



**Agenda Item 12**

For Information

Issued: 21 May 2025

## Gender Diversity & Inclusion now reframed to Culture & Engagement

### Purpose

The following set of materials are provided as a standing item on GDI in CGIAR's workplaces to each System Council meeting:

- A pre-read presentation, setting out an update on the progress of GDI, and the rationale to its evolution to Culture & Engagement. It highlights key strategic plans for 2025 – 2027.
- Annex 1 - GDI Infographic 2024
- Annex 2 - Culture & Engagement Action Plan 2025 – 2027, outlining activities and key performance indicators (KPIs) for advancing culture and engagement in CGIAR.

### Action Requested

The System Council is requested to review the documents provided to inform discussion during agenda item 12 of the SC22 meeting.

**Document category:** Working document of the System Council.

There is no restriction on the circulation of this document

Prepared by: Lavanya Srinagesh, Practice Leader, Culture & Engagement



Agenda Item  
**Document SC22-12**  
**For Information**  
*(action point SC/M18/AP1)*  
Issued: 21 May 2025



# Gender Diversity & Inclusion now reframed to Culture & Engagement

## Purpose:

Pre read: This is an update on the progress of GDI, and the rationale to its evolution to Culture & Engagement. It highlights key strategic plans for 2025 – 2027.

Prepared by: Lavanya Shrinagesh



# CGIAR Leadership continue their active advocacy, firmly support the implementation of Culture & Engagement (GDI) across CGIAR

- The EMD visibly supports Culture & Engagement and has obtained GLT approval for the 2025 – 2027 Action plan. She is the executive sponsor and directed focus to developing a strong, aligned and inclusive overarching culture.
- The GLT pledged its commitment to integration and embedment of both behavioral and structural alignment to build stronger synergies and inclusive workplaces, in a recent GLT meeting.
- Co-developed with Centers, and designed to build on existing foundations while advancing implementation across CGIAR. This plan moves us from raising awareness to delivering measurable impact, through four strategic priorities aligned with **Inclusive Leadership, Workplace Culture, Representation, and Accountability**. Key Areas include:

## Culture Alignment

## Core and Leadership Competencies

## Inclusive Recruitment

## Leadership Development

## Representation

Align on common standards and practices to foster collaboration, engagement, identity, a growth mindset, and innovation. Prioritize autonomy and empower employees to make decisions, fostering a culture of trust and innovation..

Co – develop a unified competency framework to be integrated into performance management, job descriptions, and organizational standards, customized within each Center’s systems and methodologies.

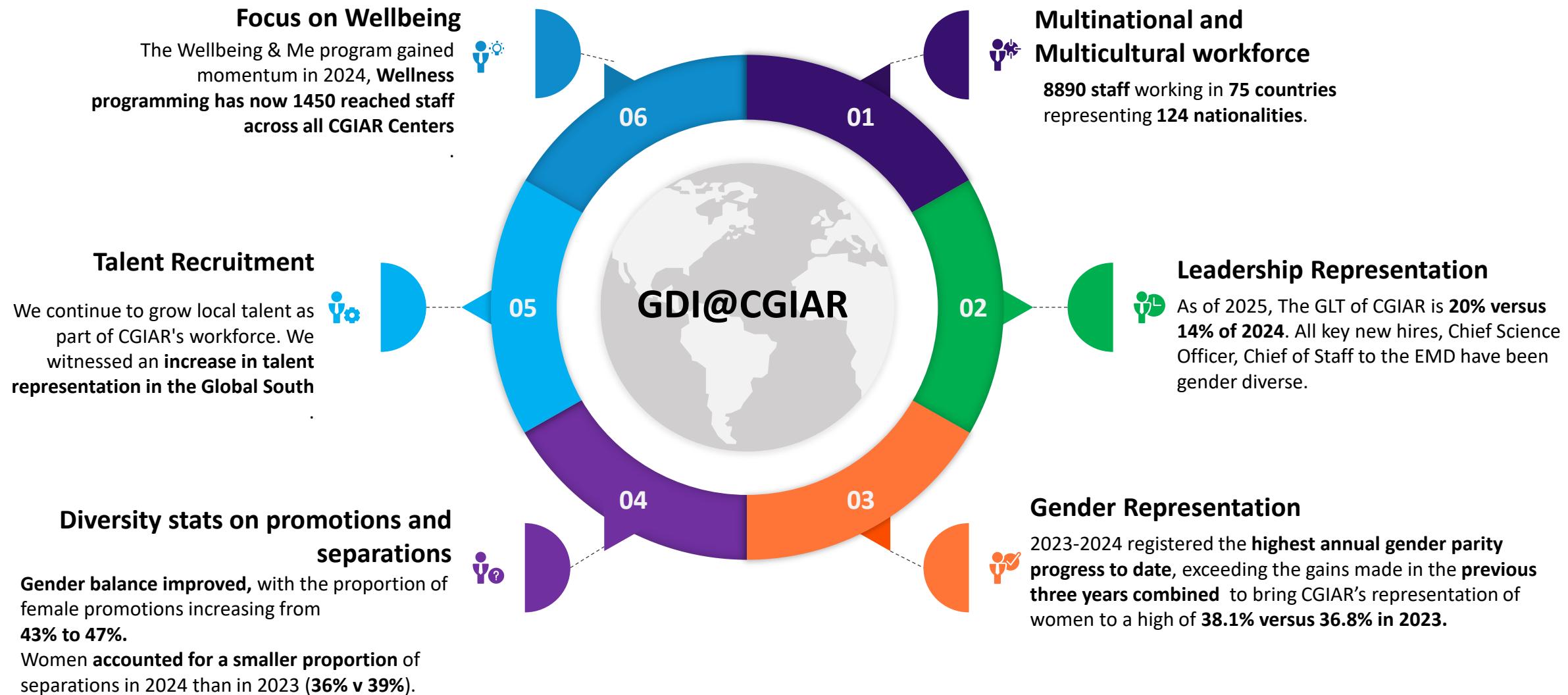
Strengthen recruitment processes by implementing Inclusive Recruitment Guidelines to attract and hire diverse talent.

