Scaling For Impact Program

Inception Report

June 2025

Contacts:
Interim Director: Tim Krupnik (t.krupnik@cgiar.org)
Interim Deputy Director: Inga Jacobs-Mata (i.jacobs-mata@cgiar.org)

Table of Contents

Acronyms 3
Executive summary 4
1. Program overview 5
1.1 High-level Vision 5
1.2 Achievements from 2022—2024 6
1.3 Description of intended research 7
2. Codesign and partnerships 11
3. Theory of change and MELIA 14
3.1 Theory of change 14
3.2 Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning, and Impact Assessment (MELIA) 16
4. Comparative advantage analysis 18
5. Knowledge-Driven Prioritization Exercise 20
5.1 Knowledge-driven priorities 20
5.2 Decisions on Program's Direction and Design 21
6. Alignment of W3 and bilaterally funded work 23
7. Plan of Results and Budget 24
8. Cross-Portfolio linkages and geographic coordination 27
8.1 Cross-portfolio linkages 27
8.2 Geographic Coordination 27
9. Risk management 29
10. Addressing feedback on select topics 33
Appendix 1: Addressing specific feedback 36

Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AMD	Asian Mega-Deltas
APAARI	Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions
CA	Comparative Advantage
CWANA	Central and West Asia and North Africa
ESA	East and Southern Africa
FARA	Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
IA	Impact Assessment
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFI	International Finance Institute
IPS	Innovation Packaging and Scaling Readiness
ISDC	Independent Science for Development Council
KBP	Knowledge-Based Prioritization
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MELIA	Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning, and Impact Assessment
NPS	National Policies and Strategies
PABRA	Pan-Africa Bean Research Alliance
PCA	Principal Component Analysis
PORB	Plan of Results and Budget
S4I	Scaling for Impact
SA	South Asia
SEA	Southeast Asia
SPIA	Standing Panel on Impact Assessment
TAAT	Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation
TAFSSA	Transforming Agrifood Systems in South Asia
UU	Ukama Ustawi
WCA	West and Central Africa

Executive summary

Scaling for Impact (S4I) is CGIAR's first systemwide Program focused solely on scaling—created to close the gap between innovation and real-world impact. S4I focuses efforts on a long-standing challenge: CGIAR has developed tens of thousands of innovations, but only a fraction have reached the scale needed to benefit the farmers, agribusinesses, and consumers they were designed for. Weak connections between research innovation and stakeholder demand, fragmented delivery systems, limited market and policy alignment, and insufficient links to private investment are among the challenges slowing progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals.

S4I strengthens CGIAR's ability to deliver meaningful development outcomes by aligning supply with demand, embedding scaling in research and innovation processes from the outset, supporting institutional scaling capacity development and change, developing scaling strategies and transformative partnerships, and leveraging public and private investment to amplify impact. By 2030, it will support more than 62 million people—at least 30% of whom will be women, youth, or underrepresented groups—with innovations that improve livelihoods and health. Biodiversity-friendly and climate-smart solutions will be applied on over 10 million hectares. The Program will create or improve 250,000 jobs and enable 480,000 people—half of them women—to access healthier diets. These impacts are anchored in a $5 billion development investment leverage goal, and within which CGIAR as a trusted science *and* scaling partner.

In 2025, S4I is operating through a blended financing model, combining $25.35 million from W1/W2 and $44.8 million in mapped W3/bilateral resources. Two-thirds of funding is concentrated in efforts supporting national demands for the context-specific scaling of bundled innovations—and frequently linked to International Finance Institute (IFI) investments in large-scale, government-led development programs—particularly in Africa and Asia[1]. This blend enables S4I to link strategic learning and demand identification with large-scale delivery—using flexible funds to strengthen internal CGIAR scaling coordination and applying W3/bilateral resources to embed innovations in national and international development projects led by CGIAR Centers.

A major inception-phase adaptation was the redesign of AoW 2 into a set of Scaling Flagship priorities. Informed by regional dialogues with 193 non-CGIAR organizations across Africa, Asia, and Latin America, the Flagships respond to strong partner demand for bundling and deploying innovations suited to national needs. Unlike research-focused efforts, the Flagships prioritize development outcomes by packaging validated innovations into delivery models focused on driving real-world results such as increased farmer incomes, improved yield efficiency, and greater climate resilience. Each supports CGIAR Science Programs while embedding solutions into public and private investment programs. Initial Flagships will support CGIAR's Science Programs in addressing scaling constraints by improving and better linking seed systems to markets, digital climate advisories for farmers and agribusinesses, agripreneurship in irrigation and mechanization, regenerative agriculture tools and practices, scaling behavioral change innovations that support healthier diets, and livestock and aquaculture delivery models.

A key achievement during S4I's inception phase is the strong movement towards integration of the Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation (TAAT) Clearinghouse. An anticipated new investment is expected to support TAAT's migration into S4I where it can serve as a long-

[1] Details on how S4I prioritizes work geographically to address context-specific scaling challenges and opportunities can be found in Section 5 on prioritization.

term CGIAR-wide platform for technology scaling. Originally launched by the African Development Bank with IITA and involving 10 CGIAR Centers and national systems, TAAT operates in over 40 countries to boost uptake through stronger value chains. TAAT's incorporation will strengthen S4I's ability to scale by providing technical support and applying CGIAR-derived innovations within large-scale AfDB-supported national development investments. It will also help establish the foundation for S4I's ambition to create a CGIAR-wide global clearinghouse of innovations to support investments from multiple multilateral development banks.

This expanded architecture is supported by S4I's 2025 workplan, which includes partnerships with 81 non-CGIAR collaborators in Africa, 49 in Asia, and 24 in Latin America and the Caribbean. Strategic alliances with regional platforms—such as AGRA and APAARI, among others—are also being developed to localize scaling and improve efficiency. In early 2025, a Scaling Coalition was formed with GIZ, World Bank, Gates Foundation, FAO, and CGIAR, supported by S4I, to align scaling efforts through shared principles, interoperable innovation and data systems, and joint scaling strategy learning mechanisms.

1. Program overview

1.1 High-level Vision

The Scaling for Impact (S4I) Program is CGIAR's mechanism for achieving delivery and impact at scale. It ensures that scientific advances move beyond early-stage innovation to deliver measurable improvements in livelihoods, job creation, agribusiness performance, and access to healthier foods—while supporting climate adaptation and mitigation and ensuring equitable outcomes for women, men, youth, and marginalized groups. By aligning research with partnerships, markets, policies, and investment pathways, S4I accelerates the use of proven solutions from across CGIAR's portfolio. While the Program's high-level vision remains unchanged—ensuring CGIAR science delivers outcomes at scale—the inception phase has clarified S4I's role in driving system-wide impact by supporting innovation bundling, targeting, and packaging, coordinating the development and deployment of scaling strategies, and strengthening feedback loops to identify where solutions are most. Grounded in the principles of scaling science and focused on evidence-based, solution-oriented action, S4I works across CGIAR's Science Programs to develop scalable innovation bundles and support their uptake by catalyzing public and private partners to drive impact.

S4I builds on CGIAR's 2022–2024 Regional Integrated Initiatives (RIIs), which operated in South Asia, East and Southern Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, South East Asia, and Central and West Asia and North Africa (CWANA), along with the National Policies and Strategies (NPS) Initiative. While these initiatives combined research and scaling, S4I focuses on the latter. By 2030, and through CGIAR's coordinated Portfolio approach with its Science Programs, S4I will benefit 62 million people, including 18 million women, youth or under-represented groups, support restoration or improvement of 10 million hectares through biodiversity-friendly and/or climate-smart innovations, enhance or create 250,000 jobs, improve diets for 480,000 people (half of whom will be women), and leverage over US$5 billion in development investment by aligning science with delivery systems, partnerships, and the enabling conditions for impact.

The Program's five Areas of Work include stakeholder demand signaling (AoW 1), scaling pathways and flagships (AoW 2), enabling environments (AoW 3), scaling strategy support and finance and private-sector investment leverage (AoW 4), and learning for impact (AoW 5). During the inception phase, S4I initiated a redesign process to build its Scaling Flagships—clusters of thematically grouped innovations with shared adoption challenges that require coordinated

support. Preliminary Flagships include pathways to accelerate the adoption of improved varieties and quality seed, scaling climate advisories for farms and businesses, supporting rural entrepreneurship for irrigation and mechanization, irrigation, regenerative tools and practices, scaling behavioral change innovations that support healthier diets, and livestock and aquaculture delivery models.

1.2 Achievements from 2022—2024

From 2022–2024, CGIAR's RII's and NPS served as test beds for scaling science and practice, delivering measurable outcomes that now underpin the S4I Program. Collectively, they accelerated the use of CGIAR-derived innovations among 10.2 million farmers, advanced gender and youth inclusion, and piloted delivery models that inform S4I's operational focus. Across 100 countries, 1,598 partners contributed to 4,152 results between 2022-2024, including 132 innovations adopted and in use, alongside 2,012 knowledge products and 90,740 people supported with capacity sharing. Highlights include the following:

- **Africa:** The Ukama Ustawi (UU) initiative in East and Southern Africa supported the adoption of climate-smart agriculture solutions by 164,363 farmers through scale-appropriate farm mechanization, regenerative practices, and water-smart systems; and provided support to over 2.4 million farmers and value chain actors through the provision of novel agro-advisory and financial services. It catalyzed US$740 million in investment in enabling environments through nine policies it supported. UU also launched the CGIAR Scaling Fund and Scaling Week, now part of S4I. In West and Central Africa, Transforming Agrifood Systems in West and Central Africa (TAFS-WCA) enhanced five policies, advancing food security, women's empowerment, and youth entrepreneurship through nutrition innovations, GESI-responsive planning, and agribusiness accelerators that reached 18,000 youth. In CWANA, the Fragility to Resilience Initiative strengthened policy frameworks, scaled climate-resilient practices on over 200,000 hectares, and expanded tools such as Zar3Direct and Water Accounting Dashboards, laying a foundation for scaling efforts through S4I's Flagships.
- **Asia:** The Transforming Agrifood Systems in South Asia (TAFSSA) initiative supported climate services, nutrition-sensitive diversification, and scale-appropriate mechanization across 426,000 hectares, with over one million adopting farmers. The Asian Mega-Deltas (AMD) initiative supported the use of climate-smart practices through Vietnam's million hectares of low-emission, high-quality rice program, catalyzing use of CGIAR innovations by over 8 million farmers, influencing national policy, and unlocking over US$1 billion in climate finance. It also advanced mitigation and adaptation innovations in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Myanmar, and West Bengal.
- **Latin America and the Caribbean:** AgriLAC Resiliente benefited over 1.4 million people across Latin America and the Caribbean through CGIAR innovations, trained 12,879 people, and co-developed 26 innovations—including digital tools and biofortified food protocols—now shaping policy, empowering communities, and opening new market opportunities.
- **National Policies and Strategies:** From 2022 to 2024, the NPS Initiative supported 2,228 people from over 12 governments with food policy advice, informing dozens of policies on topics ranging from agricultural input subsidies to national strategies for agricultural transformation.

While the RIIs and NPS achieved significant outcomes, each applied a regionally or nationally tailored approach during the 2022–2024 Portfolio period. Reflection on their performance revealed missed opportunities for cross-regional thematic integration and shared learning—particularly around scaling and expanding the use of global public goods produced by CGIAR

across regions. S4I responds to this by embedding a unified, interconnected scaling approach across regions, with country-specific adaptations and scaling pathways. At the same time, each RII contributed foundational elements that S4I has adopted and refined—including innovation packaging and scaling readiness (IPSR), early models of regional scaling hubs, and structured stakeholder engagement to support sustained innovation use. Together, these advances laid the foundation for the demand-responsive, delivery-focused scaling architecture through S4I.

1.3 Description of intended research

Background and value proposition: S4I is CGIAR's system wide delivery mechanism for translating high-quality science into widespread use, sustained adoption for tangible, real impact across food, land, and water systems. The Program acts as an intermediary between research and delivery at scale by connecting CGIAR to scaling partners that influence public policy, create market opportunities, strengthen extension systems, and mobilize investment—enabling farmers, entrepreneurs, private sector actors, governments, and development organizations to translate innovation into impact. During inception, S4I progressed towards forming partnerships with complementary scaling and innovation networks and platforms such as AGRA the Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI), and technical support providers like FAO's Country Programs. The Program is also prioritizing partnership formation with International Financial Institutions (IFIs), including the World Bank, Asian Development Bank (ADB), African Development Bank (AfDB), Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), as well as the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). These are in addition to multi-sectoral partnerships supporting innovation in scaling processes, such as the Scaling Community of Practice. Equally critical are partnerships formed by the Program and its aligned W3/bilateral investments with national and local actors—such as research and extension systems, government ministries, agribusinesses, market actors, and public and private agricultural service providers—alongside regional platforms like CCARDESA, ASARECA, CORAF, FARA, ASEAN, and SAARC's Agriculture Center. These collaborations ensure context relevance, strengthen local ownership, and support impact.

