

ISPC Assessment of the Climate Change, Agriculture, and Food Security (CAAFS) CRP-II revised proposal (2017-2022)

ISPC CRP RATING¹: A

1. Summary

- CCAFS positions CGIAR to play a major role in bringing to scale the practices, technologies, and institutions that enable agriculture to meet two tightly interlinked grand challenges: food security and climate change (including measures for both mitigation and adaptation). CCAFS's strategic relevance is unquestionable.
- The CRP aims to assist 9 million people to exit poverty; remove the nutritional deficiencies of one or more essential micronutrients in 6 million more people; and reduce the agriculture-related GHG emissions by 0.16 Gt CO₂eq /yr. CCAFS shows a strong commitment to capacity development of non-CGIAR scientists and partners².
- CCAFS has fully embraced its role as an integrating CRP, expanding its scope to collaborate with AFS CRPs and demonstrating leadership in articulating programmatically, organizationally, and financially what a true integrating program can be.
- The CRP has an experienced and high quality management team with strong scientific expertise. It has a strong track record in being a unified voice for the CGIAR by raising the profile of agriculture and CGIAR in climate change debates, particularly in the UNFCCC negotiations and by feeding into IPCC assessments.
- The Theory of Change (TOC) is clear and compelling. However, the CRP level TOC is focused more on how the work is conceptualized and approached, than on causal relationships between program outputs, outcomes and ultimate (potential) impacts and could use greater elaboration and supporting evidence.
- CCAFS's four FPs comprise an impressive set of innovative, integrated activities ranging from forecasting and scenarios at national and regional scales, risk mitigation and management innovations to testing of specific technologies and interventions within Climate Smart Villages.
- Considering that CCAFS is at a relatively advanced stage of development, enhanced emphasis on laying the foundations for high quality impact assessments is an appropriate area of attention in Phase 2. Specifically, the CRP would benefit from increased attention to enhancing credibility of baselines, survey design, type of data collected as well as methodological approach and alignment with overarching research hypotheses.
- CCAFS has embraced innovative and forward looking thinking in developing the CRP, and therefore it is at the forefront of CGIAR science.

¹ A+: Outstanding - of the highest quality, at the forefront of research in the field (fully evolved, exceeds expectations; recommended unconditionally).

A: Excellent – high quality research and a strongly compelling proposal that is at an advanced stage of evolution as a CRP, with strong leadership which can be relied on to continue making improvements.

A-: Very good – a sound and compelling proposal displaying high quality research and drawing on established areas of strength, which could benefit from a more forward-looking vision.

B+: Good – a sound research proposal but one which is largely framed by 'business as usual' and is deficient in some key aspects of a CRP that can contribute to System-wide SLOs.

B: Fair – Elements of a sound proposal but has one or more serious flaws rendering it uncompetitive; not recommended without significant change.

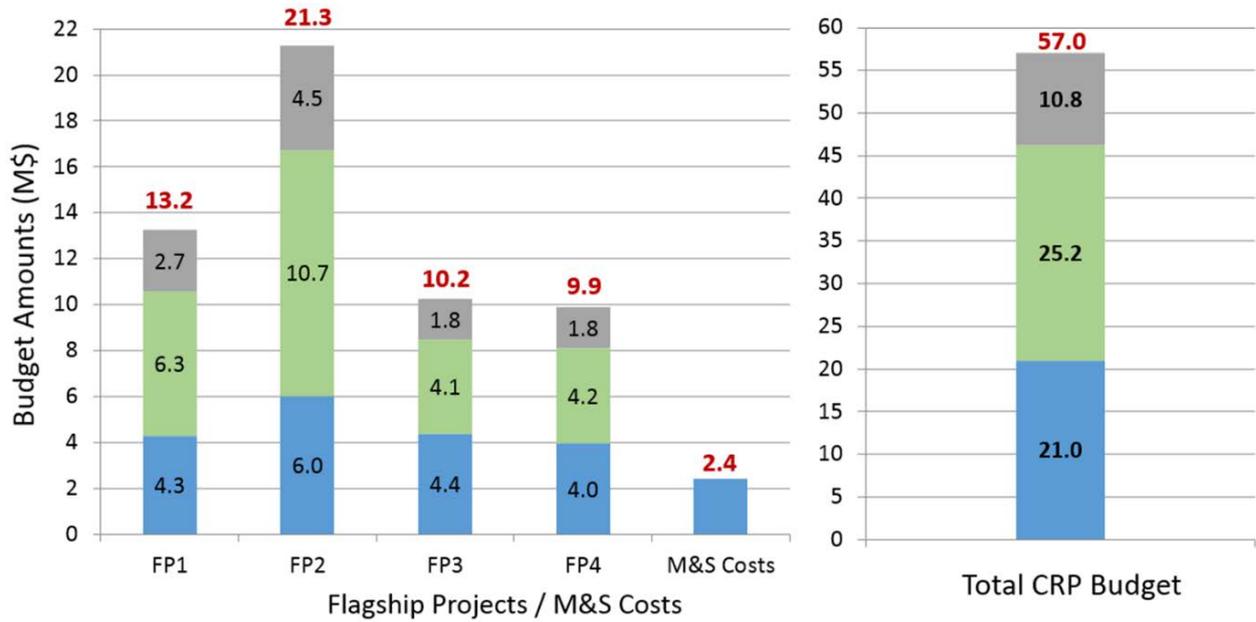
C: Unsatisfactory – Does not make an effective case for the significance or quality of the proposed research.

