Review Processes in the CGIAR: Terms of Reference and Guidelines for External Program and Management Reviews of CGIAR Centers

TAC and the CGIAR Secretariat have revised the terms of reference and guidelines for external reviews of centers, based on reactions to the external review process from CGIAR members and centers. The revisions are in five documents which are described in the forwarding letter to the CGIAR Chair. The terms of reference for regular, interim and mid-term center reviews are for endorsement by the CGIAR. The guidelines are for information and comment.
Mr. Ismail Serageldin  
Chairman, CGIAR  
World Bank  
1818 H Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20433

Dear Mr. Serageldin:

We take pleasure in submitting to you for the CGIAR’s consideration at the 1995 Mid-Term Meeting a revised set of terms of reference and guidelines for external program and management reviews of CGIAR centers. These documents reflect the most significant update since the external program reviews and external management reviews were merged in 1991. Because commissioning center reviews is a joint TAC-CGIAR Secretariat responsibility, the terms of reference and guidelines were drafted by a working group from the two secretariats and discussed by TAC’s Standing Committee on External Reviews and the full TAC in March 1995. The attached drafts incorporate the suggestions made at this meeting. They also incorporate the comments made by CGIAR members at the 1994 International Centers Week in connection with the progress report given by the TAC Chair on the efforts of TAC and the CGIAR Secretariat to redesign the System’s review processes, as well as earlier input from the CGIAR members and center directors through two questionnaire surveys.

The attached set consists of five documents:

1. Terms of reference for external reviews of CGIAR centers. This is the principal document for which CGIAR’s endorsement is being sought. It outlines the objectives of the center reviews and the specific charge of the review panels. A list of topics to be covered in reviews and a sample summary information form are attached to the terms of reference. The latter is being proposed to improve comparability of information across centers.

2. Guidelines for external reviews--standard review format. These guidelines reflect current CGIAR practice in carrying out external center reviews. The term “standard review format” is used to differentiate it from an alternate format, heretofore not tried, which is described below. We would welcome the CGIAR members’ comments on it.

3. Guidelines for external reviews--issue-driven review format. These describe an optional way of conducting periodic center reviews which responds to the changes in the review process suggested by donors and centers, i.e., relying more on results from internally commissioned reviews of centers, reducing the time demands external reviews place on the centers, and reducing costs of external reviews. We should point out that a review conducted in the issue-driven format would use the same terms of reference as one carried out in the standard format--thus, it is expected to be equally comprehensive in coverage of topics. The main differences would be in the design of the review, selection...
of panel members, and number of visits to the center by the whole panel. Over time, we expect the System’s external center reviews to be conducted more and more in this format as the centers strengthen their internal review procedures, particularly through rigorous reviews of their scientific programs by peers in other institutions.

4. Terms of reference for interim external reviews. This one-page document (next to the last page in the set) summarizes the purpose and conduct of interim reviews (which are small-scale external reviews commissioned in lieu of a regular external review when there is strong evidence that the period between regular external reviews can be extended well beyond the normal five years). Only one interim review has been commissioned to date (CIMMYT in 1993).

5. Terms of reference for mid-term external reviews. This one-page document (the last page in the set) summarizes the purpose and conduct of mid-term reviews (which are commissioned as a follow-up to a regular review to monitor closely the centre’s handling of a major concern raised during the regular review). The review of ICLARM that is before the Group at the Nairobi meeting is an example of such a review. The decision for this review was taken at the time the CGIAR discussed the external review of ICLARM in 1992.

Center reviews constitute a major component of the CGIAR’s evaluation mechanisms. Other components include program (or “stripe” or inter-center) reviews, ex-post impact assessments, and ex-ante impact assessments. At the Mid-Term Meeting, the CGIAR will also discuss proposals for mounting an independent impact assessment function, focussing mainly on ex-post evaluation, and hear from the Impact Assessment Task Force organized by the Public Awareness and Resource Mobilization Committee about its views on improving the System’s ex-ante and ex-post impact assessment activities and methodologies. As System-level ex-ante analysis falls among TAC’s responsibilities in recommending future strategies and priorities for the CGIAR, TAC will be interacting on this subject with the CGIAR over the next few meetings in conjunction with the new priority setting exercise. Finally, specific terms-of-reference and guidelines for program reviews are in preparation and will be forwarded to the CGIAR by TAC next year. With these discussions the CGIAR will have reviewed all its major System-level evaluation activities over the period of a year.

The most recent comprehensive paper outlining the CGIAR’s review policies is about seven years old (“Review Processes in the CGIAR,” discussed at the 1988 International Centers Week). A number of changes have taken place in the manner the System carries out its reviews since then—not the least those reflected in the attached documents, and more changes are planned with the introduction of an independent impact assessment function. It might be timely to update the 1988 paper to incorporate the recent and planned changes in evaluation policies and practices. We plan to bring a draft policy paper for the CGIAR’s consideration in the near future.

We commend the revised terms of reference for endorsement by the CGIAR and welcome comments on the draft guidelines.

Alexander von der Osten
Executive Secretary, CGIAR

Donald Winkelmann
Chairman, TAC
TERMS OF REFERENCE

AND

GUIDELINES

FOR EXTERNAL PROGRAMME AND MANAGEMENT REVIEWS OF CGIAR CENTRES

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1. Terms of Reference for Panels Conducting External Reviews of CGIAR Centres


4. Terms of Reference for Panels Conducting Interim External Reviews of CGIAR Centres

5. Terms of Reference for Panels Conducting Mid-Term External Reviews of CGIAR Centres

DRAFT

APRIL 1995
1.

Terms of Reference

For Panels Conducting External Reviews of CGIAR Centres
TERMS OF REFERENCE

FOR PANELS CONDUCTING EXTERNAL REVIEWS OF CGIAR CENTRES

Background

The Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) aims, through its support to international agricultural research, to contribute to promoting sustainable agriculture for food security in developing countries. The CGIAR has charged its Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) with the responsibility of ensuring that the programmes supported by the Group are of high quality and relevance. TAC discharges this responsibility, in part, by organizing External Programme Reviews of the Centres. The CGIAR has assigned a responsibility to its Secretariat for conducting External Management Reviews of the Centres to complement the External Programme Reviews. TAC and the CGIAR Secretariat normally discharge these responsibilities by commissioning a joint panel to conduct an External Programme and Management Review (EPMR). Such reviews are conducted for each Centre approximately every five years.

EPMRs are a cornerstone of mechanisms of accountability within the CGIAR System. As each Centre is autonomous, reviews provide a measure of central oversight. They inform the donors that their investment is sound, or recommend means to make it so. EPMRs are both retrospective and prospective, and thus serve as an essential component in the CGIAR’s integrated planning and review system. They help ensure the Centres’ excellence, relevance and continued viability, and the System’s coherence.

Purpose

The broad objectives of an EPMR are to:

- provide members of the CGIAR, in particular the donors, with an independent and rigorous assessment of the health and contribution of a Centre that they are supporting; CGIAR members need to know whether the Centre is doing the right work, and doing it efficiently;
- provide the Centre and its collaborators with assessment information that complements their own evaluation efforts;
- provide principal partners, beneficiaries, and other stakeholders of the CGIAR with information about the health and contribution of the Centre.

With these general objectives in mind, the panel is specifically charged to:

1. assess the continuing appropriateness of the Centre’s mission and evaluate its strategy and priorities in the context of CGIAR strategies and priorities, and comment on needs for change;
2. assess the recent accomplishments and impact of the Centre, and comment on the effectiveness and potential impact of the Centre’s work-in-progress;
3. assess whether the Centre is managed efficiently and suggest ways of enhancing the Centre’s overall performance; in particular, comment on the systems in place for ensuring quality.
While the panel is free to address any topic relevant to the purposes of the review, it may wish to use the list of broad topics (Attachment I) as a guide in organizing its effort. The panel is expected to make a thorough and independent appraisal of the Centre and its activities, in accordance with the Guidelines to Panels Conducting External Reviews of CGIAR Centres.

**The Report and Recommendations**

The panel is required to prepare a succinct report in plain language, in which descriptive material is the minimum necessary to set the analysis and the conclusions in context. The report should focus on noteworthy features, including recognition of the Centre’s accomplishments where appropriate, and issues of major concern, with recommendations and suggestions for change. Recommendations should be justified by analysis and reflect the consensus view of the panel; any recommendations for increases in staff or activities should include a discussion of resource implications.

The report should be as brief as possible. It should include a summary with qualitative and quantitative information following a standard format (Attachment II). Upon completion, the Panel Chair should formally transmit the document to the TAC Chair and CGIAR Executive Secretary.

**The Response and Follow-up**

The Board and management of the Centre under review should submit a response to the review, addressed to TAC and the CGIAR Secretariat. TAC then will discuss the report in the presence of the Panel Chair and representatives from the Centre, and prepare a commentary, in collaboration with the CGIAR Secretariat, including recommendations for follow-up action. The CGIAR will discuss the report in light of the Centre’s response and the commentary or commentaries from TAC and the CGIAR Secretariat, and agree on follow-up action.
TOPICS TO BE COVERED
IN EXTERNAL REVIEWS OF CGIAR CENTRES

A. Recent Evolution of the Centre

Important changes in the Centre since the previous external review, including developments in the external environment and the Centre's response.