S4I's strength lies in its integrated, Portfolio-wide support model and its role as an intermediary between innovation in CGIAR's Science Programs and large-scale delivery—coordinating across scientists, government agencies, NARS, extension systems, development practitioners, entrepreneurs, and investors through activities such as stakeholder convening, partnership brokering, resource mobilization, policy engagement, and system and capacity strengthening for scaling. S4I provides scaling strategies and actions supporting to CGIAR's 2025–2030 Science Programs, 47 large CGIAR-led bilateral scaling projects, development partners, and national governments. The following sections explain how this is operationalized—beginning with Scaling Flagships, a new adaptation to support CGIAR's ability to deliver rapid, efficient, and responsible scaling impact.

Scaling Flagships: A key adaptation introduced during the inception phase is the redesign of S4I's AoW 2 around Scaling Flagships—thematically similar groups of innovations with a high potential to generate development impact, but which face shared scaling challenges and opportunities that can be tackled by bundling innovations, building business models, sequencing delivery actions, and aligning relevant international, regional, and national actors in the public and private sector. Focused on scaling rather than research, each Flagship will align with and support at least one other CGIAR Science Program to overcome adoption constraints and enhance innovation use and impact (Figure 1).

Positioning the Scaling Flagships for delivery will require experienced development professionals

with expertise in scaling, development practice, policy engagement, and business and market systems. They should understand the technical and scientific dimensions of CGIAR's innovations but be primarily focused on scaling rather than research. This marks a shift in how CGIAR typically operates—moving from research-led dissemination to delivery-oriented action. These professionals will work alongside applied researchers in CGIAR's Science Programs to drive innovation adoption and use across CGIAR's global portfolio.

Stakeholder demand signaling aiding prioritization across CGIAR's portfolio: Successful research, innovation, and scaling depend on strong alignment with stakeholder demand. Without it, scaling efforts often fall short. Through AoW 1, S4I strengthens CGIAR's ability to identify and respond to this demand across its research and innovation portfolio. During the inception phase, S4I developed tools to gather, analyze, and share stakeholder input with CGIAR's Science Programs and Centers. This includes deploying a range of methods—such as structured surveys, focus groups, key informant interviews, and co-design workshops—within a broader demand assessment approach to capture priorities from government, private sector, civil society, and marginalized groups, triangulated with national policy inventories to support iterative prioritization processes. Findings will guide Science Program workplans during annual pause-and-reflect cycles, providing demand evidence for decisions on innovation development, bundling, sequencing, and partnerships to strengthen overall CGIAR Portfolio performance. In response to lower-than-anticipated 2025 funding, AoW 1 scaled back efforts to develop CGIAR Country Engagement Strategies under HLO 1.3. Instead of launching efforts in over 10 countries, S4I will focus on initiating work in a targeted set of 3–4 high-need countries across Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

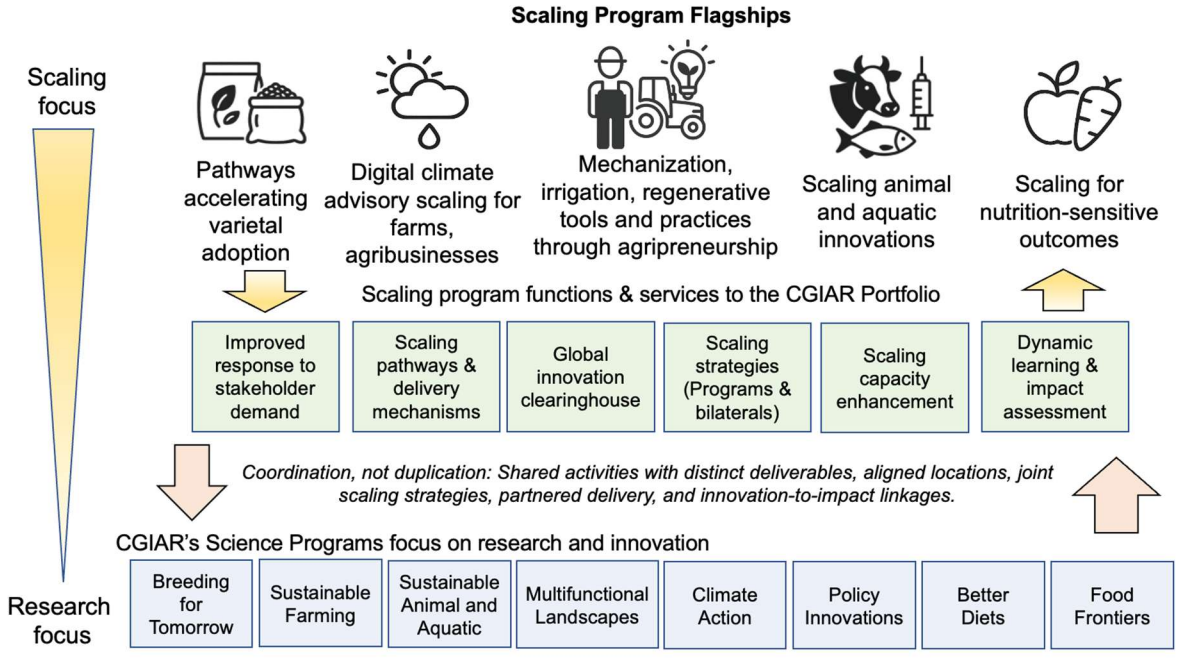

Figure 1. Scaling for Impact is designed to complement and support CGIAR Science Programs by strengthening the translation of research into system-level outcomes. Area of Work two is in the process of transitioning into six preliminary Scaling Flagships, each focused on delivering scalable solutions. These include: **(1)** accelerating smallholder access to improved seed through market-led, policy-enabled delivery models (synergizing with the Breeding for Tomorrow Program); **(2)** digital climate and management advisory services for farmers and agribusinesses (collaborating with the Digital Accelerator, Climate Action, and Sustainable Farming Programs); **(3)** inclusive access to mechanization and irrigation through agripreneurship models that embed regenerative and climate-resilient practices (supporting the Sustainable Farming, Policy Innovation, Sustainable Agriculture, Multifunctional Landscapes, and Future Frontiers Programs); **(4)** amplifying livestock and aquaculture innovations (docking with the Sustainable Animal and Aquatic Foods Program); and **(5)** behavioral change and policy innovation

for improved nutrition outcomes (supporting the Better Diets and Nutrition Program). To enable this, S4I provides shared scaling functions and services across the CGIAR Portfolio, including signaling of stakeholder demand for innovations, stronger delivery partnerships, adaptive management tools, and enhanced capacity for impact assessment and learning. Coordination mechanisms—such as joint annual planning, aligned workplans, and shared delivery platforms—ensure coherence between Flagships and Science Programs.

Strengthening Enabling Environments: Scaling efforts often fail not just due to technological gaps, but because enabling conditions—such as public policies, institutional capacity, market linkages, and regulatory frameworks—are weak or misaligned. S4I addresses this challenge through structured engagement with public and private actors in AoW 3, using stakeholder mapping, political economy analysis, institutional diagnostics, and targeted policy dialogues and partner-driven advocacy to deliver change. During the inception phase, AoW 3 advanced several efforts to improve enabling environments for scaling. These include a curated set of Success and Failure Stories, an Enabling Environment Framework and Scorecard to align assessments and guide priorities, and an Enabling Environment Methods Toolbox to support assessment and action planning. These tools are now being applied across CGIAR's Portfolio to improve coherence, comparability, and use. Core HLOs focus on institutional support and technical assistance to strengthen partners' capacities, enable inclusive scaling, foster policy change, mobilize investment, and build scaling communities of practice.

Mobilizing finance and delivery partnerships: S4I addresses delivery bottlenecks by identifying investable innovation bundles, developing scaling business cases, and brokering partnerships with governments, private actors, and development finance institutions. AoW 4 supports integration of CGIAR innovations into IFI-financed programs, social responsibility investments, and corporate social responsibility initiatives by mapping entry points, aligning incentives, and providing technical assistance through a CGIAR-wide innovation clearinghouse. Two key changes took place during the inception phase:

(1) An anticipated investment to IITA aligned with S4I is in an approval process to support the full transition of the Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation (TAAT) clearinghouse into the Scaling Program. During the period of the anticipated investment and to facilitate this transition, S4I and AfDB will develop blended financing mechanisms and a management model to sustain TAAT's long-term operations under CGIAR and the AfDB.

(2) During the Inception Phase, S4I streamlined AoW 4 to enhance operational performance. Clusters of Activity 4.1 and 4.2—Unlocking IFI Finance for Agrifood Systems Solutions and Impact Investment and Blended Finance to Catalyze Scaling—were merged into a single, integrated HLO focused on CGIAR's engagement with financing bodies. These include IFIs, impact investors, and corporate responsibility funds, supported through technical assistance and advisory services to position innovations for large-scale impact. As engagement with impact investment is relatively new for CGIAR, the merger consolidates efforts HLO 4.1 to enable a coherent approach across a wide range of private investment pathways.

Embedding systems for adaptive learning: CGIAR lacks a unified system to track, compare, and apply learning from scaling efforts across contexts. S4I's AoW 5 addresses this gap by advancing IPSR tracking dashboards, scaling readiness diagnostics, and structured assessments of demand alignment, institutional fit, and enabling conditions as part of ongoing scaling and dynamic learning processes. These efforts are complemented by responsible scaling assessments and South-South, peer-to-peer learning platforms that identify scaling bottlenecks, guide course correction, and foster capacity sharing across CGIAR and partners. During the inception period, S4I's AoW 5 also catalyzed support for an emerging global Scaling Coalition with CGIAR and external organizations—including the World Bank, FAO, the Gates Foundation, and GIZ—to embed innovation portfolio management into these organizations' development

investments and scaling strategies, strengthening an adaptive, evidence-based scaling ecosystem.

To streamline and improve the performance of AoW 5, Cluster of Activity 5.1 (Scaling Science) was merged with 5.4 (South–South Scaling Exchange) during the inception period. Activities were refocused on practical, hands-on support to strengthen innovation systems and enhance scaling outcomes. This merger simplified the Program's structure and is represented by a refined HLO 5.1, an *Innovation systems agenda strengthening South–South learning and capacities to implement responsible and context-aware scaling strategies*.

2. Codesign and partnerships

S4I's co-design prioritizes partnering for purposeful, systemic change: Since its early conceptualization—starting with the shift from regional initiatives to a unified science program in 2023-24 and continuing through its writing and Inception Phase in 2024-25 —S4I has adopted a system-wide co-design approach. Stakeholder engagement has been a continuous mechanism to build legitimacy, guide prioritization, foster ownership, and enhance delivery relevance. As a cross-cutting, portfolio-wide effort, co-design has occurred internally—with Science Programs, Accelerators, Centers, and bilateral projects—and externally, with government, private sector, and development partners across demand, innovation, and delivery systems.

In 2024, CGIAR conducted listening sessions in 27 countries to inform Portfolio design, though these offered limited insight into persistent misalignments with national priorities. In response, S4I leveraged CGIAR Country Conveners—who had already begun to raise CGIAR's profile among national stakeholders during the 2022–2024 Portfolio period—to convene advisory groups with national research and extension systems and development partners. In 2024, CGIAR conducted listening sessions in 27 countries to inform Portfolio design, but these offered limited insight into deeper misalignments with national priorities. In response, S4I worked through CGIAR Country Conveners—who had already strengthened national engagement during the 2022–2024 Portfolio period—to establish advisory groups with national research and extension systems and development partners. These groups helped identify innovation-system disconnects such as weak extension services, misaligned policy and market incentives, exclusion of women and youth, and barriers to seed access. The findings directly shaped the design of several 2025 Scaling Flagships, including those focused on digital advisory services, improved seed delivery, regenerative and conservation agriculture, and inclusive access to mechanization, finance, and bundled agronomic support.

S4I also held an online co-design dialogue in all CGIAR Regions between July–August of 2024, co-hosted an in-person session at the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) Regional Dialogue in Rwanda together with SAAF and the Digital Accelerator, and led a dedicated session during CGIAR's 2025 Science Week. These engagements directly shaped S4I's structure, content, and scaling agenda—replacing fragmented approaches from the 2022–2024 Portfolio with thematically organized AoWs and Scaling Flagships that support integrated delivery and sustained innovation use. Beyond these efforts, S4I co-design extended across Africa, Asia, and Latin America through regional dialogues and facilitated engagement exercises held between March and May 2025 (Figure 2).

