

Meeting Summary of CGIAR Integrated Partnership Board 001B Ad Hoc Meeting 13 November 2024 (Virtual)

Agenda Item 1: Opening and Agenda

- 1) The IPB Chair opened the meeting and welcomed the participants. A quorum was confirmed. She pointed out that the order of the items relating to Personnel Policy Matters and the Integrated Partnership Risk & Oversight Plan have been changed on the revised agenda.
- 2) **Decision IPB/001B/DP1:** The Integrated Partnership Board adopted the revised agenda.
- 3) **Decision IPB/001B/DP2:** The summary of the meeting of the Integrated Partnership Board of 4 November 2024 was approved with a request to the Secretary to make a technical change in par. 15.

Agenda Item 2: Integrated Partnership Risk & Oversight Plan

- 4) The Deputy EMD introduced the Integrated Partnership Risk & Oversight Plan (ROP or the plan), emphasizing the collaborative effort across centers in developing it. The plan is a result of continuous learning and alignment, incorporating feedback from existing assurance functions, donors and the AOC. The plan aims to strengthen assurance across the partnership and at each center. Over time the model will be further refined and improved.
- 5) The Co-Conveners of the ICI Forum, Juan Lucas Restrepo and Essam Mohammed, presented the highlights of the ROP emphasizing the collective effort in creating the plan involving Director Generals (DGs), center delegates and subject matter experts. The ROP marks a critical milestone in a journey to operational excellence and it lays a foundation for greater accountability. The framework that it provides will continue to evolve, adapt and improve as it is being implemented and lessons are being learned. It is a commitment to continuous improvement. The ROP comprises an executive summary, a detailed narrative, and an analytical framework that clearly explains the elements of the functions that are being integrated and coordinated and that, for now, remain independent.
- 6) The assurance functions (risks and internal controls, internal and external audit and ethics and business conduct) are integrated in a combined assurance model overseen by newly created executive positions together with the leads from all the centers. This provides greater assurance at partnership level and at center level. The plan also provides clear escalation paths whilst maintaining confidentiality where needed. It ensures systematic and continuous updates of risks at partnership level, informed by risks identified at management level of the centers.
- 7) The plan outlines the current and projected costs for 2024 and 2025. It highlights an increase primarily in risk management and ethics and business conduct areas. Centers are already incorporating these costs into their budgeting processes, with a focus on strengthening assurance capabilities. The plan also notes that the costs will be refined over time, with a focus on continuous improvement and alignment with strategic objectives.

- 8) The terms of reference for executive roles and integrated functions foreseen in the ROP need to be finalized by the end of the year. Changes at the center level are required to ensure clear reporting lines and to maintain independence and autonomy within the combined assurance system. The analytical framework will guide the delivery of policy priorities, including global risk frameworks, ethics and business conduct policies, and external audit guidelines.
- 9) In response to questions from members, the Co-Conveners explained that DGs have been advised to share the plan with their AFRCs and boards for approval. Following IPB approval, the AOC and Council will receive the approved version of the plan noting that they already received the current draft version. AOC hasn't shared any comments on the draft version.
- 10) Members further highlighted the need to consider risks related to deliverables and outputs, not just operational risks. Ensuring ethical and procedural compliance is necessary but not sufficient alone for achieving organizational goals. The Co-Conveners answered that risks will be cascaded bottom-up and top-down ensuring that center specific risks remain at center level with partnership wide risks being identified by the Global Leadership Team for example. The integration of predictive analytics and AI-driven decision support tools into the risk and oversight plan was suggested because of the importance of leveraging technology to enhance risk detection and management. Clarification of the approval process was also requested.
- 11) In response to several questions, the Co-Conveners also emphasized the importance of accelerating the development of terms of reference for executive roles and integrated functions. The need for clear functional reporting lines and the potential for shared services across centers to improve efficiency and effectiveness was highlighted as well as the importance of harmonizing risk frameworks and policies across the partnership. The budget analysis is ongoing, with a focus on understanding the cost curve over the next few years and prioritizing areas like cybersecurity and AI-driven risk detection. The importance of continuous improvement and adapting the plan to new challenges was emphasized.
- 12) Members suggested checking whether the reporting lines of the assurance roles and the functional delivery are set up in accordance with standards and how such set up is translated into job descriptions and charters. In addition, it was suggested that the plan could provide opportunities for assurance functions with a broader skillset covering multiple geographies while still respecting the sovereignty of the centers. Several policies related to the assurance functions are currently being reviewed and will be updated before year-end noting that the internal rules framework setting out the approval process isn't finalized yet.
- 13) The EMD concluded this agenda item by highlighting the importance of programmatic, operational, and governance integration within CGIAR and the need to address both delivery and technological risks. At the recent Global Leadership Team retreat the progress made in programmatic integration vis-à-vis functional integration was discussed. To underline the point, the EMD mentioned that administration and size management were reduced by USD 5 million and USD 4 million respectively where governance increased with USD 9 million including the independent functions.
- 14) **Decision IPB/001B/DP3:** Pursuant to article 8.2j of the Charter of the CGIAR System Organization, the Integrated Partnership Board concurred with the Integrated Partnership Risk