**LEAD Together** (*this program was launched on April 30<sup>th</sup>*), a 10 month CGIAR-wide leadership development program focused on growth mindset, storytelling, systems thinking, business acumen, team leadership, and stakeholder influence.

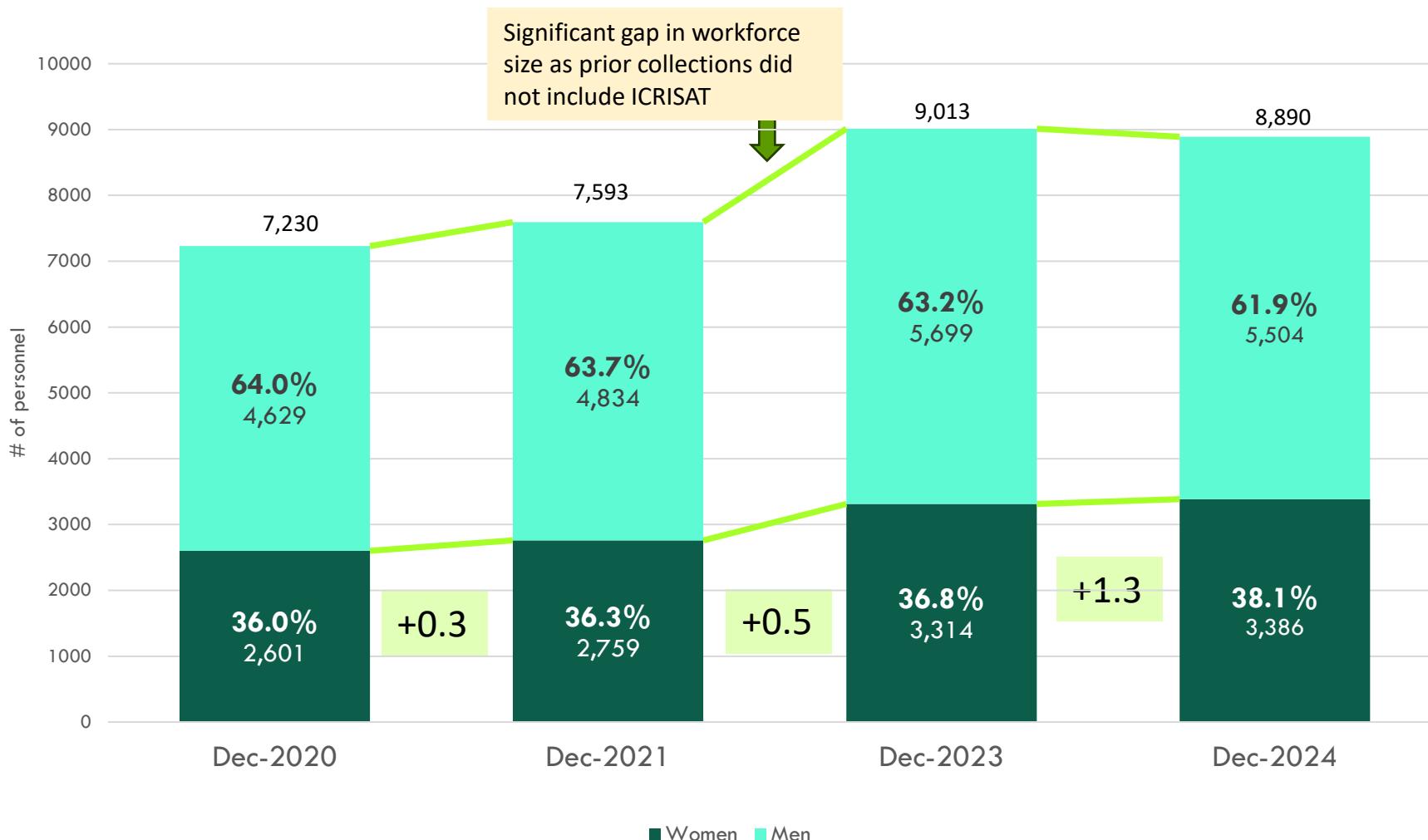
Partner with Centers to track percentage movements in representation dimensions, including, (1)Women in leadership roles (2) Representation in science and research

