

Culture & Engagement Action Plan Progress: June to Dec 2025

The following provides an update on progress to initiatives cited in the Culture & Engagement (C&E) Action Plan, since the System Council briefing in June 2025.

The scope of this work has evolved from a focus on gender, diversity, and inclusion (GDI) to a broader Culture & Engagement mandate.

This evolution reflects the importance of strengthening culture initiatives across the CGIAR System, while maintaining gender as a core area of focus within the action plan.



Culture Change Initiatives

Progress continues across Centers and culture-related initiatives:

- **Alliance Framework:**
The framework for the Alliance was approved by the SMT and presented to the Board and Executive Committee. An implementation roadmap, including short- and long-term indicators—has been agreed and is in progress.
- **IWMI Culture Workshop:**
A culture workshop facilitated by the C&E team was conducted for IWMI senior leadership. Outcomes are currently being implemented by IWMI P&C leaders.
- **Africa Rice Workshop:**
A culture change workshop is in the planning phase and scheduled for January 2026.



Mental Health and Well-Being

Throughout 2025, **21 well-being sessions** were delivered, covering a wide range of topics and featuring multiple external speakers.

Participation Summary:

Category	Number	% Increase from 2024	% Increase from 2023
Registrations	4,800 staff	17%	153%
Total participants	2,163 staff	10%	115%
Unique participants	1,151 staff	12.3%	128%

Mental Health First Aid Training:

Four global training courses were delivered. As of July 2025, **16 colleagues** have successfully completed the internationally recognized Mental Health First Aid course and are now equipped to support colleagues facing mental health challenges.

Training covered topics such as stress, burnout, anxiety, depression, eating disorders, and crisis response, supported by real-life case discussions and interactive exercises.



Workforce Engagement Survey

The **CGIAR 2025 Workforce Engagement Survey** ran from 10 September to 24 October 2025 and received responses from nearly **5,700 employees**. (59% participation).

The overall engagement score was **82%**, exceeding the benchmark of 80% observed across similar international organizations. Detailed analysis is underway to identify strengths and areas for improvement. (*Overview to be presented on December 11, 2025.*)



Culture & Engagement Progress Index

The C&E Progress Index is a new tracking tool designed to provide Centers with actionable insights aligned with the **2025–27 Action Plan for Advancing Culture and Engagement**. It will measure:

- Adoption of C&E activities
- Impact through improvements in engagement data (e.g., leadership, well-being)
- Workforce changes once relevant KPIs (e.g., women in research) are established.

To date, consultations have been completed with **five Centers** (CIP, IWMI, ICRISAT, WorldFish, IRRI) and the SO. Feedback has been positive, confirming the tool's value. With the Engagement Survey data now available, the Progress Index is expected to launch **early Q1 2026**.



CGIAR Workforce Data Collection

In January 2026, C&E will launch its 7th system-wide collection of workforce data, an exercise which began in 2020.

This work continues to be the **sole source of data on CGIAR's entire workforce**.

In addition to representation data, collection will include data on 2025 separations/turnover and promotions, as it has in the past. The data collection and its review are done manually, which takes several months to complete.

Results and analysis will be available by the end of **Q2 2026**.



Facilities Survey

On 19 August 2025, the C&E team met with the Facilities Knowledge Community to discuss inclusive workplace requirements.

A survey was subsequently developed to assess the accessibility and inclusivity of CGIAR Center headquarters for:

- Persons with disabilities
- Breastfeeding mothers
- Staff with cultural or religious needs
- Non-binary staff
- Other inclusion considerations

All **13 Centers** responded. ILRI also submitted an additional survey covering its Addis Ababa campus.

Survey results were shared with the Facilities Knowledge Community on 18 November and highlighted good practices that will support shared learning across Centers. Results will be shared with the P&C Functional Area Committee shortly.



Inclusive Recruitment Toolkit Update

The **Inclusive Recruitment Toolkit** (originally published in 2021) is being updated to ensure continued relevance and alignment with current systemwide work on job description and competency standardization. Updated research and resources are being incorporated, and revised guidance will be issued by **end of Q1 2026**.



Talent Management

Performance Management

- Pilot schemes are underway in **three Centers** (IWMI, IRRI, WorldFish) to align performance approaches.

- A Performance Management Working Group with representation from multiple Centers is reviewing performance practices.

Competency Framework & Job Evaluation

- Alignment work is in progress for **four Centers** (IWMI, IRRI, WorldFish, IITA) and the **System Organization** with consultation underway with the Alliance and CIMMYT. The focus is on core, leadership, and functional competencies to enhance talent development pathways and this alignment brings significant benefits:
- An aligned competency framework across Centers enables a **systematic approach** to talent development—supporting the employee journey, **from hire to retire**.
- This alignment strengthens **culture and engagement**, ensuring that our values are reflected in day-to-day actions, leadership behaviors, and organizational processes.
- By embedding competencies into our people systems, we build a **resilient, high-performing, and inclusive culture**—a key enabler of CGIAR’s impact.



Developing CGIAR Leadership

LEAD TOGETHER: Leadership Development Program

- 10-month structured learning journey focusing on entrepreneurship, collaboration, business acumen, and leadership behaviors.
- New module added: *Leading Partnership for Impact*

System Leaders (CG12–13)	Pilot Cohort Participants	Women	Men
362	124	56 (45%)	68 (55%)

Planning is underway for the 2026 cohort, targeting **125 additional leaders** and aiming for **50/50 gender balance**.

Pilot Management Training Program

- **952 System Middle Managers (CG10–11)**
- Planning and design are underway for a middle manager training program, including a Train-the-Trainer model to support sustainability.



CGIAR E Learning Modules

Launches include:

- **Respectful Workplace:** Pilot completed with all Center P&C Leaders; ready for go-live end of November 2025.
- **Inclusive Leadership:** Pilot began in November, with rollout to all Centers targeted by end of December 2025.

All training modules will be housed in the new system-wide learning hub, **GROW@CGIAR**, which is preparing for launch.

For further reference

CGIAR Workforce Dashboard:

<https://www.cgiar.org/how-we-work/accountability/culture-and-engagement/dashboards/cgiarworkforce/>

<p>Document category: Working document of the System Council. There is no restriction on the circulation of this document</p>
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