

# 2024 CGIAR Annual Report



Food market in Panaji, Goa, India.  
Credit: © 2020 Mazur Travel/Shutterstock



New aquaculture methods and fast-growing Egyptian tilapia could provide a healthy protein source and a healthy income.  
Credit: © CGIAR

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Collection of variety natural dry organic cereal food ingredient in sack bags.  
Credit: © 2019 Nopparat Promtha/Shutterstock

# Leader's Message

Dear members of the CGIAR community,

2024 has starkly underscored the urgency of CGIAR's mission to transform global land, food and water systems, as record-breaking global temperatures, consistent with the warmest 12-month period on record, heightened climate shocks. Our mandate to foster the climate resilience of smallholder farmers in the Global South has never been more urgent, or more impactful.

CGIAR's first-ever impact review, which consolidates over 1,100 outcomes and 127 impact assessments, offers compelling evidence of how science can shape and guide food, land, and water systems to make them more resilient, sustainable, equitable, and inclusive. The triennial report shows that between 2022 and 2024, CGIAR's science-based innovations reached over 20 million farmers, informed US \$3.3 billion in third-party investments, and helped prevent the extinction of 713 species, evidencing both the scale and depth of our global impact. In 2024, we also announced our most ambitious agenda to date: CGIAR's 2025–2030 Research Portfolio. Grounded in a multi-stakeholder, SDG-aligned vision, it brings together cutting-edge science, systems thinking, and strategic investment to tackle interconnected challenges, from climate shocks and environmental degradation to malnutrition, poverty, and inequality. With an anticipated investment of \$6–\$12 billion, the portfolio will support over 100 countries and 3,000 partners with scalable, data-driven solutions focused on smallholder

resilience, climate-smart innovations, and inclusive growth.

This year's Annual Report is focused on the topics of Poverty, Livelihood and Jobs. In 2024, we continued to drive progress toward our goal of lifting 500 million rural people out of extreme poverty.

Our research and innovation supported more inclusive agricultural policies, advanced access to finance and productive assets, and improved livelihood resilience for the most vulnerable. Initiatives such as Seeds for Needs, Excellence in Agronomy, and sustainable healthy diets programs implemented in several countries of the Global South delivered tangible gains in productivity and income for smallholder farmers. We also introduced a powerful new tool to analyze and model poverty dynamics across 170 countries, providing vital data to inform research prioritization and investment planning.

Between 2022 and 2024, 78 impact assessments confirmed the improvement of livelihoods of smallholder farmers in the global South via increases in their income and yields, with innovations in maize, aquaculture, and livestock significantly enhancing farmer outcomes in fragile and food-insecure settings.

CGIAR also remained at the heart of the global climate and biodiversity agenda in 2024, with active engagement in three major COPs. At COP28, our research informed the UAE Declaration on Sustainable Agriculture, Resilient Food Systems, and Climate Action, helping to elevate the interlinkages of food and water

systems to new levels by emphasizing the importance of transforming food systems to be more climate-resilient while ensuring water security and biodiversity protection.

At CBD COP16 in Colombia, CGIAR made significant contributions to advancing global biodiversity goals by supporting the operationalization of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, notably helping to establish the Cali Fund for fair benefit-sharing of digital sequence information.

In COP11, we contributed to discussions on sustainable livestock systems, integrated land restoration, drought resilience, and enabling policies.

As always, we express our deep gratitude to CGIAR's dedicated staff, global partners, funders, and community of stakeholders. Together, we are turning science into solutions, and solutions into shared progress, toward a food, nutrition, and climate secure future for all.

## **Dr. Ismahane Elouafi**

Executive Managing Director  
CGIAR



# Portfolio and Results

**Our 2024 Annual Report highlights the significant strides made by CGIAR in our ongoing mission to transform food, land, and water systems in a climate crisis. This year's report focuses on our work to support poverty reduction, livelihoods and jobs.**



Florence Ameza, a rice farmer stands in a field of dry rice. She was able to expand her farm from one to two acres with the help of a loan from the Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA).  
Credit: © Nyani Quarmyne/Panos Pictures

# Our Technical Reporting Portfolio

[Explore the Portfolio Narrative](#)



The 2024 CGIAR Portfolio Narrative is a cornerstone of CGIAR's Technical Reporting Arrangement. It offers a synthesis of Portfolio coherence, synergies, and collective progress across Initiatives, Impact Platforms, and Science Group Projects, which represent approximately 40 percent of CGIAR's Portfolio by dollar value. The report does not include Center-managed bilateral projects.

The Portfolio Narrative integrates data and insights to demonstrate how CGIAR has advanced research delivery, fostered partnerships, and addressed global challenges.

As 2024 marks the final year of this Portfolio and the 2022–2024 business cycle, the 2024 CGIAR Portfolio Narrative takes a dual approach to its analysis and reporting. Alongside highlighting key achievements, strategic shifts, and operational progress for 2024, the report also provides a cumulative overview of the three-year business cycle, showcasing both the immediate outcomes of 2024 and the broader trajectory of the Portfolio's contributions to CGIAR's strategic goals.

The report underscores the cumulative impact of CGIAR's work and sets the stage for the transition to the [2025–2030 Portfolio](#).

## Our Technical Reporting Framework

[Type 1 Initiative, Impact Platform, and SGP Reports](#): These annual reports present progress toward end-of-Initiative/Impact Platform/SGP outcomes and provide quality-assured results accessible via the CGIAR Results Dashboard.

[The Type 2 CGIAR Impacts in Agrifood Systems: Evidence and Learnings from 2022–2024](#): This report offers a high-level summary of CGIAR's contributions to its impact targets and Science Group outcomes, aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), for the three-year business cycle.

[The Type 3 CGIAR Portfolio Practice Change Report](#): Highlights operational and strategic progress in Portfolio performance and project coordination and innovation portfolio management.

## Key Results Stories

Stories from our work in support for poverty reduction, livelihoods and jobs.

1. [CGIAR-WFP collaboration strengthens humanitarian and resilience programming in Africa](#)
2. [Driving policy innovation for global impact](#)
3. [Digital literacy boosts uptake of digital innovations in Uganda](#)
4. [Strengthening capacity for food systems transformation in Viet Nam](#)
5. [Urochloa hybrid forages for improved livelihoods](#)
6. [Crop-livestock integration in Northern Bangladesh](#)

[Explore more CGIAR Key Results Stories](#)



Ethiopian coffee cherries lying to dry in the sun in a drying station on raised bamboo beds.

Credit: © 2023 Eric Isselee/Shutterstock

## Center Success Stories

Stories from CGIAR Research Centers in support of poverty reduction, livelihoods and jobs.



**AfricaRice**

[AICCRA: The transformative power of climate smart agriculture](#)



[With courage, they are an example of innovation in the field](#)



[Transformative Innovation for Dryland Agriculture](#)



[How training farmers to produce improved seeds helps mitigate food insecurity in conflict-affected Sudan](#)



[Unleashing the potential of Generation Z for food system transformation in Africa](#)



[How youth agripreneurs contribute to food security and wealth creation](#)



[Using social media to transform gender norms for women poultry farmers in Tanzania](#)



[Quality seed potato for improved yields: A win for smallholder farmers](#)



[New International Rice Genebank collection accelerates linking trait discovery with breeding](#)



[What is good for fish is good for people and planet](#)



[Tree tech: Growing a More Resilient Future](#)



[Climate-Smart Aquaculture in Zambia](#)



Colombian rice crop breeder  
inspects fields.  
Credit: © CGIAR

# Impact Areas

In collaboration with our partners, CGIAR advances the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by targeting five key Impact Areas. Each focuses on research and innovation aimed at achieving significant, enduring, and scalable impacts.



Farmers in Mahakanamulla, Sri Lanka, where the restoration of a tank cascade system is providing employment opportunities for villagers.

Credit: © CGIAR

Our Impact Report provides a comprehensive overview of CGIAR's long-term impact on global agricultural development and food systems transformation across our global research centers. The report marks the first assessment of CGIAR's outcomes and impacts across its global portfolio, drawn from a robust evidence base of 125 impact assessment studies and 1,108 outcome reports.