***Staying true to our values, we will continue to focus on data-driven insights through workforce data collection & analysis, work force engagement survey & analysis, and staff wellbeing***

# Key insights in 2024 as we track our progress to develop a deeper understanding of our workforce, and work towards parity



# Key 2024 data shows progress toward gender parity, with a notable increase in female representation compared to previous years



2023-2024 registered the **highest annual gender parity progress to date**, exceeding the gains made in the previous three years combined to bring CGIAR's representation of women to a high of **38.1%** in 2024 versus 36.8% in 2023.

CGIAR's Leadership structure has changed significantly in 2024 versus 2023. More leadership representation in 2023 (23 people) impacted the overall percentage. However, our current structure is more comparable with 2020 and 2021



*Executive Leadership refers to the highest stratum of CGIAR leadership – but the scope of this and the number of positions it includes has changed with each transition.*

Year	Composition	Total # of positions	Men	Women	% Women	Gender Balance in Leadership: Progress and Focus Areas
2020	Center DGs & SO ED	12	9	3	25%	The transition to OneCGIAR, with a broader leadership structure, created an opportunity for more gender-balanced representation at the leadership level. However, our current structure—comprising the GLT, including DGs, the EMD, and the CSO—closely resembles that of 2020. This underscores the ongoing need to strengthen female representation specifically within executive leadership roles.
2021	3 EMDs & Center DGs	13	10	3	23%	
2023	<i>OneCGIAR Senior Leadership - EMT, Global and Regional Directors</i>	23	14	9	39%	
2024	Global Leadership Team - Chief Scientist vacant	14	12	2	14%	
2025	Global Leadership Team – Center DGs, EMD, DEMD and Chief Scientist	15	12	3	20%	

### Board Representation and Gender Balance:

Although not included in the workforce data review, Boards present a more gender-balanced view of CGIAR leadership. The IPB is evenly split—7 women and 7 men—with a Female Chair and Male Vice Chair. Center Boards also show strong female representation, including several female Chairs.

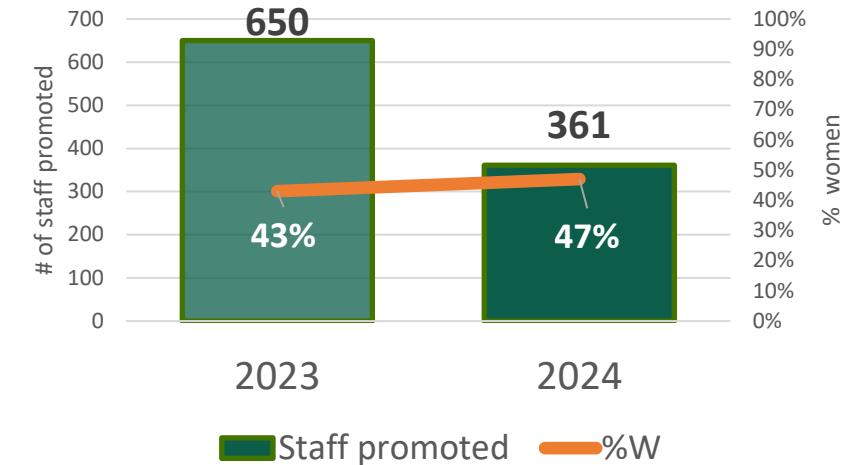
# Promotions continue to be an area of strength for gender parity



The proportion of female promotions exceeds their representation across all categories (overall/research/senior) - revealing that promotions continues to be an area of **strength** in advancing gender parity at CGIAR.