B. Mission, Strategy and Priorities

The continuing appropriateness of the Centre's mandate.

The policies, strategies, and priorities of the Centre, their coherence with those of the CGIAR, relevance to beneficiaries, and the mechanisms used for planning, monitoring and revising them.

The appropriateness of the roles of relevant partners in establishing and collaborating in the implementation of the Centre's strategy and priorities.

C. Programme Accomplishments and Impact

Recent achievements of the Centre in research and other activities.

The quality of current programmes and activities; the rationale for any proposed changes by the Centre and the implications of these.

The Centre's impact, its contribution to the achievement of the mission and goals of the CGIAR, and the methods used for making such assessments.

The potential of the Centre's current and planned activities for future impact.

D. Organization and Management

The performance of the Centre's Board of Trustees in governing the Centre, the effectiveness of leadership throughout the Centre, and the suitability of the organization's culture to its mission.

The adequacy of the Centre's organizational structure and the mechanisms in place to manage, coordinate and ensure the excellence of the research programmes and related activities.

The adequacy of resources (financial, human, physical, information) available and the effectiveness and efficiency of their management.

The Centre's relationships with relevant research partners and stakeholders in national, regional, international, non-governmental and other relevant entities.
A. **Recent Evolution of the Centre**

State significant changes in the Centre since the previous external review, and provide an overall assessment of the Centre’s response to that review. In addition, complete the following table:

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<th>TOTAL FUNDING ($'000)</th>
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<th>Last year</th>
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* x = staff in permanent positions; y = visiting scientists, post-docs, long-term consultants.

B. **Mission, Strategy and Priorities**

State overall assessment in one to two paragraphs.

C. **Programme Accomplishments and Impact**

State overall assessment in one to two paragraphs; note primary collaborators, where relevant, and include available quantitative data on impact.

D. **Organization and Management**

State overall assessment in one to two paragraphs; cover the Centre’s systems for ensuring quality, and provide quantitative indicators, if available, on trends in Centre efficiency.
2.

Guidelines to Panels Conducting External Reviews of CGIAR Centres

Version for Standard Review Format
GUIDELINES TO PANELS CONDUCTING
EXTERNAL REVIEWS OF CGIAR CENTRES

Version for Standard Review Format

External Programme and Management Reviews of CGIAR Centres are carried out in accordance with the "Terms of Reference for Panels Conducting External Reviews of CGIAR Centres." Each review is expected to be comprehensive in its coverage of the topics listed there. Several formats are used in conducting these reviews. In the "Standard Review Format", the panel is expected to carry out a thorough assessment of the Centre and its activities, typically through two visits to the Centre's headquarters plus visits to its major field locations.

INTRODUCTION

To be credible and acceptable, all reviews must strive to be objective, transparent and participatory. The reports must be direct, explicit and frank. These broad principles should be observed throughout the review.

Being a member of a review panel is usually an interesting and rewarding experience. Moreover, Centre management and staff generally welcome the opportunity to discuss with panel members their achievements, problems and future plans. A healthy atmosphere of mutual respect and collaboration in the interchange of ideas is the key to the success of a review. It helps to ensure that the recommendations of the panel are realistic, that they are well understood by the staff, and that they will be willingly, or even enthusiastically, implemented.

PARTICIPANTS AND THEIR ROLES

The conduct of a review requires the collaboration of numerous individuals. A description of the roles of the key participants follows.

The Panel

- **Panel Chair.** The success of a review is highly dependent on the leadership and task management skills of the Panel Chair. The Chair's involvement begins early on, when he/she is consulted regarding panel composition. Once the review is underway, the Chair is responsible for ensuring that the panel undertakes its assessment and completes the report in accordance with the Terms of Reference and Guidelines. Given the magnitude of the task, the complexity of the issues, the fact that many panel members may be unfamiliar with the CGIAR, the importance of maintaining dialogue with the Centre, and the need to produce a report that reflects the consensus of the panel, the Chair's task is a demanding one. Staff provided by the Secretariats assist the Chair, and the panel members, throughout the process.

- **Panel members.** The panel is expected to make a thorough and independent appraisal of the Centre and its activities, and prepare a report. Panel members are chosen on the basis of their expertise and experience in specific areas to be covered, in addition to their capacity to analyze and think strategically on the broader issues. As the report should reflect the judgement of the whole panel, members are expected to contribute to all aspects of the review. The success of a review depends to a large extent on how well the report reflects a consensus view of the panel.
Support Team

Two or more resource persons, who are knowledgeable about the CGIAR System and experienced in its review processes, support the panel's efforts. Typically this includes one person from each of the TAC and CGIAR Secretariats, it also may include one or more consultants and possibly a TAC member. These individuals provide support on process as well as substantive matters. While these participants and panel members work together as a team, ultimately the panel is responsible for formulating the assessment and recommendations. The roles of support team members follows.

- **TAC Secretariat Resource Person and Panel Secretary.** A staff member of the TAC Secretariat normally assumes the role of Panel Secretary, and also serves as a Resource Person in his or her area of expertise. The Secretary plans and organizes the review in collaboration with the Resource Person from the CGIAR Secretariat. Once the review is underway, the Panel Secretary oversees logistical and administrative matters, and report production. Like the Resource Person from the CGIAR Secretariat, the Panel Secretary provides general support to the Panel Chair and helps ensure the overall success of the review effort. The extent to which the Secretary participates in interviews, analysis and writing is at the discretion of the Chair.

- **CGIAR Secretariat Resource Person.** A Resource Person from the CGIAR Secretariat works closely with the Panel Chair and Secretary throughout the review. Like the Secretary, the Resource Person provides guidance to the Chair on process matters and on substantive issues relating to the CGIAR System, and also provides input in his or her area of expertise. The Panel Chair determines the degree to which the Resource Person is involved in interviews, evaluation, and writing.

- **TAC Resource Person.** The TAC Chair may invite a TAC member to assist the panel as a Resource Person. This individual would bring significant knowledge in a specific substantive area of the review, a global CGIAR perspective, and provide a link between the review and the workings of TAC. The nature of the TAC Resource Person's participation in the review is at the discretion of the Panel Chair.

- **Consultants.** Other experts may be employed as consultants to conduct specialized background studies or advise the panel on specific issues. Typically such consultants participate in a limited portion of the review, given the specificity of their assignment. Like others on the review team, consultants participate in panel meetings, and may be asked to work closely with specific members of the panel, depending on the nature of their assignment.

Centre Board, Management and Staff

- **Board of Trustees.** The Board is involved in the planning stage of the review; it is a subject of review by the panel; and it is responsible for preparing a written response to the review report. Finally, the Board is responsible for the Centre's implementation of the recommendations of the review, as approved by the CGIAR.

- **Management and staff.** The Centre's management and staff play a crucial role in the conduct of the review. They are heavily involved in planning and organizing the review, and in preparations for the panel's visit. Once it is underway, the review entails a significant degree of interaction between the review team and Centre personnel, which is expected to be a valuable two-way
learning experience. Throughout the process, the collaboration and inputs of Centre management and staff are essential for the review to run smoothly and for the report to be credible and acceptable.

**Centre Collaborators**

Each Centre has a diverse group of collaborators that play a role in the review process. These include the following key partners.

- **National Agricultural Research Systems.** Representatives of national agricultural research systems (NARS)\(^1\) are important partners of the CGIAR Centres, and their input is considered essential to the viability of the CGIAR external review process. As part of the review, NARS representatives are consulted for their views on the Centre's strategy, programmes and collaboration. This may be through panel visits and/or meetings with representatives of NARSs, as well as through a survey questionnaire, as described below. After the review is completed, comments from key NARS partners will be sought on the report.

- **Other Collaborators in Research and Development.** The panel may visit or contact managers and researchers from other CGIAR Centres and other relevant institutions with which the Centre collaborates. These could include governmental and non-governmental agencies, and regional and multi-lateral organizations. Such consultations are valuable as a means of assessing the Centre's role in the CGIAR and in the global context. Given the vast number of collaborators and potential collaborators of a Centre, such meetings must be limited. Their outcome is considered important, however, and is expected to feed into the panel's assessment.

**The CGIAR, TAC and the Secretariats**

- **TAC, its Secretariat and the CGIAR Secretariat.** TAC and the CGIAR Secretariat are responsible for the management of external review processes in the CGIAR. When an EPMR is commissioned, the TAC Secretariat normally assumes overall responsibility for its coordination. TAC's Standing Committee for External Reviews, supported by the TAC Secretariat and working closely with the CGIAR Secretariat, provides guidance on matters of review design and panel composition. Once the review is completed, TAC discusses the report and prepares a commentary, in consultation with the CGIAR Secretariat, which includes recommendations to the CGIAR for any follow-up action.

- **The CGIAR.** The CGIAR, or "the Group", establishes external review policies for the System, and the reviews are conducted on its behalf. At the review-specific level, the CGIAR raises questions or proposes issues for panels to consider, and receives the review report. The report is typically distributed to and considered by numerous individuals within CGIAR member agencies prior to its formal discussion by the Group, when any follow-up action is agreed upon.