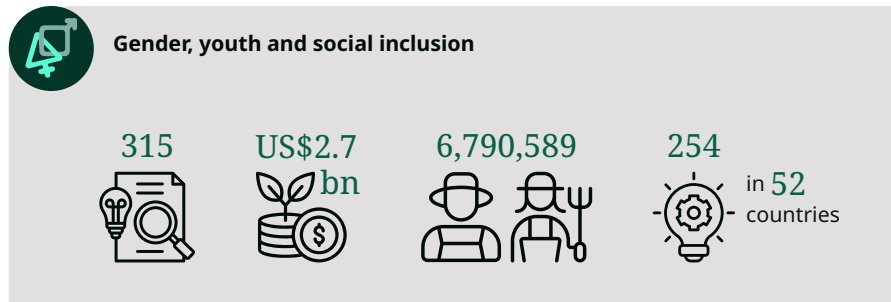
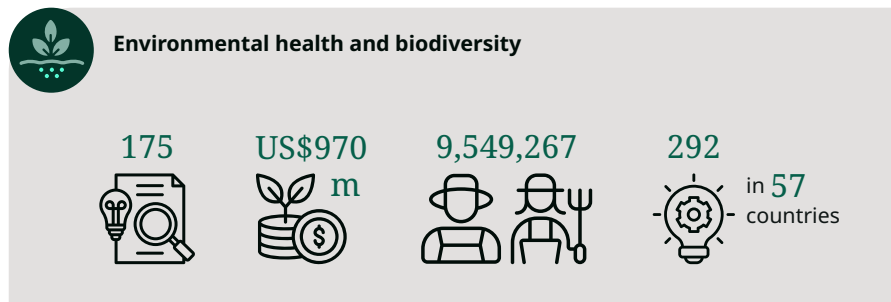
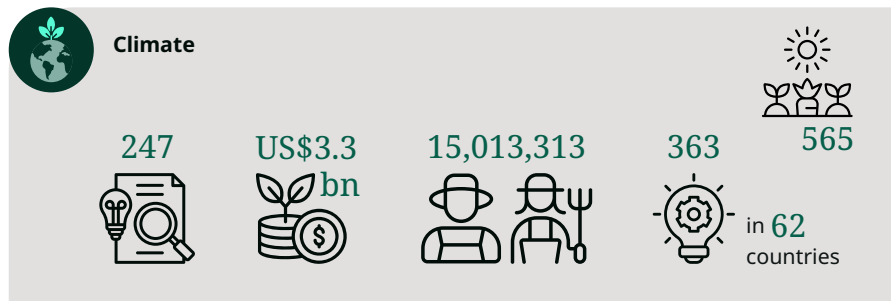
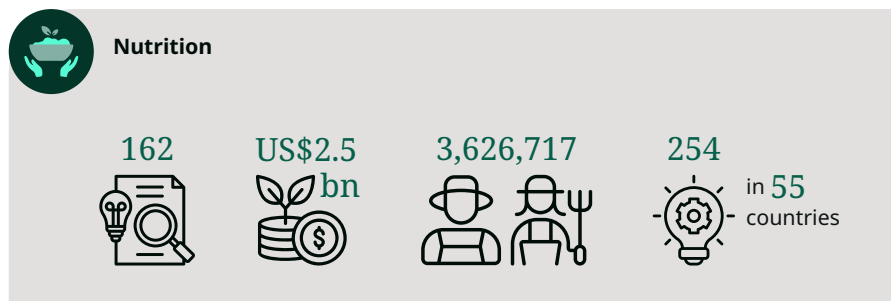
[View the Impact Report.](#)






The report highlights long-term studies which have found impressive returns on investment due to improved crop varieties and crop management. One study found that 19 CGIAR-supported crops and management generated US\$47 billion per year between 2016 and 2020. Another found that in 18 African countries, CGIAR-supported improved maize generated between US\$1.1 to 1.6 billion in a single year (2015). An evaluation of improved rice in Bangladesh found a return on investment of 115:1.

The report also highlights the huge reach of CGIAR's long-term innovations which have diffused into national agricultural systems. For example, 300 million people consumed biofortified foods worldwide (about 10 percent of the number of people who cannot afford an adequately nutritious diet). National surveys in three countries (Ethiopia, Bangladesh, and Viet Nam) found up to 25 million farming households were using CGIAR-supported technologies. That accounted for up to 87 percent of rural households in Ethiopia, 63 percent in Bangladesh, and 30 percent in Viet Nam.

### Impact by Numbers

Achievements by the 2022-24 portfolio of initiatives, platforms and science group projects



-  Policy changes drawing on CGIAR research
-  Third-party investment informed by CGIAR research
-  Farmers reached with CGIAR-informed innovations
-  Climate-resilient crop varieties developed with CGIAR support
-  CGIAR innovations in use



**CGIAR**

SCIENCE FOR A FOOD-SECURE FUTURE

# Partnerships and Regions

With more than 3,000 partners, collaboration is essential to CGIAR's approach. We work with small-scale farmers and associations, national universities and governments, global networks, and more. CGIAR engages across six key regions, aligning its strengths with regional needs.



Farmers driving an oxcart alongside the Irrawaddy river near Bagan, Myanmar.  
Credit: © Stephane Bidouze/Shutterstock

## Partnerships

CGIAR continues to build and grow its network of partners around the world, acknowledging that food, land, and water systems transformation, as well as meeting the SDGs by 2030, require an “all-hands-on-deck” approach. Through collaboration and cooperation, CGIAR and its partners are delivering solutions to address the pressing challenges of poverty, hunger, malnutrition, climate change, social injustice, and environmental degradation.

### Engagement Framework

In 2024, CGIAR reinforced its commitment to strengthening partnerships with a new Engagement Framework for Partnerships and Advocacy. This updated framework emphasizes leveraging collective resources and expertise and scaling research innovations through more strategic collaborations. It seeks to move beyond transactional relationships, ensuring partnerships are built on shared goals and contribute to greater impact on food, land, and water systems.

CGIAR also drafted a Partnership Strategy in 2024 to refine and systematize how it engages with partners. Developed in consultation with internal and external stakeholders, the strategy responds to recommendations from the High-Level Advisory Panel and addresses the lack of a unified, organization-wide framework for designing, managing, and evaluating partnerships. By adopting a more structured, strategic, and equitable approach, the strategy enhances the relevance and scalability of CGIAR’s research and innovation efforts.

Key shifts under the Partnership Strategy include moving from ad hoc partnerships to intentional, long-term collaborations, establishing clear success metrics and partnership health assessments, and fostering co-creation with a diverse range of partners, particularly from the global South. It also ensures that partnerships are better aligned with national agricultural priorities and deliver measurable value.

The draft strategy’s principles were piloted and tested across several Science Programs and Accelerators in 2024, with broader implementation anticipated following formal approval in 2025. To operationalize the strategy, CGIAR will follow a structured process encompassing partnership scoping, design, implementation, and evaluation. This approach aims to ensure CGIAR’s partnerships are not only effective but also drive sustained, transformative impact through continuous learning, adaptive management, and stronger institutional coordination.

A key component of CGIAR’s strengthened partnership approach is its Capacity Sharing for Development (CapSha) function, which enhances engagement with partners in the global South. CapSha marks a shift from traditional, one-way capacity development to a model rooted in mutual learning, co-development, and the exchange of evidence, innovations, and technologies across individual, institutional, and system levels. This approach fosters deeper collaboration and ensures that capacity strengthening is demand-driven and impactful. As part of this effort, CGIAR is piloting “Research Engagement” prototypes with national agricultural research systems (NARS) partners in Ethiopia, Rwanda, and Senegal. These pilots employ a learning-by-doing approach, enabling NARS partners to lead research efforts that align with national

priorities while contributing to jointly defined impact outcomes with CGIAR Research Initiatives and Science Programs. Set to conclude in 2025, these country pilots will generate critical insights to inform the scaling and institutionalization of CapSha’s approach.

With the rapidly evolving private-sector landscape, particularly in the global South, and the increasing role of the private sector in driving innovation and scaling solutions for smallholder farmers and agrifood systems, it is crucial that CGIAR stay attuned to trends in private sector agricultural research and development. To support this, in 2024, CGIAR partnered with the University of Minnesota’s GEMS (Genetics, Environment, Management, and Socioeconomics) Informatics Center, utilizing its advanced data analytics capabilities to compile firm-level agricultural research and development data around the globe.

The data products generated through this collaboration will enable CGIAR to identify new opportunities for partnerships with non-traditional private-sector players and to strengthen its approach to research and innovation scaling. These insights will enhance CGIAR’s ability to strategically engage with partners from the private sector moving forward.

[For more on CGIAR’s strategic partnerships, explore the Portfolio Narrative.](#)



## West and Central Africa

In 2024, the One CGIAR [Regional Directorate for West and Central Africa](#) (WCA) deepened its role as a catalyst for strategic collaboration and innovation across the region. With a strong focus on inclusive engagement, the Directorate convened a series of high-level dialogues and stakeholder-driven consultations that are shaping the future of agricultural research and development across WCA.

