



Office of Ethics & Business Conduct

ANNUAL REPORT

August 2022 - July 2023



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PREFACE

Director's Message

The CGIAR Ethics and Business Conduct ("EBC") team promotes the development and application of ethical standards by all CGIAR staff. EBC is focused on continuing the shift of the organizational culture by embedding ethical values in everything CGIAR does. This culture shift must start from within, beginning with EBC, to strengthen our role as a proactive and consultative unit. To this end, I am pleased to share this annual report detailing the activities carried out by EBC in fiscal year 2023 which spans from 1 August 2022 to 31 July 2023. In this report, we highlight some of our key priorities: prevention, fostering a respectful work environment, and addressing misconduct.

Among EBC's main achievements and deliveries in fiscal year 2023 are the following:

- Nearly 1600 staff participated in 43 training and outreach sessions. Topics of focus were Respectful Workplace, CGIAR Ethics Policies, Conflicts of interest and Research Ethics.*
- In collaboration with a multitude of CGIAR stakeholders, EBC developed the first system-wide Ethics Policies, adopted by the System Board and System Council of CGIAR in January 2023.*
- EBC embraced the challenge of placing ESG on CGIAR's risk map and created a working group, dedicated ESG page on our website, and published a white paper to trigger further conversation and action for CGIAR Management.*
- EBC continued to address misconduct in its second year of operations: It received 26 new complaints, a decrease of 26% from the previous year; and*
- EBC became a member of the Conference of International Investigators (CII) and will be participating in the 23rd edition of the CII, hosted by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, in November 2023.*

This report also demonstrates the value of establishing an independent ethics and business conduct function that serves all CGIAR Centers, the Alliance and the System Organization. CGIAR's first and best line of defense is to create a culture where staff, managers, and leaders are trained and empowered to make ethical decisions, and the ongoing development and implementation of CGIAR-wide ethics policies will be a key milestone in CGIAR's growth and organizational change journey.

In the forthcoming year, as CGIAR goes through a period of significant structural and organizational change, EBC is looking forward to developing an aligned two-year strategy with the global and regional management and all Boards within the CGIAR System to embed ethics into CGIAR's culture and to ensure that staff can continue to work in an environment grounded in ethics. The work of my team must be geared toward empowering staff across CGIAR Centers to make ethical decisions that prevent misconduct from occurring. This will require a joint effort by the entire organization, including global and regional management, staff, and key stakeholders.

Once again, as we close our second year of service and we gear up to expanding the team and the number of operational ethics policies and our outreach activities, we thank the many people at CGIAR working hard toward making CGIAR a model of Excellence in Ethics. I look forward to continuing this journey together.



Alexandra MOYAS
Director a.i., Ethics and Business Conduct, CGIAR

INTRODUCTION

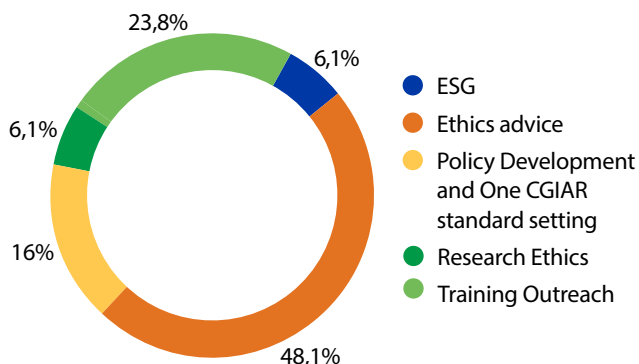
The Ethics and Business Conduct (“EBC”) function was established in July 2021. It is an independent office whose director is accountable and reports directly to the Audit, Finance, and Risk Committee (“AFRC”)¹. All activities of EBC are based on the principles of confidentiality and independence.

Currently it has a core team of five – the Director, the Deputy Director, the Head of Investigations, the Ethics/Investigations Associate, and an Executive Assistant². EBC has recently developed a robust roster of consultants through several rounds of Requests for Proposals and previous recruitment processes, from which it contracts policy/ethics/investigations experts on an ad-hoc basis.

This is the second report³ of EBC. It provides an overview of its activities and achievements (including statistical information) during the period from 01 August 2022 to 31 July 2023, as well as analysis and assessments, including comparisons with the previous year and relevant activities planned for the remainder of 2023 and until July 2024. It is organized by the office’s mandated areas of work, as follows:

- Policy development, input and standard training
- Training and outreach
- Advisory (providing confidential, individualized advice on ethics matters)
- Support investigations into alleged misconduct at CGIAR Centers worldwide⁴
- Research Ethics
- Environment Social Governance (“ESG”)⁵

Overview of EBC’s activities in 2022/2023	
Primary Category	Total
ESG	12
Ethics advice	87
Policy Development and One CGIAR standard setting	29
Research Ethics	12
Training and Outreach	43
TOTAL	183



¹There is also administrative reporting to the [Global Director, Governance and Assurance](#).

²Since the departure of EBC’s Director in March 2023, the Deputy Director is acting as Director ad interim (a.i.).

³This report is available on CGIAR’s website.

⁴In many international organizations this is housed in a separate office or function.

⁵In most international organizations this is also a separate office/function and often most closely interacts with Legal. Here the plan is to create a mechanism that will run independently from the ethics function.

HIGHLIGHTS



183 requests for Ethics related services

87 requests for Ethics Advice and Guidance



Over 1500 staff participating in training and outreach sessions conducted by EBC



A new website



4 new CGIAR Ethics Policies

Portals for dedicated groups of staff (Research Ethics, Investigators)



Member of the Conference of International Investigators since February 2023



26 new complaints received by EBC

18 investigations closed

27 CGIAR staff reached out to the Ombudsperson

1 Pocket-guide on "Where to go when"



PARTNERSHIP

We value the diverse voices of our internal and external stakeholders, and seek all forms of engagement, collaboration and teamwork.



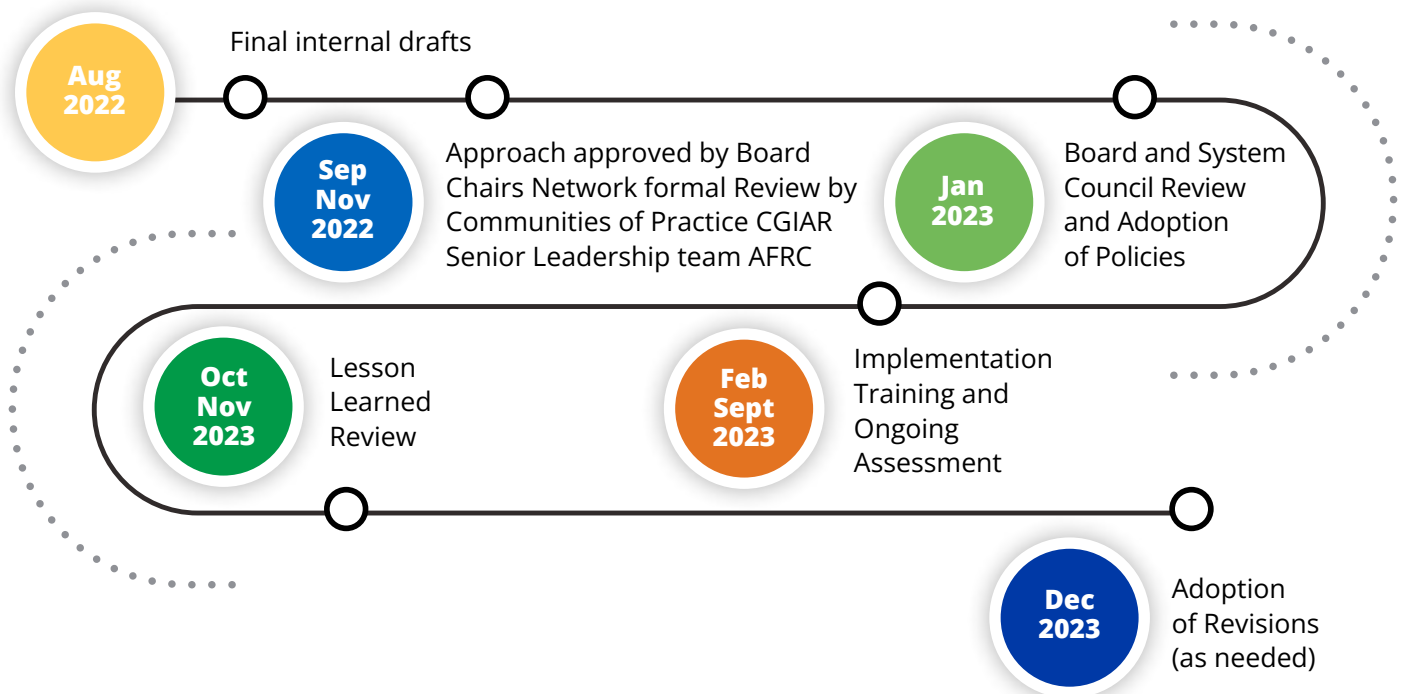
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POLICY DEVELOPMENT, INPUT AND STANDARD SETTING