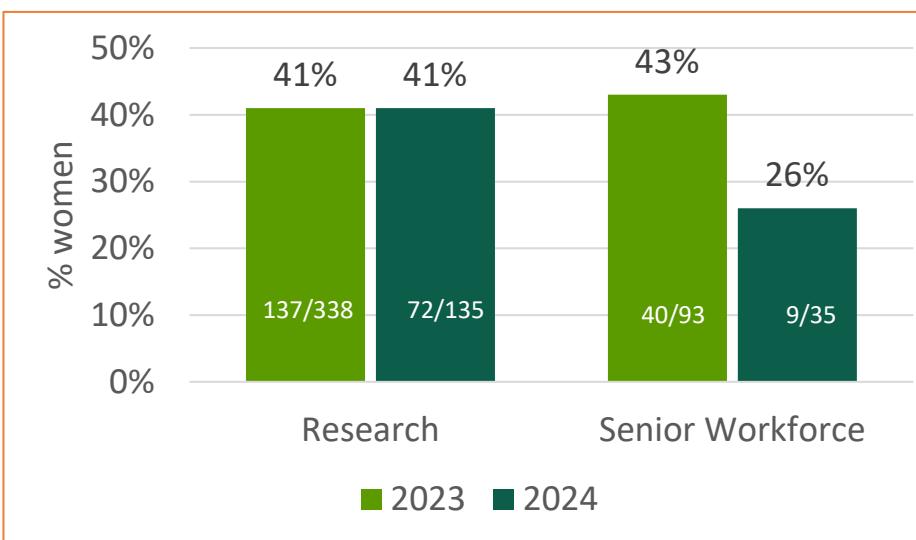
From 2023 to 2024 the total number of promotions **dropped** from 650 to 361, a 45% decrease.

**Gender balance improved**, with the proportion of female promotions increasing from **43%** to **47%**.



**Research promotions** maintained their 2023 gender balance of 41%W.

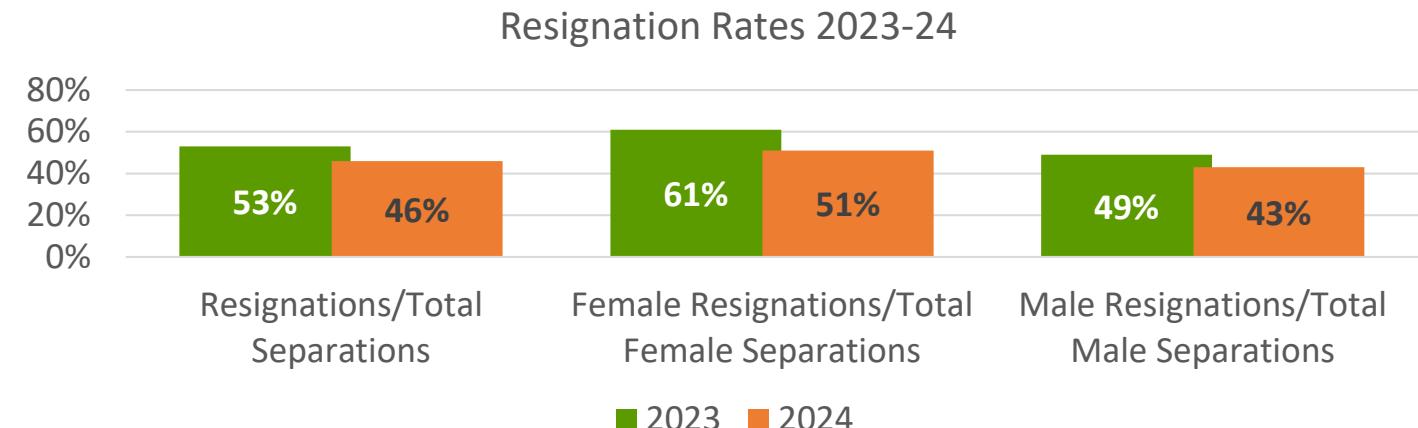
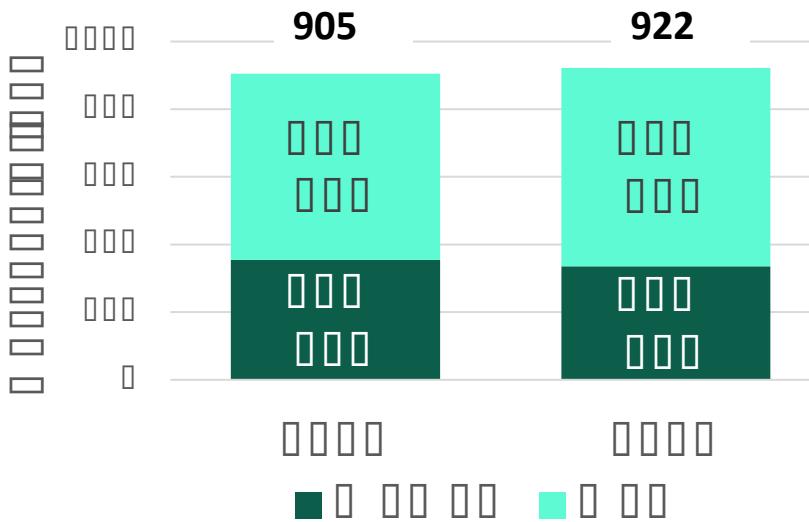
**Senior workforce** promotions became much more gender imbalanced dropping from 43% to 26% women (*in part due to the small number of 2024 senior promotions, 35*).



