

CGIAR's new strategy and research programs: Answering to poverty, health and climate change

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CGIAR's new Strategy 2016-2030

Jim Kim, President of the World Bank Group, said last week that the **three intractable challenges** keeping him awake at night are: ending extreme poverty in only 15 years; preparing for the next pandemic; and battling climate change to preserve the planet for future generations. Poverty, health and sustainability are also the top three concerns in **CGIAR's new strategy for 2016-2030**. By 2030 CGIAR, with our partners, aims to help:

- 100 million people, at least half of whom are women, get out of poverty
- At least 150 million people stop suffering from hunger, and 500 million stop being malnourished
- A 15% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from agri-food systems while restoring 190 million hectares of degraded land and saving 7.5 million hectares from deforestation

New Challenges



As I wrote **last week**, diet is now the number one health risk around the world. With 2 billion people are chronically undernourished and another two billion overweight, 4 out of 7 billion people on the planet suffer from poor health from lack of access to food and poor diet. CGIAR's new strategy, recently finalized and submitted to the CGIAR Fund Council for endorsement, focuses on agri-food systems, addressing issues along the entire agricultural value chain, from basic research to food safety affecting the poor consumer.

COP21, to take place in Paris this December, needs to achieve a new international agreement on climate, with the aim of keeping global warming below 2°C. CGIAR is aiming to help put agri-food systems on the Climate Change agenda. We are proud to be partnering closely with French research institutes and the French government on an initiative to help mitigate greenhouse gas as well as increase ecosystem health and crop productivity. CGIAR's forestry institute, **CIFOR**, is also leading the preparation for a major event, the **Global Landscapes Forum**, in parallel with COP21.

CGIAR knows that agro-ecology and justice in food systems are critical to empower people to feed themselves, and believe it is vital who has a say in the rapid change underway in food systems around the world. That is why CGIAR is partnering with the **Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR)** to organize a global consultation on what should shape CGIAR's agenda and focus. This process is referred to as **GCARD3**. CGIAR is partnering with the African Union and **CAADP** to ensure that CGIAR's work is well aligned with the national priorities of our partners the millions of poor smallholder farmers we aim to support. The new CGIAR continues to evolve and improve – let me outline several of these opportunities now.

New opportunities in science and the way we work

The new CGIAR strategy recognizes the potential that advances in science and technology are creating for us and our partners:

- Breakthroughs in: nutrition, genetics, informatics, modeling, communication technologies, satellite imaging, remote sensing, meteorology, precision farming and conservation agriculture are all driving global investments in agriculture, often with the private sector. And some of these innovations also reduce the energy and environmental footprint of agriculture.
- The landscapes approach is a solution to the challenge of improving agricultural productivity and food security while also protecting the environment and smallholders' livelihoods. Meeting the dual goals of food security and environmental sustainability will be particularly important for the sustainability of farming systems.
- Some of the most exciting advances are occurring at the interface between disciplines. These areas of ongoing discovery research for CGIAR need continued support to generate breakthrough results within the next 5-10 years.
- At the same time we recognize that reducing poverty, improving health, and increasing sustainability at the community as well as national level has to depend on a systems approach. Progress cannot be technology driven, but has to be based on an innovation systems approach in which the users, the farmers, participate directly in the innovation process.

Can CGIAR achieve its targets? Yes, we can.



CGIAR has a long and distinguished history of delivering impact for over 40 years, especially in the lives of poor farmers and poor food consumers. And we continue to adapt our research to address new challenges. CGIAR-developed varieties of bio-fortified foods (staple foods that have a higher content of iron, zinc or vitamin A, such as iron beans or orange-fleshed sweet potatoes) that reached a million farm households in 2014. Improved quality fish and shrimp seed increased farm productivity by 20% for half a million poor farm households in Bangladesh last year. Weather based insurance increased the resilience to climate change of 12 million farmers in India. Millions of rice farmers in Asia adopted scuba rice – that can be submerged up to 17 days and still deliver a decent yield. Millions of maize farmers in Africa adopted drought tolerant maize varieties. As floods and droughts become more frequent and severe due to climate change, CGIAR research is helping millions of farmers and other poor smallholders increase their resilience, while continuing to explore and deliver solutions to sequester additional carbon in the soil – thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

