

Membership of CGIAR's Standing Panel on Impact Assessment (SPIA)

Purpose

This document presents the background, decision request and rationale related to membership of SPIA as outlined in the document following this cover note, namely a nomination by the SPIA Chair to appoint Dr. Shilpa Aggarwal as a new SPIA member for an initial three-year term, with effect from 1 September 2025.

The proposal for the new member has been consulted with the System Council's Standing Committee on Strategic Impact, Monitoring and Evaluation (SIMEC).

Action Requested

The System Council is therefore asked to consider and, if thought appropriate, to approve the:

- Appointment of **Dr. Shilpa Aggarwal as SPIA Member** for an initial three-year term with effect from 1 September 2025.

<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.

SPIA Chair nomination for SPIA Member

Background

1. The CGIAR System Council approved the Terms of Reference (TOR) of CGIAR's Standing Panel on Impact Assessment (SPIA) with effect from 12 May 2023 (Decision Ref: SC/M18/DP3) ¹.
2. As set out in Paragraph 4.1 of the SPIA TORs, "SPIA will consist of a core of at least 6 members, one of whom serves as SPIA Chair. SPIA membership may be grown as needed to lead on the delivery of different components of the approved workplan."
3. At the 18th System Council meeting held on 11 and 12 May 2023, the System Council approved Scenario 1 of the new operational model, workplan, and committed multi-year budget (2023-2030)² of the Standing Panel on Impact Assessment (SPIA), pursuant to paragraph 7.6 of the SPIA TOR. The approved budget ceiling includes honorarium payments for up to thirteen SPIA members. This approved expansion in SPIA members is necessitated by the ambitious new workplan, especially the scaled country studies program. With a more decentralized operational model, SPIA members will – to a greater degree than in the past – have defined and delegated responsibilities related to components of the SPIA workplan.
4. Pursuant to paragraph 4.7 of the SPIA TORs, "The members of SPIA will be identified by the SPIA Chair based on role specification, criteria and key competencies desired for SPIA members, as approved by the System Council, with those persons identified by the SPIA Chair, in consultation with SIMEC, being confirmed by the System Council."
5. SPIA currently has eight members as shown in the table in section 11. One member will end his maximum term in December 2025.
6. In order to match the expanded need for SPIA members implied by the new workplan, SPIA aims to have nine or ten members by the end of 2025. Adding a further new member in 2025 is the next step toward this target panel size. SPIA intends to nominate additional members during the year to reach this target end-of-year size.
7. In view of the above approvals and procedures, and in view of the new demands that have been made to SPIA by System Council members with the approval of the Scenario 1 of the new operational model, namely to (a) expand the number of countries where the reach of CGIAR-related innovations and policy influences is systematized, quantified and tracked over time; (b) generate new causal evidence of impact on CGIAR's five impact areas; and (c) continue to support CGIAR in improving the generation and use of rigorous impact evidence, SPIA now wishes to appoint a new member to lead part of the SPIA program of work.

¹ https://storage.googleapis.com/cgiarorg/2023/06/TOR-SPIA-Approved-4Oct2018_2022_2023.pdf

² https://storage.googleapis.com/cgiarorg/2023/08/SC18-17_MeetingSummary_APPROVED.pdf

8. Following an electronic consultation process with SIMEC on the proposed new member, whereby no impeding comments were received by the deadline of 16 May 2025, the SPIA Chair presents the candidacy for approval by System Council pursuant to paragraph 4.7 of the SPIA TOR.

Decision requested

9. On the recommendation of the SPIA Chair, the System Council is requested to confirm that the following person be appointed as SPIA member for a three-year term with effect from 1 September 2025, with the possibility of renewal up to three additional years without further extension:

- **Shilpa Aggarwal**

Shilpa Aggarwal, an Indian national, is currently an Associate Professor at the Indian School of Business. She is a development economist, whose research explores market linkages in developing countries. Her ongoing research focuses on agricultural supply chains in India and East Africa. She also works on issues pertaining to domestic trade, microfinance, and food policy. Given her research foci, she would make immediate and valuable contributions to SPIA's workplan and priorities. The alignment of her research with many of CGIAR's Science Programs and impact areas, and her geographic position in the Global South, make her an excellent fit for SPIA member.

10. Annex 2 sets out further information on the part of the SPIA work program that the new member would lead, and the rationale for the selection.
11. Diversity among the Panel is an important element for SPIA in selecting new members. It is key to maintain substantive diversity of topical and methodological expertise so that SPIA can effectively carry out its broad workplan. In addition, SPIA also considers the origin, gender and current affiliation of its members.