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\(^1\) A national agricultural research system comprises a country's governmental organizations and universities as well as its non-governmental and private sector organizations responsible for organizing, coordinating, or executing research that contributes explicitly to the development of its agriculture, forestry and fisheries and the maintenance of its natural resource base.
PHASES OF THE REVIEW

A comprehensive EPMR entails an Initial Phase (of one week or less), when the panel visits the Centre for the first time, and a Main Phase (of up to three weeks), when the panel completes its assessment and prepares the report. The Initial Phase usually precedes the Main Phase by a few months. The review process also includes a panel briefing, attendance at a meeting of the Centre’s Board of Trustees, interactions with representatives of NARSs and other collaborators, and possible visits to the Centre’s major field locations. The broad objectives and conduct of these components of the review are described below.

Formal Interactions with the Board of Trustees

Interactions between the Board and the panel form an essential component of every review, given the Board’s important role. Thus, early in the process, prior to or during the Initial Phase of the review, the Panel Chair along with possibly one other panel member or consultant attend a Board meeting and interview Trustees concerning Board and Centre matters. The panel member (or consultant) analyzing the Board’s performance is also expected to review Board documents, including past Board and committee meeting minutes. Further, he or she may ask trustees to complete a survey form, regarding the Board’s role and responsibilities and how it conducts its business, to facilitate the assessment. The assessment is expected to be based on an analysis of the Board’s performance, which should reveal much to the panel about the Centre’s performance. The full panel receives a written report prepared by the team member covering the Board, and is orally briefed on the meetings and findings.

Initial Phase

Panel briefing

Panel members are provided with a set of documents, intended to familiarize them with the Centre, the CGIAR and its review system. (See list of documents in Attachment II.) Panel members should read through these documents before their formal briefing, so that the team can progress quickly to its task.

The review team convenes for the first time at its formal briefing, which is organized by the Secretariats. Generally, the briefing covers topics such as: CGIAR priorities and strategies, the CGIAR’s external review process, donors’ expectations, topics and issues to review, report format, individual assignments, a review strategy or “game plan”, lessons from past reviews, and changes in the CGIAR System of relevance to the review; panel members also are briefed on administrative arrangements related to their participation in the review. These briefings, chaired by the Panel Chair, help to orientate panel members who may not be familiar with the CGIAR System and to bring others up-to-date. The briefings also provide an opportunity for panel members to become acquainted with each other and develop a plan for the task ahead.

During the panel briefing, the Chair proposes a draft table of contents of the review report with writing responsibilities, prepared with input from the Secretariat staff. The full panel modifies this as necessary at this time, or as the issues of the review emerge. The topics are divided up, with panel members assigned primary responsibility for issues or sections of the report within their area of expertise; some topics may be assigned to sub-groups. It is essential that panel members decide early on how they plan to share the load, avoiding overlap and gaps and optimizing the use of their time.
The conduct of a review puts great pressure on panel members to complete their assessments, agree on their recommendations and write a report in the time available. In this regard, teamwork is essential for a successful review. Panel members must strive to work together—exchanging ideas, sharing assessments and refining conclusions. Time management can be crucial in this regard, and should be touched upon during the panel briefing or in the days directly thereafter.

• **Getting started**

The Initial Phase of the review is designed to enable the panel to gain a broad understanding of the Centre’s programmes and strategies, through brief presentations and formal meetings. During this period the panel also commences dialogue with key staff, identifies a preliminary list of major issues for the review, and begins to formulate tentative conclusions.

During the Initial Phase, panel members also gather information they will need for their analysis. They may request that additional data be provided or documents prepared, although such requests should be restricted to essential information. Based on the nature of the issues they identify, the panel may consider preparing and distributing a questionnaire survey on a particular set of issues to Centre staff (e.g., those out-posted), which one of the Secretariats would analyze and summarize. Such data can help facilitate the panel’s work during the Main Phase, and provide valuable input to their assessment.

It is important that, during the Initial Phase of familiarization with the Centre, the full panel meet daily in closed session to reflect on what it has absorbed and clarify any matters regarding how it will proceed. By the end of this phase, all panel members should have a clear sense of the structure of the report, writing responsibilities, deadlines for drafts and how to communicate with other panel members between the Initial and Main Phase of the review.

• **Conducting a comprehensive review with a selective focus**

The panel is expected to conduct a comprehensive review covering all points in the Terms of Reference, and guided by the checklist of "Illustrative Questions" attached to these Guidelines (Attachment I). However, given differences among Centres, sections of the Guidelines and certain questions may not be directly relevant to every review; thus panels can use discretion in interpreting these documents. Further, review panels are usually small and the time provided limited to study each and every area in depth. Thus panels are expected to target their effort on the most important strategic issues of concern at the Centre.

As a means of assisting in the identification of these issues, several months before the start of the review the Secretariat organizing it solicits the views of key Centre stakeholders on the major issues that the external review should address. Those contacted include the members of the CGIAR, NARSs collaborators, directors general of other CGIAR Centres, and representatives from other relevant organizations in research and development. The responses are analyzed and summarized by the Secretariat, and distributed to the panel at its briefing.

As an important aid in identifying issues, the panel also should consider internal evaluation material that is available at the Centre. The panel should begin by assessing the credibility and adequacy of the Centre’s system of internally-commissioned external reviews, and the reports generated by that system. Such internal reviews can provide a valuable check on the quality of Centre outputs. Where there is a tradition of rigorous internal reviews with participation of external experts, the panel can use...
such findings as a starting point to summarize and build upon. The same applies to Board initiated
evaluations in the management domain; where a board has credible mechanisms in place to assess the
Centre’s management effectiveness, a panel can use these as its starting point. Finally, the Centre is
couraged to conduct a self-study prior to the external review to assess its strengths and weaknesses;
the results of such a study should be shared with, and can greatly facilitate the work of, the external
review panel.

Based on this preliminary assessment, the panel should draw up a list of major issues for the
review by the end of the Initial Phase. Later the panel may revise this list or discover additional matters
of strategic importance, but is advised to do so as soon into the process as possible. During the Main
Phase the panel is expected to focus its effort on an in-depth evaluation of these issues.

*Evaluation of Impact*

The panel’s conclusions concerning the Centre’s impact are a critical aspect of every review.
Panels are expected to base these conclusions on studies and other evidence that is available; they are not
expected to conduct independent assessments on the Centre’s impact. Panels also should comment on
the studies or other evidence on which their conclusions are based, including their coverage and methods
used.

*Interactions with NARSs, and Country Visits*

Interacting with a Centre’s partners, most notably the NARSs, is an integral part of the review
process and critical to the formulation of the panel’s assessment. Typically these interactions include
most if not all panel members. NARS views may be solicited through a variety and combination of
means: panel visits to partner institutions; round-table meetings of a panel with NARSs from a region,
convened at the Centre or some other location; a mailed questionnaire survey; or information generated
by others (such as the Centre, a regional organization, or another external review panel). Consultations
with other collaborators in research and development are typically handled through visits, written
correspondence or telephone contact. The approach or approaches to be used for a Centre’s review are
planned with the Panel Chair in advance of the panel’s first meeting.

Country visits have proven to be a valuable means of enabling review teams to interact with a
Centre’s collaborators and other stakeholders in the regions. Such visits also allow the team to meet with
out-posted staff and observe and assess the Centre’s field operations. When these are scheduled, they
typically occur directly after the Initial Phase of the review. The first country visit is normally within
the host country of the Centre’s headquarters and usually involves the whole panel; thereafter, the team
splits into sub-groups to give wider country coverage.

The Centre makes all the logistical arrangements and provides the panel with a detailed
programme and background material for each country visit. Normally, the Centre is asked to provide
a senior staff member, based in the region and familiar with the national scientists and programmes, to
accompany the panel to their meetings with national scientists and government officials. Such staff should
provide briefings, advise on protocol, and make necessary introductions; they should tactfully withdraw
when meetings begin.

Panel members often find that they are given vast amounts of information to absorb in very little
time during the country visits. For this reason, it is advisable that they take careful notes and summarize
their conclusions as soon as possible after each visit. These trip reports should be shared with the rest of the panel.

Main Phase of the Review

• **Interviews and report drafting**

  The Main Phase usually takes two to three weeks. The team begins with a day or so of intensive panel meetings to review progress, reassess the major issues identified during the Initial Phase and possible country visits, and map out a programme with agreed deadlines for the weeks ahead. Then panel members begin to delve into their respective areas of expertise and the topics or issues they are expected to address.

  They begin by building upon the earlier full panel interviews, doing so individually or in small groups. Panel members should coordinate their efforts to avoid overlap and gaps. Centre staff who wish to meet panel members are generally invited to do so early on in the review; such interviews can be arranged confidentially if so desired by Centre staff.