& Oversight Plan, and approved recommending it to the System Council for its approval.

Agenda Item 3: Personnel Policy Manual (PPM) revisions

- 15) The EMD presented the proposed revisions to the PPM, highlighting changes based on previous discussions and feedback. Key changes include the rationale for deploying staff outside of France, principles for establishing salary scales, and the removal of references to low and middle-income countries for staff deployment. The revisions aim to ensure equity and competitiveness in salary scales and clarify the organization's commitment to diversity.
- 16) **Decision IPB/001B/DP4:** Pursuant to article 1.4.1 of the Personnel Policy Manual, the Integrated Partnership Board approved the changes to the CGIAR System Organization Personnel Policy Manual, Part A, version of 2016 and last amended on 26 July 2024.

Any other business and meeting close

- 17) The IPB Chair and the EMD highlighted the importance of IPB members attending the upcoming System Council meeting in Berlin, Germany. The meeting will include a celebration of the 50th anniversary of collaboration between the German Government and CGIAR. The System Council Chair has allocated time for interaction between the System Council and IPB members. IPB members were encouraged to attend and have the opportunity to interact with Funders, DGs and other stakeholders.
- 18) The IPB Chair thanked the participants for their contributions and closed the meeting.

Invited Participants

IPB Members

Lindiwe Sibanda	Voting Member and Chair
Patrick Caron	Voting Member and Vice Chair
Alice Ruhweza	Voting Member
Celso Moretti	<i>Apologies</i>
Clarissa van Heerden	Voting Member and Chair of AFRC
Dhesigen Naidoo	Voting Member
Enrica Porcari	<i>Apologies</i>
Jessica Fanzo	Voting Member

Active Observers

Eliud Kireger	<i>Apologies</i>
Ruben Echeverria	<i>Apologies</i>
Holger Meinke	<i>Apologies</i>

Invited Guests

Guillaume Grosso	Deputy EMD	All sessions
Elbert Hidding	Head of Internal Audit a.i.	All sessions
Myra Wopereis	Special Advisor to the IPB Chair	All sessions
Allison Smith	Directors IAES	All sessions
Maina Sahi	Special Advisor to the EMD	All sessions

Secretariat Team

Michiel Roovers	IPB Secretary
Christine Larson-Luhila	AFRC Secretary

Mauricio Lopes	Voting Member
Nicholas Austin	Voting Member
Rachel Chikwamba	Voting Member
Ramesh Chand	Special Invitee*
Segenet Kelemu	Voting Member
Shenggen Fan	<i>Apologies</i>
Ismahane Elouafi	Ex-Officio Non-Voting Member and EMD

** pending approval by India's Prime Minister of IPB appointment*

Roel Merckx	<i>Apologies</i>
Mark Smith	<i>Apologies</i>

Juan Lucas Restrepo	Co-Convener ICI Forum	2
Essam Mohammed	Co-Convener ICI Forum	2
Stephen Brightwell	Head People and Culture	3
Francesco Tresca	Sr. Dir. Global Talent Mngt.	3

Victoria Pezzi	Meeting & Events Coordinator
Olwen Cussen	Governance Officer