

CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Team Leader and Team Members
Evaluation of the CGIAR Research Program
on Water, Land and Ecosystems (WLE)
September 2014



Independent
Evaluation
Arrangement

Background to the evaluation

In the CGIAR agricultural research for development is implemented by 15 research Centers and their partners through CGIAR Research Programs (CRPs). The Strategy and Results Framework (SRF), approved in 2011, determines the CGIAR's comparative advantage in the context of international agricultural research and sets four high-level goals for the CGIAR research in the CRPs, termed System-Level Outcomes: reduction of rural poverty, increase in food security, improving nutrition and health, and more sustainable management of natural resources. An update of the SRF, forthcoming in end-2014, will elaborate on intermediate level outcome goals for the CRPs and include targets for outcome oriented planning. Thus, the SRF provides the broad rationale and content for CGIAR research for the development, implementation and evaluation of the CRPs.

The Independent Evaluation Arrangement (IEA) of the CGIAR is responsible for external evaluations of the CRPs. The IEA's first four-year Rolling Evaluation Work Plan 2014-17, approved in November 2013 by the Fund Council, foresees the evaluation of up to 10 CRPs over 2013-2015. The order in which the CRPs will be evaluated was established on basis of multiple criteria including the starting date of the CRP, and donor feed-back.

One of the CRPs to be evaluated in 2015 is the CRP on Water, Land and Ecosystems.

The CRP on Water, Land and Ecosystems

The CRP on Water, Land and Ecosystems (WLE), which began in its current form in February 2012, holds its objective to be: "To learn how to intensify farming activities, expand agricultural areas and restore degraded lands, while using natural resources wisely and minimizing harmful impacts on supporting ecosystems."

WLE is led by the International Water Management Institute (IWMI). It encompasses nearly all research at IWMI, but it is a partnership of 11 participating CGIAR Centers, with CIAT, Bioversity, ICRAF, and IITA as the most significant partners.

Some principles and practices of WLE continue the work that began under the CGIAR Challenge Program on Water and Food (CPWF), including the focal regions of WLE research and its emphasis on context-specific development impact from scientific research ("participatory action research").

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Some members of CPWF's Steering Committee are now in governance positions for WLE, and many partnerships formed in CPWF have continued under WLE. Partnership is a significant legacy of the CPWF, as 14 of its 29 projects were led by non-CGIAR institutions.

WLE comprises five Strategic Research Portfolios (SRPs): (1) irrigated agriculture; (2) rainfed agriculture; (3) resource recovery and reuse; (4) river basins [into which CPWF merged]; and (5) information systems technology. Two additional themes are "Gender, Poverty, and Institutions" and "Ecosystem Services and Resilience," themes which cut across the five SRPs.

Focusing on Africa and Asia (not yet Latin America), WLE has selected the Volta, Nile, Ganges, and Mekong river basins for particular emphasis in its research, policy influence, and partnership outreach activities.

The approved, initial WLE proposal for the first three years of operation indicated a total budget of US \$246 million, which has since been revised to \$189 million after only \$113 million were spent during the first two years of operation of the program (2012-13).

For more information on the CRP on Water, Land and Ecosystems, please see the program webpage: <http://wle.cgiar.org/>.

Evaluation purpose and scope

The primary purpose of this evaluation is to enhance the contribution that the CRP on Water, Land and Ecosystems is likely to make towards reaching the CGIAR goals on reducing poverty, improving food security, and managing natural resources sustainably.

As for all CRP evaluations, the purpose is to provide essential evaluative information for decision-making by Program management and its funders on issues such as extension, expansion and structuring of the program and adjustments in some aspects of the program.

The results of the evaluations are expected to provide inputs for the 2nd call of CRP proposals for funding in 2016 contributing both to program proposal development and generating evaluative information for the appraisal of the proposals.

The evaluation will be both summative and formative. The dimension of the evaluation that will cover past, "transferred" research (thus continued and carried on within the CRP) is summative and will assess the extent to which results were achieved and look at early results from the current program. As the CRP on Water, Land and Ecosystems was formally launched only in the beginning of 2012, the dimension of the evaluation that will focus on the new and evolving programmatic approach is formative. Research will be evaluated for relevance, quality of science, efficiency, likely effectiveness and sustainability.

Evaluation timing

The evaluation is scheduled to take place between February 2015 and January 2016 with an intensive phase for the conduct of the evaluation foreseen between May and October 2015.

Table 1: Preliminary schedule

Phase	Period	Main outputs	Responsibility
Preparatory Phase	Sep – Dec 2014	Final ToR Evaluation team recruited	IEA
Inception Phase	Jan – Feb 2015	Inception Report	Evaluation team
Inquiry phase	March – Sep 2015	Various reports and analysis products as defined in inception report	Evaluation team
Presentation of preliminary findings	Sep 2015	Presentation of preliminary findings Feedback from main stakeholders	Evaluation team IEA
Reporting phase			
Drafting of Report	Sep– Oct 2015	Draft Evaluation Report	Evaluation team
Final Evaluation Report	Dec 2015	Final Evaluation Report	Evaluation team
Management and CGIAR Consortium Responses	Feb 2016	Management and Consortium Responses	CRP Management Consortium Board

Full terms of reference for the evaluation are being developed by the IEA in consultation with stakeholders.