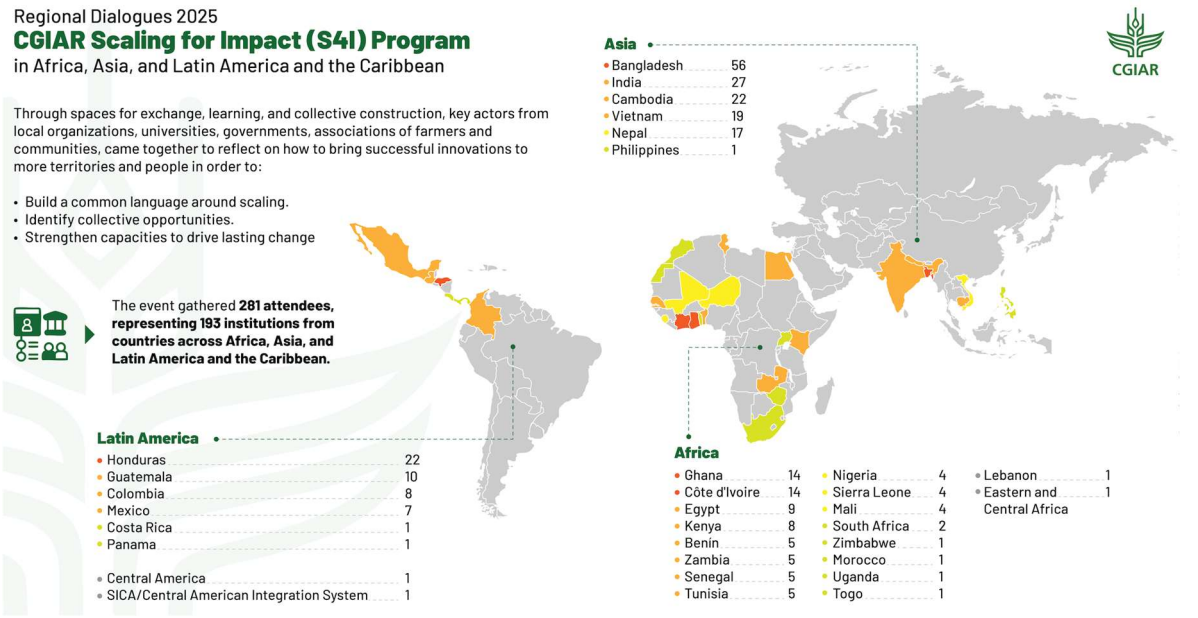

Figure 2. During the Inception period, Scaling for Impact Program Regional Co-Design Dialogues were held in Latin America, Africa, and Asia, including 281 attendees from 193 non-CGIAR affiliated organizations.

Latin America and the Caribbean: National dialogues in Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico with 35 organizations surfaced challenges such as the disconnect between innovation readiness and market incentives. In Colombia, stakeholders identified weak extension services and policy misalignment as major barriers to scaling biofortified crops and regenerative practices, informing S4I's work on enabling environments under AoW 3, and resulting in workplan adjustments to fund dialogues and activities to identify and action improved innovation to market linkages through the private sector. In Guatemala, participants emphasized the need for agroclimatic communication strategies, proposing digital formats like TikTok and YouTube. These suggestions, which align with AoW 2's Scaling Flagship on digital climate and management advisory services for farmers and agribusinesses, led to immediate adjustments in 2025 Work Plans under AoW 2 to widen the use of new media outlets to expand the reach of climate service advisories.

Africa: Co-design workshops with over 50 organizations across Africa revealed systemic seed system constraints, limited last-mile delivery of climate-resilient crop varieties, limited access to finance, weak extension services, policy and institutional gaps, and exclusion of women and youth. A recurring theme was the need to move beyond linear, top-down models to systems thinking that recognizes power imbalances, builds trust with farmers, and uses locally driven demand to guide innovation uptake. Participants called for more inclusive, participatory governance and long-term engagement strategies to embed scaling in national institutions. These insights directly align with the development of the demand intelligence dashboard in AoW 1, and the emerging Scaling Flagship on accelerating smallholder access to improved seed through market-led, policy-enabled delivery models, and have informed the planned deployment of innovation packages—including crop insurance, agronomic advice, and contract farming models—in AoW 2's 2025 work plan.

During North Africa-focused dialogues, participants from Morocco underscored the role of public-private coordination in scaling conservation agriculture. They recommended S4I's contribution to increasing cereal system resilience through the 'Green Generation Strategy', aiming to scale out 1 million hectares under conservation agriculture by 2030, by aligning financial tools with national extension services to facilitate the adoption of resource-conserving

machinery. Based on these suggestions, AoW 2's Flagships on inclusive access to mechanization and irrigation, and regenerative and climate-resilient agriculture will include Morocco. These examples highlight co-design as a practical necessity for aligning innovations with delivery systems and national priorities.

Asia: In Bangladesh, 56 partner organizations emphasized the importance of farmer networks and interoperable digital platforms that align with governmental tools such as the Khamari App, to support the scaling of climate advisories, directly contributing to the Asia component of the digital climate and management advisory services Flagship and 2025 AoW 2 work plan adjustments. An additional South East Asia regional S4I workshop held in May 2025, was attended by 20 partners from Philippines, Cambodia, and Vietnam. Using innovation systems analysis, partners and CGIAR teams reflected on how key innovations could be more effectively scaled in the region. Through exchanges between S4I-led innovation pitches—on topics including direct-seeded rice, alternate wetting and drying, agricultural machinery, digital climate advisories, and nutrition—and national partner priorities, opportunities were identified to align CGIAR support through the Portfolio and S4I. These interactions helped surface deployment-ready innovations for scaling consideration.

Dialogues with partner organizations: During its design and inception phases, S4I also dialogued with IFIs, including the World Bank, AfDB, and IFAD, to assist in designing its AOWs, Flagships, and partnership financing strategies. These exchanges contributed to the creation of a CGIAR-wide Scaling Strategy Task Force and a joint Scaling Coalition under AOW 5 with the CGIAR, World Bank, FAO, the Gates Foundation and GIZ. Operating across Centers and Science Programs, the Coalition works to establish shared principles for responsible scaling, create a common data-sharing framework, and pilot integrated approaches in priority geographies. It also strengthens CGIAR's coordination with funders and policymakers and reinforces S4I's role as a system-level aggregator connecting innovations to stakeholder-identified challenges. In parallel, S4I is collaborating with internal CGIAR platforms such as the Pan-Africa Bean Research Alliance (PABRA) and Harvest Plus Solutions to plan scaling sprints in Africa and South Asia linked to emerging Flagships on seed systems and nutrition.

Looking ahead, S4I will treat co-design as a continuous, adaptive management process anchored in AoW 1 and reinforced across AoWs 2 to 5. Its learning approach will provide structured opportunities for partners to assess priority challenges, identify available solutions, evaluate which combinations have the greatest potential for impact, determine how to deploy them at scale, and adapt as needed when challenges arise. Rather than delivering predefined solutions, S4I collaborates to co-create scaling pathways—listening, learning, and evolving with partners to strengthen both programming and systems.

3. Theory of change and MELIA

3.1 Theory of change

Building on CGIAR's science and innovation, S4I supports the delivery of development outcomes at scale by strengthening conditions for the adoption of innovations across food, land, and water systems. Its Theory of Change (ToC) positions the program as a cross-cutting, system-wide mechanism that links research outputs to national priorities and delivery systems through interconnected impact pathways. S4I's contribution to CGIAR Impact Areas is guided by its MELIA Plan, which embeds learning, outcome tracking, and evidence-based adaptation throughout the Program lifecycle. This includes a focus on ensuring that scaling leads to measurable, sustained benefits—particularly for women, youth, and other marginalized groups—by identifying where and how impact can be optimized, going well beyond reach.

End-of-Portfolio outcomes by 2030: S4I's impact targets include **(1)** CGIAR's Scaling partners will extend to agrifood system innovations to over 20 million people, with at least 30 percent from underrepresented groups, including women and youth. These efforts will contribute to creating or improving 250,000 jobs and providing more equitable access to healthy diets for at least 480,000 consumers. **(2)** S4I's work to improve enabling environments for scaling will influence at least 100 policy or market changes, unlocking more than US$100 million in investment supporting 11 million agrifood system participants (e.g., farmers, businesses, and consumers). **(3)** S4I will leverage US$5 billion through IFIs and impact investors to embed CGIAR innovations in country-led, large-scale development programs. **(4)** More than 100 CGIAR and national partners will apply tools and methods for responsible scaling, innovation portfolio management, and impact **(5)** CGIAR Programs and 25 percent of new large bilateral projects will manage research and scaling adaptively in at least half of CGIAR's priority countries. assessment. These outcomes will be delivered through shared effort and co-reporting with other Science Programs and Accelerators, as S4I provides system-wide support services rather than operating through direct delivery alone. S4I engages Centers and SPs through joint work planning, co-developed Scaling Flagships, and shared application of tools such as the Innovation Package and Scaling Readiness framework and scaling diagnostics. It also convenes the Scaling Coalition under AoW-5, partnering with organizations such as the World Bank, FAO, the Gates Foundation, and GIZ to harmonize scaling principles and align support with country needs. In contexts like Morocco's conservation tillage efforts—where CGIAR lacks direct machinery expertise—S4I works with non-CGIAR actors, including private sector and national partners, to coordinate solutions grounded in national investment plans and technical capabilities.[2]

Intermediate Outcomes: S4I's intermediate outcomes reflect results within its sphere of influence—shaped by targeted interventions, partnerships, and system-level engagement, though not directly controlled. These outcomes rest on core assumptions in the ToC: that CGIAR scientists will respond to stakeholder demand to better prioritize research and scaling; policy and financing systems will be positioned to respond to demand-driven innovation development, placing scaling—not science alone—at the center of the innovation process. Acting as an intermediary across research, policy, and investment systems, S4I works to align incentives, reduce fragmentation, and support coordinated CGIAR-wide scaling efforts.

Through this influence, S4I supports CGIAR, NARES scientists, and innovation system actors—including extension organizations, private sector partners, development organizations, policy advisors, policymakers, and financiers—in using scaling market intelligence to prioritize research and scaling activities. It enables Science Programs and partners to co-design, bundle, adapt, and deliver Flagship innovations through carefully developed scaling strategies and

[2] Details on S4I's End of Initiative Outcomes are found in Annex 7 of the S4I design document.

actions. Policymakers and market actors are engaged in shaping enabling market, policy, and cultural conditions that support inclusive, sustained innovation use. At the same time, S4I works with IFIs and impact investors to embed CGIAR innovations in national development programming and corporate social responsibility efforts. Over S4I's six years of implementation, 100+ non-CGIAR partners working in agrifood systems will be equipped with tools for improved innovation portfolio management, scaling readiness, and responsible scaling, reinforced by South–South and cross-regional scaling capacity improvements and learning. These outcomes are grounded in outputs generated across S4I's five AoWs, underpinned by a MELIA system integrated into CGIAR's overall performance management approach that supports adaptation, accountability, and collaboration across the Science Programs.

S4I's AoWs serve as the operational backbone of the ToC: AoW 1 enables adaptive CGIAR-wide Portfolio management by collecting, articulating, and actioning stakeholders' demands for CGIAR's research and scaling to support the Science Program's annual workplan activity (re)prioritization. AoW 2 maintains a focus on scaling innovations and is currently reconfiguring its action-learning cycle approach to integrate S4I's Scaling Flagships. These Flagships will be organized around thematically grouped innovations that face shared scaling constraints and opportunities, as described in Section 1.3, enabling clearer docking points for CGIAR Science Program and partner engagement, tailored support along common adoption pathways, and systems to speed delivery. AoW 3 enhances enabling environments by tackling policy, market, cultural, and institutional bottlenecks to scaling. AoW 4 supports the integration of CGIAR innovations into large-scale public development investment and impact finance mechanisms. AoW 5 embeds learning and strategic portfolio management across relevant components of CGIAR's Portfolio. Together, the AoWs generate outputs that interact across impact pathways to support the achievement of the Program's Intermediate and 2030 End-of-Program Outcomes.

Inception Phase adjustments to the ToC: No AoWs, intermediate, or end-of-Portfolio outcomes have been added, nor any removed. Several structural changes have, however, been made. **(1)** AoW 2 is in the process of refining its approach to encompass the Scaling Flagships discussed in Section 1.3, each of which is anticipated to feed into existing HLOs. **(2)** In AoW 4, HLO 4.2, which focused on private-sector impact investment in scaling, has been merged with HLO 4.1, which embeds CGIAR expertise into international financial institutions and large-scale development investments. This merger brings a simplification to the overall Program design, and recognizes the common impact pathway—increased financial investment in scaling—shared between the HLOs. **(3)** To improve coherence and operational efficiency in AoW 5, Cluster 5.1 (Scaling science) was merged with 5.4 (South–South scaling exchange and learning). This consolidation shifted the focus toward applied, experience-driven support to strengthen innovation systems and enhance scaling outcomes. This resulted in a revised HLO under 5.1 (an Innovation systems agenda strengthening South–South learning and capacities to implement responsible and context-aware scaling strategies). MELIA has been updated accordingly, though the overall logic of S4I's ToC remains largely unchanged. **(4)** Funding to HLO 1.3 has been scaled back to $0.47 M in 2025, with activities targeting a smaller sub-set of countries rather than launching a more ambitious multi-country plan. No further changes are anticipated before 2026; at this point, adjustments may be considered based on early Flagship performance in AoW 2.

S4I is supported by a blended funding model: Pooled (W1/W2) funds are used to sustain S4I's coordination functions, MELIA systems, enabling environment support, and cross-program alignment. Approximately half of S4I's provisional $29.6 M 2025 budget comes from W1, the other half from W2 (AoW's-4 and -5 each having $1.25 M W2 designated earmarks, respectively, with remaining W2 designations made at the Program level). These funds are concentrated on context-specific scaling activities, which the Program supports through scaling strategies and

tactical guidance, efforts to address enabling environment challenges, and alignment of IFI and impact investments with the $44.8 millions of Center-led bilateral and W3 project investments mapped to S4I across 47+ projects[3].