According to the new strategy:

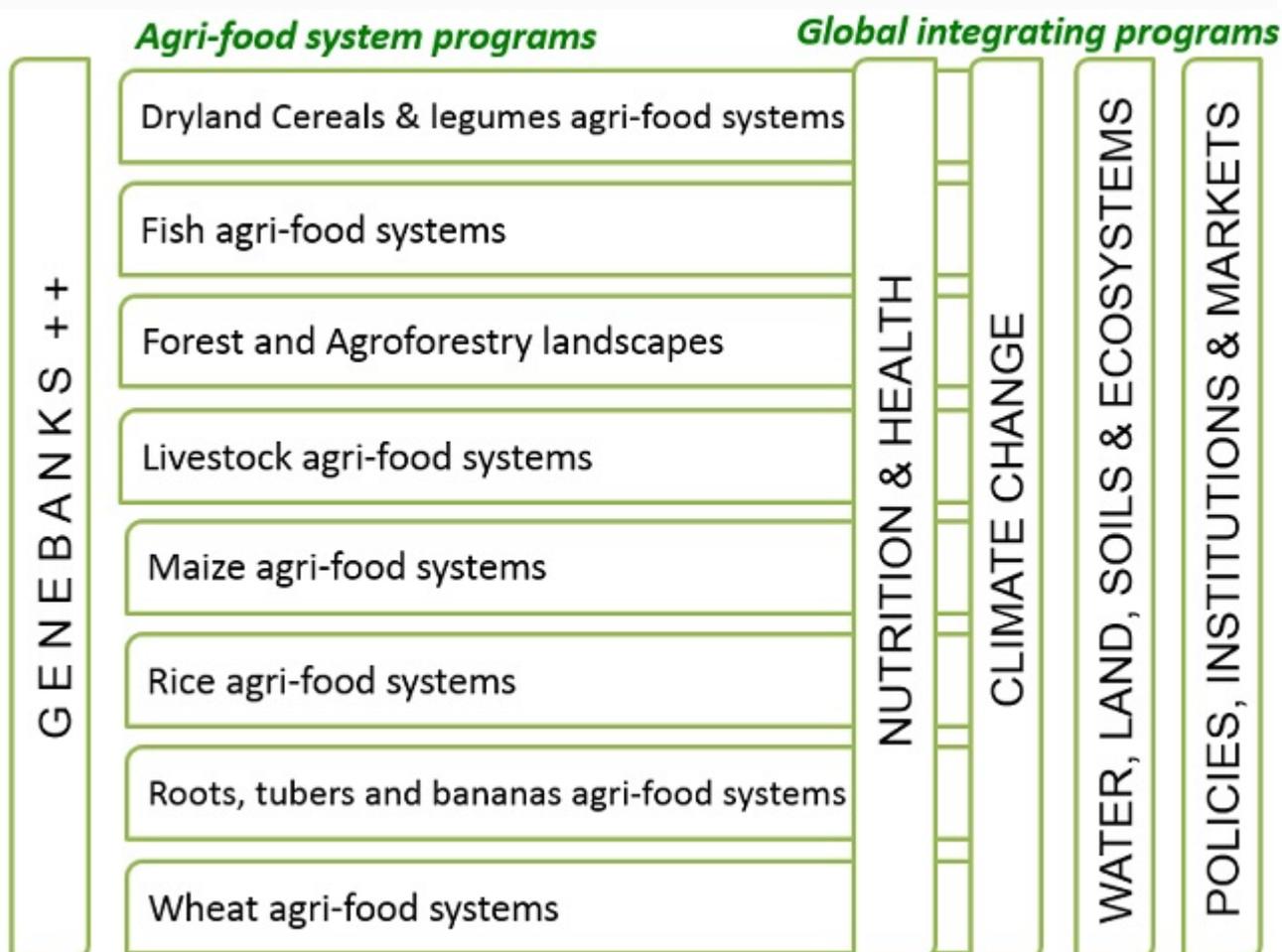
“Agri-food system research is an effective investment to end poverty and hunger... Just over half of the world’s rice land is sown to high yielding varieties derived from CGIAR breeding materials. Launched in 2006, Drought Tolerance Maize For Africa (DTMA) has produced more than 100 new maize varieties with drought tolerance that have been adopted on a total of one million hectares across East and Southern Africa, giving an average yield advantage of 20-50%.”

