Gender researchers</td>
<td>Adoption and impact studies that document gender differentiated changes</td>
<td>Percentage of studies that document uptake of RTB innovations that include gender analysis</td>
<td>Annual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Researchers</td>
<td>Documentation of gender relevance⁸ in milestones, policy changes and outcome/ impact case reports</td>
<td>Percentage of milestones, policy changes and outcome/impact cases reported with documented gender relevance</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td></td>
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⁷ Note that level 2 of this indicator links to the RTB Program-level MEL which will assess the extent to which strategic gender research is utilized to improve the gender-responsiveness of program outcomes and impacts, such as changes towards gender equitable control of incomes and means of production, equitable inclusion in relevant decision-making bodies and equitable status in household and other relevant institutions.
⁸ System office indicators
7. REFERENCE MATERIAL


The CGIAR Research Program on Roots, Tubers and Bananas (RTB) is a partnership collaboration led by the International Potato Center implemented jointly with Bioversity International, the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), and the Centre de Coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement (CIRAD), that includes a growing number of research and development partners. RTB brings together research on its mandate crops: bananas and plantains, cassava, potato, sweetpotato, yams, and minor roots and tubers, to improve nutrition and food security and foster greater gender equity especially among some of the world’s poorest and most vulnerable populations.

www.rtb.cgiar.org

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