3.2 Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning, and Impact Assessment (MELIA)

S4I's MELIA plan is grounded in CGIAR's Performance and Results Management Framework and aligned with the guidance provided by its Portfolio Performance and Portfolio Coordination Units (PPU and PCU), respectively. It consists of two integrated components—Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) and Impact Assessment (IA)—designed to track progress, guide course correction, and assess contributions from S4I to CGIAR's Portfolio system-wide scaling impact. Beyond tracking progress, MELIA insights will also be used for adaptive learning, helping teams refine strategies based on real-time evidence and contextual insights.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning: MEL tracks S4I's progress toward End-of-Program Outcomes, Intermediate Outcomes, and HLOs, as defined by the Program's ToC and its five interlinked AoWs. Targets are based on available resources, timelines, and expected contributions to Impact Area outcomes. Most indicators are drawn from CGIAR's standardized list and mapped to Portfolio Outcomes, with custom indicators added where needed. Quantitative indicators are prioritized for HLOs, while a mix of quantitative and qualitative metrics assess Intermediate and End-of-Program Outcomes. The MEL plan incorporates Independent Science for Development Council (ISDC) recommendations following the Program's design document submission to strengthen adaptive management and stakeholder alignment. It is anchored in CGIAR's established MELIA systems, builds on lessons from the RIIs and NPS, and is aligned with guidance from CGIAR's Portfolio Performance Unit to ensure consistency, coherence, and quality across Programs and Accelerators.

Progress tracking is coordinated through a MELIA Point of Contact (PoC) group composed of MEL specialists from all 13 CGIAR Centers participating in S4I, led by S4I's MELIA Focal Point. This group meets monthly and ensures harmonized data collection, analysis, and reporting, while providing regular feedback to the PPU and PCU, and supports data aggregation across AoWs. A detailed annual MEL work plan defines roles, responsibilities, and geographic coverage. In addition, S4I has approved 21 evaluation studies— a number that will grow over the next five years— to assess the effectiveness of scaling interventions and strategies, stakeholder engagement, and AoW contributions to Program outcomes. Studies have been prioritized based on strategic needs and, where possible, will be co-funded through aligned W3 and bilateral projects. Evaluation findings from CGIAR's 2022-2024 Science Group evaluations—particularly regarding how to measure the effects of adaptive management and scaling—have informed the management of S4I's MELIA system. Findings from evaluation studies will be primarily used to support adaptive management of S4I, while also informing other Science Programs with respect to new opportunities identified along shared scaling pathways, while findings from impact studies will be used to report on outcomes and impact targets.

Impact Assessment: The IA component initially includes six studies that will capture S4I's contribution to scaling impact and validate the achievement of outcome and impact targets. These studies will examine several dimensions and will differentiate and clarify S4I's catalytic role from scaling outcomes generated with other Science Programs and/or Window 3 and

[3] In 2025, S4I is supported by 47 of mapped W3 and bilateral investments, totaling $44.8 M ($0.42 M, $26.47 M, $1.55 M, $15.37 M, and $0.99 M across AoWs 1 through 5, respectively, with 74%, 19%, and 7% of W3 and bilaterals operating in Africa, Asia, and Latin America).

bilaterally aligned investments. Details on S4I's support to other Science Programs in CGIAR's Portfolio are provided in Sections 8.1 and 8.2 of this Report.

Impact assessments will focus on **(1)** the influence of demand articulation on adaptive management and scaling across other Programs, W3, and bilateral investments, **(2)** systematic and comprehensive studies of adoption, impact, and cost-effectiveness based on both qualitative and quantitative investigations, **(3)** the influence of S4I on enabling environment enhancements, and **(4)** S4I's catalytic role in influencing and leveraging IFI and private sector impact investments. These efforts will be designed to be consistent with and complement the objectives, priorities, and activities of the CGIAR Standing Panel on Impact Assessment (SPIA).

Impact assessment studies are implemented across AoWs and coordinated by S4I's MELIA unit, with scientific input from AoW 5's Cluster 5.2 on Dynamic Learning and Impact Assessment. This cluster collaborates with other CGIAR Programs and Accelerators to refine methods, share findings, and jointly commission cross-program studies on scaling and innovation systems. Funding combines program core resources and bilateral project contributions.

Refer to the MELIA Plan and Results Framework attachments for additional details.

4. Comparative advantage analysis

Background: Building on the initial analysis at proposal-stage, that identified sources of capital critical to achieving HLOs, S4I's comparative advantage (CA) analysis shows where CGIAR is best positioned to lead, co-deliver, or support delivery across each Program HLO. The updated assessment (please refer to the Comparative Advantage analysis attachment) compares the CGIAR's positioning against partners across the broader scaling ecosystem, including public, private, finance, NGO, humanitarian, and civil society actors.

Approach: Following ISDC guidance, for each HLO, up to 10 potential partners were scored as either moderately or weakly positioned based on their capabilities, incentives, and potential for engagement. Potential actors were drawn from a generic database of over 4,000 innovation and scaling partners globally registered in the CGIAR results dashboard**.** Additional information used to inform the CA analysis included qualitative reviews of potential partners' websites, and evidence of their work in the countries prioritized by S4I. The process was supported by a Large Language AI Model.

Results: CGIAR's overall weighted comparative advantage score of 0.74 reflects strong positioning, particularly in AoW 1 (demand articulation, score: 0.89) and AoW 4 (integrating CGIAR innovations into international financial institution investments in government-led, national development programs, score: 0.83). These HLOs align with S4I's strengths in stakeholder coordination, country presence, and established relationships with governments and IFIs. They also draw on S4I's cross-cutting, service-oriented role in the CGIAR Portfolio and its research-for-development and scaling expertise. However, given that AoW 1 and AoW 4 are new areas of work that were not part of the 2022–2024 RII or NPS Portfolio, and currently lack significant W3 or bilateral project backing, there has been a noticeable challenge in motivating Centers to allocate sufficient resources to them. As a result, their HLOs have been prioritized for W1/W2 funding to ensure early traction and build internal capacity for delivery.

Moderate comparative advantage scores for AoW 2, AoW 3, and AoW 5 (range: 0.63 to 0.69) highlight the importance of collaboration in co-delivery. HLOs with similar scores—HLO 2.2 on scaling and impact pathways, HLO 3.2 on policy enablers, and HLOs 5.1 on innovation system strengthening and south-south scaling exchange (merged during the inception period from design-phase HLOs 5.1 and 5.4) and 5.2 on dynamic learning and evaluations—have been prioritized for co-investment and joint delivery with partners[4]. These findings were anticipated and as outlined in the Program's design document, as AoWs 2, 3, and 5 were intentionally structured to involve external partners. Focused on enabling conditions and feedback systems, these areas will require partnerships with NARES, universities, and potentially SPIA for impact assessment advising. Currently, 165, 58, and 29 external scaling partners are embedded in S4I's 2025 workplans for AoWs 2, 3, and 5 (98, 92, and 62 partners in Africa, Asia, and Latin America), respectively.

Implications: The CA exercise described above assisted S4I's refinement by expanding the potential partner landscape beyond traditional CGIAR collaborators to include humanitarian agencies, development banks, indigenous and youth networks, policy think tanks, and financial

[4] In response to CGIAR's moderate positioning on HLO 2.2, S4I has prioritized delivery partnerships with CIRAD, IFAD, and FAO. HLOs 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4 are intentionally linked through an action learning process involving scaling pathway co-design, evaluation, refinement, adaptation, and redeployment. The pool of potential partners operating at S4I's cross-regional level narrows from six in HLO 2.2 to only one—IFAD—in HLO 2.4, as few organizations combine a comparable mandate, presence in S4I countries, and a science-based, iterative learning approach to improve scaling and delivery.

intermediaries. These actors offer technical depth, delivery reach, and contextual legitimacy, and are progressively being added to S4I's 2025 and future work plans. In summary, the CA analysis has provided insights to the Program's transitional AoW Leadership Team on where to better allocate resources—determining where to invest internally, co-finance, or outsource delivery efforts.

5. Knowledge-Driven Prioritization Exercise

5.1 Knowledge-driven priorities

To inform prioritization of HLOs, S4I undertook a structured, knowledge-based prioritization (KBP) exercise using a framework provided to Programs by CGIAR. The KBP aims to compare the importance of HLOs in each of CGIAR's five Impact Areas[5] in Central and West Asia and North Africa (CWANA), East and Southern Africa (ESA), Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), South Asia (SA), Southeast Asia (SEA), West and Central Africa (WCA).

Approach and results: A multi-step method was applied, with steps 1-4 using methods innovated by S4I, while steps 5 and 6 were fixed by CGIAR, applied similarly across Programs, and not adaptable. **(1)** S4I's Transitional AoW Leadership team members individually scored each HLO on a scale of 1 to 5, indicating the urgency and priority work on each HLO in each region. **(2)** Composite indicator scores were generated using principal component analysis (PCA) on selected indicators relevant to each of the CGIAR Impact Areas in the countries identified as priorities during the Program design phase (S4I Design Document, Section 3). PCA-based scores were subsequentially normalized and rescaled from 1–5 scale for each Impact Area. **(3)** The two score sets were then combined using a weighted average, with 80% weight assigned to team members' scores and 20% to PCA-based scores. **(4)** The resulting integrated scores were scaled from 1 to 5. **(5)** They were then entered into CGIAR-provided KBP spreadsheets that contained in-built formulae and fixed, pre-weighted, and ranked scores for each region within each Impact Area. **(6)** HLO ranked scores resulting from steps 1-4 were multiplied by the fixed rankings by region and impact area provided by CGIAR to generate HLO scores within each region. Higher scores reflect greater importance. Results from steps 1-6 have been included in the Prioritization attachment and are summarized in Table 1 below.[6]

Table 1. Key knowledge-based prioritization insights by CGIAR region.[a] Numbers in parentheses are High Level Outputs that correspond to the Scaling for Impact Program's Theory of Change.

Impact area	Knowledge-based prioritization insights
Nutrition, Health, and Food Security	SA and ESA scored highest on HLOs linked to demand signaling (1.1), adaptive research (1.2), coordination (1.3), innovation pathway evaluation (2.3), and IFI investment integration (4.1). WCA also showed moderate relevance. LAC, SEA, and CWANA scored lowest, especially on innovation networks (2.1), policy interfaces (3.3), program support (4.3), and applied innovation system networks (5.1).
Poverty Reduction, Livelihoods, and Jobs	High scores in SA and ESA reflected strong alignment with HLOs focused on demand signaling (1.1), adaptive research (1.2), pathway evaluation (2.3), and IFI investment integration (4.1). WCA also showed consistent relevance across these areas. In contrast, LAC, CWANA, and SEA registered low scores, especially for innovation networks (2.1), scaling science (5.1), and decision analytics (5.3).
Gender Equality, Youth, and Social Inclusion	WCA, ESA, and SA registered the highest scores across HLOs 1.1, 1.2, and 4.1, reflecting strong alignment with demand signaling, adaptive research, and IFI integration. LAC and CWANA showed more variation, with moderate relevance on HLOs 1.1 and 2.3 but weaker scores on 3.3 and 5.1. SEA consistently scored lowest, particularly on diagnostics (3.1), innovation analytics (5.3), and impact insights (5.2).
Climate Adaptation and Mitigation	SEA, SA, and LAC scored highest on HLOs 1.1, 1.2, 2.3, and 4.1, while ESA showed moderate relevance and WCA and CWANA scored lowest overall.

[5] S4I's catalyst countries for prioritized work include the following. In Africa: Côte d'Ivoire, DR Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, and Zambia. In Asia: Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Nepal, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam. In Latin America: Colombia, Guatemala, and Mexico.

[6] More detailed methods and scores for each HLO in steps 1-5 are available in the Inception Report's Prioritization Supplementary Materials. High-level summary KBP results are shown in Table 1. Supplementary files provide detailed methodology and regional scoring, available here.

Environmental Health, Biodiversity	SA, SEA, and LAC scored highest on HLOs 1.1, 1.2, 2.3, and 4.1, while CWANA and WCA scored lowest.

[a.] Regional rank orders were fixed within each Impact Area in the KBP prioritization spreadsheets provided to the S4I team and remained unchanged regardless of the HLO or regional scores generated by the S4I Program.

5.2 Decisions on Program's Direction and Design

While the knowledge-driven prioritization informed S4I's overall logic, the Program's decisions on what, where, and how to prioritize HLOs also drew on the Program's design and inception-phase consultations and regional dialogues, comparative advantage analysis, the intensity of CGIAR Science Program activities in countries and regions, and far broader strategic considerations that were not captured in the KBP exercise. These included alignment with government and investor scaling priorities, coherence with other CGIAR Science Programs and their investments, the presence of capable scaling partners, and of aligned W3/bilateral investments mapped to S4I. As 2025 marks a transition from the 2022–2024 to the 2025–2030 CGIAR Portfolio, with an 80% fund-flow directly from CGIAR to Centers based on prior Initiatives' activities and funding levels, S4I's 2025 Plan of Results and Budget also partially reflects continuity with prior RII and NPS activities that generally align with the Program's ToC. A more detailed, quantitative prioritization—assessing legacy RII activities against S4I's vision and ToC—is planned for Quarter 3 of 2025 to guide programming from 2026 onward. Information on how the KBP exercise has informed 2025 planning and inception phase activities is provided below.