² The CRP targets have not been independently verified.

CCAFS 2017 FP and CRP Budgets:

W1/W2 Amounts, W3/Bilateral Amounts & Shortfalls (US\$M)

- Projected 2017 W1/W2 Amounts
- Secured 2017 W3/Bilateral Amounts
- 2017 Budget Amounts not yet Secured
- Figures in red are Total 2017 Budgets Needed*



Data Source: CGIAR System Management Office

2. Characterization of Flagships

FP	Main strengths	Weaknesses/Risks	Rating
<p><i>FP1: Priorities and Policies for CSA</i> FP1 aims to assess how enabling policy environments and priority setting for targeted investment can support the scaling of CSA interventions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligns well with national and regional priorities as well as multiple SDGs. • New body of work on influencing AFS CRPs i.e., through informing their breeding strategies for the next generation of crops, livestock and fish. • Science leadership team has excellent track record. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good but limited in-house political science and political economy expertise. • Risk that engagement with AFS CRPs will not be at level needed. 	Strong
<p><i>FP2: Climate-smart technologies and practices</i> FP2 addresses the challenge of transitioning to climate smart agriculture (CSA) at scale by testing, evaluating, promoting and scaling up CSA technologies and practices with its partners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integral to CRP delivery with its aim to scale CSA. • Strong track record of influence in global debates on CSA. • Comparative advantage based in the breadth of its CSA portfolio: few institutions that have the ability to pull together CSA-relevant technologies and practices across different agro ecological contexts. • Innovative approach to science: place-based testing of technologies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient specification of causal links between outputs, outcomes, and impacts in impact pathways. 	Strong
<p><i>FP3: Low emissions development</i> FP3 aims to promote low emissions development (LED) strategies that will reduce agricultural GHG emissions while ensuring food security. It focuses on both the two strategic goals of CSA (mitigation and food security).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound rationale for focus on smallholders as a target group. • Strong scientific team with well-developed partnership strategies with external non-CGIAR institutions that have research and delivery strength in FP3 focus areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk that cost-effective low emissions development technologies and practices may not be feasible for smallholders. • Lack of clarity in how uptake of policy prescriptions on mitigation in low- and middle-income economies will be achieved. 	Strong

FP	Main strengths	Weaknesses/Risks	Rating
<p>FP4: Climate services and safety nets FP4 aims to develop appropriate climate information and advisory services, weather-related insurance, and food security early warning and safety net programs as well as support governments and development organizations in their climate-informed planning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focussed on a critical set of issues for delivering the CRP outputs. • Comparative advantage based on CGIAR’s understanding and background in farming systems to inform development of agricultural risk management strategies and products. • Strong partnerships, including with the private sector (risk management and media). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research could be better embedded in the wider scope of research that deals with localized risk mitigation, economic shocks, and institutional instability. • Evidence supporting the assumption that information constraints and inability to mitigate risks at farm level are the critical barriers to insurance adoption is still weak. • The risk inherent in relying on partner climate centers and national meteorological agencies for the validation of downscaled climate predictions, an important FP output. Partners may not have adequate resources or the capacity. 	<p>Moderate</p>