As approved, SPIA would have a broad thematic and geographic composition, as well as a gender mix, as shown in Annex 1 (the new member is added in red at the end of the table).

Annex 1

Name	Institution	Origin	Role	Specialty	Gender	Term end
Travis Lybbert	UC Davis, USA	USA	Chair	Impact evaluation, development, agriculture	M	30/09/2026
Kyle Emerick	Tufts University, USA	USA	Member	Agricultural Development, Climate Change adaptation	M	31/12/2025
Sujata Visaria	City, University of London, UK / Hong Kong University	India	Member	Impact evaluation, finance, agriculture	F	30/06/2027
Monica Biradavolu	QualAnalytics, USA/India	India	Member	Qualitative methods and measurement, Sociology	F	30/06/2027
Jennifer Burney	UC San Diego, USA	USA	Member	Remote sensing and earth observation for agricultural and climate change applications	F	30/06/2027
Susan Godlonton	Williams College, USA / University of Cape Town (South African Labour Development Research Unit)	South Africa	Member	Economics of development, health and labor markets in Sub-Saharan Africa	F	30/06/2027
Jenny Aker	Wageningen University, the Netherlands / Cornell University), USA	USA	Member	Impact evaluation, ICTs and agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa, use of evidence	F	30/06/2027
Robert Darko Osei	University of Ghana	Ghana	Member	Impact evaluation, risk, fiscal policy, aid effectiveness, and other development policy in Sub-Saharan Africa	M	31/03/2028
Shilpa Aggarwal	Indian School of Business, India	India	Member	Market linkages in developing countries, supply chains in India and East Africa, domestic trade, microfinance and food policy	F	31/08/2028

Annex 2

Candidate identified by SPIA Chair to join SPIA as a member

Shilpa Aggarwal – Associate Professor, Economics and Public Policy, Indian School of Business, Hyderabad, India

As a national of India, Shilpa Aggarwal has significant research experience in India, but also in East Africa. As a member of SPIA, she will work closely with the Chair on the implementation of SPIA's TORs, including in ways that leverage her unique professional networks that span the Global North and South.

The key criteria considered for selection of the candidate include:

- track record in capacity building for impact assessment;
- proven ability to work with and engage social and biophysical scientists to identify opportunities for studying CGIAR impacts and design strong studies;
- excellent publication record, demonstrating methodological innovation and rigor in establishing impact of CGIAR innovations;
- a broad understanding of the work of CGIAR and the challenges involved both in establishing impacts of AR4D and in the use of such impact evidence for policy making.

Shilpa Aggarwal is strong in all four criteria. She holds a PhD in Economics from the University of California, Santa Cruz. Besides her affiliation at the Indian School of Business, she is also an affiliated professor at Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL).

The CV of the nominated member is attached to this document for further information.

SHILPA AGGARWAL

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ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Indian School of Business
Associate Professor of Economics and Public Policy, April 2024 – present
Assistant Professor of Economics and Public Policy, July 2014 – March 2024

OTHER AFFILIATIONS

Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL)
Affiliate, 2021 - present

EDUCATION

University of California, Santa Cruz
PhD in Economics, 2014
MA in Economics, 2011

Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi
MA in Economics, 2003

Shri Ram College of Commerce, University of Delhi
BA in Economics, 2001

PUBLICATIONS

- (Forthcoming) “Private but Misunderstood? Evidence on Measuring Intimate Partner Violence via Self-Interviewing in Rural Liberia and Malawi” with David S. Park, Dahyeon Jeong, Naresh Kumar, Jonathan Robinson, and Alan Spearot, August 2024. *The World Bank Economic Review*
- (2024) “Market Access, Trade Costs, and Technology Adoption: Evidence from Northern Tanzania” with Brian Giera, Dahyeon Jeong, Jonathan Robinson, and Alan Spearot. *The Review of Economics and Statistics* 106 (6): 1511–1528
- (2024) “Shortening the Path to Productive Investment: Evidence from Input Fairs and Cash Transfers in Malawi” with Dahyeon Jeong, Naresh Kumar, David Park, Jonathan Robinson, and Alan Spearot. *Journal of Development Economics* 170 (2024): 103288
- (2023) “Exhaustive or Exhausting? Evidence on Respondent Fatigue in Long Surveys” with Dahyeon Jeong, Jonathan Robinson, Naresh Kumar, Alan Spearot, and David Sungho Park. *Journal of Development Economics* 161 (2023): 102992
- (2023) “Saving for Multiple Financial Needs: Evidence from Lockboxes and Mobile Money in Malawi” with Valentina Brailovskaya, and Jonathan Robinson. *The Review of Economics and Statistics* 105 (4): 833-851
- (2022) “COVID-19 Market Disruptions and Food Security? Evidence from Households in Rural Liberia and Malawi” with Dahyeon Jeong, Naresh Kumar, David Park, Jonathan Robinson, and Alan Spearot. *PLOS ONE* 17 (8): e0271488
- (2021) “The Long Road to Health: Healthcare Utilization Impacts of a Road Pavement Policy in Rural India” *Journal of Development Economics* 151 (2021): 102667
- (2020) “Cashing In (and Out): Experimental Evidence on the Effects of Mobile Money in Malawi” with

