Australian Government

Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research

Preliminary Project Proposal

ACIAR Program(s) area	ACIAR to complete
Project Title	ACIAR to complete
Project Number	ACIAR to complete
prepared by	Project Leader to complete
ACIAR Research Program Manager	ACIAR to complete

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Summary Information

Version # and date of this document	*Project Leader to complete*
Project number	*ACIAR to complete*
Full project title	*ACIAR to complete*
Short project title	*ACIAR to complete*
Budget ($)	*ACIAR to enter Concept Note budget*
Commissioned Organisation	*ACIAR to complete*
Project Leader	*ACIAR to complete*
Country 1 Coordinator	*Project Leader to enter*
Country 2 Coordinator	*Project Leader to enter*
Proposed start date	*ACIAR to complete*
Proposed end date	*ACIAR to complete*

The guidelines in italics in each section of this template will assist you to develop your Preliminary Project Proposal. Please delete guideline text before submitting your Preliminary Proposal.

ACIAR uses the Preliminary Proposal to assess a project developed in response to an approved ACIAR Concept Note. This assessment occurs through our 'In House Review' process and includes the scientific credibility of the proposed research, appropriateness of the project's technical design and partnerships, the relevance and significance of the expected outputs, outcomes and impacts and the project's 'value for money'.

The Preliminary Proposal presents the architecture of the project. In preparing this document, focus on presenting key information concisely and clearly. More detail will be included in a Full Proposal, which will provide the basis for more detailed quality assessment, contracting the project and guiding implementation of the project and its monitoring and review.

In the Preliminary Proposal, the total number of pages for Section 1 – 4 must not exceed 15 pages.

The document should be prepared using Arial, 11-point font.

Provide a list of all the abbreviations and acronyms used in the project proposal here – but please limit your use of both.

Contents

1. Project Justification - Why should ACIAR commission this research?

This section should establish <u>why</u> the proposed research should be commissioned as part of Australia's Official Development Assistance.

1.1 Development Issue and Research Opportunity

What is the development issue this project seeks to address? Briefly describe the context of the development issue, including what we already know about this issue and how it's been addressed to date. What is the opportunity for further research to address the development issue? Provide a concise explanation of the research opportunity, including what is new research and what is ongoing research on an existing topic. Support these statements with relevant references. It may be helpful to consider why a research project is needed to address the development issue rather than a development project.

1.2 Partner country and Australian research and development priorities

Explain how this project addresses national priorities and/or development priorities in the partner country/countries (and in Australia for projects with an Australian research component). Cite references to support these claims (for instance relevant priorities listed in the partner country chapter(s) of ACIAR's Annual Operational Plan). What further evidence can you provide to demonstrate this problem is a priority for the partner country or countries and for Australia? If the project is to be commissioned through a CGIAR centre you should also indicate how it will relate to relevant strategies and programs of the CGIAR.

1.3 Relationship to other ACIAR investments and other donor activities

How will this work complement other Programs and Projects? Provide a description of the relationships that this project would have to other relevant programs and projects (if any), including national programs, other ACIAR projects and any other related activities in the partner country/countries. For other ACIAR projects, focus on those projects that have a strong link to the proposed research and indicate how the new research will complement or add to previous or current activities.

1.4 Gender Strategy

Describe how gender is relevant to the research and development issues. How will the research contribute to increased gender equity and women's empowerment?

Please refer to ACIAR Gender Guidelines (https://www.aciar.gov.au/Gender-Guidelines).

2. Project Outcomes - What will the project seek to achieve?

Present the expected project outcomes from this research and anticipated development impact.

*Project outcomes are the changes to knowledge systems or practices that the project is intended to contribute to <u>during the project</u>. **If the project is successful, <u>who</u> is going to be able to do <u>what</u> differently? <u>Why</u>?***

ACIAR distinguishes three categories of project outcomes: Scientific Achievement, Capacity Built and Innovation Enabled. A project does not need to deliver against all three categories or equally across them.

Provide brief statements of each intended project outcome from the project's activities under these three headings. These outcomes are the key things that the project will deliver. Ensure that they are worded so that if the research and related project activities are successful, they can be demonstrated to have been achieved at the end-of-project review. Consider how each outcome will differentially benefit women and men. Provide an indication of the potential scale of the outcome at the <u>end of the project</u>.

2.1 Scientific Achievements

*Summarise expected scientific results. **What will we know or be able to do that we don't know or can't do now?** What future research and innovation will this enable?*

2.2 Capacity Built

*Identify the specific areas of enhanced capacity among project partners, stakeholders and next users that will be delivered by project activities. **Who will be able to do what differently?** Include the anticipated scale of capacity built <u>by the end of the project</u>.*

2.3 Next Users and Innovation Enabled

*Summarise key anticipated innovations <u>as an immediate consequence of project activities</u>. **Who (excluding the project team) do you expect to do what differently and what value will this create?** This might include the adoption of improved technologies, systems or processes, accessing new markets or changed opinion or practice of policy advocates and makers. Explain both the nature of these changes and the value that these will have for the intended next users. Value might include improvements to the existing livelihoods of smallholders and communities, the social systems in which these livelihoods are generated, or to the policy environments related to the theme of research. Innovation enabled is necessarily speculative because this is about what other people will do (during the life of the project) with the knowledge or technologies you generate.*

3. Implementation - How will the project be done?

This section should present key information about how the project will be implemented to address research questions and deliver project outcomes.

3.1 Research Questions

Provide a set of clearly worded research questions that will guide and be answered by the research activities. Each research question should be supplemented by brief explanatory text, which outlines the links to research focus and key project outputs.