# Separations - Improved retention of women and decrease in resignation rates



Women accounted for a smaller proportion of separations in 2024 than in 2023 (36% v 39%).



Overall, attrition/turnover stayed the same at 10%, but **resignations decreased from 53% to 46% of all separations, as well as for women and men.**

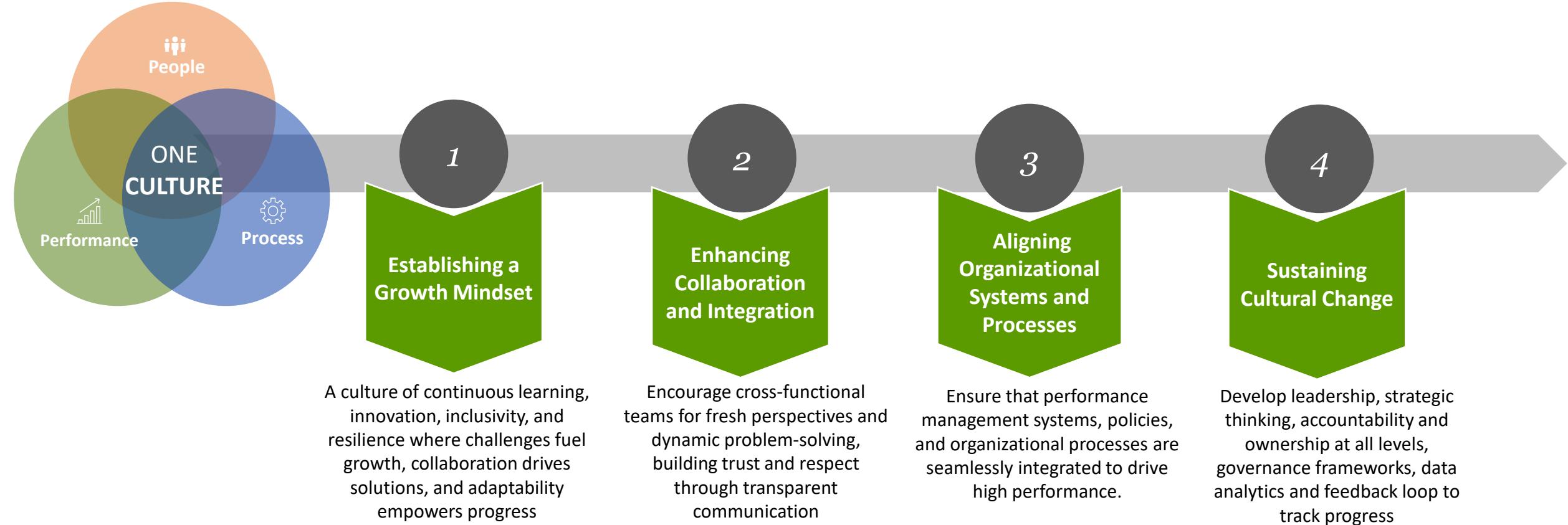
In 2023, resignations accounted for a larger proportion of women's separations than men's (61% v 49%) – indicating women were more likely to resign than men. While this is still true, this gap narrowed in 2024 (51% v 43%) reflecting better retention of women and less disparate reasons for separation between sexes.

2025 - 2027

**Building “Culture & Engagement” Fostering Growth Mindset and Transformation**

*Culture Transformation: The path to agile, collaborative and adaptive ways of working at CGIAR*

# The strategy to establish One Culture involves embedding **4 key elements** through the **people, process and performance lens**



The People, Process, Performance lens aligns individual actions, organizational processes, and performance outcomes with the core values of One Culture, creating a unified, consistent, and high-performing organization

# Leading cultural transformation requires us to tackle both **behavioral** and **structural** perspectives



## Behavioral

focus on the attitudes, actions, and interpersonal dynamics that support and reinforce the desired cultural transformation