A major milestone was the launch of intensive Listening Sessions in three priority countries—Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Nigeria. These week-long, in-country dialogues, facilitated by national conveners, brought together a broad spectrum of actors, from farmers and private sector leaders to civil society, academia, and national research institutions. The consultations focused on evaluating CGIAR's contributions to national goals and identifying pathways to enhance its relevance and effectiveness.

These sessions resulted in:

- greater regional voice in CGIAR's research agenda and priority-setting.
- stronger alignment with national agricultural strategies.
- increased visibility and presence of CGIAR across WCA.
- valuable input to guide country-specific strategies and inform Portfolio 25 (2025–2030).

Building on this momentum, the Regional Directorate hosted the Second High-Level Meeting of African Ministers of Agriculture and Higher Education, with a focus on transforming rice-based systems—a critical priority for regional food sovereignty.

Discussions addressed Africa's growing food import bill and emphasized the need for:

- increased investment in agricultural R&D for climate-smart innovation
- strengthening private seed systems
- launching a Rice Value Chain Observatory for real-time market insights
- establishing a continental Plant Health Network to combat disease threats.

These strategic engagements are closely tied to poverty reduction, improved livelihoods, and job creation, particularly for youth and women. By aligning agricultural research with real-world challenges - such as access to quality inputs, climate resilience, and market opportunities - CGIAR is helping to unlock inclusive economic growth in rural communities. These efforts aim to strengthen smallholder resilience, boost productivity, and generate sustainable employment across the agricultural value chain.

“ 2024 was a turning point in how we engage with purpose, with partners, and with a clear path toward impact. Our commitment is to ensure that CGIAR's work not only reflects regional priorities but also empowers the people driving agricultural transformation on the ground.”

Baboucar Manneh, Director General AfricaRice and CGIAR Regional Director, West and Central Africa



Yam farm, Ghana  
Credit: © CGIAR



Woman selling coffee beans at a market in Bahir Dar, Ethiopia.

Credit: © 2018 Oscar Espinosa/Shutterstock

## East and Southern Africa

The [East and Southern Africa](#) (ESA) region is home to some of the world's rapidly expanding economies – and some of the most vulnerable communities due to frequent climate shocks and conflicts. Challenges like shorter and less predictable growing seasons hinder the region's ability to harness agriculture's full potential for sustained economic growth.

The CGIAR Regional Office for ESA continues to leverage partnerships formed within the region since the 1970s to improve food and nutrition security amid a climate crisis. This office oversees the largest number of projects, Initiatives, and funding within the CGIAR portfolio, spanning 19 countries from South Africa to Ethiopia.

Our work is closely tied to poverty reduction and improving livelihoods. In 2024, this included the [AgriTech4Kenya Innovation Challenge](#), which seeks to catalyze science-based early-stage solutions for Kenya's agricultural sector, and the second phase of an [agroecology project focused on smallholder livelihoods in central Tanzania](#).

“ Addressing poverty and threats to livelihoods brought about by climate change in East and Southern Africa means leveraging CGIAR's extensive network to ensure tangible impacts on the ground.”

Namukolo Covic, Regional Director, East and Southern Africa.

### Country Profile: Kenya

The agricultural landscape in Kenya is undergoing significant transformation, driven by national strategies such as the [Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda](#), community-driven projects, a vibrant private sector and a research and innovation system aimed at enhancing food security, resilience, and sustainable practices. For the 2022–2024 Portfolio period, a key focus was on the interconnectedness of agricultural practices, climate change adaptation, and socioeconomic factors affecting smallholder farmers and pastoral communities.

Examples of CGIAR's Research Initiatives in Kenya that contributed to the impact area of **Poverty Reduction, Livelihoods and Jobs** include:

#### Community Engagement and Empowerment

- A [Citizen Science](#) initiative empowered farmers in Nandi and Bomet counties to collect data on livestock production, contributing to improved dairy management practices.
- A [Black Soldier Fly Farming](#) initiative is a community-led project converting organic waste into fertilizer and livestock feed, enhancing soil health and farm productivity.
- CGIAR Initiatives on Low Emissions Food Systems, Agroecology and Nature Positive Solutions each facilitated community driven institutional models to develop context specific solutions to enhancing sustainability and resilience.

### Innovative Financial Solutions

- The integration of insurance-linked credit products showed promise in improving access to finance, particularly for women-headed households that face additional barriers.
- Index-based Livestock Insurance for pastoralists was boosted by a World Bank grant to scale its use in Kenya and other countries in the horn of Africa.
- The popular television [Shamba Shape Up](#) program is also promoting agricultural education and financial literacy among farmers, addressing various challenges through community engagement and technology.

### Productive Agricultural Practices

- The [Mbili Mbili intercropping system](#) promotes intercropping of legumes and cereals, optimizing yields and providing safety nets against crop loss, yielding up to 37 percent higher returns than traditional practices.

For more on what CGIAR is doing in Kenya, explore the [Portfolio Narrative](#).



## Central and West Asia and North Africa

In 2024, CGIAR continued to advance its mission to transform dryland agriculture in [Central and West Asia and North Africa \(CWANA\)](#) through renewed focus, robust science, and strategic collaboration. The [IWMI Strategy 2024-2030: Research and Innovation for Water Security](#) will guide work on critical water issues across the region, whilst the launch of the [MENA Regional Climate Security Hub](#) will drive the development and expansion of the climate, peace, and security agenda for the region.

Innovations in agri-food systems must be grounded in local realities to achieve lasting impact. In Morocco, ICARDA demonstrated how improved wheat seed, combined with targeted irrigation practices, can deliver significant yield gains. In Egypt, a new light-weight, low-cost [Raised Bed Machine](#) that requires less pulling power can achieve a 30 percent increase in yields while reducing water use and input costs.

Due to difficult security conditions, ICARDA took decisive steps to safeguard genetic resources by relocating critical seed collections from the genebank in Lebanon to Morocco and Svalbard.

The year ended on a high note with strong regional engagement at [COP29](#) in Baku, Azerbaijan and [UNCCD COP16](#) in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The [CGIAR Global Strategy for Resilient Drylands \(GRSD\)](#) was launched in Riyadh as a roadmap that draws on CGIAR's five decades of dryland experience to lay out a clear path towards a climate-resilient, food-secure, prosperous, and peaceful future for dryland communities worldwide.

None of this progress would be possible without the unwavering commitment of our partners, donors, and fellow colleagues across the CGIAR system. Together, we are laying the foundation for a more resilient future for the millions who call CWANA home.

“ To growing global challenges that demand coordinated scientific responses, we combine the best CGIAR science, regional knowledge, and local partnerships to deliver real-world solutions to protect livelihoods, preserve ecosystems, and ensure resilience of the world’s iconic crops.”

Aly Abousabaa, CGIAR Regional Director, CWANA and ICARDA Director General



MoA at ICARDA INRA.  
Credit: © ICARDA/CGIAR

## Latin America and the Caribbean

In 2024, CGIAR deepened its engagement across [Latin America and the Caribbean](#) (LAC), working alongside regional partners to align agricultural research and innovation with shared development priorities. The year was marked by steady progress in translating dialogue into collaboration, and strategies into coordinated action—advancing efforts toward more sustainable, resilient, and inclusive food systems.

A key milestone was the signing of a [Memorandum of Understanding \(MoU\) between CGIAR and Brazil's Embrapa](#) marking a new chapter of strategic cooperation across the region. The agreement outlines collaboration in areas such as digital innovation, genebank management, climate adaptation, nutrition, and gender inclusion aimed at transforming agrifood systems to be more sustainable, inclusive, and resilient.

CGIAR also played an active role in the XX Meeting of the Iberoamerican INIA Network in Uruguay. Together with partners from across the region, CGIAR researchers emphasized the urgency of tackling plant health threats exacerbated by climate change and trade, especially for smallholder farmers. With more than 70 plant health projects developed since 2022 in partnership with over 40 institutions, CGIAR's contribution to food security and biodiversity protection was central to the discussions.

At COP16 in Colombia, CGIAR and the Montpellier Process highlighted how inclusive science-policy dialogue can advance biodiversity and strengthen sustainable food systems, both locally and globally.

Listening Sessions held in Colombia, Mexico, Peru, and Ecuador provided a platform for diverse voices from

policy-makers to research institutions to share their expectations from CGIAR. These insights are informing the 2025-2030 Research Portfolio in the region, ensuring it remains demand-driven and deeply connected to people and their lived realities.

CGIAR joined regional leaders at the G20-Meeting of Agriculture Chief Scientists (MACS) Food Loss and Waste Workshop in Brasilia, hosted by Embrapa. The event reaffirmed the importance of regional collaboration in tackling food system inefficiencies, with a focus on scaling practical solutions to meet SDG 12.3.