Regional and HLO-Level Prioritization: S4I builds on the RIIs and NPS. As noted above, 2025 marks a transition between the previous and new CGIAR Portfolio; as such, the Program's 2025 Plan of Results and Budget includes activities in all regions. Looking to 2026, SA, ESA, and WCA were often identified by the KBP exercise for the Food Security, Poverty, and GESI Impact Areas. These regions also align as priorities delivery-oriented HLOs, including HLO 2.2 (co-design of scaling pathways), HLO 2.3 (delivery along scaling pathways), and HLO 2.4 (refinement and improvement of scaling pathways). These HLOs are interdependent, sequential, and form an action-learning feedback loop to strengthen CGIAR's ability to deliver Scaling Flagship goals through topic-specific scaling pathways including **(1)** stakeholder-informed prioritization pathways where demand signals and enabling conditions guide adaptive research investments; **(2)** coordinated delivery pathways that bundle innovations with scaling support mechanisms (e.g., finance, capacity, policy alignment); **(3)** evidence and learning pathways that use data from implementation to refine both scaling strategies and research focus; **(4)** institutional integration pathways that embed scaling practices and tools across CGIAR and national systems; and **(5)** investment leverage pathways where validated innovations are linked to IFI- and government-funded programs, and social impact investments, to reach scale efficiently.

The regional distribution of W3 and bilateral investments mapped to S4I in 2025 also reflects this regional prioritization: Africa accounts for 74% of investment, Asia for 19%, and Latin America for 7%. Trends in overseas development assistance suggest this pattern is likely to continue. HLOs 3.1 (science–policy partnership interfaces for responsible scaling) and 3.2 (scaling support services for enabling environments and institutions) were identified in the Prioritization exercise as comparatively more important in South Asia, East and Southern Africa, and West and Central Africa due to their alignment with the Food Security, Poverty, and GESI Impact Areas. In contrast, fixed-ranking results from steps 1–6 of the standard KBP process under the Climate Adaptation and Mitigation and Environmental Health and Biodiversity Impact Areas placed more emphasis on South Asia, Latin America, and Southeast Asia, and surprisingly, less on WCA, ESA, or CWANA. While these scores are acknowledged, the S4I Program team has concerns that strict reliance on these rankings—which used only a small set of indicators rather than a more comprehensive approach as detailed in the 2024 S4I Design Document (Section 3)—risks

underemphasizing climate, environmental health, and biodiversity challenges in regions where poverty alleviation, food security, and gender and social inclusion remain significant development objectives. Justifications for selected departures from KBP ranking results are described in the following section.

Methodological challenges and departures from prioritization results: The validity of these results, which resulted from fixed rank-orderings by region in Steps 4-5, did not include data on country or stakeholders' and needs or priorities. They were therefore debated by the S4I team that had already arrived at a detailed initial country prioritization for its activities in the 2024 S4I Design Document (Section 3). This prior work included multiple composite indicators for all CGIAR Impact Areas that considered constraining and enabling factors applied at a country level. As the Scaling Program is designed to provide scaling functions and services across the CGIAR Portfolio, this prior analysis also considered the intensity if planned Science Program activities on a country-by-country basis. Conversely, the standrd Prioritization exercise completed as part of the Programs' Inception Reports did not allow for methodological adaptations to account for these important considerations that are particularly relevant for the Scaling Program.

Steps 4-5 of the KBP methodology, which used a smaller number of indicators and focused only on the regional level, also appears to rest on the assumption that HLOs function independently and that Programs operate in isolation, rather than within a systems context—either internally or in the context of the overall CGIAR Portfolio of Programs and Accelerators. These assumptions are inconsistent with S4I's design and ToC, which relies on achieving outcomes as an emergent property of interdependent, mutually reinforcing HLOs and work across and in collaboration with CGIAR's Science Programs. This integrative logic is central to AoWs 2 and 3, where sequencing and coordination of HLOs are essential for success. It also applies to HLOs 1.1 (stakeholder demand signaling), 1.2 (adaptive CGIAR-wide Portfolio management support), and 1.3 (CGIAR country strategies), which deliver cross-cutting system functions intended to inform and align the work of Science Programs across the Portfolio. Likewise, HLOs 4.1 and 4.2 depend on coordinated demand from IFIs, impact investors, and other CGIAR partners and projects. Under-investing in any of these elements from 2026 forward risks weakening the Program's overall integrity and performance, although the S4I team did acknowledge the likelihood that these HLO's activities will likely focus strongly on Asia and Africa, in part due to the priorities of the IFIs with which it hopes to collaborate.

Implications: Looking ahead, S4I will concentrate its activities in regions with strong CGIAR presence, consistent demand and potential for scaling and impact, as well as in areas of donor investment, particularly in South Asia and Africa, while remaining responsive to justified and strong scaling opportunities elsewhere. The KBP validated S4I's emphasis on high-need regions such as SA, ESA, and WCA for three of five Impact Areas. However, because the KBP approach treated HLOs as stand-alone and regionally independent, and was not designed to account for inter-Program collaboration and coordination—essential for the Scaling Program to focus efforts in countries where it can support other Science Programs through a whole-portfolio approach to impact—its standardized design is less suited to integrative HLOs or cross-cutting Programs such as S4I that deliver Portfolio-wide services and functions. S4I's final prioritization decisions therefore draws on a broader evidence base—including the detailed analysis completed in the Program's design phase[7], comparative advantage analysis, funder priorities and aligned W3/bilateral activities, the presence of and intensity of Science Programs' activities in at a country level, aligned bilaterals, and scaling feasibility.

[7] Readers are referred to Section 3 of the S4I Design Document, available here.

6. Alignment of W3 and bilaterally funded work

S4I aligns W3 and bilaterally funded scaling projects in CGIAR's Portfolio through five key mechanisms: **(1)** AoW 1 (Engage and Empower) generates structured demand signals through ongoing engagement with CGIAR Centers, guiding W3/bilateral project design and enabling adaptive management. **(2)** AoW 2 (Scaling Flagships) identifies high-potential innovations for scale, supports their bundling and packaging, and enhances impact pathway logic and delivery strategies. **(3)** AoW 3 (Enabling Environment Lab) addresses policy, institutional, and regulatory constraints to improve conditions for scaling success in priority projects. **(4)** AoW 4 (Achieving Impact by Unlocking Finance and Partnerships) provides technical assistance for project design and connects innovations to markets, partners, and new sources of scaling finance. **(5)** AoW 5 (Learning for Impact) advises projects on tracking scaling readiness and outcomes, embedding adaptive learning and impact assessment to improve current implementation and future design across the CGIAR system.

A total of 47 projects—representing the top 80% by budget of CGIAR Centers' W3/bilateral scaling efforts—have been mapped against S4I. These projects sum to an amount of $44.8 million in 2025, and an anticipated 2026-2030 budget of $84.0 million[8]. Of the 47 mapped projects—including contributions from all CGIAR Centers in 2025—29 align with AoW 2 (Scaling Flagships). These are primarily focused on digital climate services and farm advisories (16), seed systems (14), regenerative agriculture and mechanization (5), livestock and aquaculture (3), and nutrition (1), offering entry points for S4I to enhance bundling, packaging, and impact pathway design. AoW 4 (Unlocking Finance and Partnerships) accounts for 10 projects, including the TAAT Clearinghouse and the nascent CGIAR–ADB Asia Clearinghouse, which align with S4I's focus on embedding innovations into large-scale investment programs. AoW 3 targets systemic delivery bottlenecks that constrain in-country scaling outcomes. AoW 4 also strengthens private sector engagement and financing pathways, exemplified by the Mastercard Foundation's investments in WAEMU led by AfricaRice, and World Bank AICCRA-related efforts. Five projects are aligned with AoW 3, focusing on enabling environment improvements. AoWs 1 and 5 are currently underrepresented in aligned W3/bilateral work, reflecting their newness and pointing to opportunities to expand engagement through non-pooled investments.

W3 and bilateral funds allow flexible, context-driven delivery in high-need countries, while W1/2 resources underpin core programmatic functions such as MELIA, stakeholder coordination, scaling science, and enabling environment research. In 2025, 72.5% of mapped projects were rated highly complementary to S4I's ToC, confirming that W3/bilateral efforts largely reinforce and operationalize the scaling logic supported by W1/2 funds. This blended model improves responsiveness, strengthens alignment with partners, and enables adaptive implementation. Alignment is reflected through shared outcomes, co-developed work plans, or harmonized indicators and MELIA approaches between bilateral projects and the S4I initiative. From 2026–2030, where feasible, bilateral projects will be engaged early in the annual planning process to foster mutual alignment and collaboration—while also respecting their individual goals and funding frameworks. Findings from the mapping are already being used to guide Flagship refinement, prioritize co-financing strategies, and target delivery support through 2025–2026.

[8] This figure is expected to increase as new W3 and Bilateral investments are initiated by CGIAR Centers.

7. Plan of Results and Budget

Background:

Scaling for Impact's 2025 Plan of Results and Budget (PORB) presents a financial summary that reflects both the Program's core scaling functions and its shift toward integrated coordination of technical, institutional, and financial elements required to achieve development outcomes derived from its high-level outputs across the Areas of Work. The 2025 PORB was informed by regional partnership dialogues and comparative advantage analysis conducted during the Inception Phase, with adjustments based on donor designations in Window 2 and allocations in Window 1. As 2025 also represents the transition from the 2022–2024 CGIAR Portfolio into the new 2025–2030 Portfolio, the PORB incorporates ongoing scaling activities and partnerships stewarded under the RIIs and NPS.

The transitional nature of 2025 influenced both the PORB and broader budget processes across CGIAR. Following a 2024 Global Leadership Team decision, CGIAR aspired to maintain at least 80% of the average 2022–2024 budgets for Initiatives (the RIIs and NPS) and Centers integrated into the Scaling Program. Since budget decision letters were issued to Centers early in 2025, the S4I Transitional Leadership team was able to recommend how allocations align with specific AoWs and HLOs, but Centers retained final authority over funding assignments. The message that 2025 was a transition year therefore meant that many budget holders within Centers opted to continue funding activities from 2022-2024. This arrangement limited S4I's ability to improve funding alignment with its Theory of Change, resulting in some slight mismatches between strategic priorities and actual resource distribution, particularly to AoWs 1 and 4.

Moreover, CGIAR aspired to reach a much larger, $36.4M baseline budget for the Scaling Program. Had this level of funding been achieved, a flexible 20% ($7.28M) was to be invested by strategically in AoWs and HLOs that represented newer work that was not part of the RIIs or NPS. Unfortunately, however, 2025 has proven to be a challenging year for Overseas Development Assistance, and 7 out of 8 of the CGIAR Science Programs—as well as the Scaling Program—achieved budget envelopes below an 80% threshold that would permit the flexible investment of $7.28M in new AoWs and HLOs. As such, several system-critical HLOs are funded in 2025 at levels slightly lower than aspired to, potentially weakening the Program's coherence and sequencing of scaling actions in 2025. The Program is therefore working to address this through coordination with other Programs and targeting W3 investments to support key activities[9], as well as planning for a 2026 PORB that will prioritize new and high-impact activities above the continuity of prior work that is less fit for purpose in the Program's ToC.

Windows 1, 2, 3 and bilateral funding: Approximately half of S4I's 2025 funding is from Window 1, with the remainder from Window 2, including two $1.25 million designated W2 allocations specifically for AoWs 4 and 5. The PORB also reflects stronger alignment of Window 3 and bilateral funding with Program logic: in 2025, 47 mapped W3 and bilateral investments totaling $44.8 million support the Program ($0.42M, $26.47M, $1.55M, $15.37M, and $0.99M across AoWs 1 through 5, respectively), with 74% of these funds active in Africa, 19% in Asia, and 7% in Latin America.

Engage and Empower (AoW 1): This AoW is allocated $2.98 million in W1/W2 funding and supported by $0.42 million in W3/bilaterals. It anchors S4I's stakeholder demand intelligence

[9] The section on AoW 4 in the PORB description highlights major inception period successes in leveraging Window 3 investments, with an anticipated, two-year bilateral investment in HLO 4.1 to transition TAAT into the Scaling Program that will support new work that was not part of the RIIs or NPS.

and country engagement functions, while supporting prioritization and adaptive management responses to demand in other Programs and Accelerators. HLO 1.1 (Stakeholder demand identification and articulation) receives $1.72 million, while HLO 1.2 (adaptive Portfolio management support) and HLO 1.3 (Country engagement and strategy setting) receive $0.78 million and $0.47 million, respectively. These outputs support S4I's decolonization and stakeholder demand-driven prioritization and adaptive management efforts across the CGIAR Portfolio. Activities feed into delivery systems under other AoWs and across CGIAR's Science programs. AoW 1 HLOs and Intermediate outcomes also contribute to 2030 Outcomes 1 (adaptive portfolio management in response to stakeholder demand). W3-supported scaling projects increasingly draw on these outputs for upstream targeting and contextualization.