  As they progress, panel members begin to formulate their appraisal and draft sections of the report. Panel members should refer to the Terms of Reference for Panels Conducting External Reviews, and the checklist of "Illustrative Questions" (Attachment I) to ensure that their assessment is thorough. What they write, however, should be as concise and brief as possible, with a focus on major issues, analysis and conclusions. It is highly advisable that panel members begin writing early, given the need to share, discuss and agree on the text with others responsible and seek feedback from the Panel Chair, prior to distributing the draft to the panel for discussion, within the agreed time-frame. It is also highly important that the full panel meet regularly throughout this period to review progress, refine its conclusions and agree on recommendations.

  The report is expected to be a panel-product, and thus each chapter is discussed by the full panel. Authors should expect suggestions and debate, and the need to revise their work to reflect the panel’s comments. Given time constraints and the volume of work to be covered, panel members must discipline themselves during these discussions to focus on substantive issues (editorial and other concerns should be raised with the authors directly). Authors should avoid feeling "ownership" of their work, for as the report takes shape the panel may decide to delete, expand or move report sections around, or the Chair may assign a team member the task of editing or revising another’s draft. Ultimately, the final report should be a collective product.

• **Feedback on tentative conclusions and drafts**

  The Panel Chair is responsible for regular dialogue with the Director General of the Centre during the Main Phase. It is important that the Director General be informed of the panel’s progress and the issues and possible solutions being discussed so that the final recommendations of the report do not come as a surprise.

  As the panel progresses in its writing, the Panel Chair is expected to submit chapter drafts to Centre management for comments on factual validity. The chapter drafts are sent after the panel as a whole has agreed on the contents. Depending on the Chair’s wishes, more than one draft may be shared with the Centre. The Centre may provide oral or written comments. The panel considers these and may
revise the draft accordingly.

During some reviews, the Chair or other members of the Centre’s Board of Trustees have been present during the last week of the Main Phase. This provides additional opportunities for interaction, enables the Board to comment on chapter drafts and, in general, to follow the progress of the review.

- **Completing the review**

Prior to the completion of the report, the Panel Secretary distributes a consolidated list of the report’s formal recommendations to the panel members, which they should consider carefully prior to discussion. Panel members should consider whether each recommendation relates to a major issue, whether all major issues are reflected on the list, the list is substantively balanced, and each recommendation is clear, concise and points to action that can be implemented and monitored. The final list should not be long. Recommendations should reflect the consensus view of the panel. In circumstances where consensus is not possible, dissenting panel member(s) have the right to present a minority opinion on a specific recommendation.

The Main Phase of the review culminates with the completion of the report and its presentation to the Board of Trustees and to Centre staff. The report should be distributed to Board members at least 24 hours prior to its presentation and discussion. Normally the Panel Chair makes a brief presentation of the report to the Board, highlighting the most important points. Other panel members may attend this presentation, at the discretion of the Panel Chair, and participate in the discussion at the Board meeting. The report also may be presented to the staff. Centre management decides whether such a presentation is called for, and which staff should be invited to attend.

**RESPONSE TO REPORT AND FOLLOW-UP**

After the report is presented, the Board of Trustees normally meets in closed session to discuss the report further and prepare its written response, in close collaboration with Centre management. The response is sent to the TAC Chair and the CGIAR Executive Secretary.

The report is then formally presented to TAC by the Panel Chair, normally in the presence of the Board Chair and the Centre Director. TAC and the CGIAR Secretariat evaluate the review and transmit the report with their commentary to the CGIAR. In addition, they consult with the Panel Chair and Centre management regarding their views on the review process, in order to capture lessons that could improve the conduct of future reviews.

Finally, the Panel Chair presents the report to the CGIAR. The CGIAR discusses it and decides upon any specific follow-up action. While TAC and the CGIAR usually endorse the panel’s main recommendations, this occurs only after careful deliberation; likewise the Centres, as autonomous entities, are not obligated to implement the panel’s recommendations -- in practice, however, they implement most, if not all of them.
ILLUSTRATIVE QUESTIONS FOR EXTERNAL REVIEWS

- A CHECKLIST -

This checklist supplements the "Topics to be Covered in External Reviews of CGIAR Centres", attached to the Terms of Reference. It is intended to illustrate the types of question the panel may wish to consider in each category, before focusing on the key issues of the review. The questions apply to most, but not necessarily to all Centre reviews. The panel is not expected to answer all questions explicitly, but to take them into account in making the assessment.

A. Recent Evolution of the Centre

1. What important changes have taken place in the research environment in which the Centre is operating, and in the Centre since the previous external review? What are the likely effects of these changes on the future performance of the Centre?

2. How responsive was the Centre to the previous review?

3. How effectively does the Centre monitor and respond to developments (opportunities and threats) in the external environment, which could have institutional or programmatic implications.

B. Mission, Strategy and Priorities

4. How appropriate are the Centre’s operational mandate and mission statement in relation to the changing mission, goals and research agenda of the CGIAR?

5. How well do the present and planned activities of the Centre relate to the mandate and the mission of the Centre?

6. Does the Centre have an up-to-date and well-reasoned strategy statement? In particular, does it:
   
   (a) reflect a thorough understanding of the needs of the Centre’s principal beneficiaries, the relevant activities of its partners and collaborators, and its comparative advantage?
   
   (b) take into account any major changes occurring in the Centre’s external environment?
   
   (c) spell out the Centre’s aims and objectives in different programme areas and provide a clear justification for them?
   
   (d) take into account the Centre’s internal strengths and weaknesses and the financial constraints likely to be faced?
(e) provide a clear justification for the future scale of the Centre's operations?

7. Are partners in developing countries satisfied with the Centre’s strategy and did they have adequate opportunity to contribute to its formulation?

8. Does the Centre actively promote a strategy of collaboration in international research with national systems and regional research organizations? Is the strategy appropriate considering the sizes and stages of development of these partners? Are the priorities for collaboration with individual countries (particularly the host country) appropriate?

9. What instruments and mechanisms does the Centre engage to determine programme priorities and resource allocation among programmes? Are the planned directions and priorities within each major programme appropriate?

10. Has the Centre analyzed the operational implications of its future priorities and strategy in terms of institutional resources (financial, staff and support needs) and collaborative mechanisms, such as networking and consortia?

C. Accomplishments and Impact

11. How successful has the Centre been in realizing the objectives of each major programme area since the previous external review? Is the Centre employing or accessing the best scientific tools and competencies to solve the problems it is addressing? What have been the Centre’s major achievements by programme area?

12. Has the Centre paid adequate attention to gender considerations in planning and implementing its programme activities?

13. What mechanisms does the Centre have in place to measure its achievements and impact? Are these adequate?

14. What benefits have developing countries derived from the Centre’s work since the previous review? Note the extent to which the Centre’s work has contributed to the CGIAR’s mission of promoting sustainable agriculture for food security in developing countries and, in particular to: (a) increasing productivity, (b) protecting the environment, (c) saving biodiversity, (d) improving policies, and (e) fortifying national programmes in developing countries.

15. What is the Centre’s potential for further impact, given its planned activities? Do these justify continued donor support for the Centre? Is there a case for increasing the Centre’s funding level? Could funding be reduced without seriously affecting the Centre’s potential for further impact?

D. Organization and Management

Governance, Leadership and Culture

16. Is the Centre’s legal status appropriate for fulfilling its mission?
17. How effective has the Centre's board been in determining policy and providing oversight? How effective has it been in managing its internal affairs (e.g., planning, internal board structure, member selection and development, managing meetings, etc.)?

18. Are board-management relationships based on openness, respect for each other's roles, and mutual trust? Does the board regularly assess and provide feedback on the performance of the director general on the basis of explicit and objective criteria?

19. How effectively has the Centre been led by the director general and the management team since the previous external review? How well do senior managers work as a team?

20. What principal guiding philosophies appear to shape the action of the board, management and staff? Are they conducive to high performance? (Among others, consider attitudes towards creativity, accountability, efficiency, and organizational change.)

21. What are the main features of the Centre's current organizational culture, and do these help foster or serve as barriers to high performance? Is the Centre's organizational culture in harmony with its strategy, structure and management practices?

22. How successfully has the Centre managed its relations with the government and relevant institutions within the host country(ies), the donor community, and the media and general public.

Programme Organization and Management

23. Has the Centre developed an appropriate organizational structure with effective mechanisms for internal coordination and for conducting collaborative research? Given the Centre's strategy, are there alternative structures that should be considered?

24. Are the Centre's decentralized activities effectively linked with those of headquarters and with national collaborators? Are out-posted staff adequately involved in overall planning and decision making?

25. How effective are the Centre's strategic and operational (i.e. medium-term and annual) planning processes? Do these processes ensure sufficient participation of the views of the Centre's partners and other key stakeholders?

26. Does the Centre have effective evaluation mechanisms that are applied systematically at institutional, programme, project and personnel levels (consider internal review systems, programme monitoring, peer review, etc.)?

27. If the Centre is involved in a System-wide initiative, does it have adequate mechanisms in place at the programme level for collaboration with other international centres (consider research planning, execution, interpretation, etc.)?

28. Does the Centre have an effective planning and management system for programmes and projects, including collaborative activities?

29. Does the Centre's programme structure, organization, operating procedures and
management facilitate cooperation and teamwork, ensure efficiency and internal accountability, and foster innovation and high performance?