As CGIAR looks ahead, strengthened alliances with national partners such as Instituto Interamericano de Cooperación para la Agricultura (IICA), Fontagro, Instituto Nacional de Tecnología Agropecuaria (INTA) in Argentina, Instituto Nacional de Innovación Agraria (INIA) in Peru, Corporación Colombiana de Investigación Agropecuaria (AGROSAVIA) in Colombia, and the Instituto de Ciencia y Tecnología Agrícolas (ICTA) in Guatemala continue to be the foundation for delivering science that responds to local needs and contributes to global food security.

“ Collaboration is the engine that powers agricultural innovation in our region. At CGIAR, we are committed to building research partnerships that address local challenges and deliver global impact.”

Joaquin Lozano, CGIAR Regional Director, Latin America and the Caribbean.



Farmer packing cabbage crop.  
Credit: © 2021 SALMONNEGRO-STOCK/Shutterstock

## South Asia

Over the past three years, CGIAR has strengthened collaboration across [South Asia](#) through a demand-responsive approach ensuring research and innovation align with regional priorities and deliver real-world impact. In 2024, this approach translated into high-impact partnerships with diverse sectors, including governments, research institutions, NGOs, and the private sector.

In India, the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare hosted a workshop for the second consecutive year, where CGIAR centers displayed scalable technologies. [The 9th CGIAR Advisory Committee meeting in Bangladesh](#) convened leaders from the National Agricultural Research System to review progress and align on shared priorities. These events reinforce CGIAR's ability to respond to national needs swiftly and with agility.

To ensure research remains responsive to local contexts, CGIAR conducted Listening Sessions in India, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. These sessions facilitated open dialogue with stakeholders and contributed to shaping a research portfolio that reflects national and regional objectives.

Aligned with this year's theme on poverty reduction, improved livelihoods, and job creation, several CGIAR initiatives across South Asia contributed to strengthening rural economies. In Nepal, Mixed Farming Systems initiative trained over 100 smallholder farmers with 77 percent of them women, in business management. CGIAR Executive Managing Director Dr. Ismahane Elouafi joined a [Tribal Women Millet Conclave](#) in India highlighting how research, capacity-building, and value chain development are transforming traditional practices into sustainable livelihoods and resilient local food systems.

“ Partnerships are central to how CGIAR delivers impact. Over the past three years, we have worked to align research more closely with regional priorities through a demand-responsive approach. In 2024, this vision took shape through Listening Sessions, development of India Strategy, expanded regional dialogues, and focused community-level initiatives shaping an inclusive and scalable research portfolio grounded in the real-world challenges facing South Asia's food systems.”

Temina Lalani-Shariff, CGIAR Regional Director, South Asia

## Country Profile: Bangladesh

Between 2022 and 2024, Bangladesh was — and will continue to be — one of the most active countries in CGIAR's global research and scaling Portfolio. Its long-standing partnership with CGIAR, along with its strategic importance in global agricultural and food systems development, has stemmed from its intensive production systems, strong economic growth, and potential for innovation. At the same time, its vulnerability to climate extremes and increasing national interest in policy and technological reform have reinforced the need for sustained engagement.

Between 2022 and 2024, CGIAR collaborated with governmental ministries, national research institutes, NGOs, private-sector actors, and multilateral organizations to co-create innovations, strengthen evidence-informed policymaking, and scale solutions that addressed food system challenges.

Examples of CGIAR's work in Bangladesh that contributed to the impact area of **Poverty Reduction, Livelihoods and Jobs** include:

- CGIAR's Research Initiative on [Transforming Agrifood Systems in South Asia \(TAFSSA\)](#) collaborated with the [Cereal Systems Initiative for South Asia \(CSISA\)](#) to support the uptake of climate-smart agricultural innovations, scale-appropriate farm mechanization, and climate information services. Together, these efforts supported over [1 million farmers](#) and underpinned the transition to improved practices on 9,742 hectares across [Bangladesh and Nepal](#).
- The CGIAR Research Initiative on [Mixed Farming Systems](#) strengthened farm-level resilience and income stability by supporting the integration of crops and livestock. It provided [farm inputs and training to over 10,000 households](#) aimed at improving farm-level nutrient recycling, fodder production, and animal health.

For more on what [CGIAR is doing in Bangladesh](#), [explore the Portfolio Narrative](#).



Winnowing wheat grains from the chaff using traditional methods, India.  
Credit: © Shutterstock

## Southeast Asia and Pacific

In 2024, CGIAR deepened its engagement across [Southeast Asia and the Pacific](#) by aligning scientific research with national priorities and strengthening partnerships across the region. From policy dialogues and digital innovations to farmer training and cross-sectoral collaboration, efforts across the region delivered tangible progress in food systems transformation.

In Thailand, a renewed partnership between the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives and IRRI focused on advancing research, capacity-building, and institutional alignment. A delegation from the Thailand Rice Department also visited IRRI Headquarters in the Philippines reaffirming a shared commitment to sustainable rice production. In Vietnam, [IRRI and Vinaseed partnered co-developed climate-resilient rice varieties](#), while the launch of [RiceMoRe](#), a digital monitoring system, marked a major step forward in agricultural data transformation.

Vietnam's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development collaborated with CGIAR through the Asian Mega-Deltas and SHiFT Initiatives to [co-design and publish nutrition-sensitive agriculture guidelines](#), reaching 12 provinces in the Mekong Delta under the Poverty Reduction Program. Nearly 1,200 livestock farmers in Mai Son District received training in sustainable animal production practices through the SAPLING Initiative. In the Philippines, the Vendor Business

School under the Resilient Cities Initiative launched in Quezon City empowered small food vendors, many of them women, with business and food safety training.

Cambodia hosted a [National Dialogue on Integrated Decentralized Food System Governance](#), organized by WorldFish, IWMI, and national partners, to explore new pathways for strengthening food security and nutrition. The country also co-hosted the Southeast Asia School Meals Coalition Summit, reinforcing commitments to scaling up school nutrition programs.

These efforts reflect growing alignment between national goals and CGIAR's mission to deliver science that addresses food security, climate adaptation, and equity.

“ In Southeast Asia, inclusive, demand-driven partnerships are helping shape more resilient food systems. Our research is grounded in collaboration—with governments and communities—to deliver meaningful, lasting impact.”

Temina Lalani-Shariff, CGIAR Regional Director, South Asia and Southeast Asia





Farmers working on field near Hanoi, Viet Nam.  
Credit: © C. de Bode/CGIAR

## Country Profile: Solomon Islands

CGIAR's engagement in Solomon Islands is led by WorldFish, which has maintained a continuous legal and operational presence in the country since 1985. Over this four-decade partnership, WorldFish has evolved from a mariculture-focused technical program into a leading research and implementation partner for aquatic and island food systems transformation.

There are 57 Small Island Developing States in the world, which are home to 65 million people. In 2024, Solomon Islands was confirmed as a core country in CGIAR's newly launched Food Frontiers and Security Program, which seeks to transform island food systems across the world. This development marked a significant elevation of CGIAR's profile in Solomon Islands, positioning the country as a Pacific regional leader in research for development in island food systems.

Examples of CGIAR's work in the Solomon Islands that contributed to the impact area of **Poverty Reduction, Livelihoods and Jobs** include:

### **Youth Engagement and Livelihood Innovation**

CGIAR-supported efforts created new pathways for young people to engage in fisheries-related enterprise, leadership, and technical careers. Training programs were designed with input from youth councils and local facilitators, blending technical instruction with business development, leadership, and communication. Young interns also contributed to monitoring, storytelling, and co-designing workshops, strengthening links between research and implementation.

### **The Nusatupe Island Food System Innovation Hub**

A national platform for co-design, experimentation, and learning related to island food systems. Located in Western Province, the Hub hosts demonstration sites for aquaponics, coral gardening, seaweed farming, and nutrition-sensitive gardening. It also serves as a venue for community workshops, provincial exchange events, and youth internships. The Hub is envisioned as a long-term asset for national research and learning.

# Digital Transformation

**CGIAR integrates cutting-edge digital solutions into our scientific innovations. And we use digital technologies to enable our business units and research programs. In 2024, we made substantial advances in deploying digital solutions to help us tackle global challenges.**



Drone in farm use.  
Credit: © Shutterstock

## Delivering Impact Through Innovation

CGIAR has significantly expanded its use of digital and data innovations to enhance agricultural research and improve the resilience of global food systems. The [Digital Innovation Initiative \(DI\)](#) conceptualized, developed, tested, and scaled cutting edge digital innovations and frameworks for an inclusive and equitable transformation of AFS.