3.2 Addressing research questions

3.2.1 Research Approaches

Summarise the proposed approaches (i.e. research methods) for conducting the research. ACIAR will use this information as a key part of determining the case for investment, including whether the proposed level of funding represents value for money. Provide a description of the disciplinary methods that will be used, approaches to inter- or trans-disciplinarity (where appropriate), the intended locations for the research and the specific planned research activities. Where experiments, trials or surveys are to be used, provide an indication of scale. Where relevant, describe the approaches to be used to consider and/or address gender during the conduct of each of the research activities.

3.2.2 Activities and Outputs

For each of the main activities that will be implemented outline primary output(s) and expected output milestone dates, ensuring there are clear links with the proposed research approaches. You will have the opportunity to provide more detailed information on activities and outputs in the Full Proposal.

No.	Activity	Output(s)	Milestone date of output(s)	Application(s) of output(s)

3.3 Turning research into project outcomes

Project outcomes are likely to be achieved through a combination of the implementation of the planned research with additional activities that enhance collaborative processes to enable innovation by others and capacity building of others. In this section, elaborate on how the research design, partnerships and activities support the achievement of intended project outcomes. For example, during the project, how will the intended knowledge contribution be positioned for use by next users and end-users? Which outputs are targeted at which next users for what intended result?

Describe the approaches to be used to: (i) increase gender equity as a result of the research; (ii) address gender inequality subsequent to the research; and (iii) engage the private sector and/or relevant community groups and partners.

3.4 Development impacts after the project life

What are the key things that need to happen <u>after</u> project completion (which therefore may be beyond the control or direct influence of the project team) and who needs to do them for the development outcomes summarised in Section 2.3 to occur? This might include scaling up and out of adoption of technologies, changes to markets, policies or other institutional arrangements etc.

We DO NOT require or expect a detailed 'theory of change' that links your proposed research to development outcomes at scale. However, ACIAR does make investment decisions based on assessment of the likelihood and scale of ultimate development contributions. This is your opportunity to provide input to that assessment by presenting plausible impact pathways.

For example: development of improved cropping practices or technologies may lead to widespread adoption by producers which may improve livelihoods (economic), enable children to attend school (social) and reduce soil erosion (environmental).

3.5 Monitoring and evaluation

*Describe the approach to **monitoring progress of implementation** of project activities and completion of planned outputs during the project. These processes should be sufficient to alert research team to areas of work that may not be delivering - either in terms of quality or timing.*

*Explain how you will **evaluate key planned project outcomes** so that verifiable evidence can be provided at the end of the project review about what is different as a result of the project's activities, and by how much. Briefly describe the indicators to monitor progress along the way and to evaluate end-of-project success, as defined in your planned outcomes.*

3.6 Avoiding harm

If there is the possibility of negative environmental, animal welfare or socio-economic impacts because of this project's activities, provide a brief consideration of the issue and its mitigation or management.

Note that ACIAR needs to ensure that its research investments comply with:

- *Section 28 of the **Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999** which states that a Commonwealth agency must not take inside or outside the Australian jurisdiction an action that has, will have or is likely to have a significant impact on the environment inside or outside the Australian jurisdiction.*

- **The Australian Code for The Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes 8th edition (2013)**

- [The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018)](#)

4. Resourcing - What inputs are needed?

*Note that the budget and project personnel tables are provided in the Preliminary Proposal budget template. Please complete these tables in that template. **It is not necessary to reproduce either of those tables in this document.***

4.1 Project Team

Please provide a justification for the personnel to be included in the project team. This might include the leadership structure for the project team, including who will be responsible from both the Australian/CGIAR team and the in-country partner(s) for implementation of the activities and the way the different researchers will work together. Where a component of the planned activities requires specialist skills (for example: political science, soil science, value chain analysis, genetics or molecular biology, product development) indicate which team members will lead this component and be accountable for delivery.

In doing so, consider relevant aspects including the balance between the Australian/CGIAR and the in-country organisations and individuals, as well as diversity and balance with respect to female and male participation (including women's active participation in all aspects of project governance, leadership and implementation) and early/mid/late career researchers.

4.2 Project Partnerships

Provide a brief description of each of the organizations that will form the partnership to implement the project. Describe the role of each partner organization, at the level that it relates to the planned project, and the comparative advantage that it brings to the project team. At the Preliminary Proposal stage, ACIAR assess whether these are the best organisations to undertake this project and the value that each partner will bring to the project, including its scientific capacity and relevant international and in-country experience.

You should briefly explain any governance or advisory structure involving stakeholders that will be used to support project implementation and to ensure that the project's activities have the appropriate level of 'ownership' within the key in-country partner organizations.

4.3 Other resourcing requirements

Are there other resources that will be needed to answer the research question? What other resources are needed to generate the intended outcomes of the research? These might include equipment, operating conditions, permits etc.

5. References

Provide a bibliography of the references cited in the Preliminary Proposal.

There is no page limit for Section 5*.*

6. Supplementary Information for ACIAR's In House Review

This section includes information provided to ACIAR to help better understand aspects of the project design. Please indicate which if any of this information is potentially sensitive and should therefore be confidential to the ACIAR In House Review.

There is no page limit for Section 6*.*

6.1 Budget

Provide a brief narrative to explain the logic behind the development of the figures contained in the budget spreadsheets. This could include information about the proposed funding distribution between partners, in-kind contributions, the magnitude of the travel budget, and an explanation of the need for capital items. Explain how much funding will be allocated to communications, project findings dissemination and monitoring and evaluation activities.

6.2 Scoping and Collaboration

Provide a brief explanation of any scoping activities that were undertaken during project design, including a summary of the main findings and recommendations from these activities. Indicate which team members have contributed to the writing of the project proposal as well as what level of collaboration has occurred with in-country partners and how this was undertaken.

6.3 Any other issues that you would like to raise

Any further information that you feel might be important for ACIAR's review of your preliminary proposal.