30. How successfully has the Centre managed its relations, at institutional and programmatic levels, with its collaborators to ensure complementarity and cost efficiency; consider:

- regional and national research systems and partner agencies in developing countries;

- other CGIAR Centres and international research institutes (and undesirable overlap of activities);

- advanced public and private sector institutions in research and training;

- other programmes in research and development executed by governmental and non-governmental organizations;

**Resources and Facilities, and their Management**

- **Human Resources**

31. Has the Centre been able to attract and retain international and local staff of the highest calibre? Is the turnover rate one that ensures programme continuity as well as healthy infusion of new staff into programmes?

32. Does the Centre have appropriate personnel policies for international and local staff stationed at the headquarters and outside it? Are they seen to be fair and consistent? (Consider policies for staff recruitment, orientation, compensation, performance planning and assessment, career development, tenure, spouse employment, retirement, etc.)

33. Does the Centre actively promote recruitment, retention and career development of women? Are there barriers to women's advancement in the Centre?

34. How satisfied are staff at all levels with their jobs? How are morale, trust, communication and teamwork perceived among the staff?

- **Finance**

35. How successful has the Centre been in securing funds for its activities? How stable is the Centre's funding? Does the Centre have a fund-raising strategy, and how effectively is fund-raising managed?

36. How effective are the systems and processes used for financial management of headquarters and field operations? (Consider financial planning, analysis, reporting and control, accounting, budgeting, internal and external auditing, and cash and currency management.)

37. How strongly is financial management linked with programme management, planning and review? Do staff have appropriate financial responsibility and accountability?
• **Administration**

38. Does the Centre have adequate land, facilities, and services for supporting the programmes and meeting the needs of staff in an efficient manner?

39. How cost-effective are the systems and policies used for managing the Centre's:
   - property (e.g., maintenance, development, construction, rental);
   - general services (e.g., security, housing and dormitories, food services, transport, travel services);
   - procurement operations (e.g., foreign and local purchasing, receiving, stores)?

• **Information**

40. How successful is the Centre in acquiring, generating and managing the information it needs for decision-making, communication and integration of activities?

41. How effectively are information services and technology managed? (Consider public awareness efforts, publications, library services and records management, computers and electronic communications.)
## LIST OF DOCUMENTS FOR EXTERNAL REVIEWS OF CGIAR CENTRES

The following is a list of documents for panels conducting external reviews of CGIAR Centres. Copies of relevant documents should be sent to panel members in advance of the review. Copies of all documents should be available at the Centre during the review.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provided in Advance of the Review</th>
<th>Provided by:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Terms of Reference and Guidelines for Panels Conducting External Reviews of CGIAR Centres</td>
<td>TAC Secretariat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most recent External Programmes and Management Report of the Centre</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most recent TAC paper on CGIAR Priorities and Strategies</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most recent CGIAR strategy studies involving the Centre</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most recent CGIAR Vision Statement</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Most recent CGIAR Annual Report</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Most recent CGIAR Brochure and Directory</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Most recent Annual CGIAR Funding Requirements document</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most recent Annual Report of the Centre, and comparable research reports of the programmes, if available</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The latest Board-approved Strategic Plan of the Centre</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>The latest Medium-Term Plan of the Centre</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The latest Annual Funding Request</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>A paper summarizing the main achievements, constraints and impact of the Centre's programmes since the last CGIAR external review</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>A brief paper outlining the major issues confronting the Centre</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>The current organization chart, with a brief description of the Centre's internal management structure, including the composition and terms of reference of each major committee</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>List of senior staff with brief summary of qualifications</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of reports of major planning conferences, internal reviews, internally-commissioned external reviews, expert meetings, etc., which have had a major influence on the direction of specific Centre programmes</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-studies, if conducted, assessing strengths and weaknesses of Centre programmes and/or management</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of actions taken in response to the last External Programme and Management Review</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>A list of staff publications during the period under review</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>List of the agreements for cooperative activities with other centres and institutions</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of ongoing and recently completed contracted projects</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Supplementary documents, provided to relevant panel members:**

- Most recent statements of CGIAR policies of relevance to the Centre | X |
- Most recent CGIAR Medium-Term Resource Allocation document | X |
- Relevant extracts from IAC and CGIAR reports of the most recent discussions on the Centre's programme (e.g., Strategic Plan and Medium-Term Plan) | X |
- Overview of Management in the CGIAR Centers, 1990 | X |
- Most recent volume of the CGIAR Board of Trustees Directory | X |
- Roles, Responsibilities and Responsibilities of Trustees of International Agricultural Research Centers, 1994 | X |
- Some Thoughts Toward Ensuring the Successful Performance of Boards in the CGIAR System, 1987 | X |
- Most recent Annual CGIAR Financial Report | X |
- Most recent CGIAR financial guidelines and manuals relating to:
  - Financial Management | X |
  - Accounting Policies and Reporting Practices Manual | X |
  - Audit Policies and Procedures | X |
- Charter and other basic documents establishing the Centre, along with subsequent amendments | X |
- Table showing composition of the Board over the last five years, along with an indication of the term of office of current members and their roles on the Board | X |
- Board handbook or rules of procedure | X |
- Table showing allowances, benefits, and salary ranges for each category of staff | X |
- Table showing personal data on internationally recruited staff by programme, including each job title, incumbent's location, period of tenure, gender, nationality, age, salary over the last three years, funding source (excluding remit) | X |
- Table summarizing turnover of staff over the last five years by staff category | X |
- List of international staff vacancies and how long positions have been vacant | X |
- Brief description of the Centre's information management systems and procedures (e.g., library and documentation, archives and records management, computer and information technology, management information systems) | X |

**Available at the Centre (one copy):**

- Set of minutes covering Board and Board committee meetings since the last External Review (and reports of board committees to the full Board if not included in the minutes) | X |
- Staff manual or a description of current personnel procedures for international and locally-recruited staff | X |
- Local compensation surveys used by the Centre | X |
- Reports of external auditors, including management letters, and financial officer's reports to the Board since the last External Review | X |
- Most recent internal audit reports | X |
3.

GUIDELINES TO PANELS CONDUCTING EXTERNAL REVIEWS OF CGIAR CENTRES

VERSION FOR ISSUE-DRIVEN REVIEW FORMAT
GUIDELINES TO PANELS CONDUCTING
EXTERNAL REVIEWS OF CGIAR CENTRES

Version for Issue-Driven Review Format

External Programme and Management Reviews of CGIAR Centres are carried out in accordance with the "Terms of Reference for Panels Conducting External Reviews of CGIAR Centres." Each review is expected to be comprehensive in its coverage of the topics listed there. Several formats are used in conducting these reviews. An "Issue-Driven Review Format" is designed for Centres that have in place effective internal processes of evaluation. These external reviews differ from standard external reviews in that they entail in-depth coverage of a few issues, judged to be the most important at the Centre under review. Such issues are identified during a planning visit by the Panel Chair and Secretariat staff, taking into account internal evaluation reports and views of the Centre and its stakeholders. If during this visit the Panel Chair determines that the standard review format would be more suitable for this Centre, the guidelines for the standard format are used instead for conducting the review.

INTRODUCTION

To be credible and acceptable, all reviews must strive to be objective, transparent and participatory. The reports must be direct, explicit and frank. These broad principles should be observed throughout the review.

Being a member of a review panel is usually an interesting and rewarding experience. Moreover, Centre management and staff generally welcome the opportunity to discuss with panel members their achievements, problems and future plans. A healthy atmosphere of mutual respect and collaboration in the interchange of ideas is the key to the success of a review. It helps to ensure that the recommendations of the panel are realistic, that they are well understood by the staff, and that they will be willingly, or even enthusiastically, implemented.

PARTICIPANTS AND THEIR ROLES

The conduct of a review requires the collaboration of numerous individuals. A description of the roles of the key participants follows.

The Panel

- Panel Chair. The success of a review is highly dependent on the leadership and task management skills of the Panel Chair. The Chair’s involvement begins during the review Design Phase; once a Centre has been identified as a potential candidate for an issue-driven review, the Chair must confirm that this format is suitable (as opposed to the more extensive standard review format). Further, during the Design Phase, the Chair takes the lead in conducting a preliminary analysis of the major issues for the review, and determining panel composition requirements. Once the review is underway, the Chair is responsible for ensuring that the panel undertakes its assessment and completes the report in accordance with the Terms of Reference and Guidelines. Given the magnitude of the task, the complexity of the issues, the fact that many panel members may be unfamiliar with the CGIAR, the importance of maintaining dialogue with the Centre, and the need to produce a report that reflects the consensus of the panel, the Chair’s task is a demanding one. Staff provided by the Secretariats assist the Chair, and the
Panel members, throughout the process.

- **Panel members.** The panel is expected to make a thorough and independent appraisal of the Centre and the issues under review, and prepare a report. Panel members are chosen on the basis of their expertise and experience in specific areas to be covered, in addition to their capacity to analyze and think strategically on the broader issues. As the report should reflect the judgement of the whole panel, members are expected to contribute to all aspects of the review. The success of a review depends to a large extent on how well the report reflects a consensus view of the panel.

