

Authorship/Coauthorship Guidelines (from HR Policy Manual)

POLICY:

208.1 Authorship Philosophy. The appropriate recognition of authorship is integral to the intellectual integrity of research carried out at IFPRI. Authorship of research is often an important component of staff work plans and can be an important factor in appointment renewal and promotion. At IFPRI, multiple authorship is appreciated and no special recognition for single authorship is given in performance assessment. Special attention to inclusion of developing-country research partners that have substantially contributed along the lines mentioned below is called for at the Institute.

Members of a research team are expected to discuss the issue of authorship before research is undertaken and written up. This discussion should lead to a clear understanding of planned research outputs, the allocation of tasks, and what is required of co-authors on each paper. It is the explicit responsibility of the project leader to develop a work plan that reflects this.

Credit for authorship should be based on the criteria described below. Project leaders should be cognizant of the value that IFPRI places on meaningful collaboration, including co-authorship, with researchers in developing countries. Senior researchers should remember their responsibility to help junior researchers develop professionally; providing opportunities for co-authorship is one means of achieving this. The allocation of tasks and authorship may well change as a project unfolds. When this occurs, the project leader should meet with the team to discuss and reallocate tasks and authorship as needed.

208.2 Criteria for Authorship. Given the variety of research produced at IFPRI, there can be no single formula that determines what constitutes a substantive contribution.

Substantive contributions to the following represent activities that merit consideration of co-authorship or some form of attribution: (a) Defining the research question to be addressed; (b) the development of: theoretical models; conceptual frameworks; data collection instruments or questionnaires or methodologies; analytical techniques; mathematical or statistical programs; (c) the collection of data, including – but not limited to – new information such as that obtained from a quantitative or qualitative survey or the collation of data found in secondary sources; (d) analysis of these data; (e) interpretation of findings, broadly defined so as to include insights based on theory or knowledge of the local context; or (f) writing the paper.

It remains a collegial judgment call whether a strong contribution to one of the above or some contributions across several of the above establishes consideration of co-authorship. If two of the above are covered, this typically establishes a case for co-authorship. In addition to these activities, co-authorship requires that an individual explicitly approves the version to be published.

Authorship is not justified solely because someone has provided funding, conducted interviews, offered logistical and administrative support, submitted a few comments or suggestions, or provided general supervision of a research group. Honorary authorship is unacceptable.

Individuals who have contributed to the work but are not authors should be mentioned in the “Acknowledgements”, where their contribution is described (e.g., they were enumerators, managed surveys, reviewed or edited the paper, provided guidance on statistical analysis, supervised the research, or provided funding). Whenever possible, IFPRI staff should acknowledge the source of the funding for the research, including contributions of unrestricted donors.

208.3 Resolution of Authorship Disputes. Disputes should initially be handled informally within the project team. If not resolved satisfactorily within the project team, the Division Director(s) will meet with the project team to air, address and attempt to mediate the authorship dispute. If desired by any of the parties, the Head of Human Resources will facilitate the mediation, chairing the meeting, but not taking part in the judging of the issue. If the authorship dispute remains unresolved, the Director General will be the final arbiter. After consultation with the project team to review and discuss the issues, the Director General will make the final decision. The Director General may appoint an ad hoc committee to serve as advisors.