Other initiatives also tested and scaled digital innovations that contributed to CGIAR's digital and data modernization roadmap. These tools, from artificial intelligence and geospatial platforms to decision-support systems, are now integral to CGIAR's delivery model, accelerating impact, improving efficiency, and expanding reach to farmers, policymakers, and development partners.

### AI for Climate-Smart Agriculture and Breeding

Under the [ClimBeR Initiative](#) in 2024, machine learning models delivered localized climate advisories to over 100,000 farmers in Kenya and Peru by 2024, helping them make informed decisions on planting and risk management. Meanwhile, AI-powered genomic prediction tools, championed by the [Accelerated Breeding Initiative](#), have reduced breeding cycles for critical crops like maize and wheat—improving resilience to drought and heat stress across Africa and South Asia.

## Advancing Digital Transformation at CGIAR

### Building a Digital-First Organization

Alongside developing and testing digital innovations for transformation of its research and the broader agri-food systems, CGIAR has also invested in its internal digital transformation, laying the groundwork for a connected, efficient, and data-driven organization. Between 2022 and 2024, CGIAR moved from isolated digital efforts to a coordinated, enterprise-wide approach anchored in shared infrastructure and strategy.

CGIAR has made significant strides in implementing CGIAR360, a cutting-edge data platform powered by Microsoft Fabric. This platform is designed to revolutionize the way CGIAR manages and utilizes data. It offers an enterprise-ready, end-to-end analytics platform that unifies data movement, processing, ingestion, transformation, real-time event routing, and report building.

### Digital and Technology Architecture (DTA): A Strategic Leap

A major milestone in 2024 was to coalesce CGIAR's various digital and data efforts to the **Digital Transformation Accelerator (DTA)**, which is part of the new 2025-30 portfolio. The DTA design and vision embeds several building blocks which are critical to CGIAR's digital strategy, including the need to establish an AI Hub for CGIAR.

### AI for Science Hub in Abu Dhabi: A New Frontier

The DTA launched the **AI Hub** in Abu Dhabi, a center of excellence focused on developing and scaling artificial intelligence applications in agriculture and food systems. The hub is recruiting experts in applied machine learning, natural language processing, and digital ethics, and will serve as a bridge between global AI innovation and local agricultural challenges.

### Strategic AI Planning and Staff Upskilling

In parallel, the draft **AI Strategy** was presented to the Investment Prospectus Board (IPB) in 2024, outlining a vision for responsible AI integration across research and operations. As part of this effort, CGIAR also piloted **Copilot**, an internal generative AI tool that supports staff with content generation, data synthesis, and administrative tasks. Training sessions reached over 400 staff across CGIAR, highlighting strong demand for digital productivity tools and upskilling opportunities.

### Embedding Digital for Impact

From AI-driven breeding and farmer advisories to internal platforms and global partnerships, digital tools are now central to CGIAR's ability to deliver results faster, smarter, and at a greater scale. With the DTA in place, the AI Hub launched, and a growing ecosystem of digital partnerships and products, CGIAR is well-positioned to lead the next chapter of digitally enabled transformation in agriculture.

# Operations

**Our operations teams are committed to ensuring CGIAR is a value-driven, high-performing organization. In 2024, CGIAR made progress ensuring we are an inclusive and enabling place to work, a transparent financial manager, and an effective manager of digital and data assets.**



Farmer on his way to deliver water to farming families in Bekaa, Lebanon.  
Credit: © Lien Arits/IWMI/CGIAR

## Finance

The year 2024 marks a significant evolution in CGIAR’s governance and strategic direction. Building upon the foundation laid in prior years, the collaboration of the CGIAR Centers has transitioned into an Integrated Partnership. This development represents a pivotal shift toward a more cohesive and strategic approach that increases CGIAR’s ability to deliver on its critical mission.

A major milestone in this transition was the establishment of the Integrated Partnership Board (IPB or Board) on 1 October 2024. The Board is tasked with approving CGIAR’s vision, strategic direction, partnership strategy, and governance, overseeing their implementation, and ensuring financial and programmatic performance.

In 2024, CGIAR revenue and expenses reflect the aggregated revenue of the 13 Centers who signed the [Integration Framework Agreement](#) and compared with 2023 information. The 2023 revenue, expenses and net results for 2023 was restated at the high level (to include 13 Centers) for comparable information presentation and analysis in this financial highlight. Within the CGIAR System (CGIAR Centers, System Organization and System Council advisory bodies), Total Revenue in 2024 was \$1.050 million, a 16 percent increase from the previous year (\$902 million). System-level results increased by 48 percent from a surplus of \$6.4 million in 2023 to a net surplus of \$9.4 million in 2024.

## Financial highlights

### Funding channels

Investments in CGIAR may be delivered through the multi-funder CGIAR Trust Fund and/or directly to specific projects at CGIAR Research Centers (outside the Fund), which is called Bilateral Funding. Funding for

the CGIAR Trust Fund is channeled through two funding Windows (W1, W3) with increasing levels of Funder support. A third Window (W2) was discontinued in 2022 as part of One CGIAR reforms.

- **Window 3 (W3)** – Project investments: funding allocated by Funders individually to projects that are defined by the Funders (with partners) and aligned with System-wide investments.
- **Window 2 (W2)** – Not available between 2022 and 2024 and reinstated in 2025.
- **Window 1 (W1)** – Funders may use Window 1 in two ways: a) by contributing unearmarked funding to support the entire CGIAR Portfolio, with allocations prioritized by the System Council or b) by designating their contribution to specific CGIAR Initiatives or Impact Area Platforms, while still operating within the pooled funding mechanism.

In 2024, CGIAR recognized revenue of \$1050 million, of which W1 accounted for 34 percent (same level from 2023), W3 for 25 percent (an increase of 2 percent compared to 2023), Bilaterals for 37 percent (decrease of 2 percent from 2023), and Other Income for 5 percent (same level in restated 2023).

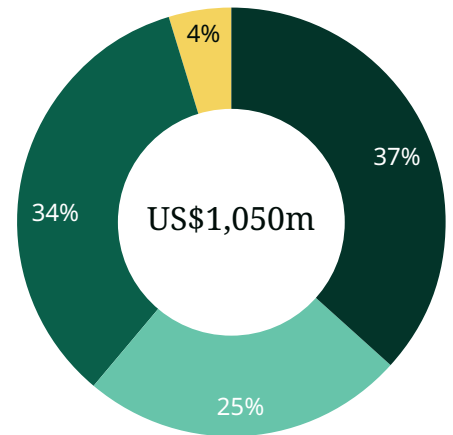
## Resources

For access to more detailed information on funding and expenditure by Center, Program, or Funder, visit the [CGIAR Financial Report dashboards](#).

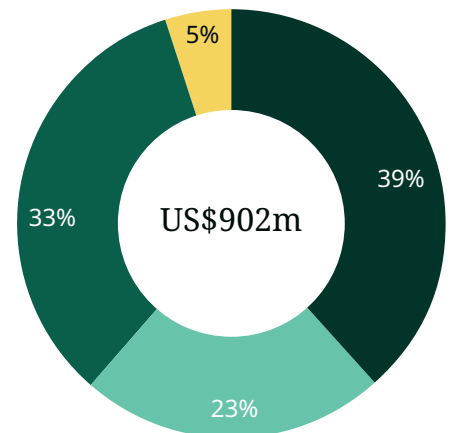
See a comparison of 2024 and 2023 funding in Figure 1.

**Figure 1. CGIAR revenue by source of funding**

### 2024 Revenue



### Restated 2023 Revenue



■ Bilateral ■ CGIAR Fund W3  
■ CGIAR Fund W1-2 ■ Other Income

Further analysis of System revenue since 2011 by funding source is shown in Figure 2.

