



Australian Government

**Australian Centre for
International Agricultural Research**

Impact of the John Allwright Fellowship Scheme – Survey Report

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The Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) operates as part of Australia's international development cooperation program, with a mission to achieve more productive and sustainable agricultural systems, for the benefit of developing countries and Australia. It commissions collaborative research between Australian and developing country researchers in areas where Australia has special research competence. It also administers Australia's contribution to the International Agricultural Research Centres, conducts and funds training related to its projects, and communicates the outputs and outcomes of its activities.

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Executive summary

ACIAR currently invests \$1.5–1.6 million annually on John Allwright Fellowships (JAF)—awards for postgraduate study in Australia by scientists involved in active ACIAR projects. Applications are highly competitive, with 40–60 applicants annually competing for 8–12 awards. In mid-2004 there were just under 50 Fellows undertaking awards.

In July 1998 ACIAR commissioned an external review of its training program. Review Chairman was Professor Lindsay Falvey of the University of Melbourne. Several of its recommendations relating either directly or indirectly to the JAF awards were accepted and have been implemented by ACIAR since 1999. These include:

- increasing the number of postgraduate fellowships
- focusing training on the needs of partner countries with the lowest research capacity
- widening of fellowship modes to include options for conduct of much of the fieldwork in-country
- closer alignment of fellowship selections with medium-term research program strategies
- stronger linkages to Fellows both during and after their fellowship, including:
 - 1) all Fellows attend one or two meetings at ACIAR Headquarters during their time in Australia;
 - 2) initiation of a funding facility to support small projects for Fellows after they return to their home countries
- greater emphasis on collection and analysis of data on the effectiveness of ACIAR's training programs.

In keeping with the final recommendation, ACIAR conducted a detailed survey of recipients of postgraduate scholarships between January and April 2004. The overall objective of the survey was to evaluate the impact of the program on the awardees and their institutions in terms of employment and career paths, and also to gauge the impact of the former fellows themselves on the research institutions to which they returned and the wider national impacts/leadership by the fellows. Information gained will help to identify options for improving ACIAR's postgraduate awards program. The approach used was to carry out structured, separate interviews of both the former fellows and the Directors of the organisations for which they currently work. The survey covered all former John Allwright Fellows (JAFs) who had successfully completed their degrees and returned to their home countries.

Major findings included:

- The success rate of John Allwright Fellows is very high—91% of those who originally accept an award complete the higher degree.
- Over three-quarters of the Fellows have returned to their original countries and are currently working in a relevant position.
- The majority (80%) of former Fellows have as their current employer the one who released them to undertake the ACIAR fellowship. One of the primary aims of the fellowship, to build capacity in the home country research institutes, has been achieved.

- Almost all (92%) former Fellows regarded their ACIAR fellowship as totally or strongly related to their current employment. Almost all former Fellows (98%) and Directors (96%) agreed that they were now passing on skills and knowledge gained from their fellowship to other staff.
- Most (78%) former Fellows have been promoted since their return from Australia. A large majority (80%) of former Fellows consider their promotion to be totally or strongly related to skills and knowledge gained in their Australian course. Some of the Fellows have proceeded to positions of national influence.
- Almost all (98%) former Fellows were able to undertake the course of their choice and 81% have kept in contact with their supervisors.
- Directors also commented positively on the Australian study—98% expressed extreme/strong satisfaction with the Australian degree, and 94% agreed that the Australian training compared favourably with training offered in other countries.
- Almost all (98%) former Fellows felt that undertaking the fellowship met their expectations. Major benefits, both personally and for their institution, were skills and knowledge gained from the course, development of research skills, personal growth and cultural experience, gaining a qualification and networking. Directors ranked research experience, exposure to scientific methods and specific skills, and knowledge gained from the degree as important benefits.
- Former Fellows provided a variety of suggestions for improvement of the scheme, with the majority wanting more scholarships, more sandwich courses/field work and support for training

networks and professional contacts on return. Directors made similar suggestions but added that in some cases the courses/research projects undertaken needed to be more relevant to the particular developing country. Most of these suggestions have already been addressed by ACIAR over the last 5 years.

Although the results of the survey were extremely positive, it should be recognised that they do not provide a benefit/cost ratio for the investment in the same way that economic impact assessment of projects do. This makes it difficult to judge (using return on investment as a criterion) whether the current level of investment by ACIAR is appropriate or whether it should be increased or decreased.

There are few studies on economic returns of postgraduate study in technological areas. The July 2003 external evaluation of the Cooperative Research Centres Programme by Howard Partners showed that in the period up to June 2002, 2875 postgraduate degrees had been awarded to CRC postgraduate students, and of these 1655 had taken up employment with industry or end-users. An Outcomes Survey showed that 72% of research users were satisfied or very satisfied with the qualities and capabilities of CRC graduates. However, no analysis of the economic returns from the several hundred million dollars invested in their awards was provided. Similarly, the National Health and Medical Research Council Performance Measurement Report 2000–2003 provides information on the numbers of postgraduate awards and their completion rates but no information on economic benefits of postgraduate training. Within the CGIAR, the results of the *Evaluating Capacity Development* project, coordinated by ISNAR, were published in 2003. Although it analyses six case studies in different developing countries, no economic analyses of these case studies were made.

Former ACIAR Fellows: Some success stories



Dr Muharsini Santoso

Dr Muharsini Santoso (Research Institute for Veterinary Science, Bogor, Indonesia) completed her PhD in 2000 at the University of Queensland. Since returning to Indonesia, she has regularly utilised her training in molecular biology and has recently been promoted to Chief of the parasitology group in the Institute. In September 2003, she organised and hosted a major livestock seminar.



Dr Agustina Rahmianna

Dr Agustina Rahmianna (Legume and Tuber Research Institute, Malang, Indonesia)

completed her PhD in 1997 at the University of Queensland. Dr

Rahmianna is the first

and only female PhD in her institute. Since completing her PhD she has been promoted from being an assistant researcher to the Chief of Ecophysiology and Agronomy Research Group. Currently she leads project PHT/1997/017 on reducing aflatoxin in peanuts using agronomic management and bio-control strategies.

Ms Norah Omot (National Agricultural Research Institute, Lae, Papua New Guinea) completed her Master of Agricultural Economics in 2002 at the University of Sydney. Since returning, Ms Omot has had two promotions—from Junior Researcher to Economist and recently to Senior Economist. Currently she leads the IFPRI activity survey on R & D indicators in PNG. Ms Omot was awarded a John Dillon Fellowship by ACIAR and will take up the fellowship in Australia in early 2005.

ACIAR Fellow Success Stories



Mr Nalish Sam with Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr Alexander Downer

Mr Nalish Sam (Forestry Research Institute, Lae, Papua New Guinea) completed his Masters degree in 1995 at James Cook University. He has had two promotions since completing his fellowship, rising from Junior Researcher to Deputy Director of the Forestry Research Institute, and supervises 32 staff. Currently he leads two ACIAR projects—FST/1998/118, *Planning methods for sustainable management of timber stocks in Papua New Guinea's forests* and FST/1998/115, *Domestication of Papua New Guinea's indigenous forest species*. Mr Sam was awarded a John Dillon Memorial Fellowship for 2003, which also assisted him in gaining promotion into a senior management position.

Mr Lauatu Tautea (Cocoa Board, Rabaul, Papua New Guinea) completed his Master of Economics in 1992 at the University of New England. He has had a meteoric rise in his career—from Economist to Senior Economist to Chief Executive Officer of the Cocoa Board, and currently supervises 37 staff. Mr Tautea's studies took his organisation in new directions by adding a market economics emphasis to the Cocoa Board's planning. Currently he is in the process of formulating an economic assessment of smallholder cocoa production in PNG.