Valentina Brailovskaya, and Jonathan Robinson. *AEA Papers and Proceedings* 110 (2020): 599-604

(2018) “Grain Today, Gain Tomorrow: Evidence from a Storage Experiment with Savings Clubs in Kenya” with Eilin Francis, and Jonathan Robinson. *Journal of Development Economics* 134 (2018): 1-15

(2018) “Do Rural Roads Create Pathways out of Poverty? Evidence from India” *Journal of Development Economics* 133 (2018): 375-395

WORKING PAPERS

“The Dynamic Effects of Cash Transfers: Evidence from Rural Liberia and Malawi” with Jenny Aker, Dahyeon Jeong, Naresh Kumar, David Park, Jonathan Robinson and Alan Spearot, January 2025. *Revise & Resubmit (3rd Round), AEJ: Applied Economics*

“Designing Incentives for Impatient People: An RCT Promoting Exercise to Manage Diabetes” with Rebecca Dizon-Ross and Ariel Zucker. September 2024, *Revise & Resubmit, AEJ: Applied Economics*

“Going the Extra Mile: Farm Subsidies and Spatial Convergence in Agricultural Input Adoption” with Naresh Kumar, Dahyeon Jeong, Rolly Kapoor, David Sungho Park, Jonathan Robinson, and Alan Spearot. March 2025

“Minimum Support Prices in Indian Agriculture: Supporting Whom and at What Price?” with Natasha Jha and Ishani Chatterjee. January 2025

WORKS IN PROGRESS

“The Value of Value Chains: An Experiment linking Farmers’ Cooperatives with a Maize Processor in Rwanda” with Susan Godlonton, Jonathan Robinson, Alan Spearot, and Guanghong Xu

“Green Shoots: Seeding a Market for Certified Cassava Cuttings among Cooperatives in Rwanda” with Athanase Nduwumuremyi, Jonathan Robinson, Youngwoo Song, and Guanghong Xu

“It’s Showtime! Improving Agricultural Productivity through TV Programming and Improved Input Access” with Francisco Ceballos, Berber Kramer, Blessing Mhlanga, and Jonathan Robinson

“A Road for all Seasons: Market Access and Inter-temporal Arbitrage in Rural India” with Ishani Chatterjee

BOOK CHAPTERS AND OTHER PAPERS

“Impact of a financial incentive scheme on purchase of fruits and vegetables from unorganised retailers in rural India: a cluster-randomised controlled trial,” with S. Kinra, P. C. Mallinson, A. Debbarma, H. L. Wells, J. Lieber, S. Bhogadi, S. Addanki, R. Pande, A. V. Krupad, N. K. Kannuri, B. Kulkarni, E. A. Finkelstein, and S. Deo. *The Lancet Regional Health - Southeast Asia* 12:100140

“Financing Businesses in Africa: The Role of Microfinance,” with Leora Klapper and Dorothe Singer, Chapter 9 in *Microfinance in Developing and Developed Countries: Issues, Policies and Performance Evaluation*, Jean-Pierre Gueyie, Ronny Manos and Jacob Yaron, eds., Published by Palgrave Macmillan, 2013

“Designing Government Policies to Expand Financial Inclusion: Evidence from Around the World,” with Leora Klapper, September 2013

PRESENTATIONS (INCLUDING SCHEDULED)

2024 RHUL-IIMC Conference on Political Economy, Ashoka University, UCSD 21st Century India Center Seminar Series

2023 Stanford Development, FAO, AFEDEV ICD 2023 at Paris School of Economics

(Keynote)