**Support Team**

Two or more resource persons, who are knowledgeable about the CGIAR System and experienced in its review processes, support the panel’s efforts. Typically this includes one person from each of the TAC and CGIAR Secretariats, it also may include one or more consultants and possibly a TAC member. These individuals provide support on process as well as substantive matters. While these participants and panel members work together as a team, ultimately the panel is responsible for formulating the assessment and recommendations. The roles of support team members follows.

- **TAC Secretariat Resource Person and Panel Secretary.** A staff member of the TAC Secretariat normally assumes the role of Panel Secretary, and also serves as a Resource Person in his or her area of expertise. The Secretary plans and organizes the review in collaboration with the Resource Person from the CGIAR Secretariat. Once the review is underway, the Panel Secretary oversees logistical and administrative matters, and report production. Like the Resource Person from the CGIAR Secretariat, the Panel Secretary provides general support to the Panel Chair and helps ensure the overall success of the review effort. The extent to which the Secretary participates in interviews, analysis and writing is at the discretion of the Chair.

- **CGIAR Secretariat Resource Person.** A Resource Person from the CGIAR Secretariat works closely with the Panel Chair and Secretary throughout the review. Like the Secretary, the Resource Person provides guidance to the Chair on process matters and on substantive issues relating to the CGIAR System, and also provides input in his or her area of expertise. The Panel Chair determines the degree to which the Resource Person is involved in interviews, analysis and writing.

- **TAC Resource Person.** The TAC Chair may invite a TAC member to assist the panel as a Resource Person. This individual would bring significant knowledge in a specific substantive area of the review, a global CGIAR perspective, and provide a link between the review and the workings of TAC. The nature of the TAC Resource Person’s participation in the review is at the discretion of the Panel Chair.

- **Consultants.** Other experts may be employed as consultants to conduct specialized background studies or advise the panel on specific issues. Typically such consultants participate in a limited portion of the review, given the specificity of their assignment. Like others on the review team, consultants participate in panel meetings, and may be asked to work closely with specific members of the panel, depending on the nature of their assignment.
Centre Board, Management and Staff

- **Board of Trustees.** The Board is involved in the planning stage of the review; it is a subject of review by the panel; and it is responsible for preparing a written response to the review report. Finally, the Board is responsible for the Centre’s implementation of the recommendations of the review, as approved by the CGIAR.

- **Management and staff.** The Centre’s management and staff play a crucial role in the conduct of the review. They are heavily involved in planning and organizing the review, and in preparations for the panel’s visit. Once it is underway, the review entails a significant degree of interaction between the review team and Centre personnel, which is expected to be a valuable two-way learning experience. Throughout the process, the collaboration and inputs of Centre management and staff are essential for the review to run smoothly and for the report to be credible and acceptable.

**Centre Collaborators**

Each Centre has a diverse group of collaborators that play a role in the review process. These include the following key partners.

- **National Agricultural Research Systems.** Representatives of national agricultural research systems (NARS)\(^1\) are important partners of the CGIAR Centres, and their input is considered essential to the viability of the CGIAR external review process. As part of the review, NARS representatives are consulted for their views on the Centre’s strategy, programmes and collaboration. This may be through panel visits and/or meetings with representatives of NARS, as well as through a survey questionnaire, as described below. After the review is completed, comments from key NARS partners will be sought on the report.

- **Other Collaborators in Research and Development.** The panel may visit or contact managers and researchers from other CGIAR Centres and other relevant institutions with which the Centre collaborates. These could include governmental and non-governmental agencies, and regional and multi-lateral organizations. Such consultations are valuable as a means of assessing the Centre’s role in the CGIAR and in the global context. Given the vast number of collaborators and potential collaborators of a Centre, such meetings must be limited. Their outcome is considered important, however, and is expected to feed into the panel’s assessment.

**The CGIAR, TAC and the Secretariats**

- **TAC, its Secretariat and the CGIAR Secretariat.** TAC and the CGIAR Secretariat are responsible for the management of external review processes in the CGIAR. When an EPMR is commissioned, the TAC Secretariat normally assumes overall responsibility for its coordination. TAC’s Standing Committee for External Reviews, supported by the TAC Secretariat and working closely with

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\(^1\) A national agricultural research system comprises a country’s governmental organizations and universities as well as its non-governmental and private sector organizations responsible for organizing, coordinating, or executing research that contributes explicitly to the development of its agriculture, forestry and fisheries and the maintenance of its natural resource base.
the CGIAR Secretariat, provides guidance on matters of review design and panel composition. Once the review is completed, TAC discusses the report and prepares a commentary, in consultation with the CGIAR Secretariat, which includes recommendations to the CGIAR for any follow-up action.

- **The CGIAR.** The CGIAR, or "the Group", establishes external review policies for the System, and the reviews are conducted on its behalf. At the review-specific level, the CGIAR raises questions or proposes issues for panels to consider, and receives the review report. The report is typically distributed to and considered by numerous individuals within CGIAR member agencies prior to its formal discussion by the Group, when any follow-up action is agreed upon.

**PHASES OF THE REVIEW**

An issue driven EPMR entails a Design Phase, with a small team, and a Main Phase involving the full review team. The process also includes a panel briefing, possible country visits, and attendance at a meeting of the Centre's Board of Trustees. The broad objectives and conduct of these components of the review are described below.

**Design Phase**

In an Issue-Driven Review, the panel is expected to target its effort on the most important strategic issues of concern at the Centre. An initial identification of such issues is made during the Design Phase of the review. Also during this phase, the Panel Chair must confirm that the Centre -- identified as a candidate for the issue-driven review -- does not require the more extensive standard review (which then could be scheduled in lieu of the issue-driven review).

The Design Phase begins about eight to twelve months prior to the Main Phase of the review. It commences when the Secretariat organizing the review solicits the views of key stakeholders of the Centre on the major issues that the external review should address. Those contacted include the members of the CGIAR, NARSs collaborators, directors general of other CGIAR Centres, and representatives from other relevant organizations in research and development; the responses are analyzed and summarized by the Secretariat. In addition, the Centre is asked to prepare a brief paper outlining its assessment of the major issues it faces. This, and the responses of other stakeholders, are taken into consideration during the planning visit to the Centre, which follows.

During the planning visit, the Panel Chair and supporting Secretariat staff visit the Centre's headquarters for approximately one week. Efforts are made to schedule this visit to coincide with an internal programme review or a meeting of the Board of Trustees. During this visit the Chair must conclude whether the issue-driven review format is suitable. As input to this assessment -- as well as a main output of the visit -- the team is expected to prepare an analysis of the major issues for the review, in consultation with the Centre and taking into account the views of stakeholders. As a means of facilitating this preliminary assessment, the Chair and Secretariat staff are expected to examine reports produced by internally-commissioned external reviews, and other internally-managed evaluation exercises (e.g., related to research relevance, quality, achievements, impact, and efficiency); such internal evaluations provide the foundation upon which the external Issue-Driven Review is built.

Based on their assessment of what issues the review should focus on, the Panel Chair and Secretariat staff determine:
1. what specialists are needed on the panel to conduct the Main Phase of the review focusing on these issues; the Secretariats recruit panel members accordingly;

2. whether country visits will be required and what approach will be employed for panel-NARS interaction;

3. what documents the Centre should provide to the review team to help orientate them to the Centre's work and the issues of the review.

The Panel Chair and Secretariat staff, in consultation with Centre management, may also consider preparing and distributing a questionnaire survey on a particular set of issues to Centre staff (e.g., those out-posted), which one of the Secretariats would analyze and summarize prior to the Main Phase of the Review. Such data can help facilitate the panel's work during the Main Phase, and provide valuable input to their assessment.

**Formal Interactions with the Board of Trustees**

Interactions between the Board and the panel form an essential component of every review, given the Board's important role. Thus, early in the process, during the Design Phase or at another time prior to the Main Phase, the Panel Chair along with possibly one other panel member or consultant attend a Board meeting and interview Trustees concerning Board and Centre matters. The panel member analyzing the Board's performance is also expected to review Board documents, including past Board and committee meeting minutes. Further, he or she may ask trustees to complete a survey form, regarding the Board's role and responsibilities and how it conducts its business, to facilitate the assessment. The assessment is expected to be based on an analysis of the Board’s performance, which should reveal much to the panel about the Centre’s performance. The full panel receives a written report prepared by the team member covering the Board, and is orally briefed on the meetings and findings.

**Interactions with NARSs, and Country Visits**

Interacting with a Centre’s partners, most notably the NARSs, is an integral part of the review process. The extent to which such interactions are required and the approach or approaches to be used for a review are determined during the Design Phase, once the issues of the review are identified. NARS views may be solicited through a variety and combination of means: panel visits to partner institutions; round-table meetings of a panel with NARSs from a region, convened at the Centre or some other location, a mailed questionnaire survey, or information generated by others (such as the Centre, a regional organization, or another external review panel). Consultations with other collaborators in research and development are typically handled through visits, written correspondence or telephone contact. The approach or approaches to be used are planned well in advance of the panel’s meeting.

Country visits have proven to be a valuable means of enabling review teams to interact with a Centre’s collaborators and other stakeholders in the regions. Such visits also allow the team to meet with out-posted staff and observe and assess the Centre’s field operations. When these are scheduled, the first country visit is normally within the host country of the Centre’s headquarters and involves the whole panel; thereafter, visits are usually limited to two or three members of the team.