Pathways to Scale (AoW 2): This AoW, which is transitioning into the Scaling Flagships described in remains the most highly funded, with $11.15 million in W1/W2 allocations and $26.47 million in W3/bilateral contributions—more than half of the Program's total mapped W3/bilateral support. As described in Section 1.3, this AoW is being restructured around Scaling Flagships which will shape S4I's scaling impact trajectory going forward. While the Flagship structure will be formalized in 2026, the existing Theory of Change and HLOs remain valid and applicable in 2025. The AoWs sequenced and interdependent HLOs allow for coherent scaling across co-design, deployment, evaluation, and improvement. HLO 2.1 (Innovation networks enhance agrifood system solution scaling) is funded at $1.99 million, while HLO 2.2 (co-design of scaling strategies with partners) and HLO 2.3 (Scale-ready agrifood system solution bundles and packages) receive $3.96 million and $3.26 million, respectively. HLO 2.4 (agrifood system solution scaling strategies) receives $1.95 million. AoW 2 directly contributes to 2030 Outcomes 1-6. The scale of bilateral investment in AoW 2 reflects CGIAR Centers' confidence in its delivery logic and relevance to donors' and partners' agendas.

Enabling Environment Lab (AoW 3): This AoW supports institutional, market and policy systems that enable responsible scaling. It receives $4.53 million in W1/W2 funds and $1.55 million from W3/bilateral sources. HLO 3.1 (Enabling environment diagnostics) is allocated $1.01 million, HLO 3.2 (Scaling support services for enabling environments and institutions) receives $2.63 million, and HLO 3.3 (Science-policy partnership interfaces for responsible scaling) is supported at $0.88 million. AoW 3 contributes to 2030 Outcome 3.1 (Scaling partners enable demand from 20M+ people, 0.25M+ jobs, and 0.48M+ consumers accessing diverse foods) and Outcome 3 (Policy and market actors implement 100+ measures, drive $100M+in SME investment, and benefit 11M people systems), and Outcome 6 (farmers adapt and adopt sustainable practices; markets boost food supply and enhance jobs, supporting increased consumers' access to diversified food). AoW 3 contributes to 2030 Outcome 3.1 (Scaling partners enable demand from 20M+ people, 0.25M+ jobs, and 0.48M+ consumers accessing diverse foods), and Outcome 3 (Policy and market actors implement 100+ measures, drive $100M+in SME investment, and benefit 11M people systems), and Outcome 6 (farmers adapt and adopt sustainable practices; markets boost food supply and enhance jobs, supporting increased consumers' access to diversified food). W3 and bilateral investments support policy and institutional engagement where regulatory change or public-sector delivery is essential.

Achieving Impact by Unlocking Finance and Partnerships (AoW 4): This AoW is new—no 2022–2024 CGIAR Portfolio activities aligned with it. AoW 4 plays a keystone role in S4I. It aims to leveraging $5 billion in scaling finance and influence 50+ projects reaching over 31 million people. It receives $2.04 million in W1/W2, but benefits from $15.37 million in W3 and bilateral investments – the second largest W3 and bilateral investment in S4I's AoWs – underscoring how this work is new in the context of the prior Initiatives but is of crucial importance for scaling as evidenced by donors' and Centers' W3 and bilateral investments. HLO 4.1 (CGIAR expertise and

solutions embedded in development investments and partnerships) receives $0.87 million, while HLO 4.2 (Scaling hubs supporting CGIAR Programs) receives $1.17 million, respectively. During the inception period, a donor indicated that it was in the process of approving a 18-month Window 3 investment to IITA to support full integration of the TAAT Clearinghouse into S4I. In parallel, S4I and AfDB will co-develop blended financing mechanisms, a management model for TAAT, and a roadmap for a CGIAR-wide Innovation Clearinghouse. By Q4 2025, S4I hopes to convene CGIAR and IFI partners to validate this roadmap and guide implementation. AoW 4 contributes to 2030 Outcomes 4, 5 and 6.

Learning for Impact (AoW 5): This AoW is supported by $2.89 million in W1/W2 funding, but only $0.99 million in mapped W3/bilaterals. It embeds MELIA directly into scaling design and adaptation, ensuring learning is continuous and operational rather than retrospective, and connects this learning to system-level decisions across CGIAR programs, investment strategies, and partnerships with IFIs and governments. HLO 5.1 (Enhancing scaling science for societal impact) receives $1.08 million, while HLO 5.2 (Insights for CGIAR scaling success through impact assessments), and HLO 5.3 (Custom analytics for managing innovation portfolios and decision-making), receive $0.94 million, and $0.84 million, respectively. AoW 5 and AoW 1 jointly support feedback loops for course correction in bilateral programs, reinforcing CGIAR's adaptive capacity. This learning architecture is critical to CGIAR's long-term scaling performance. Like AoW 1, AoW 5 contributes to 2030 Outcomes 1, 5, and 6.

The 2025 PORB outlines a coherent, financial strategy for S4I, balancing system-critical functions with targeted investments in delivery, learning, policy reform, and finance. Backed by $25.35 million in W1/W2 and $44.80 million in mapped W3 and bilateral funds, it totals $70.15 million in planned 2025 resources. Allocations align with HLO and outcome priorities, enabling S4I to deliver CGIAR-wide scaling support. A full breakdown is available in the PORB file, which has been attached.

8. Cross-Portfolio linkages and geographic coordination

8.1 Cross-portfolio linkages

S4I connects CGIAR science to partners by using AoW 1 to align with innovation supply with demand and AoWs 2–5 to bundle innovations, enable scaling, and support delivery through financing and learning. Two key mechanisms support cross-portfolio linkages, described below.

1. **Joint Work Planning and Operational Coordination**: Analysis of S4I's 2025 detailed workplan highlights key areas of collaboration with other programs, most notably Breeding for Tomorrow (B4T; 78 collaborative activities), Sustainable Farming (47), Climate Action (38), Policy Innovations (24), Better Diets and Nutrition (BDN;14), and Sustainable Animal and Aquatic Foods (SAAF; 10), and Multifunctional Landscapes (9) Programs. Workplan activity collaborations with the Accelerators are prominent with the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI; 24 shared activities), Digital Transformation (20), and the Capacity Sharing Accelerator, which works with S4I's AoW 5 (innovation systems strengthening South–South learning and capacities) to co-deliver HLO 5.1 through its AoWs-1 and 2 (Innovation Lab and Capacity Sharing Marketplace, respectively).
2. **Scaling of the Science Programs' 'Top 10' innovations:** Collaborating with CGIAR's Portfolio Performance Unit, S4I is systematically engaging all eight Science Programs to identify top innovations and assess their scaling potential. This process informs support across the entire Program—not only through the Scaling Flagships under AoW 2, but also via strategic services in AoWs 1, 3, 4, and 5. The Scaling Fund under AoW 4 will allow Science Programs to competitively apply for catalytic co-financing to develop scaling strategies and accelerate delivery partnerships. AoW 5 will tailored innovation scaling readiness support, helping refine impact pathways based in part on stakeholder demand identified through AoW 1. AoW 3's diagnostics on enabling environment constraints will also be informed by this innovation review, guiding support where policy, institutional, or market barriers limit scale. Flagship-aligned opportunities have emerged: the first preliminary AoW 2 Flagship on market-driven seed systems may support B4T in expanding maize, millet, and cassava adoption, while the second on digital climate advisories is designed to assist scaling in Sustainable Farming, Climate Action, and SAAF. Sequencing of collaboration will be based on innovations' scaling potential, ensuring alignment, coherence, and responsiveness across all AoWs.

8.2 Geographic Coordination

S4I's geographic strategy is anchored in shared country prioritization and the development of regional scaling hubs, with two additional hubs planned for 2025 and one already launched in East Africa in February. At the country level, S4I is working to formalize the role of CGIAR's Country Conveners to align Programs with national strategies, coordinate scaling partners, and support resource mobilization; however, reduced pooled funding in 2025 has limited full implementation. In Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Bangladesh, S4I is advancing collaboration with the Sustainable Farming Program to improve scaling pathways for innovations such as direct-seeded rice, AKILIMO, and agricultural advisories. In South Asia, S4I is working with the BDN Program to organize the 2025 Delivering for Nutrition Impact conference to convene scaling practitioners and nutritionists from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka to exchange scaling experiences and develop scaling approaches tailored to national nutrition contexts.

As CGIAR Programs establish operations, planning focuses on identifying complementarities and aligning delivery with each Program's mandate and comparative advantage. Translating this into measurable synergies will require collaboration between Science Programs and the Scaling Program at the Portfolio level. Strategic engagement and facilitation by the Systems Office is

starting to help reinforce this message across Centers and their scientists. S4I's effectiveness depends partly on the Portfolio's collective engagement with its mechanisms for demand signaling, activity reprioritization, and scaling support. Further coordination mechanisms will be developed in Q3 2025 as the Portfolio evolves.

9. Risk management

A brief summary of S4I's top five risks and mitigating actions are described below and in Table 2, and detailed in the Program's Risk Register.

1. **Shocks Disrupting Scaling Activities:** S4I faces exposure to geopolitical instability, economic turbulence, climate-related crises, and shifts in donor priorities, any of which could delay implementation, weaken partnerships, and disrupt delivery. **Planned mitigating actions:** In response, **(1)** S4I will implement a Funding Resilience and Diversification Strategy in 2025 to reduce reliance on any single donor or stream. This will include early engagement with emerging donors, philanthropic organizations, and private sector actors, alongside mapping of flexible co-financing opportunities. **(2)** An internal working group will be established in Q3 to monitor funding trends and revise diversification targets annually. **(3)** From 2025 onward, S4I will embed structured scenario planning into its annual work plans.
2. **Funding Misalignment and Reduced Flexibility:** 2025 budget shortfalls exceeding 25% have constrained S4I's ability to launch new activities, encouraging a retreat at the Center budget holder level to legacy research work misaligned with S4I's impact agenda. **Planned mitigating actions:** To mitigate these challenges, **(1)** S4I will continue engaging CGIAR leadership throughout to advocate for a flexible budget share directly managed by Program leadership for scaling. **(2)** Coordination with Center leaders and Deputy Directors for Research through CGIAR's Global Science Team will intensify in the second half of 2025, aiming to improve alignment between Center-managed activities and S4I's workplan and ToC. In parallel, **(3)** targeted efforts will focus on mobilizing complementary financing (bilateral and philanthropic) with the goal of bridging funding gaps.
3. **Scaling Capacity Constraints:** Budget restrictions could prevent the hiring or retention of staff with expertise in delivery science, innovation portfolio management, and systems integration, leading to execution delays. **Planned mitigating actions: (1)** S4I will strengthen internal capacity by launching targeted training modules on scaling science, innovation portfolio management, and adaptive delivery by late 2025, with additional sessions planned through 2026. In parallel, **(2)** S4I will coordinate with CGIAR's and Centers' People and Culture teams to identify essential staffing skills for delivery and advocate for their prioritization in 2025–2026 recruitment plans. This dual-track approach—combining internal skill-building with strategic protection of key roles—seeks to mitigate constraints from broader budget pressures and ensure critical scaling expertise remains available within Centers.
4. **Internal CGIAR Coordination and Ownership Risk:** A key risk is that Science Programs may not fully engage with S4I as a systemwide mechanism designed to support and guide the scaling dimensions of their work. If S4I is not seen as a core extension of CGIAR's research-to-impact pathway, there is a risk that Programs will operate in parallel rather than in alignment—undermining coordination, reducing portfolio coherence, and limiting the ability to deliver significant scaling outcomes. **Planned mitigating actions:** To address this, **(1)** S4I will work closely with the Systems Office and Science Group to strengthen alignment mechanisms and clarify roles, beginning with formal coordination structures in Q3 2025. **(2)** A series of co-designed planning processes and joint reviews will help integrate S4I across Program strategies and impact pathways. **(3)** Complementary communication materials will be developed to highlight how S4I's tools, funding instruments, and technical services can enhance and assist the other Science Programs to deliver Portfolio-wide outcomes.
5. **Business Continuity: Potential Challenges in CGIAR Program and Accelerator and Center Activity Governance Coordination:** Weak coordination and resource competition across CGIAR Programs risk fragmenting planning, reducing strategic coherence, and undermining Scaling for Impact's ability to deliver integrated, system-wide scaling support. **Planned mitigating actions:** Beginning in Q2-Q3 of 2025, **(1)** S4I will help to coordinate annual joint

planning sessions across Programs, Accelerators, and key bilateral projects to align scaling priorities, resource use, and country engagement. In parallel, **(2)** S4I will catalyze routine cross-Program communication and coordination on scaling. **(3)** S4I will map scaling efforts across Programs to reduce duplication, achieve synergies, and strengthen system-wide coherence.

Table 2. Potential risks to the Scaling for Impact Program, their current risk level, and key actions and controls that can be used to manage risk.