- **Embedding growth mindset**, entrepreneurial thinking, continuous learning, adaptability as a core way of working
- **Collaboration and teamwork**, sharing knowledge, supporting others to achieve common goals, breaking down silos and encouraging cross-functional collaboration
- **Transparency and open communication** to build trust and respect, inclusion, encouraging feedback from all levels
- **Idea generation, risk taking, innovation**, normalizing failure as a learning process to encourage experimentation

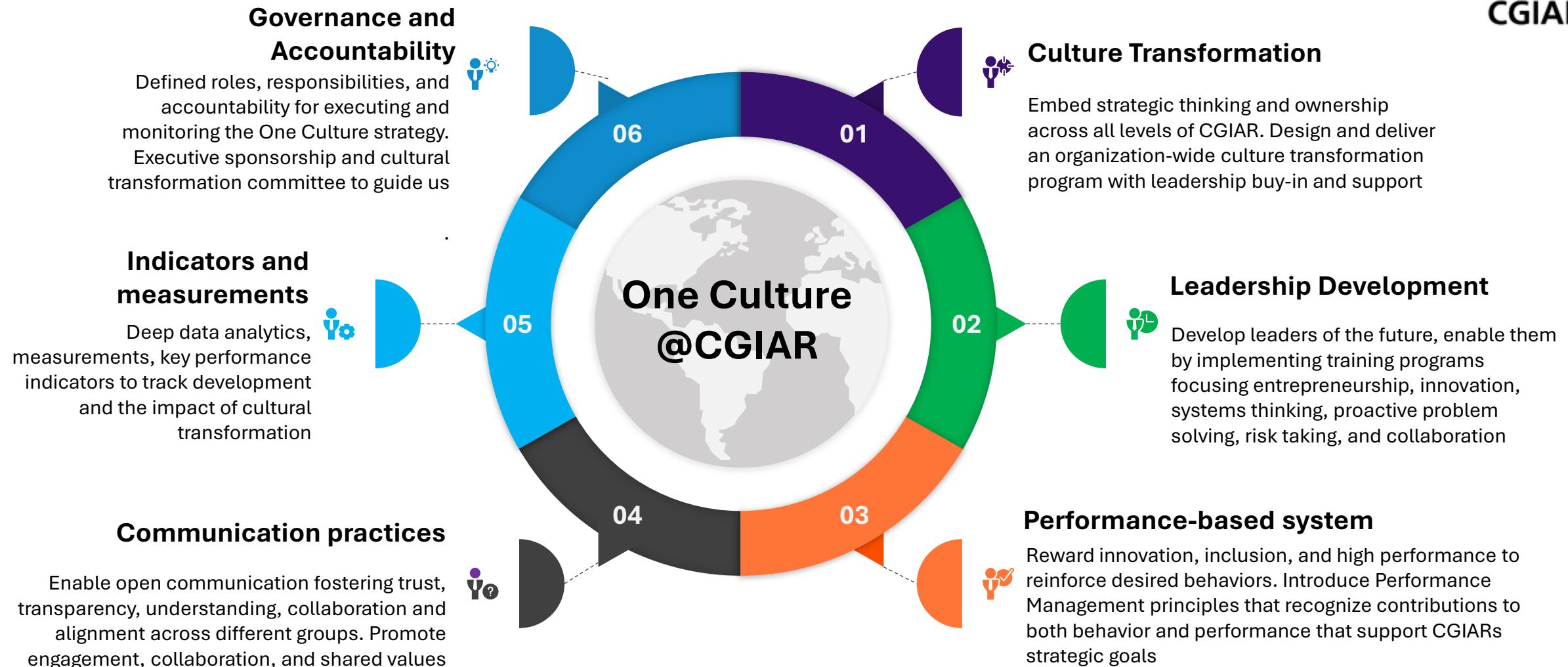


## Structural

organizational frameworks, systems, and processes that support and reinforce the desired cultural transformation

- **Organizational structure and design** that encourage collaboration, flexibility, and transparency
- **HR policies and practices** on recruitment, onboarding, performance management, promotions, and rewards designed to identify, nurture, and recognize cultural fit and behaviors
- **Technology platforms** that enable collaboration, communication, and tracking of cultural transformation progress
- **Formal feedback mechanisms**, such as surveys, focus groups, and employee forums, to gather insights on cultural initiatives

# The Six levers that will advance behavioral and structural transformation



# Translating the levers into a ***concrete action plan*** on the foundation of ***People, Process & Performance in partnership with Centers & the Science Portfolio***



**People & Culture:** shared strategic people policies, frameworks and guidelines which enable increased efficiency, effectiveness and enhanced employee experience and engagement

**People Analytics:** leverage people analytics through **workforce data analytics** to optimize talent management strategies and investment, improve workforce processes and promote positive employee experience

**Change Adaptability:** foster a resilient and agile workforce that is proactive and responsive through a range of change adaptability interventions, toolkit and capability development

**Strengthen Communication practices:** Harness the **collective intelligence** of CGIAR through **hackathons and knowledge sharing platforms** to foster collaboration & innovation.