The Centre makes all the logistical arrangements and provides the panel with a detailed programme and background material for each country visit. Normally, the Centre is asked to provide
a senior staff member, based in the region and familiar with the national scientists and programmes, to accompany the panel to their meetings with national scientists and government officials. Such staff should provide briefings, advise on protocol, and make necessary introductions; they should tactfully withdraw when meetings begin.

Panel members often find that they are given vast amounts of information to absorb in very little time during the country visits. For this reason, it is advisable that they take careful notes and summarize their conclusions as soon as possible after each visit. These trip reports should be shared with the rest of the panel.

Main Phase of the Review

- Panel briefing

Panel members are provided with a set of documents, intended to familiarize them with the Centre, the CGIAR and its review system. (See list of documents in Attachment II.) Panel members should read through these documents before their formal briefing, so that the team can progress quickly to its task.

The Main Phase of the review is normally two weeks long. At the start of this period, panel members attend a formal briefing that is organized by the Secretariats. If country visits are planned prior to the Main Phase, the briefing would occur before such visits. Generally, the briefing covers topics such as: CGIAR priorities and strategies, the CGIAR’s external review process, donors’ expectations, topics and issues to review, report format, individual assignments, a review strategy or “game plan”, lessons from past reviews, and changes in the CGIAR System of relevance to the review; panel members also are briefed on administrative arrangements related to their participation in the review. These briefings, chaired by the Panel Chair, help to orientate panel members who may not be familiar with the CGIAR System and to bring others up-to-date. The briefings also provide an opportunity for panel members to become acquainted with each other and develop a plan for the task ahead.

During the panel briefing, the Chair proposes a draft table of contents of the review report with writing responsibilities, prepared with input from the Secretariat staff. The full panel modifies this as necessary. The topics are divided up, with panel members assigned primary responsibility for issues or sections of the report within their area of expertise; some topics may be assigned to sub-groups. It is essential that panel members decide early on how they plan to share the load, avoiding overlap and gaps and optimizing the use of their time.

The conduct of a review puts great pressure on panel members to complete their assessments, agree on their recommendations and write a report in the time available. In this regard, teamwork is essential for a successful review. Panel members must strive to work together -- exchanging ideas, sharing assessments and refining conclusions. Time management can be crucial in this regard, and should be touched upon during the panel briefing or in the days directly thereafter.

- Getting started

The first few days of the review are designed to enable the panel to gain a broad understanding of the Centre’s programmes and strategies, through brief presentations and formal meetings. During this period the panel also commences dialogue with key staff, refines the list of major issues, and begins to
formulate tentative conclusions. Panel members gather information they will need for analysis during this period (and may request that additional data be provided or documents prepared, although such requests should be restricted to essential information).

It is important that, during this phase of familiarization with the Centre, the full panel meet daily in closed session to reflect on what it has absorbed and clarify any matters regarding how it will proceed; all panel members should have a clear sense of the structure of the report, writing responsibilities and deadlines for drafts.

A round-table meeting with NARS representatives could be planned during the early stage of the review. This would entail full review team participation.

- **Conducting a comprehensive review with a selective focus**

The panel is expected to conduct a comprehensive review covering all points in the Terms of Reference, and guided by the checklist of "Illustrative Questions" attached to these Guidelines (Attachment I). Given differences among Centres, sections of the Guidelines and certain questions may not be directly relevant to every review; thus panels can use discretion in interpreting these documents. Further, the panel is not expected to study each and every area in depth. Instead, it should rely on credible, objective evaluation material that is available at the Centre to provide a foundation for its effort; such documents should have been identified by the Panel Chair and Secretariat staff during their planning visit to the Centre.

The panel should begin by assessing the credibility and adequacy of the Centre's system of internally-commissioned external reviews, and the reports generated by that system. Such internal reviews can provide a valuable check on the quality of Centre outputs. Where there is a tradition of rigorous internal reviews with participation of external experts, the panel can use such findings as a starting point to summarize and build upon. The same applies to Board initiated evaluations in the management domain; where a board has credible mechanisms in place to assess the Centre's management effectiveness, a panel can use these as its starting point. Finally, the Centre is encouraged to conduct a self-study prior to the external review to assess its strengths and weaknesses; the results of such a study should be shared with, and can greatly facilitate the work of, the external review panel.

It is expected that, by building on credible recent evaluations, a small panel can conduct a comprehensive review, with time to focus on key issues. The bulk of the panel's effort should be directed towards an in-depth examination of the major issues, as identified in advance during the Design Phase. The panel may revise this preliminary list of issues or discover additional matters of strategic importance, but is advised to do so as soon into the process as possible.

- **Evaluation of Impact**

The panel's conclusions concerning the Centre's impact are a critical aspect of every review. Panels are expected to base these conclusions on studies and other evidence that is available; they are not expected to conduct independent assessments on the Centre's impact. Panels also should comment on the studies or other evidence on which their conclusions are based, including their coverage and methods used.
Interviews and report drafting

After their briefing and orientation to the Centre, panel members delve into their respective areas of expertise and the issues they are expected to address. They begin by building upon the earlier full panel interviews, doing so individually or in small groups. Panel members should coordinate their efforts to avoid overlap and gaps. Centre staff who wish to meet panel members are generally invited to do so early on in the review; such interviews can be arranged confidentially if so desired by Centre staff.

As they progress, panel members begin to formulate their appraisal and draft sections of the report. Panel members should refer to the Terms of Reference for Panels Conducting External Reviews, and the checklist of "Illustrative Questions" (Attachment I) to ensure that their assessment is thorough. What they write, however, should be as concise and brief as possible, with a focus on major issues, analysis and conclusions. It is highly advisable that panel members begin writing early, given the need to share, discuss and agree on the text with others responsible and seek feedback from the Panel Chair, prior to distributing the draft to the panel for discussion, within the agreed time frame. It is also highly important that the full panel meet regularly throughout this period to review progress, refine its conclusions and agree on recommendations.

The report is expected to be a panel-product, and thus each chapter is discussed by the full panel. Authors should expect suggestions and debate, and the need to revise their work to reflect the panel’s comments. Given time constraints and the volume of work to be covered, panel members must discipline themselves during these discussions to focus on substantive issues (editorial and other concerns should be raised with the authors directly). Authors should avoid feeling "ownership" of their work, for as the report takes shape the panel may decide to delete, expand or move report sections around, or the Chair may assign a team member the task of editing or revising another’s draft. Ultimately, the final report should be a collective product.

Feedback on tentative conclusions and drafts

The Panel Chair is responsible for regular dialogue with the Director General of the Centre during the Main Phase. It is important that the Director General be informed of the panel’s progress and the issues and possible solutions being discussed so that the final recommendations of the report do not come as a surprise.

As the panel progresses in its writing, the Panel Chair is expected to submit chapter drafts to Centre management for comments on factual validity. The chapter drafts are sent after the panel as a whole has agreed on the contents. Depending on the Chair’s wishes, more than one draft may be shared with the Centre. The Centre may provide oral or written comments. The panel considers these and may revise the draft accordingly.

During some reviews, the Chair or other members of the Centre’s Board of Trustees have been present during the last week of the Main Phase. This provides additional opportunities for interaction, enables the Board to comment on chapter drafts and, in general, to follow the progress of the review.

Completing the review

Prior to the completion of the report, the Panel Secretary distributes a consolidated list of the report’s formal recommendations to the panel members, which they should consider carefully prior to
discussion. Panel members should consider whether each recommendation relates to a major issue, whether all major issues are reflected on the list, the list is substantively balanced, and each recommendation is clear, concise and points to action that can be implemented and monitored. The final list should not be long. Recommendations should reflect the consensus view of the panel. In circumstances where consensus is not possible, dissenting panel member(s) have the right to present a minority opinion on a specific recommendation.

The Main Phase of the review culminates with the completion of the report and its presentation to the Board of Trustees and to Centre staff. The report must be distributed to Board members at least 36 hours prior to its presentation and discussion. Normally the Panel Chair makes a brief presentation of the report to the Board, highlighting the most important points. Other panel members may attend this presentation, at the discretion of the Panel Chair, and participate in the discussion at the Board meeting. Normally, the report is also presented to Centre management and staff. Centre management decides whether such a presentation is called for, and which staff should be invited to attend.

**Response to Report and Follow-up**

After the report is presented, the Board of Trustees normally meets in closed session to discuss the report further and prepare its written response, in close collaboration with Centre management. The response is sent to the TAC Chair and the CGIAR Executive Secretary.

The report is then formally presented to TAC by the Panel Chair, normally in the presence of the Board Chair and the Centre Director. TAC and the CGIAR Secretariat evaluate the review and transmit the report with their commentary to the CGIAR. In addition, they consult with the Panel Chair and Centre management regarding their views on the review process, in order to capture lessons that could improve the conduct of future reviews.

