

Annual reporting guidance 2021

Monitoring, evaluation, learning and impact assessment (MELIA) studies/activities

Definition

Monitoring, evaluation, learning and impact assessment (MELIA) studies/activities are used to test program's assumptions, inform learning and adaptive management, meet accountability requirements, and inform the design of new initiatives.

Reported MELIA studies/activities should be related to the outcomes and impacts of CGIAR research activities and outputs (that are being assessed or evaluated). They should be limited to those that have a CRP's own learning and assessments of internal accountability as prime objectives.

Note that planned MELIA studies/activities are listed in the Annual Plan of Work and Budget (POWB).

Title of the MELIA study/activity

The title should usually correspond to the title mentioned in the POWB. It should match the type of study or activity and be self-explanatory (however, a description of key findings from the study is outside the scope of this indicator).

Note that acronyms must be spelled out (see the "CGIAR list of accepted acronyms").

Type of MELIA study/activity

Choose one type of MELIA study/activity (see the Annex for a detailed description) from the following:

- EPIA (Ex-post impact assessment)
- Ex-post adoption study
- Program/project adoption or impact assessment
- Correlates of adoption/impact study
- Qualitative outcome study (mainly to substantiate contribution to policy or similar)
- Program/project evaluation/review
- Synthesis (secondary study)
- Ex-ante, baseline and/or foresight study
- Other MELIA activity (please specify)

Status

This indicates whether a MELIA study/activity is "completed", "partially completed", "cancelled", or "changed". In particular, consider that:

- The status "partially completed" means that the planned MELIA study/activity was not fully completed.
- The status "cancelled" means that the MELIA study/activity has been removed.

- The status “changed” means that the MELIA study/activity has somehow evolved or been modified (e.g., the target group has changed).

Please note that you must select only one status (e.g., you cannot select “changed/partially completed”). Thus, please select “changed”:

- If a MELIA study/activity has been changed and partially completed.
- If a MELIA study/activity has been changed and completed.

And include a brief explanation of the change in the “Description of the MELIA study/activity” field.

Description of the MELIA study/activity (max. 150 words)

The description should provide a short narrative on the purpose of the study and the methods used. It should also clarify which CGIAR outputs are being assessed.

Links to MELIA publications

Links to MELIA publications are required for completed outputs.

Study commissioner

This field is filled in for the POWB but is not quality assessed.

Geographic scope

This field is filled for the POWB, but is not quality assessed.

ANNEX: Types of MELIA studies/activities

Please find below explanations describing the types of MELIA study/activity.

1. **EPIA/Ex-post impact assessment:** Studies that estimate the causal effects of research outputs and related activities on one or more development parameters of interest and assess the costs of the intervention with the magnitude of impact achieved. They are applied after or long after the development intervention has been completed.

Due to the nature of research, EPIAs often measure benefits to large numbers of people, or to large areas of land or water.

Normally one component of an EPIA study will be multiple rounds of survey data representative of a policy-relevant scale – state, national or regional. If a study measures adoption as well as impact (this is common) it is counted as an EPIA.

Key identifiers: Impact of long-term, sustained use of a CGIAR innovation on IDO/SLO outcomes.

For: Underpinning CGIAR claims of sustained results (OICRs level 3).

Examples: Impact of adoption of cassava varieties in Nigeria; varieties were introduced from 1999-2005 and the study took place in 2015.

2. **Ex-post adoption study:** Studies that assess the adoption/use of a CGIAR output and/or methodology in order to make a case for CGIAR contribution to an outcome, relative to other potential influencing factors. They are applied after or long after a development intervention has been completed. These studies usually measure adoption at a policy-relevant scale (crop-growing area, national, regional).

Key identifiers: Long-term, sustained adoption/use of a CGIAR innovation.

For: Underpinning CGIAR claims of sustained results (OICRs level 3).

Example: National adoption study of conservation agriculture practices.

3. **Program/project adoption or impact assessment:** Studies at the program or project level which assess the adoption/use of a CGIAR output and/or methodology to make a case for CGIAR contribution to an outcome, relative to other potential influencing factors.

Such studies generally have a control or comparison group that was not treated or included in the intervention, and the analysis involves comparing outcomes among the groups.

While the results observed in the context of the program are valid, they cannot be easily extrapolated to the broader population outside the project context. This type includes effectiveness studies (RCTs), and other evaluations of specific interventions.

Key identifiers: An impact assessment of a program or project that is disseminating a CGIAR innovation(s) as part of the intervention, conducted during or shortly after the program.

For: Underpinning CGIAR claims of sustained results (OICRs level 2).

Example: Impact of adoption of CGIAR-designed behavior change communication approaches on child nutrition carried out under Project X.

4. **Correlates of adoption/impact study:** Studies that analyze adoption and impact data to estimate who is most likely to adopt and/or benefit from an innovation. These are not conventional MELIA studies, but can be included as long as they relate to innovations associated with CGIAR.

Key identifiers: identify factors associated with/influence uptake and impact.

5. **Qualitative outcome study:** Studies that focus on a particular unit – a person, site, or project – by using mainly qualitative data.

These studies are particularly useful for understanding how different elements fit together and how different elements (implementation, context, and other factors) have produced observed changes in practice/behavior.

These studies are usually studies of influence of CGIAR innovations or findings on policy or behavior of next users. They may use methods such as contribution analysis or process tracing (but may not).

Key identifiers: Mostly for policy and advocacy. Qualitative methods such as process tracing, contribution analysis.

For: Underpinning CGIAR claims of sustained results (OICRs level 2).

Example: Study of influence of CRP X on policy change X.

6. **Program/project evaluation:** Studies that assess a set of interventions, marshaled to attain specific global, regional, country, or sector development objectives.

Program/project evaluations are often made by independent evaluators or experts who examine the performance of either a particular entity – for example, a project, flagship, research program or platform – or a theme. They involve evaluating/reviewing past performance, by using a systematic approach against formal evaluation criteria.

Key identifiers: A review or evaluation of a component of a CRP/Center (e.g., a Flagship), or a project, IEA-type study.

7. **Synthesis study:** Reviews, systematic reviews, or evidence gap maps.

Key identifiers: Secondary studies that pull together findings from primary studies.

8. **Ex-ante baseline and/or foresight study:** Analytical descriptions/evaluations performed before implementation of a development intervention, against which progress can be assessed or comparisons made. These studies can contribute to projected benefits assessments and prioritization.
9. **Other MELIA activity:** For example, learning workshops, internal reviews, training in MELIA, installation of MIS, and development of MELIA methods.