ACIAR Fellow Success Stories



Dr Sapit Diloksumpun

Dr Sapit Diloksumpun (National Wild Life and Plant Conservation Department, Bangkok, Thailand) completed her PhD in 2001 at Northern Territory University (now Charles Darwin University). She is one of only three forestry researchers working on tree physiology in Thailand. She has made good progress in her career, gaining two promotions—the second after publication of research articles (one of which was from research sponsored by ACIAR in 2002 under a Fellowship Returnee small project). Currently she leads several research projects on carbon dioxide uptake and production of dry evergreen and mixed deciduous forest ecosystems and on assessment of carbon sequestration of fast growing tree plantations. Dr Sapit is regularly invited to give lectures for undergraduate and postgraduate students of Mahidol and Kasetsart Universities in Bangkok.



Dr Yothin Konboon

Dr Yothin Konboon (Rice Research Institute, Thailand) completed his PhD in Soil Science in 1999 at the University of New England. Dr Yothin

has had two promotions since returning home. The knowledge gained from his study of agronomic practice benefits rice farmers in Thailand and Laos. He has created a weekly forum among researchers for exchange of ideas and information on the progress of research projects. Since maintenance of the fertility of agricultural soils has high priority for the Government, Dr Yothin is frequently invited to provide training courses for Thai and Laos agronomists on nutrient management in rainfed agriculture, and leads participatory research groups with smallholder farmers in Northeast Thailand. This approach aims to provide technology transfer at the grassroots level.



Mr Vichit Sibounheuang

Mr Vichit Sibounheuang (Head of Agricultural Section, Champasak Province, Laos)

completed a Masters degree in Plant Physiology in 2000 at the University of Queensland. Mr Vichit worked as a researcher at Pong Ngam Agricultural Station, Champasak Province, before travelling to Australia. On his return he worked as Head of Research responsible for all research work as well as being involved in ACIAR project CIM/1999/048. Mr Vichit also assisted in training students

from the National University of Laos, Vientiane. Approximately two years after his return he was promoted to Head of the Agricultural Sector, taking responsibility for all crops in the Champasak province. At present Mr Vichit supervises about 147 officers from 10 districts. He is also the Chairman of the Advisory Committee for Rice Research in Pakse and he assists nationally on integrated farming systems, particularly extension work. Mr Vichit stated that working in Australia helped him to gain professional research design skills, access to improved laboratory facilities and a wide range of text books, and good advice from his Australian supervisor. He had gained not only research and leadership skills but also experience in planning and monitoring projects.

Dr Ricardo Cachuela (Department of Agriculture, Manila, Philippines) completed his PhD in 1991 at Monash University. Since receiving his PhD he has been promoted from Supervising Science Research Specialist to Division Chief of Post Harvest and then to an Executive Director of the Department of Agriculture, supervising over 180 staff. At present Dr Cachuela plays a lead role in research, development and extension work in postharvest technologies related to mechanisation and cold chain management of horticultural production at a national level.

Dr Pita Taufatofua (Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries, Nuku’Alofa, Tonga)

completed his PhD in 1994 at the University of Queensland. Dr Taufatofua was the first person to achieve a PhD in Agriculture in Tonga, and quickly was offered the top research job. He was promoted to Head of Agricultural Research and Extension Division with supervision of 80 staff. Prior to the fellowship he supervised about 12 staff. Currently his main activities are administration, policy, planning and finance. He also gives advice to research and extension officers and remains active in leading farmer training programs.

Dr Zhou Changyong (Citrus Research Institute, Chongqing, China)

completed his PhD in 1997 at the University of Sydney. Dr Zhou was promoted by the China Academy of Agricultural Sciences in 2002 to Principal Research Plant Pathologist. Currently he is Director of the Citrus Research Institute and supervises approximately 230 staff. He was awarded a John Dillon Fellowship in 2004, which he intends to take up in February 2005.



**Dr Zhou
Changyong**

Dr Tran Xuan Hanh (National Veterinary Company, NAVETCO, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam)

completed his PhD in 2003 at the University of Queensland. Prior to undertaking the Fellowship, Dr Hanh was the Deputy Director of a research department, but after his return was promoted to Deputy Director of his organisation. Dr Hanh has been passing his skills on to other colleagues and veterinary workers from many provinces across the country. The knowledge gained in his postgraduate study on pasteurellosis in pigs and cattle has been especially useful in research he has been conducting at NAVETCO. Currently he is conducting a small project funded by ACIAR, studying the development of a combined vaccine for *Pasteurella multocida* serotypes B2 and A1, using local Vietnamese strains.

Dr Nguyen Le Hung (Dean, Faculty of Food Science and Technology, Nong-Lam University)

Dr Hung was Vietnam's first John Allwright Fellow, and he completed his PhD in 2000 at the University of New South Wales. He has been promoted twice since his return. Prior to undertaking the fellowship Dr Hung was a lecturer at Nong-Lam University. His PhD was a decisive factor in his promotion to Vice Dean in 2000 and in 2001 to Dean of the Faculty of Food Science and Technology at one of Vietnam's major universities. In his teaching, Dr Hung had many opportunities to pass on the

skills and knowledge gained from his PhD to students at the university. As Dean his responsibilities include developing and directing strategic plans for the faculty. Currently, Dr Hung is leading research projects on evaluation of postharvest technology applied in rice mills in An Giang province, and on needs assessment for postharvest technology in Can Tho province.

Dr Dil Fayaz Khan (North West Frontier Province Agricultural University Peshawar, Pakistan)

completed his PhD in 2001 at the University of Melbourne. Dr Khan conducted a small project funded by ACIAR under the Fellowship Returnee scheme in 2002–03. Due to this Award, the University and Provincial Government are now able to conduct major soil analyses to assess cropping potential and problems. In December 2003, Dr Khan won a national 'Science and Technology Award' for this work. In March 2004 Dr Khan was promoted to Deputy Chief of the National Ministry of Science and Technology. His responsibilities include preparation of the Science and Technology Indicators and he has a key role in setting national science and technology policy for Pakistan.

Introduction and survey methodology

There were three phases involved in conducting this study:

Phase 1: Development of the questionnaires.
Steps involved at this stage were:

- Gathering advice from AusAID and IDP on their experience with similar surveys and obtaining sample surveys from other institutions, including Australian universities (July–August 2003)
- Compilation of a draft survey that was sent for comment to ACIAR Country Offices (September–November 2003)
- Completion of the final survey for execution of face-to-face interviews by ACIAR Country staff in January 2004

Phase 2: Conduct of survey

Phase 3: Analysis and reporting of survey findings

As many as possible of the interviews were conducted face-to-face with the former fellows and their institute Directors by ACIAR country office staff. A private consultant was contracted to conduct face-to-face interviews in Papua New Guinea as the post of ACIAR Country Manager was vacant at the time. The second best option, used either when the former Fellow was now based in a city quite remote from the Country office or where ACIAR did not have an office in the particular country (e.g. Malaysia, Zimbabwe, Kenya and the Pacific), was to interview the

former Fellow by telephone. In only a few cases were faxed, emailed or mailed surveys used. Only those who completed their degrees were to be surveyed and this constituted 91% of those who had been awarded fellowships.

The status of the 109 former Fellows is:

- Of 109 former Fellows, 84 were contacted (77%). Of the 84 who returned a questionnaire, three are in Australia, two in USA and one in Canada, leaving 78 who returned and remained in their respective home countries.
- Of the 25 (23%) who were not contacted, 19 now live in developed countries (11 in Australia, two in Canada, two in United States, and one each in Japan, United Kingdom, Singapore and Sweden) and there are six whose whereabouts are unknown. Of the 25 former Fellows who could not be contacted, nine were originally from China, five from the Philippines, three from the Pacific, two each from Pakistan, Kenya and Indonesia and one each from Malaysia and Sri Lanka.

The status of the Institute Directors is:

- Of the 78 possible records, 64 (82%) were received from 58 Directors, as some Directors have supervised more than one former fellow.
- Of the 20 Director surveys not received, the majority were from China (five), Malaysia (four), Papua New Guinea (three) and Tonga (two).