First set of CGIAR Ethics Policies

1. CGIAR is celebrating a milestone: the development of a new suite of CGIAR-wide Ethics Policies, following a detailed and robust collaborative process, led by EBC, and with significant contributions from colleagues in the People & Culture and Legal communities, as well as the support of external experts.
2. Individual CGIAR Centers have policies that cover many of these important areas in different ways. That said, having standard policies that set and clarify our shared expectations across the whole of CGIAR, covering such an important topic as safe and respectful workplaces, is an important step towards CGIAR's goal of One Culture.

CGIAR ETHICS POLICIES PATH - INITIAL FOUR



3. This first set of Ethics Policies was adopted in January 2023. They are available on the [CGIAR public website](#) and in the EBC website under the [Resources tab](#)⁶:
 - i. CGIAR Code of Ethics and Business Conduct for CGIAR Staff,
 - ii. CGIAR Policy on Protection Against and Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination,
 - iii. CGIAR Policy on Whistleblowing and Protection from Retaliation, and
 - iv. CGIAR Safeguarding Policy – Protection Against and Prevention of Sexual Misconduct, Exploitation and Abuse, and Human Trafficking.
4. The Code of Ethics and Business Conduct for CGIAR staff is the lynchpin; it sets the tone for our shared workplaces. The other three new policies, as well as forthcoming ones, flow from it.
5. EBC has promoted these new CGIAR-wide Ethics Policies through all of its programming.
6. EBC also developed an internal Investigations manual and a case risk prioritization matrix. Both were presented to the Executive Management Team and the AFRC in April 2023.
7. EBC further developed several templates bringing some uniformity in the way the investigation work and outputs were presented such as notifications of formal inquiry to subjects, notices of seizure of ICT equipment, investigation report template, notification of closure to the complainants and subjects amongst others.

Carla Lazarte, in her role as Former Director, People & Culture (“P&C”), CIP and in her current role as Director, Global Talent Development, CGIAR:

I would focus on two things: the first, is that the formalization of an EBC unit at the CGIAR has brought an expert and objective perspective into managing complex cases within Centers (strategic partner) while also drawing similarities across Centers and allowing to focus not only on the investigation and disciplinary implications but also on the awareness and promotion of ethical behavior which leads to engagement and fostering a culture of respect and integrity. The second aspect is walking the talk at the CGIAR – around partnership and collaboration focused on developing our staff and shaping the CGIAR culture. The P&C and EBC came together to bring awareness to staff through the Respectful Workplace training back in May delivered in New Delhi and Bangladesh in which 8 Centers participated resulting in very positive feedback and demonstrating that staff was avid to learn about how to work together respectfully, welcomed the CGIAR mechanisms to report and also praised the opportunity to be together across Centers, which felt for them a clear indication of One CGIAR integration.

⁶These are in English and have been translated into Arabic, French and Spanish. There was also a “Procedure on handling reports of alleged misconduct” that was developed under the oversight of, and approved by the AFRC that did not go to the full System Board and to the System Council.

Second set of CGIAR Ethics Policies

8. EBC has engaged several expert consultants to assist in developing the second set of Ethics Policies with the initial drafts expected to be discussed with the Center representatives in the last quarter of 2023. This set will include the following:
- CGIAR wide conflict-of-Interest policy and the accompanying procedures on i) outside employment and activities ii) gift, honors and entertainment; and iii) financial disclosures and declaration of interest forms;
 - CGIAR Anti-Money Laundering, and Combatting the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) policy, and
 - CGIAR Anti-Fraud policy.
9. Due to CGIAR's research portfolio and its integrated Center reporting structure, any alleged misconduct must consider multiple legal dimensions and cross-center governance frameworks. This challenge provides a compelling reason to introduce a uniform approach to the application of CGIAR system-wide Ethics Policies.

Policy input and standard setting

10. EBC has worked closely with other CGIAR business units to provide policy input and standard setting. Some of these collaborations include:
- **Partnerships;** with specific input on the Partnership Intelligence Management System,
 - **Funder Engagement;** with specific input on the Green Climate Fund (GCF) certification and Occupational Health Safety policy references,
 - **Internal Audit;** with specific input on a good practice Advisory memorandum for Director Generals and Board Chair/Members expenses, and
 - **People & Culture;** with specific contribution to the creation of a new Employee Resources Group (ERG) "Pride@CGIAR".





EXCELLENCE & INNOVATION

We strive for excellence by maintaining high standards of scientific rigor, actively encouraging innovation and creativity, and pursuing our passion for learning and discovery.



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TRAINING, OUTREACH AND AWARENESS RAISING

11. Training, outreach, and awareness raising are key components of EBC's mandate. In training CGIAR employees on standards of conduct and reinforcing CGIAR's core ethical values, EBC empowers employees to make ethical decisions and conduct themselves in the best interests of CGIAR.
12. From August 2022 to July 2023, EBC's approach to training and outreach shifted progressively from being demand-driven to becoming more proactive, needs-specific, and targeted.
 - EBC received more and more direct requests from CGIAR Centers and Business Units for all types of sessions.
 - Focus topics were Respectful Workplace, CGIAR Ethics Policies, Conflicts of interest and Research Ethics.

Key Figures

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training sessions across CGIAR (CGIAR Centers, onboarding of staff, Communities of Practice etc.)

1582 staff trained across CGIAR

Regional in-person trainings in Southeast Asia October 2022 (IWMI, IRRI, World Fish, ILRI, Alliance)

4

Ethics Leadership training for 40 Board members (initiated by Governance & Risk, managed by EBC)



Research Ethics training for ICARDA

Respectful Workplace training in India and Bangladesh, in partnership with P&C, in May 2023:

8 CGIAR Centers in India: 67 participants 6 CGIAR Centers in Bangladesh: 188 participants

Training of System Council new members / Assurance Oversight Committee members July 2023

Edwin Seah, Gender, Diversity & Inclusion ("GDI") Advisor, CGIAR:

I highly appreciated working with Alex from the EBC function during the pilot of our Safe and Respectful Workplace training in New Delhi and Dhaka. The team had provided us with the essential information and resources to be included in the training to ensure that all staff are aware of the One CGIAR policies.

