Managing Agricultural Research for Learning and Outcomes (MARLO)

INTRODUCTION TO MARLO
Updated Apr 2023

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 WHAT IS MARLO-AICCRA

Welcome to **MARLO** - **M**anaging **A**gricultural **R**esearch for **L**earning and **O**utcomes. MARLO is an online platform designed to assist Platforms in planning, monitoring, reporting on, and evaluating their research portfolios and their contributions to outcomes.

MARLO was the result of joint work by several CRPs to improve a tool developed by CCAFS in Phase 1 and adapt it to the needs of the CRPs in Phase 2.

1.2 WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document is an introductory guide for MARLO users. It is not intended as a detailed user guide. The roles and responsibilities of the different MARLO users vary by Clusters and are not covered in this document. Contact your Management Unit for more detailed guidance as needed.

1.3 KEY MARLO-AICCRA CONCEPTS

MARLO is designed to monitor and evaluate the platform portfolio at the cluster and overall project level.

What is a Cluster?

A cluster is defined as the group of AICCRA main activities led by each AICCRA Country Leader (Ghana, Mali, Senegal, Ethiopia, Kenya and Zambia), AICCRA Regional Leaders (Western Africa and Eastern & Southern Africa), and AICCRA Thematic leaders (Theme 1, Theme 2, Theme 3, and Theme 4). In each cluster, participants are involved as leaders, coordinators and collaborators with specific budget allocations for each AICCRA main activity with a set of deliverables and contributions towards our performance indicators.

Each cluster is funded through a fund which in the system is called a **funding source**. The deliverables of a cluster are associated with one or several funding source(s).

In MARLO, all clusters may indicate their own contributions to each of the predefined **performance indicators**.

The **deliverables** of a cluster (i.e., tangible, specific products to be delivered in a certain year, such as a publication or a dataset) are mapped to **performance indicators** (i.e., AICCRA partners and stakeholders in the project area are increasingly accessing enhanced climate information services and /or validated climate-smart agriculture technologies in IDA-eligible countries in Africa). Our performance indicators are supposed to be reached in 2023, which is the end of the AICCRA project. For each indicator, a set of intermediate targets are defined for years between 2021 and 2023 to reflect progress.

Note: The performance indicators are set up by the admins of MARLO-AICCRA. This process happened before information can be entered at cluster level and is not covered in this document.

MARLO-AICCRA is used at the planning stage, mid-year progress, and ends-year reporting stage. Planning (AWPB) usually occurs in the period November-January and consists in entering updated information about cluster plans for the coming year. Reporting will happen twice a year and consists in entering updated information about achievements. The processes of updating MARLO-AICCRA at every stage are referred to as **planning, progress, and reporting cycles.**

2. USING MARLO-AICCRA

2.1 HOW TO LOG IN

Go to MARLO: https://aiccra.marlo.cgiar.org/

Note: MARLO-AICCRA works best with Chrome and Firefox; please use one of these browsers if possible.

Enter your CGIAR credentials (full CGIAR e-mail address and password). If you do not have a CGIAR email address, login credentials will be sent to you.
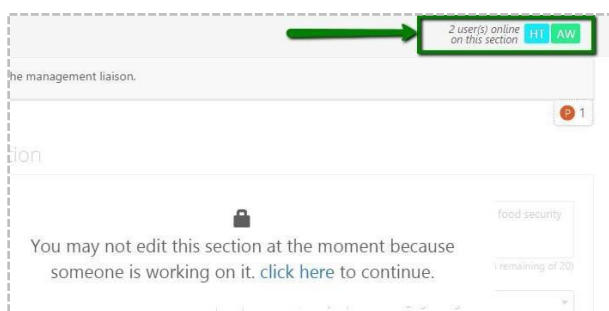

2.2 IMPORTANT TIPS

Saving changes

Click the 'Save' button before moving to another section.

Multiple users working simultaneously:

Only one user at a time can edit a given section in MARLO. When someone else is editing a section, a message appears, and the initials of the current users appear at the top of the screen.

2.3 ENTERING AND VIEWING INFORMATION ABOUT CLUSTERS

Editing a cluster

Editing a cluster occurs during the planning cycle, mid-year report and the end-year reporting cycle. During the planning cycle, more details about what the cluster plans to accomplish each year are added. During the reporting cycles, updates are provided about the actual cluster accomplishments.

To find a cluster, you can type part of the cluster name in the search field. In addition, the table of clusters can be sorted (click on the header of the column you want to use for sorting).

The status of the cluster can be:
Pre-setting: basic information about the cluster's description, partners, and budget should be entered. This happens when a new cluster is created for the first time.
Ready for CL: more detailed information about the cluster's location, contribution to performance indicators, deliverables, and in some cases partners, should be entered - usually by the cluster leader.
Submitted: the cluster was successfully submitted and is no longer enabled to be edited. This status will be accessible during the end-of-year report.
Open the cluster by clicking on its title or ID.

Cluster Menu
AICCRA Research Cluster

General Information	
Description	✅
Partners	✅
Locations	✅

Indicators	
Contribution to Performance Indicators	⚪
OICRs & MELIAs	✅

Outputs	
Deliverables	✅
Innovations	✅

Activities	
Activities	✅

Budget	
Budget by Partner	✅

At the planning stage, after the cluster has been pre-set, more detailed information needs to be provided about the cluster's **location, contribution performance indicators, and deliverables** (see Cluster Menu on the left-hand side). **Additional partners** that were not added during pre-setting can also be entered at this stage. Usually, these steps are performed by the cluster leader.