Questionnaire design

Former Fellow questionnaire

Key components of the questionnaire were:

1. *Biographical data* Includes country of origin, type of degree and date completed.
2. *Employment profile* Covers length of time they have worked for their current employer and whether this was the same employer who released them from work to undertake the ACIAR fellowship.
3. *Relevance and value of the ACIAR fellowship* Covers whether the fellowship was relevant to employment at the time of undertaking the JAF, whether it is currently relevant to their work, application and frequency of knowledge, factors that hindered use of postgraduate training.
4. *Passing on skills and knowledge* Covers the use of skills/knowledge they gained from their course of study in Australia and whether knowledge and experiences gained in the study is passed on to others.
5. *Subsequent promotions and seniority* Covers whether the fellowship assisted in gaining a promotion or a more senior position.
6. *Supervision and leadership of research projects* Covers supervision of staff in current job and prior to undertaking the JAF, and whether former Fellow currently leads research projects.
7. *Future employment and study intentions* Covers whether the former Fellow is contemplating a change in career and whether he/she intends to undertake further study.
8. *Study experience in Australia* Covers whether student was able to enter into postgraduate program of choice, quality of supervision and support from Australian supervisor, and overall experience of studying in Australia.

9. *English language* Looks at English difficulties before and after arriving in Australia.
10. *Social experience in Australia* Covers whether student had paid employment while in Australia, whether family accompanied student, suitability of accommodation, and beneficial experiences related to living in Australia.
11. *Views on the John Allwright Fellowship* Covers main benefits to the former Fellow personally, benefits to institute/country, and negatives of undertaking the JAF.
12. *Suggestions for improvement* Looks at suggestions for improvements to the ACIAR scholarship scheme.

Director questionnaire

Key components of the questionnaire are:

1. *Background information* Covers time in position as Director of the former Fellow's institute, whether he/she is the direct supervisor and how long he/she has supervised the former Fellow.
2. *Relevance/use of skills/knowledge* Covers the utilisation of the skills/knowledge the former Fellow gained from the course of study in Australia and the extent to which this has impacted on personal career path and benefited the organisation; whether knowledge and experiences gained in the study is passed on to others.
3. *Impression of training received in Australia* Satisfaction with the postgraduate degree the former Fellow undertook, impression of the training received in Australia compared to postgraduate degrees in other countries, the extent to which the work of the institute was disrupted by the former Fellow's absence.
4. *Views on the John Allwright Fellowship* Covers main benefits to the institute/country and negatives of undertaking the JAF and suggestions for improvement of the scheme.

Survey results

Background

Table 1: Former Fellows: selected characteristics

Characteristics	Number	%
Gender		
Male	59	70
Female	25	30
Country of origin		
Cambodia	1	1
China	8	10
Fiji	1	1
India	3	4
Indonesia	15	18
Kenya	1	1
Kiribati	1	1
Laos	1	1
Malaysia	6	8
Nepal	1	1
Pakistan	1	1
Papua New Guinea	10	12
Philippines	12	14
Solomon Islands	1	1
Sri Lanka	1	1
Thailand	11	13
Tonga	3	4
Vietnam	5	6
Zimbabwe	2	2
Course completed		
Graduate Certificate or Diploma	3	3
Masters degree	25	30
PhD	56	67
Year completed		
1988–1990	9	11
1991–1993	9	11
1994–1996	14	16
1997–1999	12	14
2000–2003	40	48
Total	84	100

Former Fellows were from 19 countries and completed courses ranging from Graduate Certificate to PhD over the period 1987–2003 inclusive (Table 1).

The final number of completed interviews was 84 of the 109 (77%) in total of former Fellows who completed their studies (Table 2). Of the 84 records, 78 were from students who have returned to and remained in their home country. The 64 records from Directors relate to the 78 home country students (i.e. 82% return on Directors' records

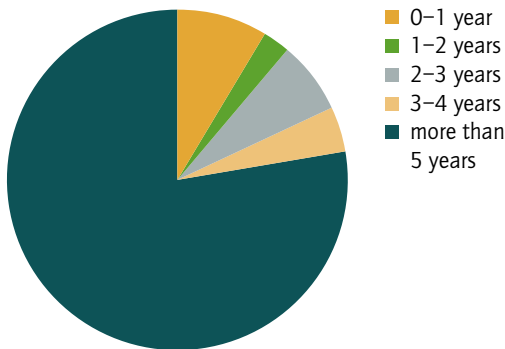
for the former Fellows) from 19 countries. Of the 64 Directors able to be contacted, 4 Directors supervised more than one of the former Fellows. In other words, there were actually 64 Director records produced by 58 Directors. The majority of cases where no Director records were received were from China (5 of 8), Malaysia (4 of 6) and Tonga (2 of 3). Reasons why the Directors could not be contacted included: the reorganisation of the institutes that they left; the former Fellow is not known to the (new) Institute Director and Director's travel commitments.

Table 2: Survey response rates of Fellows and Directors by country

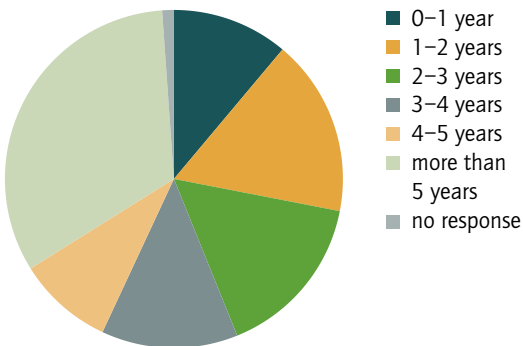
Country	Director surveys received	Former Fellows surveys received	% Response rate of Directors
Cambodia	1	1	100
India	3	3	100
Kiribati	1	1	100
Laos	1	1	100
Pakistan	1	1	100
Solomon Islands	1	1	100
Sri Lanka	1	1	100
Thailand	11	11	100
Vietnam	5	5	100
Indonesia	14	15	93
Philippines	11	12	92
Papua New Guinea	7	10	70
Zimbabwe	1	2	50
China	3	8	38
Malaysia	2	6	33
Tonga	1	3	33
Fiji	0	1	0
Kenya	0	1	0
Nepal	0	1	0
Total	64	84	100

Employment profile

Former Fellows: Time with current employer



Institute Directors: Period as Director



At the time of the survey just over three-quarters (77%) of the Directors had been the Head of their institute for more than two years. The majority of former Fellows (81%) had worked for their current employer for more than five years.

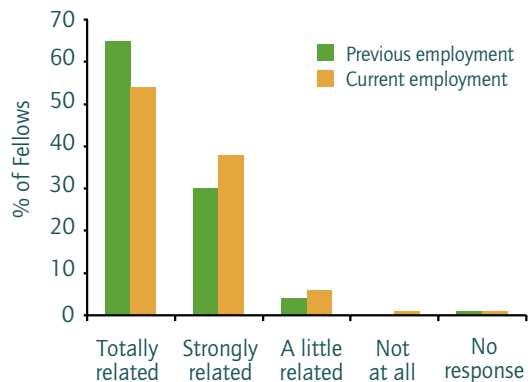
Those who still work for the employer who released them to undertake the ACIAR fellowship accounted for 80% of former Fellows. Seventy per cent of the former Fellows now report directly to the Directors of their Institutes, as they have roles such as program leader or Deputy Director.