**Talent Acquisition:** effective and efficient approaches to talent identification, attraction, selection, and onboarding of talent needed for sustainable success.

**Talent Development:** Leadership Development Programs that build growth and future forward thinking. Through strategic **Succession Planning, Mentoring and Sponsorship** develop and retain high potential talent.

**Performance Management:** a shared human-centric approach to performance management built on a foundation of **competencies and skills** that empowers and motivates employees to collaborate and generate innovation that advance CGIAR's mission.

**Reward & Recognition:** a shared, mission-driven **rewards system** for entrepreneurship, collaborative and team first behaviors.



**Embed Inclusion & fair practices:** developing sustainable and diverse workplaces which power greater innovation, improve employee engagement, and enhance effectiveness towards achieving mission.

**One CGIAR Culture:** promoting shared standards of behavior through **performance management system** highlighting **Core and Leadership behaviors** that are embedded in ways of working by leaders, managers and teams, based on shared expectations, capacity building, and accountabilities

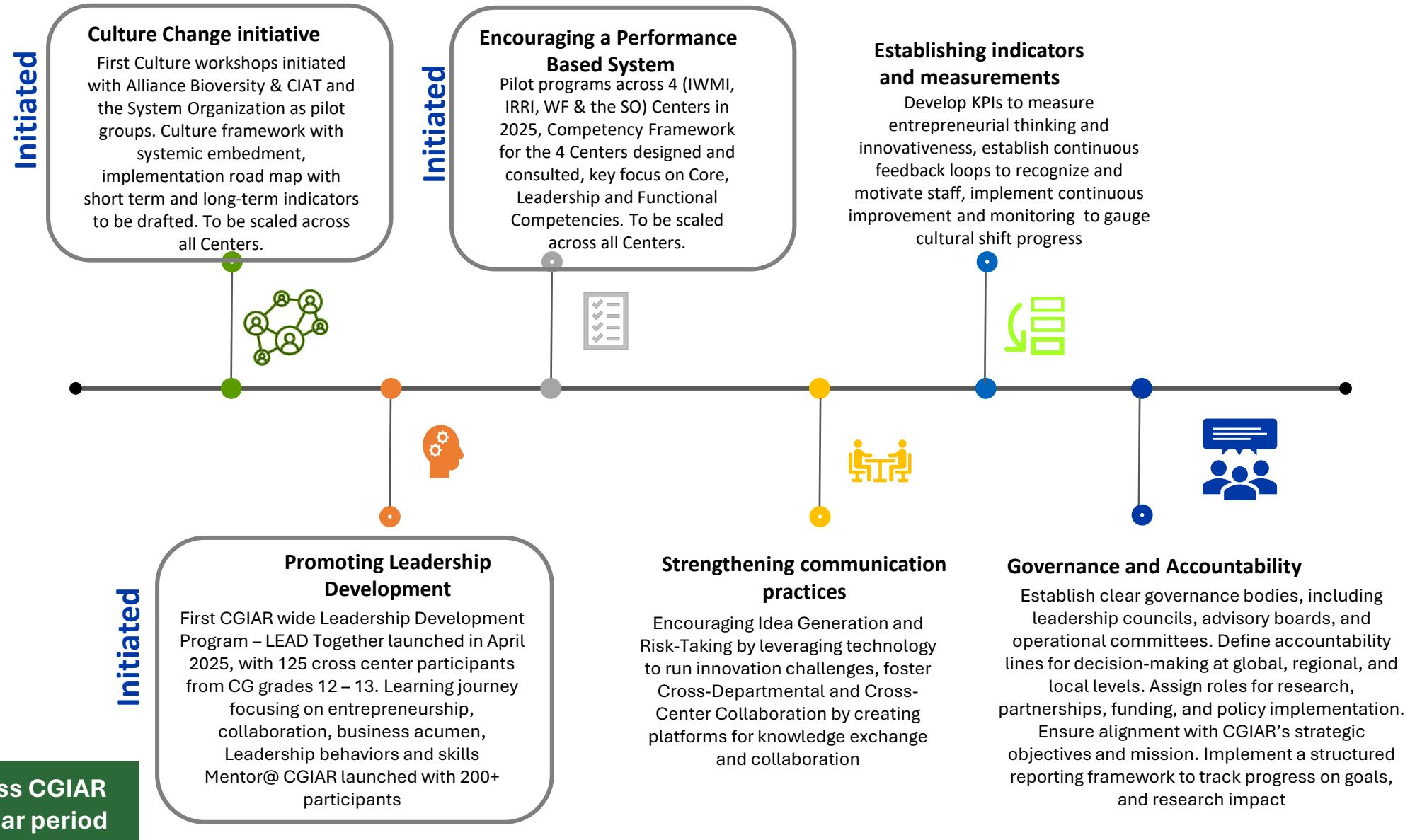
**Wellbeing:** a cross CGIAR approach to workplace well-being with a set of engagements and interventions that will primarily focus on advancing well-being and contributing to an Inclusive workplace culture