How is CGIAR laying the foundations for a safe and respectful workplace



Ethics Framework

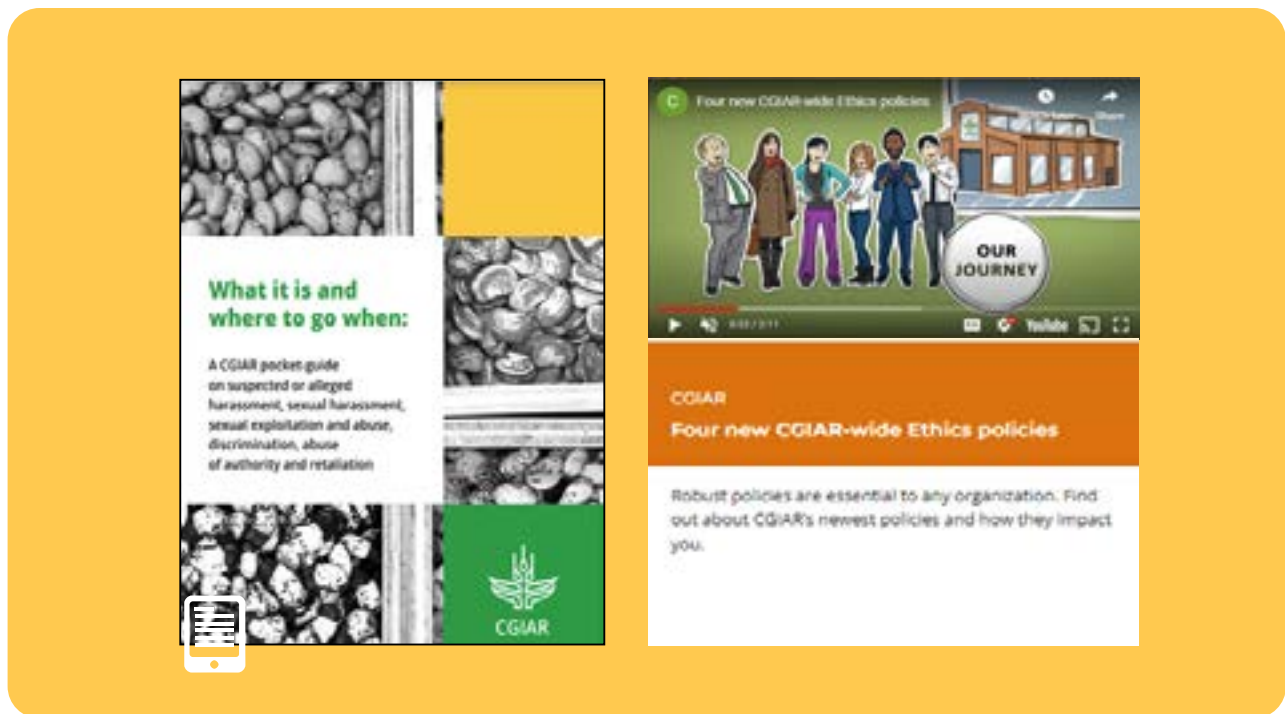
Set of Codes of Conduct

A suite of policies

Framework and Action Plan for Diversity and Inclusion

13. EBC was regularly invited to participate in the induction programme for staff at all levels, including Senior Management with dual roles at Center and One CGIAR levels. EBC was also invited to present Ethics related sessions to Communities of Practice retreats and weekly/monthly meetings.
14. As part of outreach efforts, EBC revised its dedicated webpage on CGIAR's website.
15. EBC attended the System Organization Townhall (all-staff meeting) to present its new website and navigate the System Organization staff through its extensive mandate. Through a real-life case study, EBC focused on how to handle complex ethical dilemmas and outlined the role of EBC in providing staff with guidance on making the right choices.





16. EBC rolled out, in Arabic, English, French and Spanish, a six-page pocket-guide titled “What it is and where to go when: **A CGIAR pocket-guide on suspected or alleged harassment, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and abuse, discrimination, abuse of authority and retaliation**”.
17. **On 24 May 2023**, EBC met with the Executive Director and the Head of investigations of BRAC International in Dhaka, Bangladesh to explore training opportunities as EBC is developing its training content for CGIAR partners around the world.
18. **On 8 June 2023**, EBC participated in the World Conferences on Research Integrity (WCRI) symposium “Why Research Integrity matters”: The WCRI is the largest and most significant international conference on Research Integrity and Responsible Conduct of Research. Since its first appearance in 2007, seven world conferences have been hosted in countries around the world, with the most recent in South Africa in 2022. EBC is planning on participating in the 8th WCRI, in Athens – Greece in June 2024.
19. EBC has become a member of the Conference of International Investigators (CII). Established in 1999, the CII is a forum for investigators of international organizations to exchange ideas, discuss integrity issues, address challenges in fighting fraud, corruption, and other wrongdoings, receive new developments and share leading practices. CII encourages and enables collegiality and close cooperation among investigative offices of participating organizations and provides support and guidance to investigators through its annual conferences and published materials.

- 20. CII has firmly established itself as the premier forum for investigation professionals, of participating organizations worldwide, to come together and share their experiences and knowledge as well as their challenges and concerns on key strategic, technical, and operational topics. EBC will be participating in the 23rd CII in London, UK in November 2023, hosted by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.
- 21. The Ethics Network of Multilateral Organizations (ENMO) was established in 2010 and brings together senior professionals responsible for the ethics functions in about 50 multilateral inter-governmental institutions. ENMO provides a forum for members to exchange information and experience for the purpose of broadening the knowledge base, enhancing professional capacity and promoting standards of practice and core responsibilities for the ethics function among member organizations. EBC will be submitting a membership application to join the ENMO in the fall of 2023.

What's in the pipeline for Training and Outreach?

- 22. As part of its Training and Outreach Plan for 2023/2024, EBC is planning on initiating one-on-one sessions with Center Directors General, both ongoing and incoming, as well as new CGIAR Board and Committee members.
- 23. EBC is about to launch a Request for Proposal to design an e-learning course "Ethics@CGIAR". This e-course will serve as an induction session for all new joiners to CGIAR, on EBC's mandate and its key areas of intervention. This e-course will be available to all CGIAR staff online and can be accessed at any time.
- 24. EBC will continue to produce short and animated explainer videos to promote CGIAR Ethics Policies further.
- 25. EBC will be organizing several outreach events, with a view of continuously making Ethics part of CGIAR's core agenda and drive true culture transformation at scale by focusing on "Being ethical is practical and meaningful in day-to-day work". EBC will aim at keeping all learning and training activities engaging as well as short, succinct, and practical.

Fiona Bourdin-Farrell, CGIAR Global Director, People & Culture:

CGIAR's Global People & Culture (P&C) Group has a strong, and deepening, partnership with the Office of Ethics and Business Conduct (EBC). P&C consulted on and helped promote the suite of CGIAR-wide ethics policies launched by EBC in early 2023. We also worked collaboratively to develop and deliver an exciting pilot: CGIAR's first in-person Safe and Respectful Workplace training sessions. The pilot reached staff on the ground from 9 Centers in New Delhi and Dhaka and is in the process of being further scaled to Montpellier, Penang, Colombo and Los Banos. The training will be taken to all Centers over the course of 2024. This program is emblematic of EBC and P&C's partnership on multiple fronts: showcasing One CGIAR in action while advancing our ongoing work to collectively build an inclusive and respectful workplace culture across CGIAR.



DIGNITY & RESPECT

We value and embrace diversity and inclusion, treat all stakeholders with respect and dignity, promote equity, avoid all forms of discrimination, and promote human rights.



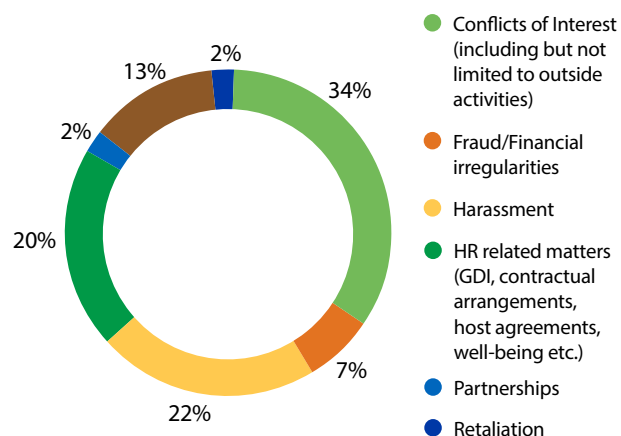
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ADVISORY AND GUIDANCE

26. Through the provision of confidential advice and guidance, EBC works to educate staff at all levels to make informed ethical decisions and to act ethically and in the best interest of CGIAR. In doing so, EBC contributes to the prevention of wrongdoing, the strengthening of accountability and the integrity of CGIAR. It serves as a trusted consultative resource available for all CGIAR staff and provides a place where staff may confidentially raise concerns and seek guidance.
27. EBC's advice ranges from managing potential conflicts of interest before they escalate into potential misconduct and wrongdoing to help staff navigate through the various processes available to them to confront interpersonal issues.
28. Given the importance of its advisory role, EBC made significant efforts to raise awareness of its services throughout CGIAR. In addition to providing action-oriented, reliable and pragmatic guidance, the Office has maintained its commitment to providing acknowledgment of all requests for advice within 72 hours and issuing clear and practical advisories.