Relevance and value of the ACIAR fellowship

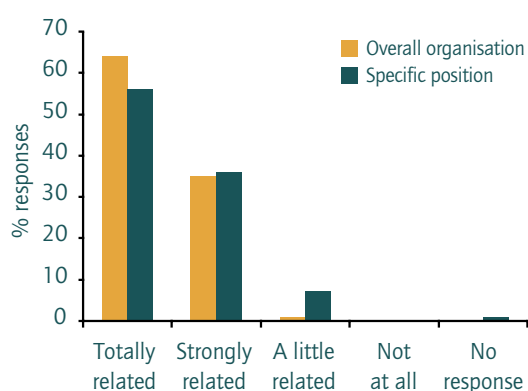
There was across-the-board agreement that the fellowship was very relevant to the former Fellows' employment at the time of undertaking the fellowship, with a vast majority of former Fellows (95%) responding that the ACIAR fellowship was totally related or strongly related while almost all (99%) of Directors concurred. Almost all former Fellows (92%) also stated that their ACIAR fellowship was totally or strongly related to their current employment. Not only were the knowledge and skills gained very relevant, but they are also applied, with 97% of former Fellows and 92% of Directors agreeing that this is the case.

Directors also indicated that specific technical skills (72%), critical reasoning (77%), and English skills (71%) acquired in the Fellows' courses were being greatly utilised in their current employment. Less than 8% of Directors said that these skills were being used to a lesser degree. Almost all the Directors (97%) concurred that the former Fellows had maintained and developed their skills after returning home. The main factors that hindered some of the former Fellows in using postgraduate training on their return (Table 3) were stated as a lack of operating budget (56%), lack of equipment

Relevance of postgraduate studies to previous and current employment.



Institute Directors' views: relevance of fellowship training to overall organisation and specific position.



Institute Directors: To what extent is the former Fellow using skills developed during their postgraduate studies?

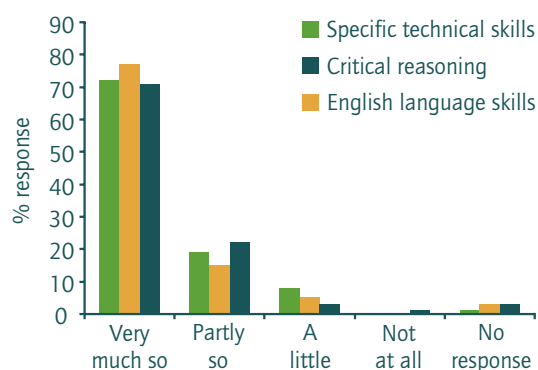


Table 3: Former Fellows: What factors (if any) have hindered you using your postgraduate training on return?

Factors that hindered JAF on return*	Number	%
Lack of operating budget	47	56
Lack of equipment	34	40
Lack of access to up-to-date research information	26	31
Other responsibilities (eg administration)	19	23
Management decision making	17	20
Other responsibilities	7	8
Other factors	4	5

* Fellows could list more than one factor

(40%) and lack of access to up-to-date research information (31%). Other responsibilities such as administration (23%) and management decision-making (20%) were less significant factors.

Passing on skills and knowledge

Just about all of former Fellows (98%) said they had the opportunity to pass on knowledge and experiences gained in their course of study to others. The Directors (96%) agree that there was the opportunity for a former Fellow to pass on knowledge (Table 4). This transfer of knowledge

and skills is largely done through training staff and students (34%), seminars and workshops (30%) and supervising/lecturing (25%). Relatively few were transferring knowledge and skills through mentoring (6%), meetings (5%) and publications (5%). Of the two Directors who said their former Fellow did not have the opportunity to pass on knowledge, the reasons given were that most tasks were currently of an administrative nature, and in the other the reason specified was the ethnic tension in the past four years in the Solomon Islands.

Table 4: Institute Directors: Ways former Fellows pass on knowledge to other staff

Ways knowledge is passed on*	Number	%
Training staff and students	22	34
Seminars and workshops	19	30
Supervising/lecturing	16	25
Mentoring	4	6
Meetings	3	5
Publications	3	5
Other responsibilities		

* Directors could give more than one suggestion.

Subsequent leadership by former Fellows

Just over three-quarters (78%) of former Fellows currently employed have had a promotion since returning from their ACIAR fellowships. Three-quarters (75%) of former Fellows considered the additional skills and knowledge they gained from the ACIAR fellowship assisted them in gaining a more senior position (Table 5). Directors supported the claims of the former Fellows by responding that 82% of them had been promoted as a result of the fellowship.

Number of promotions since returning from Australia (% of respondents)

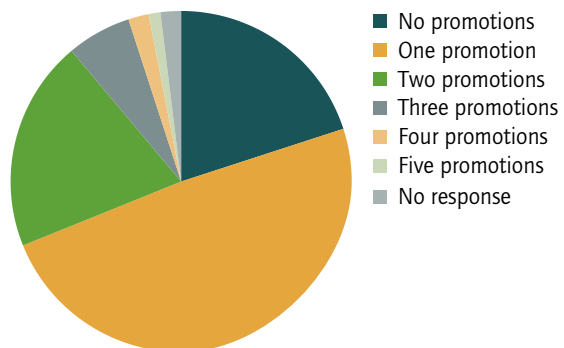
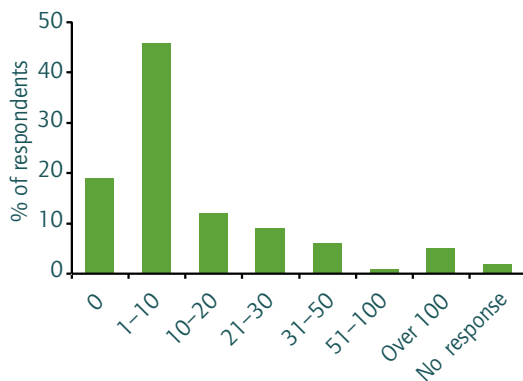


Table 5: Former Fellows: To what extent do you consider that any promotion was due to the skills and knowledge that you gained from your Australian studies?

Relation of promotion to skills obtained from fellowship	Number	%
Totally related	32	38
Strongly related	35	42
A little related	7	8
Not at all	8	10
No response	2	2
Total	84	100

Former Fellows: numbers of staff currently supervised.



Although just under two-thirds (61%) of former Fellows had supervised staff prior to undertaking the fellowship, this figure rose to 81% after completion of the fellowship. Over half (58%) of former Fellows supervise 1–20 staff but 5% actually supervise more than 100 staff. A considerable number (68%) of former Fellows currently lead research projects and this figure is corroborated by the Directors.

Future employment and study intentions

Just under two-thirds (61%) of former Fellows currently employed said that they were not contemplating a change in career as a result of undertaking the fellowship and 30% were likely to seek change; 9% did not respond. Of the 30% of former Fellows currently employed who said that they would like a change in career, the main reason given was that they would like to broaden their experience.

Surprisingly, one-half of the former Fellows said they were contemplating further study. Of the 42 who said they intended to do further study, 16 said they were contemplating PhD studies, while six intend undertaking degrees in other disciplines and 6 are considering postdoctoral study. A further two were interested in short training courses and 10 did not disclose their plans.

Study experience in Australia

A substantial number (88%) of former Fellows were able to undertake the postgraduate program of their choice. Of the seven who gave a negative response, three said they had no choice at the time, two said the selection of the course was dependent on the ACIAR project and two gave no reason.

Eighty-eight per cent of the former Fellows stated that they were comfortable with seeking advice from their Australian supervisor. Of the eight who said they were not comfortable with seeking advice from their supervisor, three said the supervisor was always busy, one did not like to bother his supervisor because he was retired, one said the supervision was not good and the remaining three did not give reasons. Relationships with former supervisors were good in a great majority of cases as evidenced by the fact that 81% of former Fellows have remained in contact with their postgraduate supervisors in Australia.

Satisfaction with study experience in Australia.