**Figure 2. CGIAR System revenue by source of funding, 2011–2024**

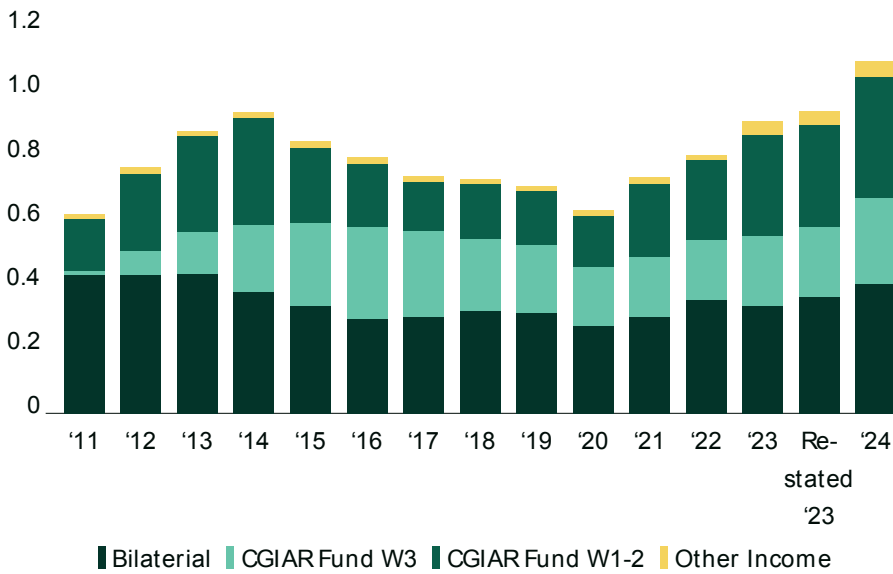
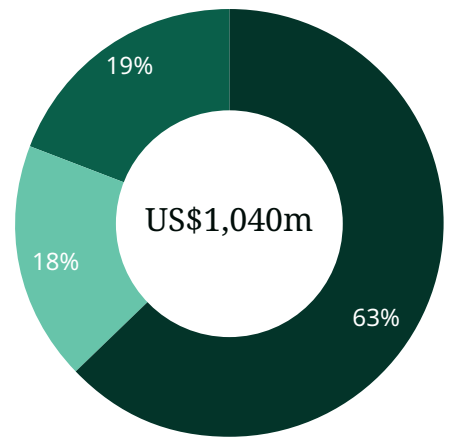


Figure 3 shows the main categories of expenditure. Overall, expenses in 2024 increased by 16 percent to \$1,040 million from \$895 million in 2023. In 2024, 81 percent of expenditure was on research and collaboration costs, and 19 percent was on general, administrative, and System-level costs.

**Figure 3. Expenditure by main category, 2024 and 2023**

**2024 Expense**



**Restated 2023 Expense**

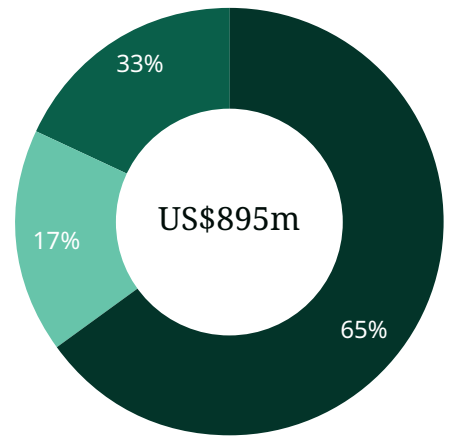
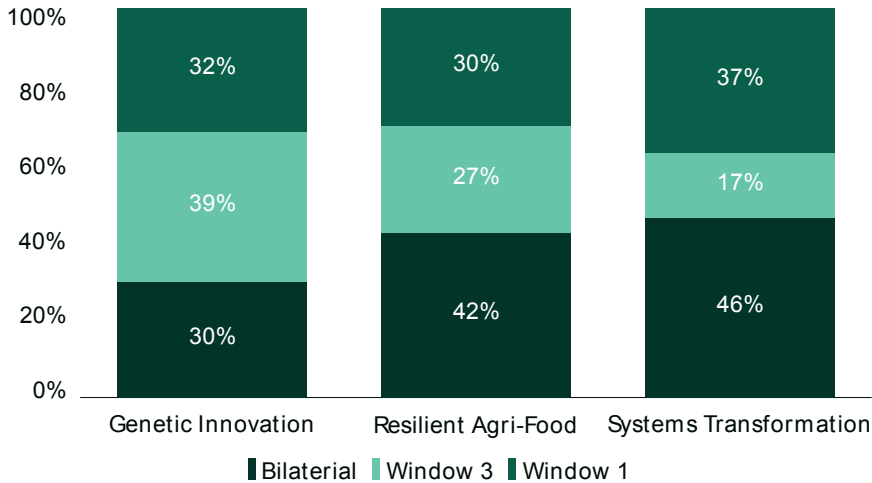


Figure 4 shows expenditure by CGIAR Science Groups/Action Areas by funding channels.

Systems Transformation had the highest W1 spending at 37 percent followed by Genetic Innovation with 32 percent and Resilient Agri-Food Systems with 30 percent.

Beginning from 2022, CGIAR dedicated W1 program funding entirely for Portfolio Initiatives and Impact Area Platforms.

**Figure 4. Funding by Science Group and funding channel**



## People and Culture

At CGIAR, we actively seek to create and sustain high-performing workplaces that are inclusive and enabling. The People and Culture community works closely with our stakeholders to deliver and continuously improve the quality of services through harmonization and digitalization of People and Culture practices. Important foundational work that supports shared approaches to managing talent across CGIAR continued throughout the period.

### 2024 Highlights

A new System Organization **Organizational Structure**, in line with one of CGIAR leadership's three overarching goals -- Ensuring CGIAR is Fit-for-Purpose and Operationally Efficient -- was implemented, enabling the Integrated Partnership to deepen collaboration and deliver on CGIAR's 2030 Research &

Innovation Strategy. This involved simplifying leadership structures, consolidating and enhancing the approach to External Engagement, Business Enablement, and other business support functions in the first instance. A second phase of staffing the Science Programs and Accelerators, under the aegis of the Chief Scientist, was launched in late 2024.

Continued **Workforce Data Collection and Analysis** tracks representation in CGIAR's global workplaces, to help CGIAR better reflect the communities we serve. Ongoing data management will facilitate measurement of both immediate and long-term impact, enabling the organization to guide and refine strategies.

**Inclusive Leadership and Respectful Workplace** training programs were scaled throughout 2024. 400+ leaders and 1200+ staff from 13 Centers across 5 global locations benefitted from in-person interventions

promoting awareness to role model inclusive and respectful behaviors. 96 percent of participants were likely to apply lessons learned. In total, 20 percent of CGIAR's workforce\* was trained over 2023 and 2024 (\*based on GDI data at 31/12/2023).

2024 saw significant progress in the implementation of the **2023-2024 Action Plan** led by CGIAR's Gender equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (GDI) Function. 69 of 70 work products included in the Action Plan were delivered, building on existing foundations while advancing implementation across CGIAR.

CGIAR's first in-depth all-staff **Workforce Engagement Survey** was conducted. The survey was made available in 6 languages to better reach our global employee population. 85 percent of respondents would recommend CGIAR as a good place to work. The top two reasons people love working at CGIAR? Our mission and our diversity.



The WorldFish Nusatupe research station.  
Credit: © WorldFish/CGIAR

## Innovation Portfolio Management

CGIAR scientists and research managers must prioritize the most impactful use of scarce resources, focusing on investments in science, innovation, and scaling that are most likely to benefit farmers and other clients. Not all great ideas will “change the game,” so we need to know which solutions work, respond to real demand, and address the bottlenecks that may inhibit the widespread use and impact of solutions.

Innovation portfolio management responds to two success factors for CGIAR's mission:

1. Provide intelligence on CGIAR's progress on innovation development and scaling for impact.
2. Grow the organizational impact culture for better innovation and scaling performance.

Despite its importance, systematic innovation portfolio management remains rare in the public sector. An independent study showed that CGIAR is “best of the public-sector class” when it comes to managing its innovation portfolio — and this is recognized by other organizations as well as by funders.

“CGIAR's efforts to mainstream scaling put it at the cutting edge ... compared to other research and innovation organizations, and development organizations generally.”

Global Scaling Community of Practice

### Enablers for Integrated Portfolios

A key ingredient of effective innovation portfolio management is fostering impact culture, capacity, and community engagement. Strengthening these areas ensures that scaling efforts are embedded within organizational strategies, allowing innovations to move beyond research to real-world impact.

A flagship event in this effort is CGIAR's annual [Scaling Week](#), which was held for the third time in December 2024 at ILRI's campus in Nairobi, Kenya. This event brought together some 180 participants, including scaling experts from 11 CGIAR Centers, the CGIAR System Office, and public and private partners spanning bilateral and multilateral development organizations (e.g. GIZ and the World Bank Group), research institutions and universities (e.g. Wageningen University and Research, Jomo Kenyatta University, University of California at Davis), funders (e.g. New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade), farmer associations (e.g. Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa), and United Nations agencies (e.g. FAO, WFP, IFDC ). The diversity of perspectives reinforced the importance of collaborative scaling and acknowledged that achieving impact requires inclusive, cross-sectoral efforts.

