

Communicating research results

Funding

	\$m
2008–09 actual	0.80
2009–10 budget allocation	0.72
2010–11 budget estimate	0.75

Position

The *Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research Act 1982* commits ACIAR to communicating the results and impacts of the research it funds. Responsibility for delivering on this commitment is held by the Communications and Public Affairs Program. This program works to communicate these results to a wide range of stakeholders through the most appropriate media and channels.

Outcomes of ACIAR-funded research are delivered to targeted next-user groups through a number of mechanisms, including print and electronic publishing and media campaigns. This includes production of a wide range of practical 'how-to' guides, and reference and technical material, in both print and electronic form (depending on end-user needs). All ACIAR publications are available on the ACIAR website (<www.aciar.gov.au>).

ACIAR's scientific publications series presents the outcomes of projects as monographs, proceedings and technical reports. Other publications that report research outcomes or impacts include country profiles, brochures, training manuals, impact assessment reports, adoption studies and project final reports, which are published on the website. Research outcomes are also disseminated to end-user groups through a variety of channels, including *Partners in Research for Development* magazine, training programs, online publication repositories and the website.

A suite of corporate publications complements dissemination of research outcomes. *Partners in Research for Development* magazine is the flagship corporate publication, communicating the benefits of ACIAR's research to a wide range of audiences, and conveying the partnership mode of operation. Other corporate publications include annual operational plans, corporate plans and annual reports.

ACIAR's website is the primary source for individuals and organisations wanting to access information about ACIAR and its work. Comprehensive and accessible information about ACIAR's programs and projects, including country strategies and priorities, project summaries, progress reports, final reports, impact assessments and other evaluation studies, is available. Research outcomes are published in the form of free downloadable electronic publications and there is an online shopping facility for purchase of hard copies. Hard-copy publications are available free of charge to developing-country partners. ACIAR is also trialling a new e-magazine version of *Partners in Research for Development* on the website.

Public awareness activities promote agricultural research as part of Australia's aid program. The program works closely with the Crawford Fund facilitating media coverage in Australia and overseas, including through support of journalist visits to ACIAR-supported projects. In addition, the program provides support to program managers, project leaders, project partners and the seven ACIAR country offices in key partner countries, including advice on strategic communications and communication tools, products and practitioners.

The program is responsible for production of the ACIAR Annual Report, the Annual Operational Plan, the Corporate Plan and various corporate communications and marketing activities.

The program also works closely with the Information Management and IT Services Unit to link project teams together through the development and delivery of appropriate information and communication technology solutions.

Priorities

- » Enhance dissemination and adoption of results of ACIAR-funded work through publishing information (12–16 new titles each year) on outcomes and impacts of ACIAR-funded projects
- » Integrate appropriate technology options to enhance accessibility, search functionality and design improvements for the ACIAR website as part of a website strategy that supports and encourages project and stakeholder collaboration and interaction
- » Publish *Partners in Research for Development* magazine three times per year
- » Participate in targeted public awareness initiatives and strategic communications activities after ‘initiatives such as the annual Crawford Fund seminar; publication and project launches; targeted advertising and sponsorship; and media releases, media liaison and journalist visits
- » Work with country offices on development of communication strategies and tools for partner countries, for example bilingual publications and newsletters, public diplomacy programs, media monitoring, and liaison and training

Key performance indicators (2010–11)

- » Information on program and project achievements and impacts is widely available in print and web-based media
- » Evidence is available of continuing demand for and appreciation of ACIAR’s scientific and corporate publications
- » Targeted stakeholder groups have received information that meets their identified needs
- » ACIAR’s use of information and communication methods and technologies for disseminating agricultural research information for development is consistent with current Australian Government better practice guides

Program management

TBA, Manager, Communications and Public Affairs

Ms Georgina Hickey, Manager, Publications

Mr Warren Page, Science Communicator