The breakdown of advisory issues is set out below:

Ethics Advice	Total
Conflicts of Interest (including but not limited to outside activities)	29
Fraud/Financial irregularities	6
Harassment	19
HR related matters (Gender Diversity & Inclusion, contractual arrangements, host agreements, well-being etc.)	17
Partnerships	2
Policies	11
Retaliation	2
TOTAL	86



29. The total number of advisories provided by EBC increased by 16% over the same period last year. The highest number of requests concerned conflicts of interest (mostly at Boards and Ad-Hoc Committees levels) while the second most important number of requests concerned harassment related issues. In providing such advice, EBC relied on the applicable CGIAR Ethics Policies and guided CGIAR Staff on finding the right place within the organization for their needs. The third most numerous requests were "HR related". This category includes advisories regarding Gender, Diversity and Inclusion questions, staff contractual arrangements, Center host agreements, and CGIAR general well-being resources. EBC was also consulted regularly for advice on policy interpretation and implementation, following the issuance of the first set of CGIAR wide Ethics Policies.

Anu Rao, Ombudsperson, CGIAR:

I have enjoyed my relationship with EBC at CGIAR. As Ombuds is independent and confidential, my colleagues at EBC are cordial, helpful, respectful and collaborative.



Whistleblowing hotline

www.lighthouse-services.com/cgiar
anonymous & confidential



Ombudsperson

Anu Rao | a.rao@cgiar.org
confidential & off the record



Email the Ethics team

ethics@cgiar.org
confidential



Reach out to:

Supervisor
Human Resources / People & Culture
Internal Audit

REPORTING

30. Key stakeholders and funders are apprised of all CGIAR-wide issues through different channels:

31. Under current financial framework agreements, CGIAR Centers have a duty to promptly inform the CGIAR System Organization if there is a credible concern of financial irregularities⁷ in connection with the implementation of activities financed by Window 1, 2 and 3 Funds. The CGIAR System Organization carries the duty to promptly inform funders.⁸

32. In addition, under annual Decision Letters, there is a requirement to report a credible concern of interpersonal misconduct in connection with the implementation of activities financed by Window 1, 2 and 3 Funds.⁹ In practice, this interpersonal misconduct¹⁰ requirement covers all CGIAR staff since there is a high degree of likelihood that at least some portion of their work or funding is from those funds, absent clear evidence to the contrary.

33. Reporting is done via several mechanisms. The primary means has been via the AFRC, as well as the Assurance Oversight Committee (“AOC”) of the System Council. In addition, Centers have reported directly to bilateral funders as necessary, and members of the System Council have been informed as needed on an ad hoc basis. Moreover, there is an annual certification process, whereby CGIAR Centers are required to submit a Letter of Assurance to the CGIAR System Organization, and this helps ensure nothing is overlooked. This Annual Report is also a means to encapsulate the cases this past year and provide a broad overview.



⁷“Financial irregularities” is defined as: “a. corruption, including bribery, nepotism and illegal gratuities; b. misappropriation of cash, inventory and all other kinds of assets; c. financial and non-financial fraudulent statements; and d. other use not in accordance with the agreed work programs and financing plans.”

⁸This is not to the exclusion of bilateral reporting requirements of Centers.

⁹The full language states:

“(a) Centers will take all reasonable necessary measures to avoid, prevent, detect and manage interpersonal misconduct (such as harassment, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and abuse and other forms of interpersonal misconduct) in connection with the implementation of activities financed by Window 1, 2 and 3 Funds in accordance with applicable CGIAR Policies and the relevant entities’ own policies and procedures as applicable.

(b) In the event that there is a credible concern of interpersonal misconduct in connection with the implementation of activities financed by Window 1, 2 and 3 Funds, Centers will take swift and appropriate action to stop the misconduct, investigate any suspected misconduct and initiate other corrective measures as relevant in accordance with applicable CGIAR Policies and the relevant entities’ own policies and procedures as applicable.

(c) Centers will promptly inform the System Organization and any relevant Lead Center(s) if there is a credible concern of serious interpersonal misconduct in connection with the implementation of activities financed by Window 1, 2 and 3 Funds. Centers will specify the nature and impact or scope of the concern, as well as the corrective measures initiated. These provisions will apply unless and until replaced by the relevant section expected to be included in escalation procedures upon approval by the System Council.”

¹⁰In practice any interpersonal misconduct allegation should be reported, absent a clear, affirmative showing by a Center that none of the employee salaries or programs worked on at any point – whether related to the accused or any parties involved – involve any Window 1, 2, or 3 Funds.

34. Formal complaints or concerns come to EBC through two main channels:



35. EBC offers resourceful support for Centers, actively helping them on difficult cases. This year again, our collaboration showcased how Centers and EBC can work cohesively and obtain excellent results. However, much remains to be done with respect to achieving a continuous flow of information until a firmer system-wide policy on reporting is established. EBC currently relies on Centers willingness to share reports made to individual Center-specific hotlines. Due to these multiple entry points, EBC’s visibility of the complete overview of investigative cases that are handled at the Center level is limited. For example: some Centers conduct their own investigation and report the outcome directly to their Center specific AFRC focal point without informing EBC.

36. As we continue the One CGIAR journey, EBC will be seeking to streamline the reporting mechanisms to make this process more consistent and efficient thereby enhancing transparency.



INTEGRITY

We are honest, tell the truth, keep promises, pursue objective scientific research, admit mistakes, earn trust, and always act professionally by being accountable and transparent.



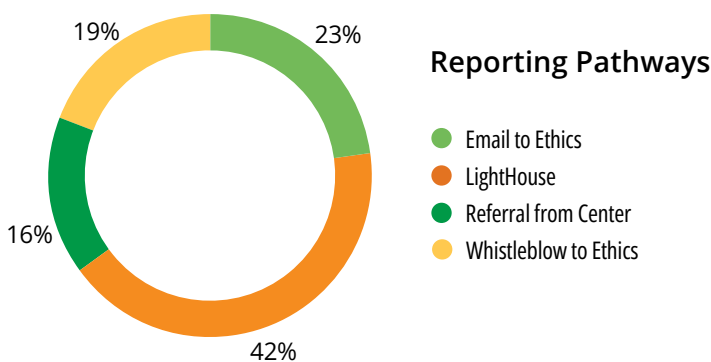
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FORMAL COMPLAINTS AND INVESTIGATIONS

- 37. Multiple channels are available to staff to report complaints: Several Centers continue to have their own whistleblowing hotline, provided by the same vendor – Syntrio. In addition, EBC has a system wide hotline available at the One CGIAR level that is accessible to all CGIAR staff and external parties.
- 38. As EBC currently does not have a case management system in place, all complaints received by EBC are manually logged into a simple and secure database. This database ensures that all complaints reported are tracked from intake to closure.
- 39. On receipt of a reported complaint, EBC confirms first if it falls within its mandate or not. If not, the report is directed to the appropriate office to take the necessary action(s). EBC thereafter keeps the matter open until it receives confirmation from the relevant office that the matter has been satisfactorily closed. If the report falls within EBC’s mandate, the report is formally taken in and a preliminary assessment is carried out. A preliminary assessment report is issued at the end of the intake phase with clear recommendation on whether the matter warrants a full investigation or if the matter can be closed at this stage. A risk assessment of the case is also included in the preliminary assessment report based on the prioritization matrix.¹¹

The risk level determines the party that will conduct the investigation: if low, EBC recommends that the relevant Center conduct the investigation; if medium – it may be conducted by the Center or EBC; and if high – it is recommended that it conducted by EBC. Irrespective of the party that conducts the investigation, and if outsourced or handled in-house, EBC endeavors to maintain overall oversight. This is to ensure that due process is adhered to, at all stages of the investigative process (from intake to closure of the case).

- 40. In the past year, EBC received 26 new complaints, a decrease of 26% from the previous year. The majority of the complaints (42%) were made via the anonymous whistleblowing channel Lighthouse. A similar percentage reached out to EBC directly via email (23%) at ethics@cgiar.org or were directly to the EBC staff (19%).



Neal Gutterson, Chair of the ICARDA Board of Trustees:

The EBC was extremely professional, objective and supportive of the ICARDA board in its review of allegations. I appreciated the EBC’s willingness to act as a partner and guide as well as assuring appropriate compliance from an ethical standpoint.

¹¹The prioritization matrix has 6 criteria to assess the level of risk associated with a case to either low, medium or high. The six criteria are (1) seniority of the subject(s); (2) Number of Centers/ Offices involved and/or Number of subjects; (3) Seriousness of offense; (4) Potential monetary loss to the Center; (5) Need for general deterrence / protect image of the Center & CGIAR; and (6) Trends / patterns based on previous allegations or investigations in the office.

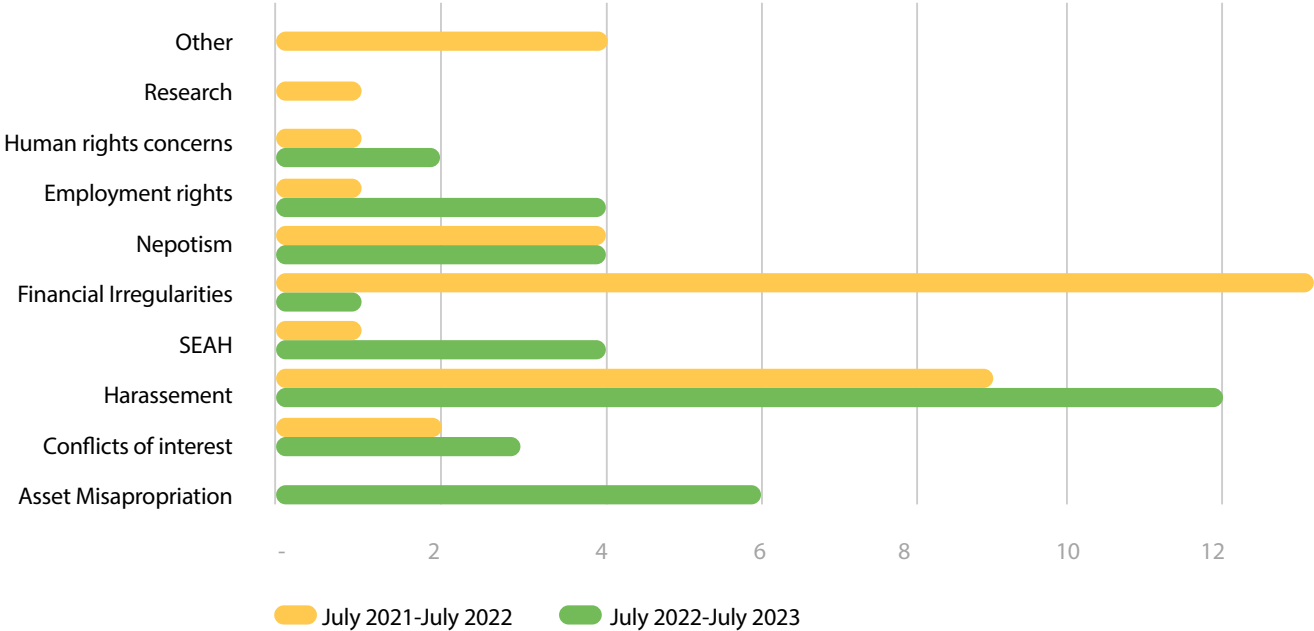
41. The region with the lowest number of reports is CWANA with only one report made in the past year. LAC had the highest number of reports followed closely by SA and WCA.

Region	No. of Reports	Percentage
Central and West Asia and North Africa (CWANA)	1	4%
East and Southern Africa (ESA)	3	12%
Europe	3	12%
Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)	7	27%
South Asia (SA)	6	23%
West and Central Africa (WCA)	6	23%
Total	26	100%

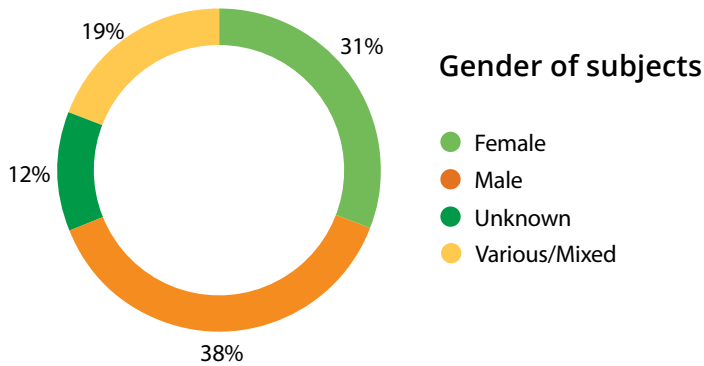
42. Reports covered several issues ranging from financial irregularities, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Harassment (SEAH), general Harassment, Abuse of Authority and Discrimination (HAAD), and Retaliation.

43. Most of the reports made in the past year were related to harassment cases whereas the financial irregularities reported were unusually low for the size of the organization and activities undertaken. There was no research/ science related misconduct reported despite this being the core business of CGIAR.

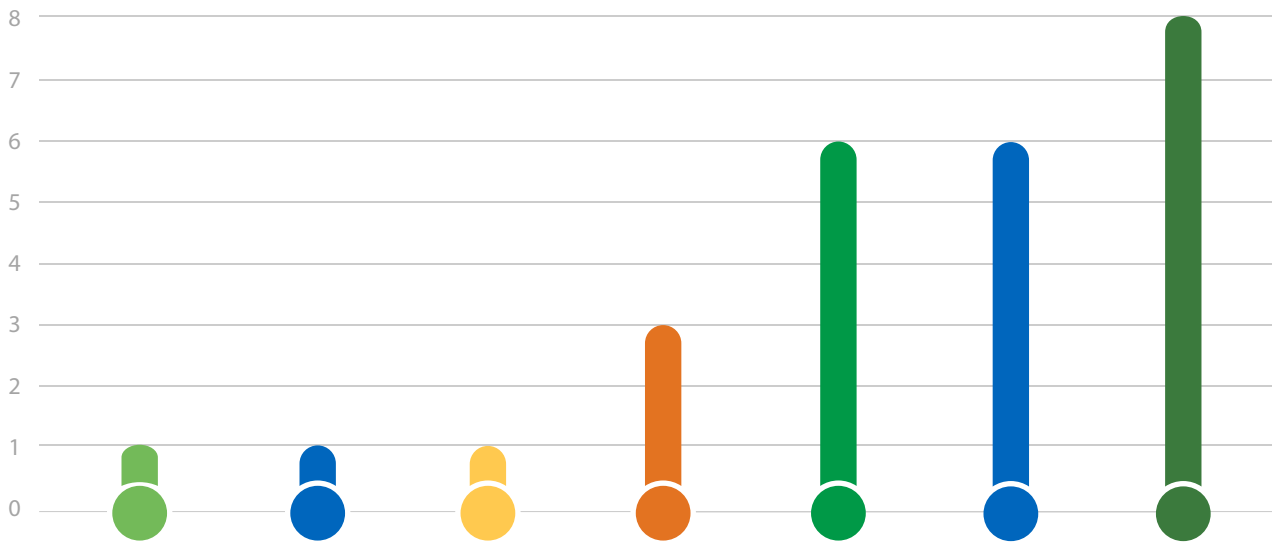
Typology of Reports



44. The gender of the subjects did not have a significant variance with the male subjects representing 38% whereas the female subjects were at 31%. In 19% of the cases, there were more than one subjects from different genders:



45. The majority of the subjects were senior management staff as represented below. These were members of Centre Senior Leadership/ Management Teams coming from 5 different entities:



Seniority of subjects

- Board Member
- Other External Associate
- Regional Office
- Unknown
- Staff
- Various/Mixed
- Senior Management



46. Below is a summary of the case activity during the year:

Stage	#of cases	Total
Cases from Prior Period	3	
Complaints received during the year	26	
Caseload		29
Closed Cases:		(18)
At preliminary assessment stage (Not warranting an investigation/ referred to outside EBC)	12	
After investigation	6	
Open Cases:		(11)
At Intake phase	6	
Finalized preliminary assessment and awaiting INV field work	3	
Referred to Center	2	

47. **Standard of Proof:** Other than the two entities¹² which subscribed to the International Labour Organization Administrative Tribunal (ILOAT), no other Center has codified its standard of proof in its policies. From a quick survey to understand the standard practice applied by the Centers, EBC noted that Centers utilized all available options in the spectrum, from balance of probabilities to beyond reasonable doubt, but in our view, mostly relying on balance of probabilities or clear and convincing. In the absence of a One CGIAR Internal Justice System, most CGIAR staff would therefore seek redress for any grievances through the local courts.

48. **During the past year, EBC has faced two significant hurdles in trying to undertake its investigative mandate:**

- EBC's mandate and authority has been put into question by some Center Management and Boards who have stated that there is currently no common Ethics Framework/protocol in place. These Centers do not believe CGIAR system-wide policies are applicable and as such EBC does not have the authority to investigate allegations of misconduct.
- Some Centers have accepted EBC's mandate to oversee the investigative work, (where EBC references the applicable legal norms from both the Center's policy framework and the CGIAR system-wide Ethics Policies.) However, in one instance, on issuance of the final investigation report, the Center highlighted that it had not adopted the CGIAR system-wide Ethics Policies according to its internal governing documents, and thus were not bound to respond by its internal rules.

49. This is an example of the disconnect between investigations/disciplinary processes that can arise. EBC is keen on driving consistency of sanction(s)/ action(s) across CGIAR and the transparent reporting on both investigations and outcomes to our key stakeholders, including the System Board and System Council.

Due to the limited resources, EBC utilized the services of external consultants in carrying out its investigations. To ensure that confidential information is exchanged securely and efficiently, EBC is in the process of developing an investigations portal where access is restricted and secure with consultants who will be working on the cases. EBC also envisages that this portal will have the capability to provide informational dashboards to business users at different levels (Center, System Organization or the Board) to be kept abreast of key information of interest.

¹²Only Bioversity International and the CGIAR System Organization have subscribed to the ILOAT.

RESEARCH ETHICS

- 50. EBC is in the process of recruiting a Senior Research Ethics Officer under the One CGIAR structure and it expects that the incumbent will support both the advisory and investigation mandate of the office. This position will work closely with Institutional Research Ethics Committees (IRECs) / Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) at the Center level.
- 51. EBC carried out general awareness sessions on Research Ethics in October 2022 in Vietnam, Malaysia and Sri Lanka at Word Fish, the Alliance Bioversity International/CIAT and IWMI offices. In January 2023, EBC held a session on Ethics and Research at ICARDA, in Egypt and Morocco. Additional CGIAR Centers have also reached out to EBC with requests to have awareness session that touch on Ethics and Research on human subjects.
- 52. In June 2023, EBC virtually took part in the World Conferences in Research Integrity (WCRI) symposium that discussed on research integrity matters with the key aim of discussing about responsible research conduct and fostering the exchange of information. The discussion touched on research outputs, outcomes, and impact vis-à-vis the funder/ funding expectations.
- 53. There have been requests to the office that touch on current research related matters such as the use of Artificial Intelligence and the potential ethical dilemmas that this presents.
- 54. EBC is in the process of developing a Research Ethics portal which will bring together the various experts from the Centers to be able to collaborate and exchange knowledge with colleagues from across the entire CGIAR system.

RESEARCH ETHICS: WHY COMPLY?

Why Comply?

- Helps deliver on our mission — no poverty, no hunger & no environmental degradation
- Builds up our productivity, morale
- Enhances reputation and trust
- Increases likelihood of more partners and resources

Why Comply?

- Makes us accountable to:
 - Beneficiaries for expected outputs and outcomes
 - Funders for efficient resources use
- Because we want to be good and behave well!

Risks of non-compliance

- Injured organizational reputation and self reputation
- Ruined careers
- Lawsuits
- Criminal charges or fines
- Fraud and scandals
- Wasted time and resources
- Recruiting difficulties
- Low morale



SUSTAINABILITY

We plan responsibly for the long-term, and are committed to environmental, social and economic food security, safety and global prosperity.



LIVING
CGIAR
VALUES

ENVIRONMENT, SOCIAL, AND GOVERNANCE (ESG)

55. CGIAR does not start from zero on the ESG journey. Indeed, there are components of ESG that are well advanced at CGIAR. These include, but are not limited to:

- Several CGIAR Centers signing the UN Global Compact and are starting to take active measures to reduce their carbon footprints in particular,
- Incredible work of CGIAR's Gender Diversity & Inclusion function,
- Work by EBC and Internal Audit related to anti-corruption, safeguarding, and more, and
- Work by Procurement and others to start to identify supply chain and third-party risks.

56. EBC continued to meet monthly with a working group, with a view to describe and explore (ESG) related questions in the broader context of CGIAR and give understanding of the complexity surrounding this crucial area.

57. As a result of these meetings, EBC put forward a white paper to the One CGIAR Senior Leadership Team to highlight key questions and propose a path to start to address them:

- What are One CGIAR's strategic objectives toward ESG factors?
- Considering increasing public expectations, what is CGIAR doing to manage the risks and opportunities related to ESG factors?
- What additional actions can be done to improve CGIAR's ESG position and what resources financial, physical, human, etc. – would be needed to do this?
- Does One CGIAR communicate and report on ESG factors on a consistent basis? How do we better highlight the existing ESG-related work across CGIAR internally – from reducing carbon emissions to big improvements in GDI to ethics and governance work – and incorporate these into a more robust ESG "story"?
- How do we leverage that ESG story to seek additional funding resources and opportunities?

58. EBC has developed a dedicated ESG page on its new website, to capture many of the progress on ESG related matters both at Centers and across CGIAR.

59. CGIAR should formalize the already undertaken ESG efforts, while expanding on them and filling gaps, and making sure we can have a real ESG story to tell our funders (including the community we serve and employees) based on a chosen set of criteria.

60. ESG shouldn't be "owned" by EBC but should likely fall into a cross-cutting team ideally lead by a full-time staff member links to Finance and Operations, EBC and People & Culture.

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

61. CGIAR WIDE INTERNAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

To consider the possible development of a CGIAR-wide internal justice and dispute resolution system, as a first step, EBC engaged the services of a subject expert to participate in discussions with key stakeholders. A report presenting variable approaches to develop such a system in line with best practices for international organizations was shared with several Communities of Practice within CGIAR.

Based on the information examined, specifically the challenges in navigating the current landscape of legal and employment arrangements at Center level, the report concludes that a centralized or even regional approach within the CGIAR System for resolution of employment disputes would be difficult to achieve, given the country-specific differences arising from the overlap of domestic law. There is however a shared recognition among stakeholders of the need to work towards harmonization.

62. CGIAR INTERNAL REDRESS MECHANISM

Within the context of implementation of an Internal Redress Mechanism at CGIAR level, an agreement was signed in September 2022 between the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and CGIAR System Organization, setting out the terms and conditions for the use of GCF resources and formalizing CGIAR System Organization's accountability in carrying out GCF-approved projects appropriately.

As a fully accredited entity, the CGIAR System Organization through EBC will be seeking guidance from the GCF and attend a set of dedicated webinars in September and October 2023, where the requirements for establishing and operating an effective Internal Redress Mechanism will be discussed with experts and industry leaders. With this objective in mind, a plan of action adhering to best practice will be submitted to management by the end of the year.



OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

With the One CGIAR transition, and the workforce and global presence growing, the fostering of an organizational culture of ethics and accountability requires consistent promotion. EBC continued to nurture a culture of ethics and integrity across CGIAR and to work to prevent, mitigate and manage ethical and reputational risks. Progress continued to be made in all areas of its mandate, with a focus on shifting towards a more field-based and proactive approach to addressing and resolving ethical issues.

EBC wishes to draw attention to some observations – that concern the following areas: protection against retaliation, organizational conflict of interest, accountability, and speak-up culture.

CGIAR is exposed to further reputational and organizational risks without a system-wide Conflict of Interest policy and a Financial Disclosure Programme especially in CGIAR's current Governance landscape.

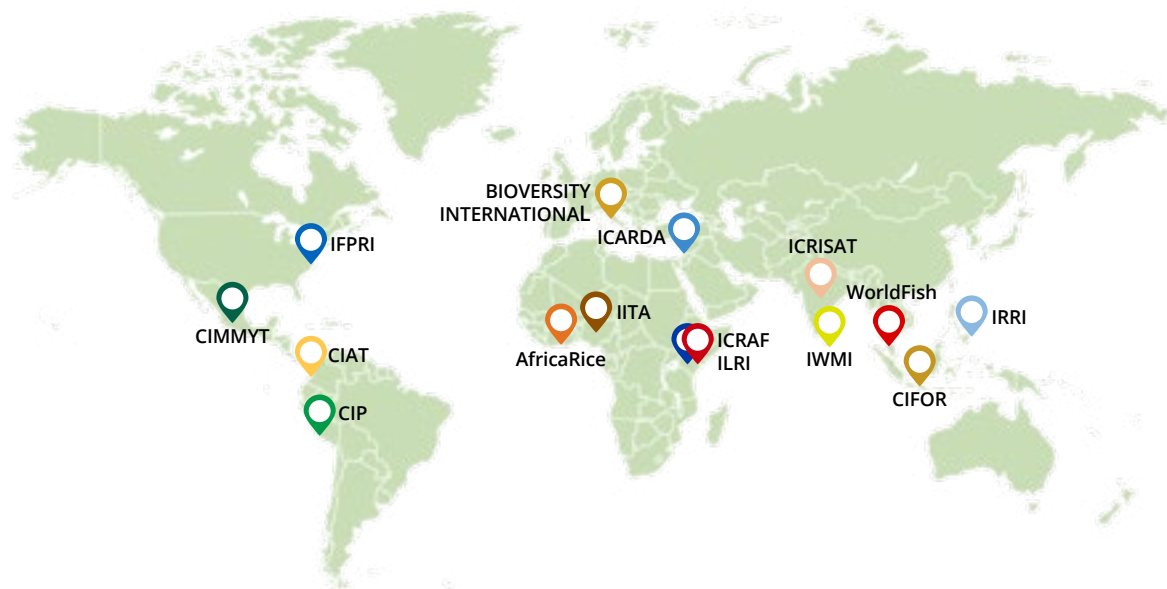
EBC continues to work closely with internal stakeholders such as P&C and Legal to identify solutions to legacy issues, on policy development and outreach. EBC is working towards pushing for a culture that accepts active bystander intervention. Inappropriate behaviour must be addressed, even if not directly called out, before it escalates, and colleagues need to know they are supported. Active bystander intervention can further help address instances of discrimination and it is EBC's consideration that further efforts should be made to help CGIAR staff across the world develop the needed capacities to speak-up and to intervene when they witness such behaviour.

Lastly, with the onboarding of a Senior Research Ethics officer, EBC will be able to provide focused advice on guidance on Research Ethics related matters – which will most likely raise awareness and contribute to the report of researched focus misconduct.

Today, research and innovation in food, land and water systems are crucial for a sustainable, climate-resilient world free from hunger and malnutrition. To continue to focus its mandate on food security and deliver science, CGIAR needs the people it assists, its funders, its partners, and the public at large **to trust it and all its employees.**

EBC will use the observations above to inform its priorities of work in the short and longer terms.

ANNEX I: CGIAR RESEARCH CENTERS



The Africa Rice Center (AfricaRice)



Bioversity International



The International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT)



The Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR)



The International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT)



The International Potato Center (CIP)



The International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA)



The International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT)



The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)



The International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA)



The International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) Ethics at ILRI



The International Rice Research Institute



The International Water Management Institute (IWMI)



World Agroforestry (ICRAF)



WorldFish
WorldFish

ANNEX II: OMBUDSPERSON SERVICES

The Ombuds Office was initiated as a pilot program by EBC. An advertisement for the vacancy of the Ombudsperson (“Ombuds”) was published in January 2022. In May 2022, Dr. Anu Rao was appointed on a renewable temporary contract, and has been extended every six months since December 2022. The Ombuds currently provides services for one to two days per month.

The Ombuds reports to the Director of EBC for administrative purposes. The Ombuds provides a service that is confidential, impartial, informal, neutral, and independent when facilitating discussions with its visitors on resolving workplace conflicts. This section of the annual report covers the limited engagement of the Ombuds in CGIAR in the period from August 2022 to July 2023.

Core Principles of the Organizational Ombuds:

An organizational Ombuds is appointed to assist individuals and groups employed in the organization to resolve problems on an informal basis. The Ombuds is guided by the Principles and Standards of Practice of the International Ombudsman Association (IOA): confidentiality, independence, neutrality and impartiality, and informality.

- **Confidential:** Services provided to individuals are held in strict confidence and will not be shared with other parties unless permission is given or there is an imminent risk of harm. Information on individuals will not be disclosed.
- **Impartial:** The Ombuds is neutral and impartial and will not advocate on behalf of any individual within the organization. The Ombuds advocates for a fair process.
- **Independent:** The Ombuds is expected to report to the highest possible authority of the organization and is independent from other organizational entities and functions.
- **Informal:** Discussions between the Ombuds and the visitor are “off the record” and will not be part of the staff member’s records. The Ombuds will not participate in any formal procedures, such as investigations or grievance hearings.

The organizational Ombuds provides feedback on systemic issues and trends. It is expected that the leadership and management will provide information for informal dispute resolution and referral to Ombuds resources, facilitate informal dispute resolution, and participate in mediation when needed.

Implementation of the Role and Functions:

The first outreach presentation of the Ombuds took place through videotaped interview with the Ombuds jointly hosted by the EBC and CGIAR’s Communications & Outreach unit. The Ombuds began to receive calls and requests for services after the presentation took place.

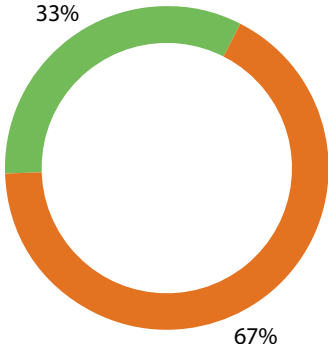
Each person who called to inquire or require the Ombuds services was presented with the IOA standards of practice. The Ombuds begins with listening to each person’s issues to understand and explore through dialogue to review suitable approaches and options to resolve the presented problem. Such options include coaching to improve conflict management, shuttling diplomacy for parties to engage to clarify and communicate mutual needs and facilitating mediation between parties. The Ombuds has also provided feedback to Management on any systemic trends and critical issues.

The Ombuds has received feedback from visitors on the use of coaching as a useful method. Several of the visitors found they have been able to freely discuss their organizational and leadership conflicts, while reflecting through their options with a confidential and independent resource.

Overview of Cases:

During the pilot period from September 2022 to May 2023, there was a total of 27 visitors who sought the services of the Ombuds. This would make about less than 1% of the total number of personnel across CGIAR and research Centers.¹³

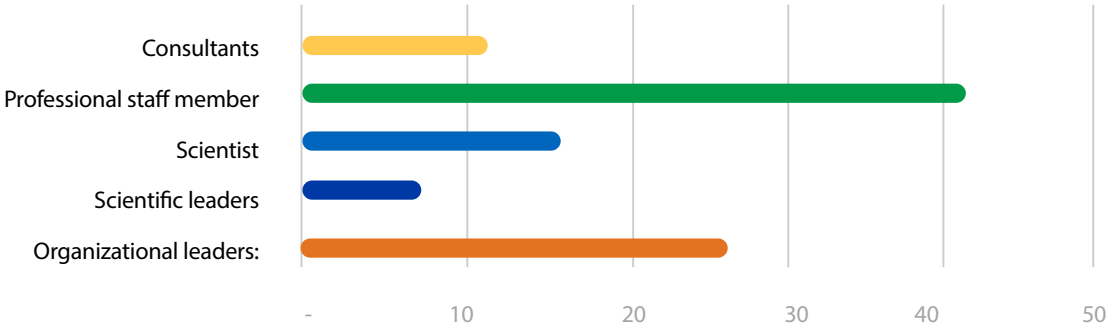
Some visitors have raised an issue of gender bias in the workplace, such as feeling excluded or underutilized.



Visitors by gender

- Female
- Male

Visitors by employment types



The Ombuds recorded data on the employment titles of its visitors from the CGIAR System Organization and Centers. A total of 67 per cent of visitors were in non-leadership positions.

It is important to note the distribution of visitors by CGIAR and its Centers. Apart from CGIAR System Organization personnel, only visitors from 7 out of the 15 Centers, in addition to those from the CGIAR System Organization, reached out to the Ombuds. This equates to less than 50% of the total number of Centers. It is therefore critical to understand the reach of the Ombuds during this pilot period.

Implementing outreach activities of the Ombuds will result in increasing awareness of its role and functions in conflict resolution to all CGIAR Centers worldwide.

¹³It is important to note that these are cases being tracked across CGIAR, but does not necessarily mean CGIAR Ethics was the lead or involved in the resolution.



Issues Presented to the Ombuds Office:

Visitors have reported concerns regarding the following issues:

- Unfair employment practices such as unfair recruitment practices, allegations of harassment and abuse of authority in denial of leave or scientific privileges;
- Gender bias in exclusion, marginalization, and underutilization of staff expertise;
- Toxic behaviors such as rudeness and domination by managers;
- Lack of accountability by leadership;
- Inequity in research by denial of appropriated funding;
- Fear of retaliation by research and non-research staff.

Reflections and Recommendations:

The Ombuds found that the CGIAR leadership and management of People & Culture was welcoming and supportive of its services. Since the data is small and covers the pilot phase of the Ombuds, the Ombuds did not make sweeping generalizations regarding the systemic issues.

The Ombuds provides the following recommendations:

- i. It is recommended that CGIAR should create a fully independent Ombuds Office which reports to the highest authority of the organization, namely the Executive Managing Director. The office should adopt the Standards of Practice and Ethics of the International Ombudsman Association.
- ii. The Ombuds position needs to expand their duties and transition into a full-time position.
- iii. The Ombuds should conduct outreach presentations at the CGIAR Centers and provide training sessions for managers on conflict resolution to prevent escalation of conflict.

CGIAR would also need to assess whether the Ombuds services should become part of a broader CGIAR Internal Justice Services (IJS) function, that could provide staff support ranging from counseling to formal review of concerns to preserve fairness in the workplace.

It is also recommended for the Ombuds to expand their duties and transition into a full-time position. The expansion will allow the Ombuds to expand their duties in outreach activities to raise awareness and introduce their functions across CGIAR and Centers worldwide. Such duties would include conducting listening sessions at each Center to broaden the visibility of the Ombuds Office and its core functions.

Further expansion of the Ombuds role would also enable conducting training sessions for personnel, including managers, in conflict resolution approaches to prevent escalation of workplace conflicts.

ANNEX III: COMPENDIUM OF CASES

#	Region	Case Description	Status
1	West and Central Africa (WCA)	A report was made with allegations of sexual exploitation by senior program staff (exchange of sexual favours for benefits, contracts, resources, etc. and employment of female sex workers). There were further allegations of sexual harassment and abuse of authority.	CLOSED
2	Europe	A senior staff member was alleged to be in an undeclared romantic relationship with a direct subordinate resulting in a conflict of interest.	CLOSED
3	South Asia (SA)	A complainant reached out requesting for an update on earlier reported allegations of asset misappropriation and harassment concerning a Center's partner.	CLOSED
4	West and Central Africa (WCA)	Allegations of harassment were looked into by the Center.	CLOSED
5	Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)	Issues of potential conflict of interest by a senior staff member in a procurement process.	PENDING
6	East and Southern Africa (ESA)	Multiple allegations reported to EBC both via lighthouse and via the ethics email on issues of harassment by multiple senior staff at the regional level and asset misappropriation by senior staff in the region.	PENDING
7	Central and West Asia and North Africa (CWANA)	Whistleblowing to both the CGIAR hotline and the Center hotline alleging harassment, abuse of authority and sexist behaviour of a senior staff member.	CLOSED
8	South Asia (SA)	A consultant was alleged to have been harassing staff at the country office.	CLOSED
9	West and Central Africa (WCA)	Email to ethics inbox with allegations of asset misappropriation and nepotism in one country office.	PENDING
10	South Asia (SA)	Report on sexual assault by a fellow staff member was reported to EBC and this was referred to the Center/ victim to report this as a criminal matter in the country where the incident took place.	CLOSED
11	West and Central Africa (WCA)	Complaint was made on asset misappropriation, conflict of interest and financial statement fraud by one of the partners in the region.	PENDING
12	West and Central Africa (WCA)	A staff member reported to have been dismissed unfairly during the restructuring process in the Center. This was allegedly seen as a retaliatory act by the Center management for previously having questioned management's decisions.	CLOSED
13	Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)	Center referred to EBC allegations of harassment, abuse of authority and engaging in an undeclared romantic relationship with a direct subordinate by a senior staff member in the office.	CLOSED
14	South Asia (SA)	A staff member alleged to be harassed by the country manager and had caused a delay in renewal of his contract.	CLOSED

15	Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)	During a business trip, one staff member alleged to have been sexually assaulted by a colleague on the same trip.	CLOSED
16	Central and West Asia and North Africa (CWANA)	Staff located in a high-risk security country reported to both EBC and the Center stating that they were not being adequately supported to relocate out of the country.	CLOSED
17	Europe	An applicant alleged to have been discriminated on the basis of her gender and nationality by a recruiting manager.	CLOSED
18	South Asia (SA)	A former staff reported instances of asset misappropriation and nepotism at the office which were not comprehensively looked into and later led to his employment contract being terminated.	CLOSED
19	South Asia (SA)	Multiple reports made through different channels alleging harassment, bullying, abuse of authority and engagement of an undeclared romantic relationship by the two senior most staff in the office.	PENDING
20	Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)	A board member and a senior staff member were alleged to have harassed, bullied, discriminated against some senior staff members by abusing their authority.	PENDING
21	East and Southern Africa (ESA)	Employment benefits were not uniformly applied to staff at the same grade in the same office.	CLOSED
22	Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)	Whilst conducting another investigation, EBC opened a case into a witness who was alleged to be in an undeclared romantic relationship with her direct supervisor.	CLOSED
23	West and Central Africa (WCA)	The Center sought advice from EBC on an investigation they had conducted and substantiated an allegation of theft by an employee.	CLOSED
24	Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)	A senior staff member was promoted to a higher global role despite numerous harassment allegations against him.	PENDING
25	South Asia (SA)	A staff member was dismissed based on an investigation conducted by the Center where he claims that the due process was not followed i.e., he was not notified of the allegations against him, he did not see the investigation report and not given a chance to be heard by the disciplinary committee.	PENDING
26	South Asia (SA)	A former staff member who had been dismissed during an ongoing investigation where he was named a subject was being considered for a position in another CGIAR Center.	PENDING
27	East and Southern Africa (ESA)	Through what he terms as a harshly worded e-mail, a staff member in one Center claimed to have been harassed by another CGIAR staff member.	CLOSED
28	Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)	Members of a department alleged that the unit head harassed them and when reported through the Center channels, the unit head retaliated against the staff who made the report.	PENDING
29	Europe	Potential harassment/discrimination and abuse of authority against the complainant by the immediate supervisor.	PENDING



CGIAR is a global research partnership for a food-secure future. CGIAR science is dedicated to reducing poverty, enhancing food and nutrition security, and improving natural resources and ecosystem services. Its research is carried out by 15 CGIAR Research Centers in close collaboration with hundreds of partners, including national and regional research institutes, civil society organizations, academia, development organizations and the private sector.

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