Unlike traditional conferences, Scaling Week 2024 fostered a dynamic, co-created environment where participants could shape discussions, share insights, and explore new approaches for scaling agrifood innovations. The event emphasized knowledge sharing, hands-on workshops, and peer-to-peer learning, strengthening both CGIAR's internal impact culture as well as that of partners and funders. Beyond the annual

Scaling Week, CGIAR continues to invest in strengthening innovation scaling expertise within CGIAR and its partners, connecting global innovation and scaling experts (e.g. via a [Scaling Directory](#)) and providing space for scaling practitioners to discuss best practices, share resources, and foster collaboration (e.g. via a [CGIAR Scaling Community on LinkedIn](#) , which has nearly 700 members and is expanding rapidly).

### SNAP Powerful Sense-Making — in a SNAP!

The proliferation of agrifood system information, reports, and data over the last several decades, with their demonstrable and potential interconnections, can be overwhelming to scientists and non-scientists alike. A new CGIAR tool powered by state-of-the-art AI techniques makes it easy to gather, explore, and draw insights from CGIAR data across the organization's many reports, journal articles, conference papers, datasets, presentations, and other knowledge resources.

The tool, called “SNAP” (Semantic Natural Language Processing Aggregator Platform), helps donors, policymakers, and other stakeholders to navigate CGIAR's extensive data and to leverage the full value of CGIAR's extensive knowledge base.

### What SNAP Does

Using the same database of reported results that appear on the CGIAR Results Dashboard, SNAP can organize the 16,500 CGIAR quality-assured results reported since 2022 into meaningful themes, clusters, and summaries. SNAP users type in keywords and the tool gathers and displays all relevant results — for each resource it can provide a description, references, PDF links, contact persons, and other key information.

## Who Should Use SNAP

SNAP is especially useful to users needing to conduct flexible topic searches by using keywords, to quickly gather topic-specific insights, and to generate tailored ready-to-use summaries.

SNAP can help communications staff swiftly identify relevant resources and contacts of people while also quickly generating summaries that can be used for speeches, donor briefs, and media content. It can help technical reporters synthesize large datasets and to organize results into coherent narratives. It can provide impact assessors with insightful qualitative summaries and help research leaders navigate CGIAR's complex research landscape. And it can generate actionable policy recommendations or high-level outcome summaries for funders and policymakers.

Narratives generated through SNAP were integrated into this CGIAR 2024 Portfolio Narrative, streamlining development, reducing preparation time, and enriching the report with contextual insights that complemented the quantitative data. Upon further refinements, SNAP will be folded into the [CGIAR Results Dashboard](#). It is also envisaged that in future SNAP will incorporate CGIAR's main document repository, [CGSpace](#).

## Refining SNAP's Beta Version

More user feedback will help to further improve SNAP's usability and accuracy. You can [try the tool out yourself](#). If you do, consider sending your feedback to: [performanceandresults@cgiar.org](mailto:performanceandresults@cgiar.org)

**For more on strategic enablers for agile and integrated Portfolios, explore the Portfolio Narrative.**



A programme supporting dairy farmers and vendors is teaching skills to help them continue to sell their milk in the face of increasingly frequent extreme weather events.  
Credit: © CGIAR



# Oversight and Assurance

**CGIAR's Advisory Services, Internal Audit, and Ethics & Business Conduct teams are crucial in ensuring that best practices are maintained within our organization and in our external collaborations.**



Fisheries in Cambodia are essential for the economy and food security, supporting millions, especially in rural areas. Fishing is a major income source for people living in these areas, contributing significantly to their livelihoods.

Credit: © CGIAR

## Advisory Services

The Independent Advisory and Evaluation Service (IAES) provides operational support for two independent advisory bodies, the Independent Science for Development Council (ISDC) and the Standing Panel on Impact Assessment (SPIA). Further, IAES implements CGIAR's multi-year, [independent evaluation plan](#) as approved by the System Council (SC). From 2022 to 2024, the IAES workstreams worked collaboratively to deliver strategic advice, independent impact evidence, and evaluative insights in support of CGIAR's evolving research and innovation portfolio, with 2024 marking a year of culmination and forward-looking planning.

In 2024, ISDC focused on [reviewing CGIAR's 2025–2030 Research and Innovation Portfolio](#). ISDC conducted an external review of 13 proposals and the Portfolio Narrative, drawing on the expertise of 39 reviewers. ISDC also concluded its three-year focus on inclusive innovation, which inspired a [Science Forum](#) series on inclusive innovation and a special issue comprising 18 papers in [Agricultural Systems](#). These achievements build on ISDC's earlier work in 2022 and 2023, including the development of a [Comparative Advantage](#) (CA) framework and a [Megatrends](#) project that examined long-term drivers shaping the CGIAR Portfolio.

SPIA completed its [2019–2024 workplan](#) and made significant progress on its newly adopted [2023–2030 plan](#), guided by a revised operational model focused on deeper country engagement and [causal impact assessment](#). In 2024, SPIA selected reach studies across 16 countries through a competitive process and initiated three pilot impact studies set to begin in 2025. Over 20 new assessment concepts were scoped with CGIAR researchers,

### Independent Scientific Advice on Inclusive Innovation

Since 2021, ISDC has focused on inclusive innovation and what that means to CGIAR. The work started with a brief that led to a literature review, which inspired a Science Forum series on inclusive innovation and a special issue in [Agricultural Systems](#) concluding in 2024. Many young researchers, from inside and outside CGIAR, were among the authors of the special issue's 18 papers.

The work sought to stimulate novel, thoughtful actions by CGIAR leaders and researchers that embed inclusive practices and behaviors in agri-food systems research. By embracing incremental innovation within CGIAR institutional processes and partnerships, CGIAR can more effectively contribute to transformative innovation of food, land, and water systems in a climate crisis.

expanding SPIA's pipeline of future work. Results from the previous cycle were disseminated at major events, including [SPIA Fest](#) and the [System Council Side Event](#), amplifying uptake of evidence across the CGIAR system. These 2024 efforts reflect a strong trajectory from prior years, which included country-level data collection and country studies in [Ethiopia](#), [Vietnam](#), [Uganda](#) and [Bangladesh](#), as well as the [2023 guidelines on remote sensing](#) for impact assessment to strengthen the methods base for the SPIA approach.

IAES's Evaluation Function finalized evaluations of the three [CGIAR Science Groups](#) in 2024 ([synthesis](#)), also completing [Evaluability](#)

[Assessments for several Regional Integrated Initiatives](#). Following the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) 2019 assessment of CGIAR, the [Management Response System](#) to independent evaluations was reviewed and benchmarked, supporting institutional learning. During the business cycle, the [Evaluation Guidelines](#) pertaining to Quality of Research for Development were released and tested. These efforts built on a foundation established in 2022 and 2023, during which platform external evaluations ([Genebank Platform](#) and [Gender Platform](#)) were completed, and the Evaluation Function operationalized the [CGIAR Evaluation Framework and Policy](#). Throughout the three-year period, the Evaluation Function has been strengthening engagement with Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) practitioners to foster knowledge uptake and collaborative practice.

### Process and Performance Evaluation: Independently Evaluating 2022–24 Portfolio Investment

Independent evaluations of CGIAR's three [Science Groups](#), Systems Transformation, Resilient Agrifood Systems, and Genetic Innovation, provided real-time feedback, bolstered accountability, and were delivered in time for the CGIAR 2025–2030 portfolio development and inception period. By conducting process and performance evaluations, CGIAR can more effectively gather evaluative evidence to inform future programs and plans while also supporting accountability processes.



Pepper plantation in greenhouse,  
North Sinai, Egypt.  
Credit: © Essam Elhersh/Shutterstock



IAES enabled cross-functional support across ISDC, SPIA, and the Evaluation Function. A common platform for communications enabled the accessible, relevant, and timely delivery of independent scientific advice and evaluative and impact evidence within CGIAR and to all stakeholders. A refreshed expert roster, comprising 185 professionals (43 percent women), strengthens IAES's capacity for high-quality independent review and evaluation. IAES met its stewardship KPI for the three-year cycle. These efforts have contributed to the development of a strong evidence base, supported portfolio decisions, and helped to position CGIAR for the next phase of its research and innovation Portfolio.

#### **SPIA Country Studies: Evidence of CGIAR's Reach**

SPIA has been working to improve the accuracy and efficiency of data collection related to adoption of CGIAR innovations and on key CGIAR outcomes. The goal is to integrate new data collection protocols into large-scale surveys regularly implemented by national systems. In the 2022-2024 business cycle, this work was completed in four priority countries. The [SPIA country-level approach](#) to documenting the adoption and diffusion of agricultural innovations linked to CGIAR research produced key insights:

In [Ethiopia](#), despite conflict, droughts, a food security crisis, and the COVID-19 pandemic, **CGIAR-related innovations continued reaching more than 5M households**. The most significant increases in adoption were seen in drought-tolerant maize, crossbred poultry, and forage grasses.

