Commitment to Open Data for Agriculture

The CGIAR Consortium is committed to making its research outputs as widely available as possible to ensure maximum potential for impact on development challenges. This includes, but goes beyond, data collected and analyzed as part of our work. We consider our research data Global Public Goods, and should be made as freely and widely available and accessible as possible. We are committed to having a clear Open Access/Open Data policy in place in 2013, and to begin implementation in 2014. Our ultimate goal is to have all CGIAR research outputs fully compliant with these policies by 2015.

Background

In 2012, the CGIAR Board of Trustees Approved “The CGIAR Principles on the Management of Intellectual Assets (“CGIAR IA Principles”) which states that “The Consortium and the Centers shall promptly and broadly disseminate their research results.” To further this commitment, the CGIAR Consortium is currently developing its Open Access policy, which is intended to be presented to the CGIAR Board for approval in the next few months after widespread consultation with CGIAR Research Centers, Research Programs, partners, and donors. The CGIAR Consortium will then work closely with CGIAR Research Centers and Research Programs to develop a comprehensive implementation plan that will provide standards, incentives, and platforms to ensure that compliance with Open Access and Open Data policies will be able to go into effect starting in 2014.

It has long been acknowledged that there is a treasure trove of agricultural research data, information and knowledge within CGIAR that, if more widely available, could increase the pace of positive impact on the agricultural sector. Recognizing this, CGIAR is actively working towards appropriate Open Access and Open Data policies, practices and standards. While CGIAR remains a complicated system that involves thousands of researchers working for a multitude of Centers and hundreds of partners, we are committed to making this happen. Open Access for CGIAR is one step closer now that a draft Open Access policy has been developed and is in wide circulation among Research Centers, Research Programs, donors and partners. The draft policy lays out a framework for how CGIAR, its Research Programs and its Research Centers would work to make their data and information broadly available.

Next Steps

Once the Open Access policy is approved by the Consortium Board, a Working Group already established will begin the process of developing a comprehensive set of implementation guidelines, standards, procedures, and technology platform specifications. Working closely with donors, we will begin the process of implementing the CGIAR Open Access/Open Data Roadmap, with the intention of having appropriate mechanisms in place by 2014. To follow progress, visit: http://www.cgiar.org/consortium-news/topics/open-access/.