Tips for working on clusters:

✓ It is recommended to fill in cluster sections in the order that they appear in the left-hand side Menu.
✓ Mandatory fields are indicated by red asterisks (*).
✓ When all mandatory fields in a section have been completed, a green checkmark appears next to this section in the left-hand side Menu.
✓ You can check which sections are still incomplete by clicking on the 'Check' button at the bottom of the left Menu.
✓ Upon clicking 'Save', a yellow flag should appear next to the missing fields.
✓ When working on a cluster, the cluster acronym appears in the top right corner of the screen. Hover your mouse over the cluster acronym to see the full cluster title.

C102086 - West Africa regional engagement, coordination and support to developing regional delivery models for climate services and climate-smart agriculture technologies and practices

To enter the contribution to the components per cluster it must be done from the left menu in the Contribution to Performance Indicators section and complete the information.

Cluster Menu
AICCRA Research Cluster

General Information	
Description	✅
Partners	✅
Locations	✅

Indicators	
Contribution to Performance Indicators	✅
OICRs & MELIAs	✅

Outputs	
Deliverables	✅
Innovations	✅

Activities	
Activities	⚪

Budget	
Budget by Partner	✅

In this section you will find all the information related to the performance indicator, the intermediate targets, and the expected values that you will accomplish each year compared with the overall target. Also, you will find "additional questions to key performance indicators", this will appear in the mid-year and end-year reporting cycle.

Additional questions to Key Performance Indicator

Reporting | **Mid-year**

This information is only for reference and is not editable

1
1. Name the likely advisory platforms/hubs to be reported this year end

Narrative:
No target set for this year

2
2. Name the likely advisory platforms/hubs to be reported in future years, if known

Narrative:
Africa Climate Action Portal (ACAP) will be launched, to support CS-CSA integration with an inclusive focus.

3
3. Indicate how gender and social inclusion issues are being dealt with

Narrative:
To be developped

4
4. If there is expected to be failure to achieve target this year end, give reason

Narrative:
N/A

For the activities sections please validate that all the main activities that you have with budget allocation are mapped to the cluster and relate all the deliverables that are contributing to each activity.

2.4 ENTERING AND VIEWING INFORMATION ABOUT SUMMARIES

Click on 'Summaries' in the top menu for access to various types of standard summaries (in pdf or Excel format) about the information entered in MARLO.

2.5 ENTERING AND VIEWING INFORMATION ABOUT BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE

Click on "BI" in the top menu for access to access to the Business Intelligence dashboards to see all the graphics that we have designed for you.
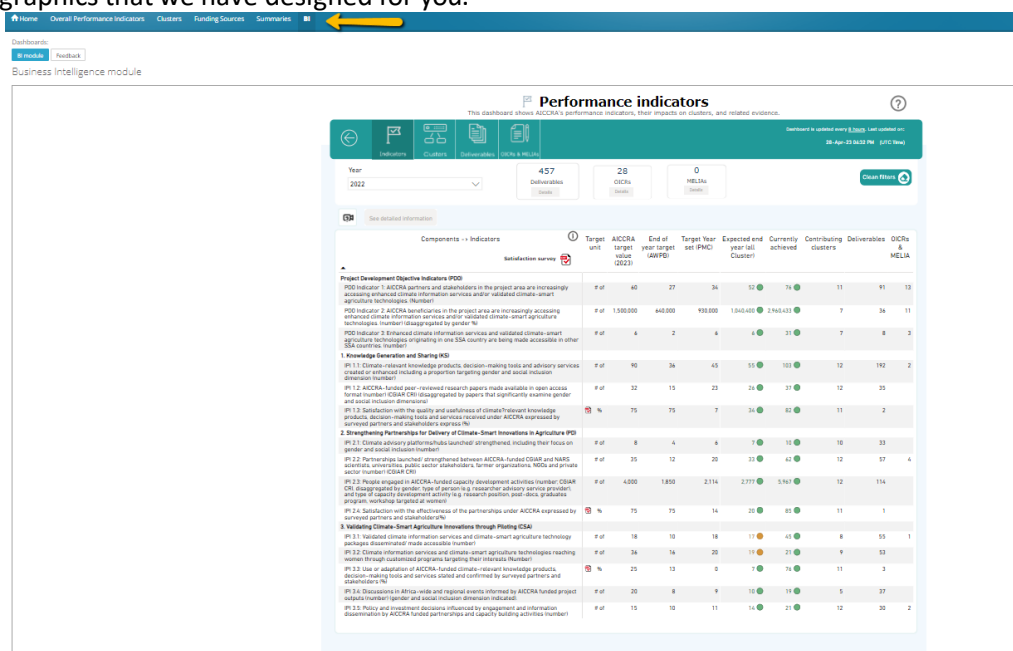
3. SUPPORT FOR MARLO-AICCRA USERS

Use the online support chat which is located at the bottom left of the screen. The chat is monitored by the technical team based at the Alliance Bioversity-CIAT in Colombia during business hours. Messages sent by users through the chat outside business hours (Colombia time) will be answered via email.
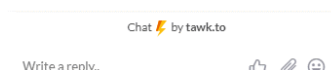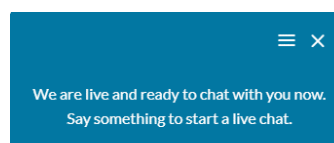
Or contact us through **MARLOSupport@cgiar.org** all emails sent to MARLO Support will automatically generate a confirmation reply with a ticket ID number.