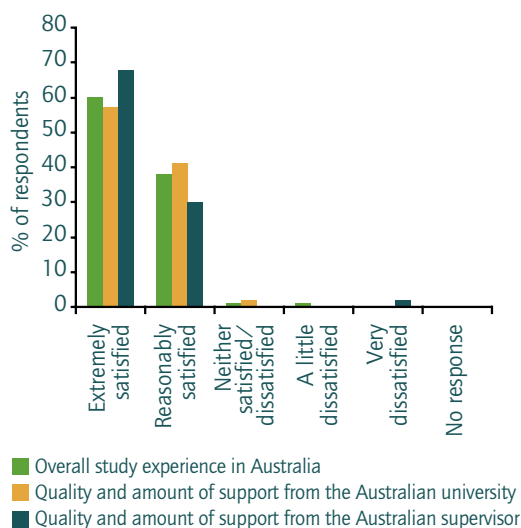


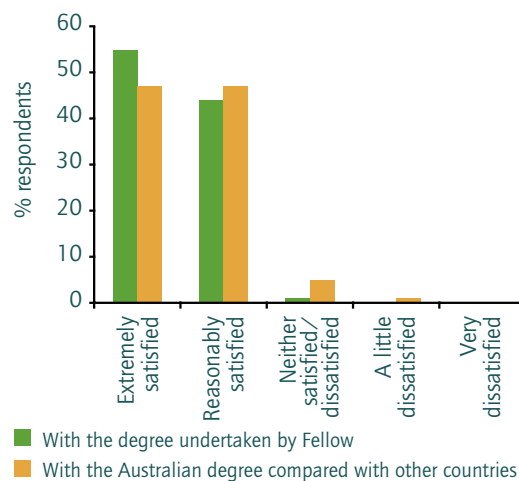
Table 6: Former Fellows: Did you usually have a clear idea of what was expected of you in your course or project?

Clear idea of what was expected	Number	%
Strongly agree	43	51
Reasonable agreement	36	43
Neither agree/nor disagree	0	0
Some disagreement	3	4
Strongly disagree	0	0
No response	2	2
Total	84	100

Former Fellows were almost unanimous (98% in both cases) in expressing extreme or reasonable satisfaction both for the overall experience of studying in Australia and for the quality and amount of support they received from the Australian university. Almost all (98%) of former Fellows were extremely/strongly satisfied with the quality and amount of support from their Australian fellowship supervision. Of the two who were very dissatisfied, reasons given for improving the Fellowship scheme included closer monitoring of the study program and personal difficulties (female student from Thailand), and increasing allowances as wife had to work (male student from Papua New Guinea). However, these reasons do not seem to be directly related to the supervisor–student relationship.

The vast majority (94%) of former Fellows strongly/reasonably agreed that they had a clear idea of what was expected of them in their course or project (Table 6).

Almost all the Directors were extremely/strongly satisfied with the Australian degree (98%) and thought that the Australian training compared favourably with other countries (94%). The Director who was a little dissatisfied was from Laos and her dissatisfaction was related to the difficulty for Lao staff to study in Australia due to their low English proficiency.

Institute Directors: overall level of satisfaction.

English language

Over two-thirds (69%) of former Fellows experienced little or no difficulty with English language prior to arriving in Australia and well over this amount (78%) did not find difficulty with English a factor in their studies (Tables 7 and 8). Of the nine Fellows who had regular difficulty with English prior to undertaking the fellowship, four were from China, two from each of Vietnam and Thailand and one from the Philippines. The former Fellow expressing extreme difficulty was a female student from Thailand.

Table 7: Former Fellows: Before arriving in Australia, how much difficulty did you have with English language requirements for enrolment in your degree?

Difficulty with English prior to fellowship	Number	%
No difficulty at all	39	46
One or two problems	19	23
Occasional difficulty	16	19
Regular difficulty	9	11
Extreme difficulty	1	1
Total	84	100

Table 8: Former Fellows: After you arrived in Australia, how much difficulty did you have overall with English language required for your degree?

Difficulty with English after arrival in Australia	Number	%
No difficulty at all	36	43
One or two problems	29	35
Occasional difficulty	16	19
Regular difficulty	2	2
Extreme difficulty	1	1
Total	84	100

After taking up the fellowship, one Chinese former Fellow and the same student from the Philippines who expressed difficulty with English prior to arriving in Australia, said they had regular difficulty, and the student from Thailand continued to have extreme difficulty (Table 8). However this Fellow did go on to obtain her PhD in 1992. Interestingly, the Philippines former Fellow who had difficulty with English worked regularly at a Sunday market in Australia and overcame his language problems. He has now risen to Executive Director of the Department of Agriculture in the Philippines and supervises over 180 staff.

Social experience in Australia

At the time of the survey, just over half (54%) of former Fellows who responded to the survey were accompanied on their fellowship by a spouse and/or family. At the time of their ACIAR fellowship, a vast majority of those who were accompanied had children (89%). Altogether there were 45 children of ACIAR Fellows in Australia during this time (Table 9). Over three-quarters (79%) had no difficulties in finding suitable and affordable accommodation in Australia.

Just over a quarter of the Fellows supplemented their scholarship income with part-time work. The type of work undertaken by the 29% of former Fellows who were employed while undertaking

Table 9: Fellows accompanied by spouse: How many children came to Australia?

Number of dependent children	Number	%
0 children	5	11
1 child	16	36
2 children	11	24
3 children	6	13
4 children	5	11
5 children	2	5
Total	45	100

their degree encompassed cleaning, technical/lab work, Sunday markets, tutoring, gardening and fruit picking.

The number of hours worked per week was mainly less than 10, although three Fellows worked more than 20 hours per week in various pursuits—analysis of forest litter, laboratory work and assisting to manage a pearl farm.

Views on the ACIAR fellowship—benefits

Almost all the former Fellows (98%) felt that undertaking the fellowship met with their expectations. Of the two former Fellows not entirely satisfied one was disappointed in the biotechnology facilities and a change in the

project discipline area, the other was disappointed at gaining a Graduate Diploma rather than a Masters degree. Former Fellows provided a variety of responses when asked to comment on the most beneficial experience of their fellowship in Australia. These are listed in Table 10.

We also questioned the former Fellows on the main benefit of the award to them personally and to their institutes. We did not seek specific information on incomes. However, a significant majority of former Fellows (86%) felt they had benefited through improved living standards because of the ACIAR fellowship. Former Fellows tended to rank the main benefits both to themselves and to their institute/country in similar rank order. The major benefits were: skills gained from the degree; developed writing skills and research skills;

Table 10: Former Fellows: What was the most beneficial experience of your fellowship in Australia?

Beneficial experience of fellowship scheme (unprompted)*	Number	%
Skills/knowledge gained from course	52	62
Personal growth (broad outlook, open-mind, confidence, independence)	33	40
Cultural experience	31	37
Gaining qualification	20	24
Networking	16	19
Family benefits	10	12
Professional contacts	9	11
Promotion and salary	8	10
English ability improved	7	8

* Fellows could give more than one suggestion.

Table 11a: Former Fellows: What were the main benefits to you personally of the ACIAR fellowship?

Skill/knowledge gained*	Extremely significant	Very significant	Not very significant	Significance (extremely & very) (%)
Developed research skills	80	4	0	100
Developed writing skills	77	4	3	96
Skills gained from degree	79	4	1	95
More open to new ideas	73	7	4	95
Professional contacts	60	19	5	94
Cultural experience	53	24	7	92
Developed computer skills	59	18	7	92
People skills/Teamwork	61	12	11	87
Improved English skills	50	18	16	80
Career opportunities	48	19	17	80

* Fellows could give more than one suggestion.

Table 11b: Former Fellows: What were the main benefits to your institute/country of the ACIAR fellowship?

Benefits to institute*	Extremely significant	Very significant	Not very significant	Significance (extremely & very) (%)
Skills gained from degree	77	6	1	99
Developed research skills	76	5	3	96
Leadership/People skills/Teamwork	62	18	4	95
Developed writing skills	67	11	6	93
Professional contacts	60	16	8	90
More open to new ideas	67	9	8	90
Developed computer skills	48	26	10	88
Improved English skills	48	16	20	76
Better attract R & D funding	50	12	22	74
Can influence national policy	32	21	31	63

* Fellows could give more than one suggestion.

professional contacts; and more open to new ideas. All of these benefits were mentioned by more than 90% of former Fellows. Other benefits both personal and to their institute that the Fellows ranked highly were people skills/teamwork and developing computer skills (Tables 11 a, b).