Team Leader profile

The IEA Office is looking for a **Team Leader** who will be responsible for leading the evaluation with the support of a team of experts. The Team Leader will work closely with the evaluation manager (the Head of the IEA) and IEA Evaluation Analyst who will provide support to the team.

The Team Leader's tasks will include:

- participation in the selection of the evaluation team members;
- preparation of the inception report;
- guidance and coordination of the team's analysis and work;
- interviews with key stakeholders in the CGIAR Centers, donors, partners and any other institution considered relevant;
- substantive technical lead to the overall analysis, findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation for providing an assessment based on all the available

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information from documents, desk reviews, surveys, interviews, in accordance with the inception report.

- preparation of the report outline, coordination of the inputs provided by the team members, preparation of the draft evaluation report;
- prepare a comprehensive evaluation report;
- present the report through different means and in different fora to key stakeholders.

The assignment of the Team Leader will require **approximately 80-90 working days**, including travel and work at home-station, spread over a period of 9-11 months from start of the CRP evaluation.

The indicative stages for a CRP evaluation with estimated Team Leader time requirement are:

- An inception phase (10 to 15 days) with the objective of defining the scope of the evaluation, clarifying the analytical frameworks, developing the methodological tools; preparation of an inception report;
- Collection and analysis of information (45 to 50 days) including center visits and field travel;
- Report drafting and final consultation with stakeholders (25 to 30 days).

Essential Qualifications of the Team Leader

- Extensive evaluation experience of complex programs, including research, at international level;
- Strong academic background relevant to the CRP on Water, Land and Ecosystems: agroecosystems; natural resource management; and policy processes;
- Extensive and proven experience as a team leader;
- Excellent understanding and knowledge of the international debate on the key issues related to the CRP to be evaluated;
- Good knowledge of the main international institutions and mechanisms involved in the areas of research and development that are the focus of the CRP to be evaluated;
- Excellent writing skills in English and good verbal communication skills.

Desirable Qualifications

- Experience in managing major research programs involving policy aspects;
- Knowledge of the CGIAR.

Team members' profile

The Team Leader will be supported by a team of likely **four team members** who will work under the direct supervision of the Team Leader and overall guidance of the Evaluation Manager and cover the subject areas relevant to the CRP on Water, Land and Ecosystems.

The principal areas of research that the WLE evaluation will assess include:

- Ecosystem services and environment;
- Rainfed, pastoral, and irrigated agroecosystems;
- Peri-urban resource recovery and reuse;

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- Information systems for natural resource management; and
- Policy analysis and influence for sustainable soil and water issues.

In addition the team will have competence in the following areas:

- program governance;
- organization and management, including financial management;
- sociological and gender issues;
- capacity building issues;
- institutional and policy analysis in the context of development;
- research planning, methods and management; and
- communication and partnership.

The Team Members' tasks will include:

- Collect, review and analyze relevant materials with support provided by the IEA
- Support the Team Leader in designing evaluation instruments
- Conduct interviews with CGIAR and non CGIAR informants by phone or Skype
- Conduct research site visits (as decided during inception phase) and face to face interviews with program staff, partners and beneficiaries;
- Conduct analysis of the research theme of responsibility
- Contribute to team discussions and analysis of overall CRP performance.

The assignment of the Team Members will require **approximately 50-60 working days**, including travel and work at home-station, spread over a period of 9-11 months from start of the evaluation.

Essential Qualifications

- Strong academic background in areas relevant to the CRP on Water, Land and Ecosystems;
- At least ten years of extensive and proven experience at the international level, working for development agencies or with a strong focus on developing countries, research programmes and policies related to one or more of the areas mentioned above to be covered by the evaluation
- Understanding and knowledge of the international debate on the key issues related to the CRP on Water, Land and Ecosystems;
- Good knowledge of the main international institutions and mechanisms involved in the areas of research and development that are mentioned above;
- Excellent writing skills in English and good verbal communication skills.

Desirable Qualifications

- Evaluation experience (highly desirable)
- Knowledge of the CGIAR
- Experience working in agricultural research for development

Involvement in the activities of WLE, IWMI or any other key partner of the CRP during past the five years—in research, program design, management, governance, or as a donor—constitutes a conflict of interest for a potential evaluator of the CRP.

Application

Interested persons should send their CV by **31 October 2014**, to Matt Fisher-Post, Evaluation Analyst (matthew.fisherpost@fao.org), with CV and cover letter indicating for which position s/he applies and including information on applicant's:

- Experience in evaluation;
- Demonstrated expertise in the technical research areas relevant to the CRP on Water, Land and Ecosystems, listed in order of priority;
- Expected daily fee rate (exclusive of travel expenses, demonstrable with evidence of rates on previous employment);
- Gender, age, and nationality;
- Availability over the evaluation period January through December 2015.