**Developing KPI's:** Develop cross CGIAR KPI's to measure **entrepreneurial thinking and innovation** to strengthen and measure outcomes in partnership with Centers.

**Technology:** Enhanced ways of working through **integrated platforms and digital tools** which enable strengthened user experience, collaboration, efficiency and business operational effectiveness in partnership with Digital & Data and Centers

Since January 2025, efforts are already underway. From an implementation standpoint, here's the **current position and where we aim to go**



# Where we are “Now” on Strategic Embedment

Q1, 2 & 3 2025: Pilots and Proof of Concept

Scale across CGIAR Centers  
by the end of 2026



Launching Culture transformation at CGIAR

Organically developing culture frameworks across Centers to Align with One Culture. This allows the framework to deeply consider Center values and local nuances.

## Phase 1: Pilot (2025) Alliance Bioversity & CIAT, System Organization and International Rice Research Institute

- Senior Management Team Design Thinking workshops in progress
- Staff Focus groups in progress
- Framework Development complete by July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025
  - Culture framework with systemic embedment to completed
  - Implementation road map with short term and long-term indicators

## Phase 2: Scale Plan with proof of concept all Centers between August 2025 & August 2026



## Launched CGIAR's first Leadership Development Program – LEAD Together

- Ten Month Learning journey focusing on entrepreneurship, collaboration, business acumen, Leadership behaviors and skills
- 125 cross center participants from CG grades 12 – 13
- Each leader will go through three Hogan psychometric tests and be assigned individual and group coaches to enhance personal development
- Peer learning circles and problem solving are key components of the program
- Mentorship & sponsorship groups will be created in program

**Lead Together will be an annual program to train all CGIAR leaders**



Building Performance Based Systems

Laying a strong foundation for performance management by systemically embedding standard frameworks and approaches:

## Phase 1: Pilot (2025) SO, IWMI, IRRI & WF

- Competency Framework for the Centers designed and consulted
- Key focus on Core, Leadership and Functional Competencies
- Alignment with job classification, job descriptions, performance management systems

## Phase 2: Further embedment into how we operate

- Succession Planning, deep embedment into systemic practices like promotion policies
- Identify triggers for skill development to create opportunities for cross pollination of talent across functions
- Develop clear career Pathways for Entrepreneurial Actions

# Other Key Activities Underway



## CGIAR Engagement Survey Enhancement

Consultations are currently underway to refine the Engagement Survey. Changes to survey questions and input data are being introduced to enable more robust analysis and actionable insights. These enhancements will support stronger accountability and inform strategies to foster a more inclusive and engaging work environment across CGIAR.



## Evolving from GDI to Culture & Engagement

As CGIAR reimagines its journey from Gender, Diversity, and Inclusion (GDI) to a broader Culture & Engagement mandate, we are updating and enhancing our website to reflect this strategic evolution. The refreshed site will better showcase our deepening engagement with Centers and our collaborative efforts to drive systemic, organization-wide cultural change.



## Workforce Data Analysis 2024

In 2024, we are advancing our workforce data analysis to gain deeper insights into the composition and dynamics of our global teams. This data will serve as a vital tool for measuring progress, informing action, and maintaining momentum on our Culture & Engagement agenda. It strengthens our ability to drive intentional, evidence-based change across CGIAR.



## Mental Health First Aider Training:

Launched Mental Health First Aider Training across CGIAR to build internal capacity for early support and intervention. This initiative empowers selected staff to serve as the first line of response for colleagues experiencing mental health challenges, reinforcing our commitment to a psychologically safe and supportive work environment.

Thank you!!



We extend our heartfelt thanks to CGIAR's Leadership, the IPB, and the System Council for their unwavering commitment to advancing our Culture & Engagement agenda. Your continued support in prioritizing this action plan reinforces its importance across the system. By keeping it a standing topic of discussion and closely monitoring its progress, you help ensure accountability and sustained momentum.

Together, we are laying the foundation for an inclusive workforce—one where everyone feels valued, supported, and has equal opportunities to succeed. We look forward to building on this strong foundation to drive meaningful, measurable, and lasting change across CGIAR.