In [Uganda](#), several agricultural innovations are reaching farmers on a large scale, albeit at very different rates, despite challenging institutional and market conditions. **Widely diffused varieties include drought-tolerant maize, disease-resistant groundnut, and to a lesser extent, disease-resistant cassava**. Adoption levels are more limited for biofortified varieties and new disease-resistant banana cultivars.

In [Vietnam](#), SPIA estimates **CGIAR reached close to 2 million (or about 25 percent of rice-growing households) with IRRI-related rice varieties**. More than one-half of cassava-growing households were growing CIAT-related cultivars. In fisheries, SPIA estimates that GIFT-derived tilapia reached only about 27,000 households. Conversely, DNA fingerprinting revealed **GIFT-derived strains in 96 percent of the sampled fingerlings from commercial hatcheries**, raising interesting implications for scaling strategies.

From 2025, SPIA is advancing and expanding its country reach studies, building on ongoing research into the dynamics of agricultural innovation. The next phase will deepen insights into how agricultural technologies scale and contribute to development.

## Internal Audit

CGIAR's internal audit team aims to provide independent and objective assurance and advisory services. Our goal is to improve organizational objectives through a risk-based approach and act as an integrated, digitally enabled, innovative, and trusted partner supporting CGIAR institutions to deliver impact.

In 2024, the CGIAR began integrating its Internal Audit function, aiming for full operation by 2025. This project will establish a function to develop and implement a strategy that aligns with the strategic objectives of the Integrated Partnership Board and the System Council's expectations.

By 2025, this integration will be operationalized through risk-based leadership methodologies and collaboration with assurance providers. The goal is to create a dynamic plan focusing on opportunities and risks where internal audit is the appropriate assurance mechanism, ensuring risk coverage across the partnership and centers. High-caliber resources, supported by digital solutions, Quality Assurance capability and expert hubs, will help achieve these objectives, going beyond compliance to support the organization's direction.

### 2024 Highlights

CGIAR Internal Audit issued 67 reports encompassing three types of engagements: Advisory, Assurance, and Investigations.

#### Seven Cross-Cutting Advisory and Assurance Engagements

- **Environmental, Social, and Governance Agenda:** A focused engagement on activities within CGIAR to identify best practices for system-wide application.
- **Open Access AI:** Analyzing AI modalities within CGIAR and enhancing governance and oversight mechanisms.
- **Lessons learned:** Providing valuable insights for the development of the new portfolio.
- **GIZ project management:** A brief assessment of key compliance issues identified for GIZ funding with recommendations for improvement.
- **Ethical Business Conduct (EBC):** Comprehensive assessment of EBC frameworks at CGIAR centers to pinpoint areas for enhancement.
- **Experimental Stock:** The management of experimental stock at the Center level.

#### Sixty Center-Specific Engagements

These services initially evaluate center-specific risks identified through uniform, risk-based audit planning. In 2024, the principal areas considered by center teams included:

- **EBC:** Reviewing centers' management of ethical responsibilities, contributing to collaborative engagement across centers.
- **Research Activities:** Evaluating research methodologies and project management practices.
- **Field Offices:** Assessing operational processes such as cash, asset, and HR management.

Additional engagements involve project audits, human resources, IT, funding, and risk assessments. The objective is to harmonize internal audit functions to enhance consistency, share lessons learned, prioritize tasks, and promote inter-center cooperation.

Five investigations were conducted by Internal Audit in response to specific management requests. These investigations are often assessments to better understand reported incidents, and when necessary, they are handed over to the office of Ethics and Business Conduct.

Additionally, we carried out two follow-up reviews on the implementation of agreed-upon management actions in response to internal audit recommendations. This was done to track progress in addressing governance, risk management, and internal control gaps. The audit results were reported to both the CGIAR Common Audit Finance and Risk Committee and the Audit Oversight Committee. We observed a reduction in the number of outstanding items due to increased attention and collaboration with Centers to ensure timely implementation.

Furthermore, we have contributed to several projects such as supporting the design of the CGIAR internal audit function, collaborating with other assurance providers, and assisting various initiatives within CGIAR. In partnership with the risk management function, we are currently evaluating quality assurance processes.

The audit function is committed to adhering to the Global Internal Audit standards from the Institute of Internal Auditors. This commitment includes the establishment of a Quality Assurance framework.

As of the end of 2024, the CGIAR Internal Audit staff comprised 21 members, with a gender distribution of 12 males (57 percent) and 9 females (43 percent). They operated within seven teams across ten countries. The team's diverse composition brought together various professional qualifications, including Certified Internal Auditor (CIA), Certification in Risk Management Assurance (CRMA), Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA), Certified Information Systems Manager (CISM), Certified Data Privacy Solutions Engineer (CDPSE), Certified Public Accountant (CPA), Certified Management Accountant (CMA), and Certified Business Data Analyst.

By the end of 2024, nine job vacancies in the Internal Audit Function will provide opportunities to enhance and expand the team. This initiative will support the new integrated CGIAR model, ensuring robust representation at the Center level and a cohesive approach to Internal Audit activities. Furthermore, collaboration with other assurance providers will facilitate the establishment of a combined assurance model as outlined in the Risks and Oversight Plan. This effort also includes the digitalization of processes to enhance efficiency and effectiveness.

The function operates as an integrated team, providing both center-specific and cross-CGIAR engagement. To achieve this, we have developed an integrated methodology, quality assurance programs, and collaboration mechanisms between teams.



Farmer using technology to check bananas at an export packing house in Mexico.  
Credit: © 2016 Ksenia Ragozina/Shutterstock



Collection of variety natural dry organic cereal food ingredient in sack bags.  
Credit: ©2019 Nopparat Promtha/Shutterstock

## Ethics and Business Conduct

Almost four years since its establishment, the Office of Ethics and Business Conduct (EBC) aims to foster an ethical culture within CGIAR, grounded in core values such as Integrity and Sustainability, and governed by principles of independence and professionalism. It continues to be a trusted resource providing confidential advice across all levels of the CGIAR workforce. In 2024, a Risk and Oversight Plan (ROP) was approved by the CGIAR Integrated Partnership Board (IPB) and CGIAR's System Council. It is anticipated that the ROP will have an impact on the mandate of the office of EBC in 2025. With great effort, EBC in its current structure will, until the new IPB – EBC function is set up, ensure continuity of the services it renders under the five areas of intervention described below.

### 1. Advisory

In 2024, EBC addressed over 120 independent requests for advice. The most significant areas of concern were HR-related matters and 'pre-complaint' investigations advice, followed by Conflicts of Interest. At the request of the Governance and Risk team, EBC undertook the assessment process of the Ethics and Conflict of Interest (COI) Declarations by candidates of the Independent Partnership Board (IPB) and the new Auditing, Finance and Risk Committee of the IPB (IPB-AFRC). EBC drafted the COI Declaration forms, undertook confidential reviews, and provided tailored recommendations and advice for each candidate. This represented an extension of EBC's core mandate of providing advice on COI issues, as EBC would not usually play an active role in Board and Committee selection processes. This highlighted the value of EBC's growing expertise in this area and the positive impact of collaboration and cooperation.

### 2. Policy development and input

EBC developed the second phase of EBC policies related to: i) Conflict of Interest; ii) Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption; and iii) Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism. EBC was also part of a working group formed to revise several sections of the System Organization (SO) PPM. EBC continued to provide input on various policies, procedures and guidelines both at the SO and CGIAR centers level.

### 3. Training and Outreach

In April 2024, EBC held a three-day training session specifically on investigations, supporting colleagues who have either been tasked with undertaking investigative activities in the past, or who may be tasked in the future. Panel members were drawn from the Conference of International Investigators (CII) - a networking group for investigators, where CGIAR is a member. The training was a great success in achieving its purposes – to share knowledge, promote consistency and encourage collaboration.

### 4. Investigations

EBC noted a steady increase in the number of incidents reported to EBC in 2024 (via Lighthouse, its generic Ethics mailbox or directly via its members). Most complaints continue to focus on interpersonal misconduct against senior staff, while very few allegations of financial and/or research related irregularities were reported to EBC.

### 5. Research Ethics

Following a CGAR competitive internal recruitment process undertaken in 2024, two candidates from the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), were selected to become Research Ethics Senior Officers (RESOs). They will join the team in January 2025 on a temporary (six months) and part-time basis and will each spend 20 percent of their time on this mandate.

The new **Integrated Partnership EBC Function** (IP-EBC) will come into practice in 2025 and continue to carry out EBC's existing mandates with a focus on ensuring consistency across Centers and the SO.



Family labor sustains paddy farming in Thakurgaon, Bangladesh.  
Credit: © Tanmoy Bhaduri/IWMI

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