2022	ISI Delhi Annual Conference
2021	Baruch College, FLAME University, IFPRI, Paris School of Economics
2020	University of Cape Town ERSA
2019	Georgetown University Qatar, NBER Transforming Rural Africa Conference
2018	Indian School of Business, SERI Conference (IIM Bangalore)
2017	IIM Bangalore, Ashoka University, ISI Delhi Annual Conference
2015	SERI Conference (Indian School of Business)
2014	Georgia State University, Indian School of Business, Mathematica Policy Research, PacDev (UCLA), University of Adelaide, UNC Chapel Hill, University of Waterloo - St. Paul's College, Vanderbilt University
2013	NEUDC (Harvard), Stanford University (Development Hour), UC Berkeley (Development Lunch), UC Santa Cruz (multiple), University of San Francisco

GRANT FUNDING (BY TOPIC AND YEAR)*Horticulture Exports in Rwanda*

2024	The IGC Pilot Grant, with Jonathan Robinson, and Youngwoo Song
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Edutainment and Market Access in Zambia

2023	Digital Agricultural Innovations and Services Initiative, with Francisco Ceballos, Berber Kramer, Blessing Mhlanga, and Jonathan Robinson
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Creating a Market for Certified Cassava in Rwanda

2022	Agricultural Technology Adoption Initiative (Pilot), with Jonathan Robinson, Youngwoo Song, Alan Spearot, and Guanghong Xu
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Forecast-Based Action

2021	JPAL King Climate Action Initiative, with Rolly Kapoor, Jonathan Robinson, and Alan Spearot
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Financing Cattle Vaccinations with Milk Cooperatives in Kenya

2020	CGIAR Standing Panel on Impact Assessment (SPIA), with Susan Godlonton, James Rao, Jonathan Robinson, Alan Spearot, Nils Teufel, and Guanghong Xu
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Input Profitability and Usage in Rwanda

2020	BASIS MRR Innovation Lab, with Susan Godlonton, Jonathan Robinson, and Alan Spearot
2020	CEGA-ATAI, with Susan Godlonton, Jonathan Robinson, and Alan Spearot
2019	CEGA-ATAI pilot grant, with Susan Godlonton, Jonathan Robinson, and Alan Spearot

Market Access for Farmers in Northern Tanzania

2017	NSF Economics, with Brian Giera, Patrick Olobo, Jonathan Robinson, and Alan Spearot
2015	IGC, with Brian Giera, Jonathan Robinson, and Alan Spearot
2015	IPA Fund on Entrepreneurship and SME Development, with Brian Giera, Jonathan Robinson, and Alan Spearot

2014 BRAC-CEGA Learning Collaborative, with Brian Giera, Patrick Olobo, and Jonathan Robinson

Incentivizing Behavioral Change for Diabetics in India

2017 Tata Center for Development Grant, with Rebecca Dizon-Ross and Ariel Zucker

2015 J-PAL Urban Services Initiative, with Rebecca Dizon-Ross and Ariel Zucker

Mobile Savings in Malawi

2016 IPA Financial Inclusion Program, with Pia Basurto, Valentina Brailovskaya and Jonathan Robinson

ROSCA Savings for Agriculture in Kenya

2015 CEGA-ATAI, with Eilin Francis and Jonathan Robinson

REFEREEING

Journals

American Economic Journal: Applied Economics, China Economic Review, Economic and Political Weekly, Empirical Economics, Environment and Development Economics, Economic Development and Cultural Change, The Economic Journal, Economica, Food Policy, Health Economics, Journal of African Economies, Journal of the Association of Environmental and Resource Economists, Journal of Development Economics, Journal of Development Studies, Journal of the European Economic Association, Journal of Health Economics, Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, Journal of Political Economy, Journal of Public Economics, Review of Economics and Statistics, Social Science and Medicine, Southern Economic Journal, The World Bank Economic Review, World Development

Grants

King Climate Action Initiative, National Science Foundation, Research Grants Council of Hong Kong, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, WEE-DiFine

Fellowships

Fulbright Nehru Fellowship - Economics

AWARDS AND HONORS

2020 ISB Alumni Research Fellow, BAT Research Fellow

2013 Best Poster Prize, NEUDC 2013

2012-13 Eileen Brooks Memorial Award for best paper in international trade, UC Santa Cruz

2010-14 Merit-based Tuition Fellowship, UC Santa Cruz

2009-10 Chancellor's Fellowship, UC Santa Cruz