Next generation research programs



By launching our first generation of 16 CGIAR Research programs back in 2011-12, CGIAR has already taken the first step in tackling these grand challenges related to agriculture and food security. As the first cycle of these programs come to an end in 2016, CGIAR now intends to build on their success by initiating the process for our second generation of programs. On June 15th the CGIAR Consortium issued the [Call for Pre-Proposals](#) for the next generation of 13 CGIAR Research Programs.

While most of the current programs will continue in the second phase, there is much greater emphasis in this 2nd Call on the interaction between programs. Drawing largely from successes and lessons learned from current Programs, this second generation will form a new coherent, integrated portfolio – with 8 agri-food system programs and 5 global integrating programs that cut across these, as shown below.



In this new generation of research program there is also a strong focus on “value for money”. Each proposal is required to specify its theory of change, the expected impact pathway, and the outcomes

it proposes to achieve that demonstrate its contribution towards impact. The CRP pre-proposals are primarily asked to argue how they will contribute to achieving the CGIAR targets specified in the new strategy and at what cost. That enables a first order assessment of value for money across the portfolio and will influence the allocation of resources to priority research areas.

While the CGIAR Centers will lead each program, partnerships are critically important to achieve impact at scale. Each pre-proposal will indicate the strategic partners in the program and their role. Key components of each program, the so-called Flagships, can also be led by partners who are not CGIAR centers.

Submissions are due on August 15. Following review, approved pre-proposals will be invited to submit a full proposal in 2016. Full proposals will need to work out the plan to achieve impact in much more detail and refine the research proposal and associated strategies for gender research, capacity development, open access and intellectual asset management, for example. Contracts for the new programs will be put in place before the end of 2016 for a 6-year period (2016-2022).

Next generation governance



In its continued effort to streamline the management of our global agricultural research portfolio, the CGIAR Fund Council decided in April this year to transition to a streamlined governance system. CGIAR will become more effective, reduce transaction costs and increase the transparency of decision-making. The current two main governance bodies, the CGIAR Fund Council and the CGIAR Consortium Board, will be replaced by a single CGIAR System Council. A single CGIAR System Office in Montpellier will replace the two main central offices, the Fund Office and Consortium Office. The new CGIAR System governance will be based on the legal personality of the CGIAR Consortium as an intergovernmental organization hosted by, and headquartered in, France.

The transition to the new governance structure will be swift, aiming for completion in mid-2016, and will not interrupt the core business of CGIAR: delivering practical large-scale solutions to those most in need. We look forward to the implementation of the new strategy, and preparation for a new and dynamic generation of CGIAR research programs.

Next generation investment

The CGIAR Fund Council agreed in April that a multiyear resource mobilization process should be initiated with a view to providing more predictable and sufficient funding for the portfolio of CRPs – this is expected to be approved in November 2016.

The group of countries that partner in the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network ([MOPAN](#)) have announced that CGIAR's performance will be assessed as part of its 2015-16 work program, which is a welcome opportunity to support CGIAR in reaching the highest levels of development effectiveness.

Management priorities for CGIAR's new strategy for 2016-2030 include:

- preparing a new generation of research programs for 2016-2022
- putting in place a unified and streamlined governance structure by mid-2016

The time is now – all hands on deck

As the UN closes in on its post-2015 agenda with the expected adoption of Sustainable Development Goals for 2016-2030 at the UN General Assembly in September this year – it is clear that this agenda cannot be achieved without healthy diets from sustainable food systems. Ending poverty and hunger is not possible without placing agri-food systems near the top of the priority list: agricultural research is truly the backbone to sustainable development.

To deliver on its vision of a world free of poverty, hunger and environmental degradation, CGIAR is stepping up its efforts to deliver effective and efficient development outcomes, in a transparent, demand-driven and participatory manner. That will require all hands on deck, all hands within CGIAR, and all hands we can link with through our partners. The path ahead may be winding and may be narrow, but we must navigate it effectively together – both for ourselves and for future generations.

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