Finally, the Panel Chair presents the report to the CGIAR. The CGIAR discusses it and decides upon any specific follow-up action. While TAC and the CGIAR usually endorse the panel’s main recommendations, this occurs only after careful deliberation; likewise the Centres, as autonomous entities, are not obligated to implement the panel’s recommendations -- in practice, however, they implement most, if not all of them.
ILLUSTRATIVE QUESTIONS FOR EXTERNAL REVIEWS

- A CHECKLIST -

Same as for standard review format.
LIST OF DOCUMENTS FOR EXTERNAL REVIEWS OF CGIAR CENTRES

The following is a list of documents required for conducting external reviews of CGIAR Centres. These documents should be available to the Panel Chair and Secretariat staff prior to the Design Phase of the review. At that time, the Chair and Secretariat staff will determine, based on their assessment of the issues, which of these documents should be sent to panel members. Copies of all documents should be available to the panel at the Centre during the review.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provided in advance of the review</th>
<th>Provided by:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To all panel members:</td>
<td>TAC Secretary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terms of Reference and Guidelines for Panels Conducting External Reviews of CGIAR Centres.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Most recent External Programme and Management Review report of the Centre.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Most recent TAC paper on CGIAR Priorities and Strategies.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Most recent CGIAR studies involving the Centre.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Most recent CGIAR Vision Statement.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Most recent CGIAR Annual Report.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Most recent CGIAR Brochure and Directory.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Most recent Annual CGIAR Funding Requirements document.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charter and other basic documents establishing the Centre.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>List of senior staff with brief summary of qualifications.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>List of board members.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>List of recent major planning conferences, internal reviews, externally-commissioned external reviews, expert meetings, etc., which have had a major influence on the direction of specific Centre programmes.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-studies, if available, assessing strengths and weaknesses of Centre programmes and/or management.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summary of actions taken in response to the last External Programme and Management Review.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>A list of staff publications during the period under review.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>List of all agreements for collaborative activities with other centres and institutions.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>List of ongoing and recently completed contracted projects.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supplementary documents, provided to relevant panel members:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Most recent statements of CGIAR policies of relevance to the Centre.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Most recent CGIAR Medium—Term Resource Allocation document.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relevant extracts from TAC and CGIAR reports of the most recent discussions on the Centre's programme (e.g., Strategic Plan and Medium—Term Plan).</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overview of Management in the CGIAR Centers, 1990.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most recent volume of the CGIAR Board of Trustees Directory.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roles, Responsibilities, and Reporting Relationships of Trustees of International Agricultural Research Centers, 1994.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Thoughts Toward Ensuring the Successful Performance of Boards in the CGIAR System, 1987.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most recent Annual CGIAR Financial Report.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Most recent CGIAR financial guidelines and manuals relating to:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>– Financial Management.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>– Audit Policies and Procedures.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charter and other basic documents establishing the Centre, along with subsequent amendments.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Table showing composition of the Board over the last five years, along with an indication of the term of office of current members and their roles on the Board.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Board handbook or rules of procedure.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Table showing allowances, benefits, and salary ranges for each category of staff.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Table showing personnel data on internationally recruited staff by programme, including each job title, incumbent's location, period of tenure, gender, nationality, age, salary over the last three years, funding source (excluding names).</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table summarizing turnover of staff over the last five years by staff category.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>List of international staff vacancies and how long positions have been vacant.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brief description of the Centre's information management systems and procedures (e.g., library and documentation, archives and records management, computer and information technology, management information systems).</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVAILABLE AT THE CENTRE (one copy)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set of minutes from Board and Board committee meetings since the last External Review (and reports of board committees to the full Board if not included in the minutes).</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff manual or a description of current personal procedures for international and locally-recruited staff.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local compensation surveys used by the Centre.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reports of external auditors, including management letters, and financial officer's reports to the Board since the last External Review.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most recent internal audit reports.</td>
<td>X</td>
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4.

Terms of Reference

For Panels Conducting Interim External Reviews

Of CGIAR Centres
TERMS OF REFERENCE
FOR PANELS CONDUCTING INTERIM EXTERNAL REVIEWS OF CGIAR CENTRES

Background

The CGIAR has charged its Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) with the responsibility of conducting External Programme Reviews of those International Agricultural Research Centres it supports financially. The CGIAR has assigned a similar responsibility to its Secretariat for External Management Reviews. TAC and the CGIAR Secretariat normally discharge these responsibilities by commissioning a joint panel to conduct an External Programme and Management Review (EPMR). Such reviews are conducted for each Centre approximately every five years.

TAC and the CGIAR Secretariat have developed different formats for EPMRs that are suited to the varied circumstances of Centres under review. One format is the Interim Review, a small-scale EPMR that is commissioned instead of a regular EPMR when there is strong evidence that the period between regular EPMRs can be extended well beyond the normal five years.

Purpose

The purpose of the Interim Review, in broad terms, is to examine major changes in strategic direction that have occurred in the Centre since the last EPMR, as well as its main achievements, impact and challenges — in programme and management domains — and recommend issues for more comprehensive examination by the Centre and the next regular external review.

The panel is expected to make an independent appraisal of the Centre, identifying and focussing on significant trends and critical issues. This task differs from that of a regular EPMR panel, which is expected to carry out a thorough assessment of the Centre and its activities, as described in the Terms of Reference and Guidelines to Panels Conducting External Reviews of CGIAR Centres (Attachment I). That Terms of Reference contains a list of "Topics to be Covered", which the Interim Review panel may wish to use for guidance, although the panel should be selective in its coverage of these topics.

The Report and Recommendations

The panel is required to prepare a succinct report, in which descriptive material is the minimum necessary to set the conclusions in context. The report should include clear endorsements of the Centre's activities where appropriate, as well as recommendations and suggestions for changes. Recommendations should be justified by analysis and approved by the panel.

The Panel Chair should discuss a draft of the report or its general conclusions with the Centre's management at the end of the review period. The Chair could put the report in final form during the days immediately following the review, provided the panel approves the final draft. The report should include a summary with qualitative and quantitative information following a standard format (see Attachment II of the attached Terms of Reference). Upon completion, the report should be formally transmitted to the Centre's Board Chair, the TAC Chair, and the CGIAR Executive Secretary.

The Response and Follow-up

The Board and management of the Centre under review should submit a response to the review, addressed to TAC and the CGIAR Secretariat. TAC then will discuss the report in the presence of the Panel Chair and representatives from the Centre, and prepare a brief commentary, in collaboration with the CGIAR Secretariat, including recommendations for follow-up action. The CGIAR will discuss the report in light of the Centre's response and the commentary or commentaries from TAC and the CGIAR Secretariat, and agree on follow-up action.
5.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

FOR PANELS CONDUCTING MID-TERM EXTERNAL REVIEWS

OF CGIAR CENTRES
TERMS OF REFERENCE
FOR PANELS CONDUCTING MID-TERM EXTERNAL REVIEWS OF CGIAR CENTRES

Background

The CGIAR has charged its Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) with the responsibility of conducting External Programme Reviews of those International Agricultural Research Centres it supports financially. The CGIAR has assigned a similar responsibility to its Secretariat for External Management Reviews. TAC and the CGIAR Secretariat normally discharge these responsibilities by commissioning a joint panel to conduct an External Programme and Management Review (EPMR). Such reviews are conducted for each Centre approximately every five years.

When the CGIAR discusses the outcome of an EPMR, it may decide that follow-up action is required, due to the nature of concerns the EPMR raised. One possible response is to call for a Mid-term Review. Such reviews are small-scale and typically organized two to three years after a regular EPMR.

Purpose

The purpose of a Mid-term Review is to provide an independent assessment of a Centre’s progress in addressing the recommendations of its last EPMR, or to examine in greater depth a specific issue identified in that review. The panel is not expected to conduct a thorough assessment of the Centre and its activities, as in a regular EPMR. However, the panel should not refrain from making suggestions it feels are important for the future effectiveness of the Centre, regardless of whether these areas are specifically included in its terms of reference. For general guidance, the panel may refer to the Terms of Reference and Guidelines to Panels Conducting External Reviews of CGIAR Centres (Attachment I). The specific questions to be examined by the panel are spelled out in a separate “List of Questions for the Mid-term Review” (Attachment II).

The Report and Recommendations

The panel is required to prepare a succinct report, in which descriptive material is the minimum necessary to set the conclusions in context. The report should include clear endorsements of the Centre’s activities where appropriate, as well as recommendations and suggestions for changes. Recommendations should be justified by analysis and approved by the panel.

The Panel Chair should discuss a draft of the report or its general conclusions with the Centre’s management at the end of the review period. The Chair could put the report in final form during the days immediately following the review, provided the panel approves the final draft. Upon completion, the report should be formally transmitted to the Centre’s Board Chair, the TAC Chair, and the CGIAR Executive Secretary.

The Response and Follow-up

The Board and management of the Centre under review should submit a response to the review, addressed to TAC and the CGIAR Secretariat. TAC then will discuss the report in the presence of the Panel Chair and representatives from the Centre, and prepare a brief commentary, in collaboration with the CGIAR Secretariat, including recommendations for follow-up action. The CGIAR will discuss the report in light of the Centre’s response and the commentary or commentaries from TAC and the CGIAR Secretariat, and agree on further follow-up action.