

CGIAR's Standing Panel on Impact Assessment (SPIA)

Purpose

This document provides System Council with information regarding the work of CGIAR's Standing Panel on Impact Assessment with regards to:

- The Terms of Reference for the consultancy to estimate returns on investments (RoI) of selected CGIAR innovations (see Annex 1)
- The self-evaluation of SPIA's 2019-2024 Program of Work carried out by SPIA in 2024 (document available on the SPIA website at the following [link](#))
- The SPIA Bangladesh Report 2025: Updating the Green Revolution (document available on the SPIA website at the following [link](#))

Action Requested

The System Council is requested to read and reflect on the documents in advance of the SPIA Chair's presentation to System Council.

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

Prepared by: SPIA Program Management Unit, IAES, on behalf of SPIA Chair.

ANNEX 1

Terms of Reference

Consultancy with CGIAR Standing Panel on Impact Assessment (SPIA): Senior Consultant to estimate returns on investments (RoI) of selected CGIAR innovations

Timing

The appointment will be for a period of 6 months from May 1st to October 31st, 2025.

Deliverables

1. By May 10th, a proposal for the approach they will use to estimate RoI of the selected showcase successes.
2. By May 30th, a progress report describing progress in a) documenting the estimated benefits / impacts of the showcase successes and b) a description of the available cost data expected to be included in the calculation of the RoI.
3. By July 23th, a progress report/slide deck before the next SPIA meeting to facilitate SPIA input.
4. By October 31st, a final report describing the method used and the estimated RoIs of showcase successes. (It is expected that this report will be between 10 and 20 pages, plus annexes as needed.)
 - a. For transparency about the methods used and for future reference, one annex would include meta data about the process for obtaining individual data points.

Activities

The Senior Consultant will:

- Focus on the “showcase successes” that SPIA has identified thus far, develop an approach to estimate returns to investment on these showcase successes, implement this approach and provide bounded estimates of returns on investment at both innovation and program-level. This will:
 - Involve reviewing rigorous causal evidence on impacts of these successes (which evidence may be generated by SPIA funded projects but may also come from other sources).
 - Involve an explicit consideration of the conditions and parsimonious set of credible assumptions under which the existing evidence on the reach and impacts of CGIAR’s innovations can be extrapolated to other geographies or contexts. As such it would explicitly address the documented constraints to adoption of CGIAR technologies per existing studies.
 - Involve incorporating information about costs into the RoI calculations, as appropriate, keeping in mind that explicit cost data may only be available for a line of innovations instead of a single innovation, or for an entire innovation program, or may have been incurred by non-CGIAR stakeholders, or may be intangible/non-monetary.
 - Explicitly acknowledge the uncertainty inherent in such an exercise and

provide bounded estimates on all RoI estimates. The relative width of these confidence intervals will convey the degree of uncertainty or extent to which assumptions were made to arrive at estimates.

- Submit a proposal (due by May 10th) that:
 - Outlines the estimation approach that is proposed to be used for the exercise, specifying the estimation method and its conceptual underpinnings and logic, and the inputs and output of this exercise, and how the method relates to prior similar exercises.
 - Includes a plan to liaise with CGIAR centers to gather the necessary cost data from CGIAR centers and partners. It is expected that System Council will facilitate the engagement of CGIAR centers in this activity.
 - Keeping in mind that investments may have occurred at innovation line or program level, the consultant would need to collect cost data at different levels. For example, although positive impact has been estimated for a specific drought tolerant maize variety, cost information may only be available at the level of whole lines of drought tolerant maize varieties or even only for investments in the entire maize breeding program. Complementary costs necessary for innovation development and diffusion may also have been incurred by other stakeholders. So, the cost information would include:
 - CGIAR's costs of developing a specific innovation
 - CGIAR's costs of developing a line of innovations
 - CGIAR's costs of developing an entire innovation program
 - information on investments made by other CGIAR partners and stakeholders that could have facilitated the diffusion of innovation
 - In instances where non-monetary /intangible costs have been incurred (such as for example, to influence policy), these should also be documented to generate a more comprehensive / holistic view of the costs involved.
 - In a virtual call after May 10th present and discuss with SPIA the proposed approach and invite SPIA comments and suggestions for the final methodological approach.
 - Discuss the findings with SPIA before finalizing the report

The Senior Consultant will report to Ricardo Labarta, Principal Scientist, with SPIA and progress will be monitored via virtual calls as needed. The Senior Consultant should expect to consult with Travis Lybbert (SPIA Chair), Sujata Visaria (SPIA member) and James Stevenson (SPIA Senior Researcher) as part of fulfilling these ToRs.