The Institute Directors were slightly more restrained when asked to identify benefits to the institute as a result of the former Fellows' study in Australia, but

ranked the following factors as very to extremely significant: research experience and/or scientific method (95%); specific skills and knowledge gained from degree was next, at 89%. Three-quarters (75%) of Directors saw passing on skills and knowledge to other staff and the acquisition of English skills as a significant benefit, while only 39% felt that the former Fellow would be better able to influence national policy as a result of gaining the Australian degree (Table 12).

Table 12: Institute Directors: What are the main benefits for your organisation/country as a result of your staff member doing the higher degree in Australia?

Benefits to institute*	Extremely significant	Very significant	Not very significant	Significance (extremely & very) (%)
Research experience/scientific method	60	4	0	94
Specific skills/knowledge gained from degree	57	4	3	89
Passing on skills, knowledge to other staff and/or students	48	14	2	75
English language skills	48	10	6	75
Status of the qualification	44	6	14	69
More open to new ideas	44	18	2	69
Professional/scientific contacts they made	43	13	8	67
People/cross cultural skills	33	18	13	52
Ability to attract research funding for the organisation	29	20	15	45
Can influence national policy	25	22	17	39

* Directors could give more than one suggestion.

Views on the ACIAR fellowship—negatives

Former Fellows listed the following as the main negatives of undertaking the fellowship: missing family and friends (46%); culture very different (26%); out of touch with work colleagues and job (25%) and financial difficulties (19%) (Table 13). Of the three Fellows who listed other negatives, these were: others in the institute were promoted while he was away (one); missed other family members (one); schedule was too tight and had to pay his own way in the last few months (one).

Institute Directors: extent of disruption (%) to Institute workplans from Fellows' absence

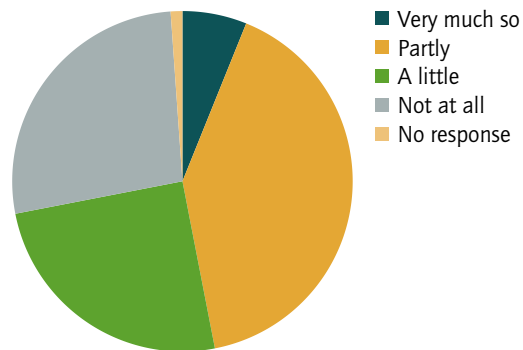


Table 13: Former Fellows: What were the main negatives of undertaking the fellowship?

Negatives associated with JAF*	Extremely significant	Very significant	Not very significant	Significance (extremely & very) (%)
Miss family and friends	22	17	45	46
Culture very different	12	10	62	26
Out of touch with work colleagues/job	10	11	63	25
Financial difficulty	7	9	68	19
Other	3			4

*Fellows could give more than one suggestion.

Table 14: Institute Directors: Main negatives for your organisation as a result of the Fellow doing the course in Australia.

Negatives associated with JAFs*	Extremely significant	Very significant	Not very significant	Significance (extremely & very) (%)
No negatives	14	4	46	22
Filling the job while Fellow was away	4	9	51	6
Project not relevant to your country	3	2	59	5
Project not relevant to your organisation	3	1	60	5
Other (specify)				

* Directors could give more than one suggestion.

Directors generally agreed that while the absence of the Fellow on study leave caused some disruption to Institute workplans, there were few other negatives for their organisation (Table 14). Two Directors specifically mentioned other negatives for their organisation as a result of the fellowship, and these reasons included the long lag time before the Fellow actually graduated (Director from Malaysia), and the length of time the Fellow actually took to get his degree (this referred to a student from the Philippines who commenced his PhD in 1989 and completed in 2003).

A large majority of institute Directors (94%) said that there were no detrimental aspects of the fellowship to the former Fellows' employment. The reasons given by the four Directors who felt there were some problems included the following:

- On return Fellows experienced frustration with local conditions and systems such as bureaucracy and lack of equipment; Fellows often have lost touch with their institute and were not aware of changes to regulations and personnel
- One Director was concerned about a communication problem of the former Fellow in being able to contact her supervisor as he had left the Australian university, and this caused a delay in finalisation of the thesis

- No short-term training for improving English skills prior to study in Australia (Director of former Fellow from Laos)
- One Chinese Director stated that while the Fellow was studying in Australia, others were promoted during a restructure. At least three people in leadership have superseded him in this manner. When the Fellow returned he did not bring new project funding with him.

Suggestions for improvement

The suggestions from former Fellows for improving the ACIAR scheme were quite varied, with the majority wanting more scholarships, more sandwich courses/field work and support with forming networks and professional contacts on return (Table 15). Over the last 5 years ACIAR has increased the number of scholarships three-fold, and all research degree awards provide the option of in-country fieldwork if appropriate to the thesis topic. Up to \$10,000 in follow-on funding is available to returned awardees. A few respondents requested that the stipend be increased and that airfares for accompanying family be provided; ACIAR has taken the view that the relevant scholarship conditions should be equivalent to those of AusAID postgraduate scholarships.

Table 15: Former Fellows: Suggestions for improving the ACIAR fellowship scheme

Suggested improvements for ACIAR fellowship scheme*	Number	%
More scholarships	17	20
More field work in home country	10	12
No suggestions	10	12
Help with networks/professional contacts	7	8
Family should be encouraged to come	5	6
Follow on funding	5	6
Increase stipend	5	6
Airfares for family should be included	4	5
Closer supervision by ACIAR	4	5
ACIAR JAF week should be at beginning of fellowship	3	4
More support from ACIAR RPM	3	4

* Fellows could give more than one suggestion.

A small number of respondents asked for closer supervision by ACIAR, greater involvement from ACIAR RPMs and assistance with professional networks. ACIAR does receive 6-monthly or annual progress reports for each scholar, and the ACIAR RPM or Training Officer follow up promptly any issues of poor performance or supervision that become apparent. One challenge to closer involvement is that ACIAR is primarily the funder of the award and the primary relationship for the scholar on performance issues is quite correctly with the university supervisor.

ACIAR will explore opportunities to further assist returning Fellows with professional networks and contacts. Already we regularly provide returning Fellows with information on current ACIAR projects in their home country and copies of ACIAR publications. In 1999–2000 we surveyed potential interest in an alumni association, but fewer than 20% of returned Fellows were interested in being involved.

Directors expressed similar suggestions for improvement, i.e. more scholarships (95% extremely/very significant), courses or research to be more relevant to particular developing country (88%) and more field work in-country (77%). Other significant comments by Directors related to more communication needed by student during the course (61%), more communication needed by ACIAR during the course (55%), and more opportunity to influence the content of the course or research project (55%) (Table16). Additional comments by Directors included:

- More sandwich programs so that skills can be applied directly in home country
- Need to know progress of student during study
- Fellowships to be given to junior scientists (under 35 years) rather than older ones
- Provide opportunities to return to Australia at least once following completion of course

- Research to be conducted in-country more often and not in Australia
- Title of thesis to be discussed with relevant working unit within institute
- Should maintain greater contact after the degree to continue onto a higher degree and/or to do further field work in-country
- ACIAR should provide more short-term courses.

Several of these suggestions above have already been adopted. One area for closer consideration by

ACIAR is to ensure that the final thesis subject is acceptable to the home institution (although since the inception of the fellowship scheme the Director of the applicants' institution has been required to comment on the relevance of the proposed thesis subject or coursework in the original application). A second issue for consideration is to establish ways of ensuring that the progress of the Fellow is regularly reported to their home institution, although we believe that primary responsibility for this should lie with the Fellow.

