Cali, 14 August 2015

Leveraging CGIAR Data: Bringing big data to agriculture, and agriculture to big data

Dear Frank,

It gives me great pleasure to submit CIAT’s Expression of Interest to lead the ICT and Big Data Cross-Cutting Platform in response to the CGIAR Phase 2 portfolio call. CIAT has a rich history of big data thinking and data science that predates the concept of big data itself. We firmly believe that CGIAR needs to seek new external partnerships to deliver on the promise that ICTs and big data present to the delivery of the goals outlined in the CGIAR Strategy and Results Framework. As a result, we have assembled a tremendous consortium of partners, which includes the private sector (e.g., IBM, Novogene, and Batelle Memorial Institute), university centers of excellence (e.g., University of Florida, Purdue, Michigan State, and King’s College London), research institutes (e.g., CSIRO, IIASA, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, and Rothamsted), innovation hubs in the North and South (e.g., DataPop Alliance, Bayes Impact, and AkiraChix), and development actors (e.g., World Bank and UN Global Pulse).

This Expression of Interest focuses on enhancing CGIAR’s capacity to deliver big data analytics and ICT-focused solutions and is structured around 3 major areas: (1) organize and promote collaboration internally within the CGIAR and leverage external partnerships to enhance CGIAR capacity; (2) increase the visibility of CGIAR big data analytics and ICT-based initiatives in new collaborative spaces; (3) generate integrative, collaborative big data analytics around core themes in the CGIAR SRF.

At this stage of the process, we have outlined the vision of the platform. If selected, we would invite all CGIAR centers and CRPs to participate in the co-development of a full proposal. CIAT has a strong track record as an organization that is capable of creating such multi-center partnerships, with inclusive governance and management arrangements.

On behalf of all partners, we thank you for the opportunity to submit this EoI, and we look forward to hearing the results of the review.

Best regards,

Ruben Echeverria
Director General, CIAT