3. Assessment of CRP response to the ISPC major comments

Initial ISPC comment (16 June 2016)	CRP response/changes proposed (31 July)	ISPC assessment (14 September)
<p>1. CCAFS Phase 2 proposes a highly ambitious agenda of working across all eight AFS CRPs, and information on how the CRP intends to prioritize efforts should be provided.</p>	<p>Addendum responds to this comment (no additional text in the proposal). CCAFS takes a demand-driven approach to AFS CRP linkages. Thematic priorities for collaboration were identified over several months and these were used as the basis for defining the Learning Platforms; and AFS CRPs then identified the priorities for CCAFS-related integration around those LPs. Examples provided.</p> <p>The allocation of budgets among Centers is determined at the project level within FPs. All current CCAFS projects have been selected through a prioritization process on the basis of formal competitive criteria and a Delphi process in which all Centers appraised each other's project proposals. The projects are embedded in regional impact pathways generated through extensive consultations with partners, and regional workshops over 2014 and 2015 refined their theories of change, impact pathways and targets, followed by extensive interaction to ensure that these are plausible and credible.</p>	<p>Satisfactorily addressed.</p> <p>The response is evidence of the rigour and replicability of an internal competitive process that has a high chance of selecting the research topic with the best mix of impact, likelihood of success and relevance. The Delphi process ensures that both quantitative and qualitative data are taken into account for prioritization. This is further evidence of good governance and CRP leadership.</p>
<p>2. Having defined nutrition and health targets with A4NH, clarify how this has shaped CCAFS priorities and the alignment with the research activities proposed.</p>	<p>A4NH has a target of 116 million people without deficiencies of several micronutrients, CCAFS will make a modest contribution (6 million people) via work on nutrition-sensitive agricultural programs and policies in key A4NH and CCAFS target countries (India, Bangladesh and Burkina Faso). This will be largely achieved via the inclusion of nutrition considerations at national/state adaptation and investment planning. Jointly developed climate, food, and nutrition scenarios at national and subnational levels will be used in planning and investment policy</p>	<p>Satisfactorily addressed.</p> <p>Good evidence of engagement with potential for co-learning.</p>

Initial ISPC comment (16 June 2016)	CRP response/changes proposed (31 July)	ISPC assessment (14 September)
	<p>processes. It describes interactions with A4NH, particularly FP1 and FP4 that has shaped CCAFS research.</p>	
<p>3. Elaboration of how the CRP will use impact assessments for hypotheses testing and validation that its work calls for, and elevation of the role of MELIA in the CRP proposal which should also be reflected in the proposed budget.</p>	<p>CCAFS intends to improve its use of IA for hypotheses testing, and validation of TOC and research results by (a) creating a design for measurement against the 2011-2013 CCAFS baseline surveys in 2018 so that it explicitly tests the FP and LP hypotheses, supplementing where necessary with project baselines at higher governance and spatial levels, (b) changing the requirement for epIAs so that the impacts assessed are explicitly linked to the outcomes reported annually, and that the IA specifically tests the theory of change at project and FP levels, and (c) ensuring that all epIAs address hypotheses on gender, youth and social inclusion.</p> <p>CCAFS has doubled the time allocation of MELIA consultant to 120 days (from an 60 days), and IA funding increased from USD 100-150K to 200-300K a year (2018 onwards). The requirement for MELIA (formerly MEL) within all Flagships, individual projects and learning platforms remains.</p>	<p>Partially addressed.</p> <p>The specific amendments – increased CRP-level IA budget, and improved clarity on the role of MELIA indicates that the proponents recognize the importance of IA. The critical question here is the rigour and amenability of data collected in CCAFS baselines to complete credible adoption and impact assessment studies. Considering that CCAFS is at a relatively advanced stage of development, enhanced emphasis on laying the foundations for high quality IAs is an appropriate area of attention in Phase 2. Specifically, CCAFS would benefit from increased attention to credibility of baselines, survey design, type of data collected as well as methodological approach and alignment with overarching research hypotheses.</p>
<p>4. Providing greater clarity on how site integration affects the impact pathways, including information on the evolution of this aspect into the prioritization process.</p>	<p>Addendum responds to this comment (no additional text in the proposal). The use of CSVs in the framework of the site integration process will be key to (1) bringing AFS CRPs to conduct their research in an integrated manner and (2) to layout sound avenues for scaling up of the CSA options, depending on opportunities as prioritized by countries. AFS CRPs take the lead on development and testing of technologies, whereas CCAFS leads on testing these technologies within portfolios of adaptation and</p>	<p>Satisfactorily addressed.</p> <p>As regards CGIAR site integration plans, much will depend on future trajectories of these plans within different regions. But, the explanation provided makes a credible case that CCAFS will embrace the potential gains from site integration without compromising the integrity of its program.</p>

Initial ISPC comment (16 June 2016)	CRP response/changes proposed (31 July)	ISPC assessment (14 September)
	<p>mitigation responses to climate risks, including testing impact pathways to achieve uptake at scale.</p> <p>Site integration has not changed CCAFS focus regions or countries, but influenced Phase 2 allocation of resources in recognition of the efficiencies offered.</p>	