Table 16: Institute Directors: Suggestions for improvement of the ACIAR fellowship scheme

Suggested improvements for ACIAR scheme*	Very-extremely significant	Fairly significant	Not very significant	Significance (extremely & very) (%)
More scholarships	62	2	0	95
More fieldwork in country	49	11	4	77
Courses/research to be more relevant to particular developing country	56	5	3	88
More communication needed by student during the course	39	19	6	61
More communication needed by ACIAR during the course	35	24	5	55
More opportunity to influence the content of the course or research project	35	20	9	55
No suggestions	1	1	62	1
Other				

* Directors could give more than one suggestion

Conclusions

The overall objective of the survey was to evaluate the impact of the program on the awardees and their institutions in terms of employment, career paths, and also the impact of the former Fellows themselves on the research institutions to which they returned and the wider national impacts/ leadership by the Fellows. The information will be used to provide input in the immediate period to identify options for improving ACIAR's postgraduate awards program and to develop monitoring mechanisms for the future.

Specific objectives were:

- (a) to identify the extent to which the qualifications and skills gained through the fellowship scheme are being used by the former Fellows in their current employment;
- (b) to assess, as far as possible, the difference that possessing those qualifications and skills have made to the employment and career paths of the former Fellows; and
- (c) to assess, as far as possible, the impact of the former Fellows on the research institutions to which they returned and their wider national leadership.

The approach used was to carry out structured, separate interviews of both the former Fellows and the Directors of the organisations for which they currently work. The survey covered all former John Allwright Fellows who had successfully completed their degrees and had returned to their home countries. This included those who had started their course in 1987 or later and who completed their course of study by 31 December 2003.

The success rate of John Allwright Fellows is very high—over the history of the scheme, 91% of those who accepted an award completed the higher degree. Furthermore, despite the potential for many scientists with postgraduate qualifications to migrate to developed countries for higher-paid positions, ***over three-quarters of the Fellows have returned to their original countries and are working in a relevant position.***

Only fellowship awardees who had successfully completed their degrees were surveyed. ACIAR conducted interviews with 84 former Fellows (comprising 59 male and 25 females from 19 countries), 77% of the total of 109 former completed Fellows. Of the remaining 25, 19 no longer resided in their original country and six were uncontactable but thought to still be in their original country. This is a much higher return rate than a survey of awardees conducted during June–July 1998, at the time of the Review of the ACIAR Training Program. In that survey, responses were obtained from only 23% of the former Fellows and 10% of their current supervisors.

ACIAR was also able to conduct interviews with 58 Directors who provided reports for 64 students out of a total of 78 from 19 countries. The majority of former Fellows (81%) have worked for their current employer for more than 5 years. In addition, 80% of former Fellows have as their current employer the one who released them to undertake the ACIAR fellowship. ***This is evidence that one of the primary aims of the fellowship scheme, to build capacity in the home country research institutes, has been achieved.***

Former Fellows (95%) and Directors (98%) agreed that the fellowship was relevant to the former Fellows' employment at the time of undertaking the fellowship. As well, **92% of former Fellows regarded their ACIAR fellowship as totally or strongly related to their current employment.**

This figure is pleasing as the relevance to current employment is an aim of the ACIAR Fellowship Scheme. In addition, over 70% of Directors noted that specific skills (technical, critical reasoning and English skills) acquired in the Fellows' courses were being greatly utilised in their current employment. Almost all former Fellows (98%) and Directors (96%) agreed that they were now passing on skills and knowledge gained from their fellowship, mainly through training staff and students, seminars and workshops, and supervising/lecturing.

The ACIAR fellowships have had positive impacts on the careers of the former Fellows. Seventy-eight per cent have been promoted since their return from Australia. **A large majority (80%) of former Fellows consider their promotion to be totally or strongly related to skills and knowledge gained in their Australian course.** Directors (81%) support these claims. In terms of leadership development and capacity building within institutes, the ACIAR fellowships have certainly been beneficial. While 61% of former Fellows had supervised staff prior to undertaking the fellowship, this figure rose to 81% after completion of the fellowship. **Four former Fellows supervise more than 100 staff and an additional six supervise more than 30 staff. More than two-thirds of former Fellows currently lead research projects.** Some of the Fellows have proceeded to positions of national influence (see *Former ACIAR Fellows: Some success stories*).

Only the former Fellows were asked about future employment and study intentions. Just under two-thirds (61%) of former Fellows currently employed said they were not contemplating a change in career. The 30% of former Fellows who were contemplating a career change gave their main

reason as a desire to broaden experience. In addition, 50% of former Fellows indicated they intended to undertake further study, with 16 former Fellows who had obtained Masters degrees now contemplating PhD studies. It is evident from the responses of former Fellows that their study in Australia was a positive experience. For example, **98% of former Fellows were able to undertake the course of their choice** and 94% agreed they had a clear idea of what was expected of them in their course or project. In addition, relationships with Australian supervisors were good; 89% of former Fellows said they were comfortable with seeking advice and 81% have kept in contact with their supervisors. **Directors also commented positively on the Australian study** with 98% expressing extreme/strong satisfaction with the Australian degree, and 94% of Directors agreeing that the Australian training compared favourably with training offered in other countries.

Just over half of the former Fellows (54%) were accompanied on their fellowship by a spouse, and 89% of this accompanied group had children. Some former Fellows (29%) had paid employment while they undertook their studies. This employment encompassed cleaning, technical/lab work, tutoring, Sunday markets, gardening and fruit picking. The majority (79%) of former Fellows had no difficulty in finding suitable and affordable accommodation in Australia. However, if one in five Fellows does experience difficulties, it is obvious that ACIAR needs to work more closely with the hosting universities to help these Fellows to have a positive start to both their stay in Australia and their studies.

Almost all (98%) of former Fellows felt that undertaking the fellowship met with their expectations. In addition, 86% felt that they had benefited through improved living standards because of the ACIAR fellowship. **Former Fellows tended to rank the major benefits, both personally and for their institution, as skills and knowledge**

gained from the course, development of research skills, personal growth and cultural experience, gaining a qualification and networking.

Directors ranked research experience and/or scientific method (95%) and specific skills and knowledge gained from the degree (89%) as important benefits.

Although Directors stated there were few negatives for their organisation as a result of students undertaking the course in Australia, there were some negatives mentioned by former Fellows associated with the ACIAR fellowship. These negatives included missing family and friends, being out of touch with work colleagues and financial difficulties. The first two factors are to be expected when people are away for their familiar surroundings.

Former Fellows provided a variety of suggestions for improvement of the scheme with the majority wanting more scholarships, more sandwich courses/field work and support for training networks and professional contacts on return. Directors expressed similar suggestions but with the additional point that in some cases the courses/research project undertaken needed to be more relevant to the particular developing country.

Most of these suggestions have already been addressed by ACIAR over the last 5 years. Since 2001, ACIAR allows students to undertake up to 50% of the fellowship period on field work in their home country. The Training Committee, Research Program Manager and Project Leader are now required to formally approve the proposed course or project work before commencement to ensure that it is relevant. In 1999, a one-week training period for all Fellows in Canberra was introduced; all new Fellows now come together for a series of workshops and for the opportunity to meet with ACIAR staff. A Small Grants Scheme was also introduced in 2001 to provide support for former Fellows for either a research project, international conference attendance or a return visit to Australia.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

QUESTIONNAIRE 1

(FOR FORMER ACIAR FELLOWSHIP STUDENTS)



Australian Government
Australian Centre for
International Agricultural Research

To be filled in prior to interview

NAME: _____

DATE OF BIRTH: _____

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: _____

COURSE COMPLETED IN AUSTRALIA: _____

YEAR COMPLETED: _____

To be asked of the student

YOUR CURRENT WORK

Current employer: _____

Current position: _____

How long have you worked for your current employer:

- 0–1 year
- 1–2 years
- 2–3 years
- 3–4 years
- 4–5 years
- More than 5 years

What are the main responsibilities of your position?

Is the current employer the one who released you from work to undertake the ACIAR Fellowship?

- YES NO If No, why did you not return to the organisation you worked for when you received your award?

