

Agenda for Methodology Review 2016/2017

General

- *Focus research:* Use this baseline to bring more focus in measurement areas and reduce the number of indicators using this focus. Gather more quantitative data for company score cards and best practices.
- *Expand regional Index:* Expand the regional Index to other regions; insights at regional industry level really adds value and for these companies there is a stake to perform well in the Index.
- *Incentivize companies as guiding principle:* Insights is nice, change is better: focus indicators, areas, weights on aspects of company behavior where change is needed. Delete aspects that are nice to know but not essential for change or not directly linked to the role of companies.

In detail

- *Impact and quality:* The 2016 Index is very qualitative which works well for a baseline. The next Index should dig deeper on impact, quality of products and should find ways to cross check data provided by the companies.
- *Less is more:* Most interesting are the company scorecards and best practices. Consider how to get better descriptions of the best practices (less qualitative).
- *Regional Index most interesting:* explore feasibility of expanding the Regional Index to other regions as it provides unique insights and regional companies have an interest in performing well in the ranking.
- *Negative scoring:* Consider 'negative scoring' based on a (non-exhaustive) list of adverse company practices, such as restrictive practices. Challenge is to find evidence that can be used for the assessment.
- *Business vs CSR:* The report mentions regularly the difference between business practices and CSR activities. More clarity is needed how the Index takes these differences in account.
- *Market opportunities:* Consider to give more attention to the context of what drives company choices, which is more than enabling environment. Also aspects like market concentration, the role of governments and the seed replacement rate.
- *Innovation:* redefine criteria for scoring on innovation indicators. For instance: new practices that really make a change on ground level. Consider renaming this category, based on the criteria, to prevent misunderstanding in the industry.

Index principles

- *Multiple seed systems:* provide more clarity in the indicators on what is expected from companies in relation to the informal seed sector. The Index is about access to quality seeds. Physiological seed quality may sometimes be more important than improved genetics.
- *Sustainable intensification:* The role of the companies regarding this principle does not come forward very well in the report. Consider a technical advisory group on how this can be better translated into indicators.

Company scope

- *Reconsider selection criteria for global field crop companies:* Index has little incentive for companies without business activities targeting smallholder farmers in Index countries (Limagrain, KWS, Dow).
- *Higher number of global companies:* The number of companies should be higher, unless lowering the threshold would only result in adding companies without activities targeting smallholder farmers in Index countries. Take into consideration to combine field crop and vegetable seed companies at a global level.
- *Global Index as result of Regional Indexes:* consider building global rankings out of regional data. This would mean that regional methodologies should be more aligned and less tailored to each region.

Crop scope



- *Broadening crop scope*: consider adding crops like mustard, pulses, sunflower, sesame to the crop scope of regional indexes, depending on regional consultations
- *Non-food crops*: consider adding cotton for regional Index for Asia as it is a main component of the business model of smallholders and regional seed companies (Some ERC members would prefer to stay with food crops).
- *Potato*: consult with CIP on how to include the potato in the Index (case studies or potato company Index?).

Measurement areas

- *Regrouping*: consider combining 'Governance & Strategy' and 'Public Policy & Stakeholder Engagement'. Consider splitting up 'Genetic Resources & IP'; look into how to cover PVP/IP discussion in IP area.
- *Increase focus of areas*: strengthen the focus of each area with more clarity on what is expected from companies, provide clear guidance to companies and reduce the number of indicators according to this focus. Currently it is not clear how focus areas in the measurement areas link with the scores and Index.
- *Link commitment and strategy*: Increase link between commitment and performance categories, cross checking the extent to which companies are doing what they are saying (as a way to start measuring actual impact).
- *Redefine local seed sector advancement*: It is deemed extremely important that companies not just bring products but have activities in the region as well. Current indicators are too vague and have too much overlap with other areas.
- *Traits for smallholders*: consider drawing up a list of traits that are relevant for smallholder farmers that should be addressed in breeding programs (in measurement area R&D).
- *Marketing & Sales*: consider to focus this area on distribution: what are companies doing to get the seeds to the farmers in time?

Weighting

- *Higher weight to areas with low scores*: consider attaining higher weights to areas, like capacity building and local seed sector advancement, where limited activities were found to encourage companies to do more in these areas.
- *Keep higher weight for performance*: make sure that the higher weight on performance is not neutralized by a high number of indicators in this category.