#	Category	Description	Current Risk Level	Target Risk Level	Actions / Controls to manage risks
1	Business continuity	S4I may be disrupted by external shocks, including political instability, economic downturns, reduced overseas development assistance, climate-related disasters in activity countries, or other shifts in donor priorities. These factors could destabilize markets, weaken partnerships, delay operations, reduce levels of annual funding, and jeopardize planned outputs and outcomes.	20	9	To manage these risks, S4I will apply adaptive portfolio management, diversify funding sources, and embed scenario analysis into annual workplans to maintain progress amid uncertainty. A funding diversification strategy will reduce reliance on a narrow investor base by engaging philanthropic, private, and non-traditional partners through flexible co-funding models. Structured scenario planning with predefined contingency triggers will support continuity in scaling and program delivery during potential disruptions.
2	Funding	CGIAR and S4I face funding risks as 2025 budgets are projected to fall more than 25% below aspired levels. CGIAR-wide shortfalls mean that S4I's and other Programs' leadership teams have no flexible fund reserve to allocate to new work prioritized in Program proposals and initial workplans. This constrains the launch of new activities and has resulted in a focus on continuing legacy research activities from the Initiatives rather than launching scaling activities.	20	9	S4I will continue engaging CGIAR leadership to advocate for a modest, flexible budget share under Program control to fund priority scaling work. It will also coordinate with Centers and DDG-Rs through the Global Science Team to align Center-managed workplans with S4I's priorities, while pursuing complementary funding from bilateral donors to support visible early results. S4I has also advocated within CGIAR for increased budgetary discretion and decision making authority for its and other Programs' leadership teams.
3	Talent	Not all scientists are well-trained in, equipped for, or interested in scaling. S4I's success depends on being able to access and/or hire specialized staff with stronger skills in development practice, business models, innovation portfolio management, and scaling. 2025 and future budget constraints and competing Center priorities may conversely leave key roles unfilled, limiting S4I's early impact.	16	4	S4I will address talent gaps by launching targeted internal training programs to build expertise in scaling science and adaptive delivery among existing staff. Trainings will focus on on-the-ground experiential learning, and will cascade and increase Centers' staff scaling skill sets. In parallel, S4I will work with CGIAR and Center leadership to identify and protect critical roles, ensuring key positions are prioritized in staffing plan and that they are appropriately budgeted.
4	Business continuity	If not recognized as part of CGIAR's research-to-impact pathway, S4I risks being sidelined by other Programs—resulting in scaling duplication, fragmented efforts, weaker coherence, and reduced potential for CGIAR to achieve Portfolio-wide scaling outcomes	15	6	The Program will coordinate with the CGIAR Systems Office, with emphasis on the Chief Scientist's Office, to establish alignment mechanisms, support joint planning and reviews, and develop communication tools that demonstrate how S4I services enhance scaling effectiveness and help Science Programs deliver integrated, Portfolio-wide outcomes.
5	Partners and Partner-ships	Program objectives could be compromised if stakeholders undervalue the role of scaling science to support strong scaling delivery actions. Under growing funding pressures, investors may shift	12	4	The program will produce communications campaigns tailored to the interests of different investors that clearly demonstrate how scientific evidence underpins scaling outcomes. It will also engage donors and partners in co-developing narratives emphasizing the

		expectations toward short-term delivery, weakening support for larger, longer-term scaling opportunities.			value of long-term, evidence-based approaches and strengthening shared ownership of CGIAR's scaling efforts.

10. Addressing feedback on select topics

Responses to the primary enquiries about the S4I Program's Design Document from Systems Council members and the ISDC, highlighting how S4I has addressed major concerns related to program focus, are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Feedback from the ISDC and select Systems Council Donors on the Scaling for Impact Design Document, published in October 2024.

Feedback summary	Details on how the S4I has addressed or will address this feedback
There is a lack of information on how water systems are covered in the Portfolio.	Water is a central focus of S4I's climate-resilient scaling strategy, with planned 2025 investments spanning AoW 2, AoW 3, and AoW 4. Under AoW 2 (Pathways to Scale), nearly $4 million is allocated to HLO 2.2 activities that bundle irrigation technologies with agripreneurship models targeting implementation in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, Zambia, and Malawi (250505 Preliminary 2025 Work Plan). These efforts engage youth and small enterprises in delivering small-scale irrigation solutions, alongside activities that integrate water-smart technologies into broader innovation packages. AoW 3 supports this work by applying the Enabling Environment Framework to identify regulatory, institutional, and market conditions that influence adoption, with budgeted activities focused on developing supportive policy pathways and incentive mechanisms. Under AoW 4, $ 0.87 million is allocated to a broader effort under HLO 4.1 to develop financing pathways for CGIAR innovations, including selected activities focused on irrigation and water resilience through engagement with IFIs and government partners. These efforts—led by CIMMYT, CIAT, CIP, ICRISAT, IRRI, and IWMI and coordinated with the Climate Action Science Group—reflect a system-level approach to embedding water resilience in CGIAR's scaling agenda.
There is a lack of information on how climate mitigation is covered in the Portfolio.	While S4I's adaptation work is more prominent in Africa, climate mitigation is embedded across the Program and features strongly in South and Southeast Asia. S4I takes a 'whole portfolio' approach to its activities, coordinating and synergizing efforts across W1, W1, W3 and bilateral investments. Under AoW 2, multiple scaling activities focus on low-emission technologies. Mitigation in rice-based farming systems is a key target. S4I for example builds on the Asian Mega-Deltas (AMD) initiative and will continue to support greenhouse gas mitigation efforts through Vietnam's million hectares of low-emission, high-quality rice program through the scaling of direct seeded rice and alternate wetting and drying technologies. In Vietnam, IRRI also leads the "Fertilize Right" project, a mapped W3/bilateral investment that supports optimized nutrient management to reduce emissions. In Mozambique, IRRI also coordinates the "Rice Productivity" project, mapped to HLO 2.1, which scales improved rice varieties and practices that reduce emission intensity. In Cambodia and Vietnam, IRRI leads the regional "Accelerating Scaling of Low-Emission Rice Technologies" project, mapped to HLO 3, which supports service delivery models and policy engagement for methane-reducing rice practices. These efforts are supported by scaling pathway design under HLOs 2.1 and 2.3, contributing to the delivery of innovation packages with mitigation benefits. AoW 3 reinforces these efforts by addressing enabling policies and institutional conditions for mitigation. In India, ICRISAT leads a W3/bilateral project mapped to HLOs 3.1 and 3.3 that enhances ground cover and manages landscape resources to reduce carbon loss from degraded lands. No mitigation-specific activities under AoW 4 are currently confirmed in the W3/bilateral mapping file. AoW 5 contributes by integrating climate-related metrics—greenhouse gas reduction, emission intensity, and mitigation cost-effectiveness—into MELIA frameworks to track outcomes from mapped investments. Together, these activities show how S4I supports mitigation. Bilaterals led by IRRI and ICRISAT in particular reflect CGIAR's broader strategy to align innovation scaling with climate mitigation goals.

Table 3. Feedback from the ISDC and select Systems Council Donors on the Scaling for Impact Design Document, published in October 2024.

Feedback summary	Details on how the S4I has addressed or will address this feedback
There is a lack of information on how tradeoffs and synergies in mixed systems are covered in the Portfolio.	S4I is CGIAR's core delivery mechanism for scaling, supporting the entire research Portfolio by translating validated innovations into broader uptake through integrated scaling pathways, enabling environments, financing, and systemwide learning. It works across CGIAR's Science Programs, linking stakeholder demand (AoW 1) with innovation bundles developed by other Programs, scaling pathways co-designed under AoW 2, enabling conditions (AoW 3), investment mobilization (AoW 4), and shared learning systems (AoW 5). Trade-offs and synergies in mixed systems—where crops, livestock, aquaculture, and trees interact—will be addressed through AoW 2 Flagship activities on regenerative agriculture, mechanization, and irrigation, by applying responsible scaling frameworks and scenario-based planning to manage social and environmental risks. AoW 3 complements this by analyzing constraints such as tenure regimes and input policies under HLOs 3.1 and 3.3. S4I's 2025 workplan includes more than 200 collaborative activities with other Science Programs, including 47 with Sustainable Farming, 14 with Better Diets and Nutrition, and 10 with Sustainable Animal and Aquatic Foods. Integration with the Accelerators includes 24 joint activities with Gender Equality and Social Inclusion, 20 with Digital Transformation, and nine with Multifunctional Landscapes. The Capacity Sharing Accelerator collaborates with AoW 5 to co-deliver HLO 5.1 through South–South learning and innovation system strengthening. These connections help ensure trade-offs are considered in scaling strategies.
There is a lack of information on how environmental health and biodiversity is covered in the Portfolio.	S4I integrates environmental health and biodiversity across its scaling strategy through diagnostics, delivery design, and learning systems. Under AoW 2, mapped bilateral investments support activities in Kenya, Ethiopia, Malawi, Nigeria, and Nepal that apply sustainability criteria to scaling design. These include practices that improve soil health, reduce land degradation, and strengthen landscape resilience, with strong CGIAR Center engagement from CIMMYT, CIP, ICRISAT, and ICARDA in ecologically degraded farming systems. AoW 3 reinforces environmental safeguards by applying enabling environment diagnostics to assess policy and institutional constraints related to land, resource governance, and biodiversity, with HLOs 3.1 and 3.3 linked to mapped bilateral projects addressing regulatory and incentive structures. AoW 5 supports responsible scaling by embedding environmental considerations into learning systems and applying monitoring tools to assess trade-offs and adjust delivery strategies to prevent lock-in to ecologically harmful outcomes. This work positions environmental health and biodiversity as integral to scaling across the Portfolio.
There is a lack of information on how youth and social inclusion (that does not relate to gender) is covered in the Portfolio.	S4I integrates youth and social inclusion—beyond gender—across its scaling design and delivery. AoW 1 applies participatory methods that engage youth-led and indigenous organizations in co-design processes, while AoW 3 is continuing work implemented under the Ukama Ustawi Initiative to boost inclusive delivery models through partnerships with youth agripreneur networks in East Africa. Under AoW 2, responsible scaling principles are used to ensure that youth and marginalized actors participate meaningfully in pathway design, with particular emphasis on areas with high youth density and historical exclusion. In 2026, S4I hopes to launch a Scaling Sprint with HarvestPlus Solutions in India that will focus on three states with under-represented tribal populations, where S4I will work with women-led SMEs and tribal community producers—particularly among the Santhal, Bhil, Gond, and Munda peoples—linking them to institutional buyers and school feeding programs. Youth are also a central focus of a potential Scaling Sprint with PABRA in Kenya and Malawi, which is targeting youth with support to engage in seed production, market alignment, and last-mile delivery systems. AoW 5 strengthens this work by supporting the development of context-specific inclusion metrics and tracking outcomes in collaboration with the GESI Accelerator's GEYSI framework.

Table 3. Feedback from the ISDC and select Systems Council Donors on the Scaling for Impact Design Document, published in October 2024.

Feedback summary	Details on how the S4I has addressed or will address this feedback
There is a lack of information capacity sharing (as it relates to internal learning and decolonization of research) is considered.	S4I addresses capacity sharing with sensitivity to decolonization by embedding partner-led decision-making and knowledge co-generation into its core design. Under AoW 1, national institutions are supported to lead demand articulation, stakeholder mapping, and prioritization of innovation through participatory tools such as focus groups and systems mapping. AoW 2 enables co-design of scaling pathways in collaboration with public and private partners, focusing on joint diagnostics and scaling pathway refinement rather than one-way technology transfer. AoW 3's work on enabling environments incorporates analysis of institutional incentives, accountability dynamics, and political economy factors that influence who shapes and benefits from scaling decisions. This approach helps surface implicit power structures and supports context-specific reform strategies that align scaling processes with national priorities and local legitimacy. AoW 5 supports shared learning across CGIAR and its partners through peer-to-peer exchange and applied learning grounded in operational case studies. Collaboration with the Capacity Sharing Accelerator reinforces these efforts through South–South engagement mechanisms and embedded learning architectures. S4I's delivery logic emphasizes distributed leadership, decentralization of power, partner ownership, and institutional learning across regions and countries in the Global South.

Appendix 1: Addressing specific feedback

Detailed feedback	Details on how the S4I has addressed or will address this feedback
Clarify prioritization across AoWs to provide a tighter focus.	S4I is streamlining its ToC through a program-wide review of AoW and HLO alignment in Q1–Q2 2025 (Inception Report, Section 1.3), simplifying implementation pathways, minimizing duplication and overlap, and clarifying delivery roles. AoW 2 now operates through Scaling Flagships focused on climate-resilient seeds, mechanization, digital services, livestock, regenerative agriculture, and nutrition, grounded in HLO prioritization (S4I Design Document, Section 3) and national demand. As an integrated system, S4I relies on interdependent AoWs and HLOs—engaging demand (AoW 1), defining pathways (AoW 2), enabling systems (AoW 3), aligning investment (AoW 4), and embedding learning (AoW 5)—to ensure coherence and delivery at scale.
Geographic focus needs more explicit criteria and differentiated models of engagement.	S4I is finalizing geographic prioritization using a structured process based on national policy alignment, innovation demand, delivery feasibility, historical investment, and CGIAR presence (S4I Design Document, Section 2; Inception Report, Section 8.2). This builds on the Knowledge-Based Prioritization exercise (Inception Report, Section 5) and will be updated in 2026 to reflect CGIAR's evolving portfolio strategy. Countries are categorized as Catalyst, Opportunity, or Support to guide differentiated engagement. Initial focus countries—Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Vietnam, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Nigeria—were selected to align with CGIAR priorities and delivery potential. AoW 1 generates demand signals, which AoW 2 applies to define scaling pipelines and investment targeting, contributing to HLOs 1.1, 2.3, and 4.1.
Clarify how stakeholder demand is identified and translated into priorities (AoW1)	Stakeholder demand is identified and translated into program priorities through structured, participatory processes in AoW 1, particularly CoA 1.1 (Inception Report, Section 2). National policy reviews, country advisory groups, and co-design platforms generate validated demand signals that identify entry points, surface constraints, and guide the design of innovation bundles and packages. The co-design methodology (Inception Report, Section 2) enables demand to move from consultation to co-prioritization through defined protocols. In 2025, participatory diagnostics will be conducted in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Vietnam, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Nigeria—selected for their alignment with CGIAR priorities and delivery feasibility. These signals will inform AoW 2 Scaling Flagships (Inception Report, Section 1.3), shape country-level workplans, and contribute to HLOs 1.1 and 1.2 by improving targeting and system responsiveness.
Ensure MELIA is developed to support scaling, performance management, and the impact areas.	MELIA is being developed as a system-wide performance and learning framework grounded in the S4I ToC and aligned with CGIAR standards (Inception Report, Section 3). Monitoring and Evaluation functions are cross-cutting, supporting all AoWs with indicators for scaling outcomes, adoption, leverage, and system responsiveness. Impact Assessment, led under AoW 5, focuses on scaling pathways, return on investment, and institutional change. MEL and IA combine cost-benefit analysis, adoption tracking, and bundle performance with qualitative tools to enable barrier and environment assessment. This integrated system informs adaptive delivery and learning, with disaggregated data by geography, actor, and innovation type, supporting HLOs 5.2 and 5.3. The MELIA plan incorporates all CGIAR Impact Areas. Feedback mechanisms embedded within AoW 5 will ensure continuous learning loops, allowing evidence to be rapidly translated into improved delivery.
Refine finance mobilization strategy under AoW4; clarify TAAT-style clearinghouse functions vs financial instrument design.	AoW 4 focuses on scaling technical assistance and investment advisory services that align CGIAR innovation bundles and packages with IFI-financed delivery systems (S4I Design Document, Section 6.4; Inception Report, Section 3.2). Based on CGIAR's experience with the TAAT Clearinghouse, IPSR, and Performance and Results Management (PRMS) system, the Program will strengthen its technical partners to IFIs by supporting investment design, innovation targeting, and scaling strategy development. S4I will work towards developing a system-wide innovation catalogue that will be developed, integrated with IPSR, and aligned with TAAT's e-catalog approach. Like TAAT's model, which provides structured, searchable profiles of scale-ready technologies for partners and investors, the CGIAR e-catalog will present innovation bundles in investor-friendly formats that include evidence of scalability, delivery models, and co-investment potential. These tools will help public and private investors identify validated innovations aligned with national priorities and delivery mandates. In the second half of 2025, S4I will lead the development of a CGIAR-wide Innovation Clearinghouse roadmap outlining IFI engagement protocols, cost recovery models, and mechanisms to embed CGIAR innovations in national investment programs. A Q4 2025 workshop with IFIs and Centers will validate the roadmap, guiding phased implementation from 2026. The Clearinghouse will use blended finance, with

Detailed feedback	Details on how the S4I has addressed or will address this feedback
	IFIs expected to co-finance and progressively lead delivery. These efforts contribute to HLO 4.1 and position CGIAR as a trusted scaling partner in public investment systems.
Institutionalize technical 'handshakes' and coordination mechanisms across Science Programs and Accelerators.	S4I institutionalizes technical coordination across CGIAR programs by embedding structured planning and shared delivery targets and co-reporting them into its systemwide scaling architecture (S4I Design Document, Section 6.1; Inception Report, Section 3.1). Through AoW 1 and HLOs 1.3 and 4.3, S4I enables joint diagnostics and adaptive management. In Q2–Q3 2025, it will lead joint planning sessions, define shared governance principles, and convene cross-program alignment workshops to strengthen coherence, clarify AoW boundaries, and reduce duplication across countries and innovation packages. Inception-phase workplans include 78 collaborative activities with Breeding for Tomorrow, 47 with Sustainable Farming, and 24 with GESI. These efforts improve transparency, align resources, and build conditions for integrated delivery. The S4I risk framework (Inception Report, Section 9) identifies fragmentation and misaligned incentives as critical risks and ties mitigation to joint investment planning, country targeting, and shared performance management. S4I responds by building bottom-up Portfolio coherence, trust, and collective delivery. Shared performance reviews will track co-delivery roles to maintain synergy and add value.
Strengthen risk management and address program feasibility concerns.	S4I is strengthening its risk management framework to support delivery realism, system integration, and adaptive performance management (Inception Report, Section 9) A detailed risk matrix, completed in Q1–Q2 2025, addresses delivery feasibility, internal capacity, stakeholder uptake, coordination challenges, and external risks such as political and funding volatility. These risks are tied to mitigation actions embedded in the operational framework. MELIA systems will track risk dimensions dynamically, linking implementation to outcomes and informing adaptive adjustments. Program scope will be reviewed annually, with refinements introduced through real-time learning. This structure balances ambition with delivery capacity, grounded in operational evidence.
Demonstrate value through outcome tracking	S4I will demonstrate value for money through MELIA indicators tracking adoption, leverage, and institutional change, with ROI and cost-benefit metrics embedded in AoW5 and IPSRs (Inception Report, Section 3.2; MELIA Annex). Targets—62 million people reached, 250,000 jobs, $5 billion unlocked—are grounded in evidence from the RIIs, S4I's integration of TAAT, and guide performance tracking for the 2027 mid-term review.
Clarify the scope and purpose of AoW2 to ensure it is relevant.	AoW 2 has transitioned from a conceptual scaling research focus to an operational platform structured around Scaling Flagships (Inception Report, Section 1.3). These Flagships deliver high-priority innovation bundles and packages that address defined system challenges with specific Science Programs, such as output and consumer market-driven seed systems, inclusive irrigation and mechanization through rural entrepreneurship, scaling digital climate advisory services—aligned with national priorities and investor demand. Each Flagship integrates delivery planning, co-design processes, and scaling pathway analysis to support decision-making across CGIAR. CGIAR's Office of the Chief Scientist has provisionally endorsed this approach. It is designed to permit Science Programs to focus on innovation development, while S4I tackles innovation scaling challenges specifically.
Strengthen linkages with private sector partners to improve scale and sustainability.	S4I embeds private-sector engagement into its scaling logic by aligning innovation bundles and packages with commercial incentives and delivery models. AoW 2 Flagships apply business model analysis to identify profit-driven pathways and will phase out activities lacking clear market logic or co-investment by 2026. AoW 3 and AoW 4 support agribusiness acceleration, SME engagement, blended finance, and investment facilitation through IFIs and private investors (S4I Design Document, Sections 4.2 and 6.4). Youth-led agripreneurship businesses will be developed to strengthen last-mile delivery. AoW 5 supports ROI and cost-benefit analysis in IPSRs under HLO 5.3. Over 40 references in the Design Document emphasize incentives, business models, and private-sector linkages as essential for scale and sustainability.
Address potential duplication between AoW1 and demand processes in other Programs.	AoW 1 provides CGIAR's only systemwide framework for structured, recurring demand articulation, including country convening structures, policy inventories and dashboarding, and regional scaling hubs (Inception Report, Section 3.1). Unlike other Programs, S4I embeds this function into its ToC and dedicates HLO 1.3 to enabling adaptive management based on evolving demand signals. While other Programs engage with stakeholders, none maintain an annual, cross-country demand solicitation process or offer shared tools to guide prioritization across the Portfolio. AoW 1 will coordinate with Program teams to avoid duplication and ensure demand signals are translated into shared workplans and investment strategies, enabling greater alignment and responsiveness across CGIAR.

Detailed feedback	Details on how the S4I has addressed or will address this feedback
Integrate profitability analysis and business models for smallholder and SME scaling.	AoW 2 embeds profitability analysis and business model development into designing and assessing innovation bundles and packages. Tools for ROI and cost-benefit assessment are being applied to 2025 activities to ensure commercial viability for smallholders and SMEs, and results are feeding into Scaling Flagship design in 2026 forward. Across all AoWs, S4I is applying a structured filtering process in 2025, requiring Centers to justify activities with clear business model logic, profitability data, or credible evidence of external co-investment. Activities that cannot demonstrate this will be discontinued by 2026. This approach helps to focus scaling support on innovations with real potential for delivery and adoption.
Ensure robust capacity building for CGIAR teams on scaling approaches and tools.	All AoWs contribute to systemwide capacity development on scaling. AoW 1 builds capabilities in demand articulation; AoW 2 focuses on scaling strategy design, business model logic, and portfolio management; AoW 3 trains on enabling environment diagnostics; AoW 4 builds expertise in investment alignment; and AoW 5 strengthens MELIA-related skills, including ROI and adoption tracking. In 2025–2026, S4I will launch a structured capacity development program with phased learning modules, hands-on clinics, and embedded coaching tailored to the Center and Program staff's needs. A digital resource hub will house tools, case studies, and templates, while structured learning exchanges will facilitate peer learning. In parallel, S4I is working with CGIAR leadership to identify and protect critical scaling roles, ensuring staffing plans, time allocations, and budgets reflect delivery needs. This approach links directly to CGIAR's performance management systems and will be tracked through uptake and application indicators.
Demonstrate the added value and comparative advantage of S4I as a distinct program.	S4I's inception phase defines its systemwide contribution by clarifying how it supports scaling across Programs without duplicating delivery roles. Based on comparative advantage (CA) analysis and HLO-level prioritization, S4I is a service-oriented platform that links CGIAR science with delivery systems through demand articulation, investment alignment, policy coordination, and adaptive learning. AoW 5 will document learning across value chains and Programs while supporting cross-Program integration, knowledge exchange, and dynamic evaluation. The CA analysis (Inception Report, Section 4) showed that S4I has the strongest positioning in AoW 1 and AoW 4, and plays a co-delivery role in AoWs 2, 3, and 5—reinforcing its intermediary function. The Program's 2025 work plans already include over 250 delivery partners. These findings inform resource allocation decisions on where to invest internally, co-finance, or partner to scale, strengthening S4I's relevance across the CGIAR Portfolio.
Clarify the role of S4I in fragile and conflict-affected states.	S4I recognizes the importance of engaging in fragile and conflict-affected states. While primary activities focus on countries with mapped bilaterals or where S4I can indirectly support other Programs' scaling strategies, the Program is committed to contributing meaningfully in these settings. S4I is building strategic partnerships with humanitarian actors such as WFP and Mercy Corps to co-design context-specific scaling strategies. AoW 1 and AoW 3 will provide diagnostics on enabling environments and delivery risks to inform feasibility and alignment.
Articulate how S4I will align with policies and public investments.	S4I will align with national policies and public investments by embedding engagement across AoW 1, AoW 3, and AoW 4. AoW 1 will generate demand through policy reviews and country convenings. AoW 3 and AoW 4 will support Ministries of Agriculture and Finance in integrating scaling evidence into national investment plans. S4I will also co-host policy di970314alogues with the Policy Innovations SP in 2025–2026. These efforts contribute to HLOs 1.1, 3.1, and 4.1 by embedding CGIAR innovations in national planning and public delivery systems.
Ensure AoW5 supports internal learning for CGIAR on scaling	AoW 5 supports CGIAR-wide internal learning on scaling through HLO 5.2 by embedding dynamic learning systems that link scaling performance to adaptive management. It goes beyond MELIA to generate lessons on what enables or constrains scale, feeding this evidence into CGIAR's performance systems to improve delivery, decision-making, and resource allocation. Contingent on sufficient funding for the Program and this AoW, AoW 5 will collaborate with other Programs to provide advice on internal learning by supporting dynamic learning and impact assessment designs.
Clarify how S4I will manage its = staffing and leadership to deliver on a cross-cutting mandate.	An Interim Director and Deputy Director lead S4I with over 18.5 years of combined CGIAR leadership across regions and multi-Center projects. Each AoW is managed by a transitional lead and 2–4 competitively selected co-leads from participating Centers, approved by the CGIAR Global Science Team for their expertise in scaling and subject matter relevance. Center Delegates meet quarterly with the leadership team to ensure alignment with Center priorities. While the permanent structure may be leaner, all core roles will be filled by professionals with deep scaling experience, transdisciplinary skills, and a track record of cross-Center coordination. Further details on program management and staffing are included in the Inception Report introduction.