Was the ACIAR Fellowship project/course undertaken relevant to your employment at the time?

- Totally related
 Strongly related
 A little related
 Not at all

Is the ACIAR Fellowship project/ study relevant to your work now?

- Totally related
 Strongly related
 A little related
 Not at all

If Yes, what knowledge from your Fellowship do you apply and how often? Do you apply the knowledge elsewhere?

Do you pass on the knowledge and experiences gained in your study to others?

Have you been promoted since returning from Australia?

- YES NO

If yes, how many promotions have you had since you returned from Australia?

Did the ACIAR Fellowship undertaken assist you in having a more senior position? How?

Do you supervise any staff? How many?

Did you supervise any staff prior to the fellowship?

Do you currently lead any research projects?

Are you contemplating a further change in career as a result of undertaking the ACIAR Fellowship?

- YES NO

If Yes, why?

- Not using skills
 No opportunities for promotion
 To get better salary
 To broaden experience
 Other

To what extent do you consider that any promotion was due to the skills and knowledge that you gained from your Australian studies?

- Totally related
 Strongly related
 A little related
 Not at all

What factors (if any) have hindered you using your postgraduate training on return?

- Lack of equipment
 Lack of operating budget
 Lack of access to up to date research information
 Other responsibilities (eg administration)
 Management decision making
 Other (please specify)

YOUR STUDY

Were you able to enter into the postgraduate program in Australia of your choice?

- YES NO (If No, please explain)

Are you contemplating any further study?

- YES NO (If Yes, please specify)

Did you feel comfortable in seeking academic advice from your Australian supervisor?

- YES NO (If No, please explain)

Have you remained in contact with your postgraduate supervisor./s in Australia?

- YES NO (If Yes, what subjects have you interacted on?)

How would you rate your overall experience of studying in Australia?

- Extremely satisfied
 Reasonably satisfied
 Neither satisfied/dissatisfied
 A little dissatisfied
 Very dissatisfied

How would you rate your satisfaction with the quality and amount of support from the Australian university?

- Extremely satisfied
 - Reasonably satisfied
 - Neither satisfied/dissatisfied
 - A little dissatisfied
 - Very dissatisfied
-

Did you usually have a clear idea of what was expected of you in your course or project?

- Strongly agree
 - Reasonable agreement
 - Neither agree/disagree
 - Some disagreement
 - Strongly disagree
-

How would you rate your satisfaction with the quality and amount of support from your Australian Fellowship supervisor?

- Extremely satisfied
 - Reasonably satisfied
 - Neither satisfied/dissatisfied
 - A little dissatisfied
 - Very dissatisfied
-

Before arriving in Australia, how much difficulty did you have with English language requirements for enrolment in your degree?

- No difficulty at all
 - One or two problems
 - Occasional difficulty
 - Regular difficulty
 - Extreme difficulty
-

After you arrived in Australia, how much difficulty did you have overall with English language required for your degree?

- No difficulty at all
 - One or two problems
 - Occasional difficulty
 - Regular difficulty
 - Extreme difficulty
-

YOUR SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT/GENERAL

Did you have any kind of paid employment during your time in Australia?

What kind of work did you do in this job?

How many hours weekly did you work at the paid job?

Did your spouse and family accompany you to Australia for your Fellowship?

- YES NO

If Yes:

How many children came?

What advantages did this have?

What difficulties did this create?

Did you have difficulties in finding suitable and affordable accommodation in Australia?

After returning home, do you feel that you benefited through improved living standards due to having undertaken the Fellowship?

- YES NO

What was the most beneficial experience of your Fellowship in Australia?

Overall, did undertaking the Fellowship meet your expectations?

- YES NO

If Yes, in what way?

If No, why?

What were the main benefits to you personally of the ACIAR Fellowship?

Score 1–5 (5 = extremely significant, 1 = not significant)

- Skills and knowledge gained from degree
- Improved English skills
- Cultural experience
- Professional contacts
- More open to new ideas/ more flexible
- People skills/teamwork
- Opened up new career opportunities
- Developed research skills
- Developed writing skills
- Developed computer skills
- Other?

Appendix 2

QUESTIONNAIRE 2

(CURRENT INSTITUTE DIRECTOR)



Australian Government
 Australian Centre for
 International Agricultural Research

To be filled in prior to interview

NAME OF ACIAR FELLOWSHIP AWARDEE:

NAME OF INSTITUTE DIRECTOR:

POSITION:

ORGANISATION:

To be asked of the Institute Director

How long have you been the Director of the former Fellow's institute?

- 0–1 year
 - 1–2 years
 - 2–3 years
 - 3–4 years
 - 4–5 years
 - More than 5 years
-

Are you the former Fellow's direct supervisor?

- YES
- NO

If not, please provide the name and position title of their direct supervisor

Did the former Fellow work for your organisation when they initially undertook the Fellowship?

- YES
 - NO
 - DON'T KNOW
-

To what extent are the skills and knowledge acquired by the former Fellow through their studies in Australia relevant to your organisation?

- Totally related
 - Strongly related
 - A little related
 - Not at all
-

To what extent are the skills and knowledge acquired by the former Fellow through their studies in Australia utilised in their current job?

- Totally related
 - Strongly related
 - A little related
 - Not at all
-

Has the former Fellow been promoted due to their undertaking the JAF program?

- YES
 - NO
-

Do they currently **lead** any research projects?

Does the former Fellow have the opportunity to pass on acquired knowledge to others in the workplace?

- YES
- NO

If so, is this done and how?

If not, why not?

Rank your satisfaction of the postgraduate degree which he/she undertook in Australia?

- Extremely satisfied
 - Reasonably satisfied
 - Neither satisfied/dissatisfied
 - A little dissatisfied
 - Very dissatisfied
-

Rank your impression of the training the former Fellow received in Australia compared with staff trained in postgraduate degrees in other countries?

- Extremely satisfied
 - Reasonably satisfied
 - Neither satisfied/dissatisfied
 - A little dissatisfied
 - Very dissatisfied
-

To what extent is your staff member using the specific technical/practical skills and knowledge acquired through their studies in Australia in their current job?

Their specific technical skills:

- Very much so
- Partly so
- A little
- Not at all

Their critical reasoning:

- Very much so
- Partly so
- A little
- Not at all

Their English skills:

- Very much so
- Partly so
- A little
- Not at all

- Other (please comment)

Have they maintained and developed these skills after returning home?

- YES
- NO

Did their studies in Australia contribute to promotion to a leadership or management position?

- YES
- NO

To what extent was the work of your organisation disrupted by the former Fellows absence in Australia?

- Very much so
- Partly so
- A little
- Not at all

What are the main benefits for your organisation/country as a result of your staff member doing the higher degree in Australia? Score 1–5 (5 = extremely significant, 1 = not significant)

- Specific skills/knowledge from the degree
 - Research experience/scientific method
 - Status of the qualification
 - Passing on skills, knowledge to other staff and/or students
 - English language skills
 - Ability to attract research funding for the organisation
 - People/cross-cultural skills
 - Professional/scientific contacts they made
 - More open to new ideas
 - Can influence national policy
 - Other (specify)
-

Main negatives for your organisation as a result of the student doing the course in Australia?

Score 1–5 (5 = extremely significant, 1 = not significant)

- Project not relevant to your organisation
 - Project not relevant to your country
 - Filling the job while he/she was away
 - No negatives
 - Other (specify)
-

Suggestions for improvement of the ACIAR Fellowship scheme

Score 1–5 (5 = extremely significant, 1 = not significant)

- More scholarships
 - More fieldwork in country
 - Courses/research to be more relevant to particular developing country
 - More communication needed by student during the course
 - More communication needed by ACIAR during the course
 - More opportunity to influence the content of the course or research project
 - No suggestions
 - Other
-

Has any aspect of the ACIAR Fellowship program been detrimental to their employment within your organisation?

- YES NO

If Yes, please specify reasons:
