



Australian Government
**Australian Centre for
International Agricultural Research**

ACIAR

CORPORATE PLAN 2019-20





Contents

Statement of preparation	1
CEO's message	2
Our purpose	4
Our operating environment	6
Our risk management	10
Our performance	11
1. Multilateral research collaborations and co-investments	12
2. Bilateral country research partnerships	13
3. Capacity building programs	14
Our capability	15

© Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) 2019

This work is copyright. Apart from any use as permitted under the *Copyright Act 1968*, no part may be reproduced by any process without prior written permission from ACIAR, GPO Box 1571, Canberra ACT 2601, Australia or aciarc@aciarc.gov.au

ACIAR Corporate Plan 2019–20

ISBN 978-1-925746-75-4 (print)
ISBN 978-1-925746-76-1 (PDF/online)

This Corporate Plan is available online via the ACIAR website www.aciarc.gov.au or as hardcopy by request to aciarc@aciarc.gov.au

Enquiries about this Corporate Plan are welcome and should be directed to:
Eleanor Dean, General Manager
Outreach and Capacity Building
Phone: +61 2 6217 0500
Email: aciarc@aciarc.gov.au

Design: WhiteFox
Print: CanPrint Communications

Cover photograph credits, from top, ACIAR/Conor Ashleigh, ACIAR, Southern Cross University



Australian Government
**Australian Centre for
International Agricultural Research**

Statement of preparation

I, Colin Andrew Campbell, as the accountable authority of the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), present the ACIAR Corporate Plan 2019–20, which covers the 2019–20 to 2022–23 reporting periods, as required under paragraph 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

The plan is prepared in accordance with the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014*.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Campbell'.

Andrew Campbell
Chief Executive Officer
August 2019

CEO's message



The Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) is the Australian Government's specialist agricultural research-for-development agency, within the Australian aid program. ACIAR is established by the *Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research Act 1982* and is an agency of the Foreign Affairs and Trade portfolio.

Our mission is to achieve more productive and sustainable agricultural systems, for the benefit of developing countries and Australia, through international agricultural research partnerships. We broker, facilitate, invest in and manage strategic partnerships in agricultural research-for-development.

Australia's world-leading agricultural innovation system is a strategic national capability that ACIAR is able to mobilise in international research partnerships to address food insecurity. Tackling shared challenges through agricultural research collaboration is a compelling element of Australian soft power in the Indo-Pacific region. Australia is well equipped to play a leading role, disproportionate to the size of our population or our economy, within our region and globally.

Our work is organised across nine research areas: agribusiness, crops, livestock, horticulture, fisheries, forestry, social sciences, soil and land management, and water and climate.

The ACIAR 10-Year Strategy 2018–2027 sets out how we intend to work with partners across the Indo-Pacific region on the knowledge base to underpin six high-level development objectives:

- » food security and poverty reduction
- » natural resources and climate change
- » human health and nutrition
- » gender equity and women's empowerment
- » inclusive value chains
- » durable scientific and policy capability.

The ACIAR Gender Equity Policy and Strategy 2017–2022 informs the design and implementation of our research activities with partners, and our own internal organisation. Many ACIAR projects work towards improving women's access to resources and decision making, as this is a direct route to reducing poverty and boosting food security at family, community and societal levels.

There is increasing evidence, in both the public and private sectors, that organisations drawing equally on the talents of women and men at all levels outperform those that do not. Within ACIAR, the proportion of women in senior roles increased from 11% in 2016 to 63% by July 2019.

The knowledge base generated by ACIAR projects and programs empowers smallholder farmers, extension agents, scientists and policymakers to take on the intersecting challenges of growing more food and reducing poverty, using less land, water and energy.

Another layer of complexity in the regions where we work is the 'triple burden' of nutrition facing many low- and middle-income countries, where acute hunger and malnutrition (including micronutrient deficiencies), coexist with increasing levels of obesity, and associated diseases such as diabetes and heart disease.

Integral to our work are partnerships and relationships with other international research and development agencies. In recognition of the importance of these to our core business, our performance framework to government assesses the establishment and management of these relationships.

To measure performance against this Corporate Plan and the ACIAR 10-Year Strategy 2018–2027, and ensure alignment with our strategic objectives, we will continue to develop our Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy during 2019–20.

The Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy provides an integrated and portfolio-wide approach to assessing the performance of our programs and understanding how our work is contributing to change in our partner countries. This complements our long-established and highly-regarded impact evaluation at the research project level and longitudinal analysis of uptake of research results.

ACIAR is recognised nationally and internationally for facilitating research that works for developing countries and Australia. Our monitoring and evaluation program has several complementary components that work together to measure and understand our impact against the performance criteria set out in this Corporate Plan.

Our performance is measured against achievements within three areas of investment, which all have the common goal of engaging with partners to achieve our purpose.

- » Our Global Program fosters and manages multilateral research collaborations and co-investment.
- » Our Research Program brokers and manages bilateral research partnerships in partner countries.
- » Our Capacity Building Program identifies and establishes opportunities for individuals and institutions in partner countries to boost technical, policy and management skills in agricultural research-for-development.

The ACIAR Corporate Plan 2019–20 articulates our performance criteria and targets, and the framework to measure the success of our work. I have every confidence that together, our committed and skilled staff and partners will deliver successfully on this plan.

Through ACIAR partnerships, we will continue to grow the knowledge base for agricultural research-for-development, and in turn, improve livelihoods of smallholder farmers and fishers in our partner countries. Along the way, we will introduce new technologies, risk management and capabilities to Australian agriculture and agricultural sciences, generating a very high return on public investment.



Andrew Campbell
Chief Executive Officer
August 2019



Our purpose

The purpose of ACIAR is to contribute to reducing poverty and improving the livelihoods of many in the Indo-Pacific region through more productive and sustainable agriculture emerging from collaborative international research.

Our purpose reflects the commitment of the Australian Government aid program to promote Australia's national interests by contributing to sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction in our region. We work with public and private research institutions to improve the productivity and sustainability of agricultural systems and the resilience of food systems in partner countries. In doing so, ACIAR contributes to poverty reduction and improved livelihoods in low- and middle-income countries.

ACIAR supports Australia's national interests by contributing to sustainable economic growth and enhanced regional stability, with a particular focus on economic diplomacy and women's economic empowerment.

Our work aligns closely with Australia's broader development assistance program, supporting research collaboration while emphasising individual and institutional capacity building and private sector-led development, targeted at improved livelihoods in agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

The collaborative international programs and partnerships underpinning ACIAR-supported research also serve to improve Australian scientific capabilities and the productivity and sustainability of agricultural systems in Australia. Improved technologies and practices identified and developed through ACIAR research programs often address the shared challenges of all farmers in the Indo-Pacific region, Australia included.

Six high-level strategic objectives guide our partnerships and research programs. These objectives are consistent with the Australian Government's development assistance policy and the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development.

ACIAR's strategic objectives



Guided by the Enhanced Commonwealth Performance Framework, this Corporate Plan is the overarching planning document for ACIAR for the 2019–20 to 2022–23 period. This plan is complemented by our Portfolio Budget Statements and Annual Performance Statement.

The Australian Government seeks to achieve benefits for the Australian community (outcomes) primarily through programs delivered by government entities. Our work is framed by one Australian Government outcome and delivered through one Commonwealth program.

The ACIAR Corporate Plan 2019–20 sets out how ACIAR intends to achieve its purpose for the four-year period of this plan.

During 2018–19, ACIAR substantially developed the scope and capacity of its monitoring and evaluation program. As a result, new performance criteria and targets were established for the 2019–20 Portfolio Budget Statements.

Relationship between Portfolio Budget Statements, Corporate Plan and Annual Performance Statement

Portfolio Budget Statements	Outcome 1	
	To achieve more productive and sustainable agricultural systems for the benefit of developing countries and Australia through international agricultural research and training partnerships.	
	Program 1	
	International agricultural research-for-development for more productive and sustainable agriculture.	
Corporate Plan	Purpose	
	To contribute to reducing poverty and improving the livelihoods of many in the Indo-Pacific region through more productive and sustainable agriculture emerging from collaborative international research.	
	Performance criteria	Target
	Delivery in line with the ACIAR 10-Year Strategy 2018–2027: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » multilateral research collaborations and co-investment with development partners through the Global Program » bilateral country research partnerships through ten research programs » capacity building programs targeted to agricultural researchers in partner countries 	Through case studies (quantitative and qualitative), mid- and end-project reviews, long-term adoption studies and impact pathway analyses, ACIAR will measure the extent to which these performance criteria are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » achieved » on track » not on track
Annual performance statement (Annual Report)	Report achievement of targets set for performance criteria	

Our operating environment

ACIAR operates throughout the Indo-Pacific region where countries are grappling with complex and intersecting challenges of growing more food and reducing poverty, using less land, water and energy.

Accommodating the challenging operating environment and acknowledging unique research priorities within each country, ACIAR establishes partnerships and programs to identify and respond to regional or local opportunities to participate in economic growth, support rapid growth in populations, and build capacity to develop productive and sustainable systems in the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors.

We operate in more than thirty countries in four key regions:

- » Pacific
- » East and South-East Asia
- » South Asia
- » Eastern and Southern Africa.

ACIAR conducts reviews and consultations with country partners, facilitated by ACIAR staff in ten country offices across our operating regions. For the period of this Corporate Plan, 2019-20 to 2022-23, several features and issues will have a significant influence on the operating environment within each region.

Pacific

Australia's commitment to a more ambitious and intensified engagement in the Pacific region, referred to as the *Pacific Step-up*, emphasises the importance of our ongoing and diverse program within the region.

Key features and priorities for ACIAR in the operating environment of our Pacific region are listed as follows.

- » Improving food and nutritional security remains a high priority for all countries in the Pacific region. Additionally, the triple burden of food insecurity, malnutrition and a high prevalence of nutrition-related diseases is emerging as a new priority for ACIAR.
- » Understanding and addressing the impacts of climate change on food systems resilience and livelihood security is an increasing priority for many countries in the region.

- » Strengthening regional biosecurity through trade protocols and individual and institutional capacity is a priority throughout the Pacific region, to support the growth of import-replacement and export markets, food security and conserve biodiversity.
- » Enabling inter-country collaboration is an important role played by ACIAR through regional projects, capacity building, and supporting a stronger forum for exchange of ideas and experiences through the Pacific Week of Agriculture.
- » Implementing a long-term capacity building program targeted at building skills in the sciences related to agriculture is a priority in Pacific island countries. As is strengthening institutions and networks to maintain this capability.

East and South-East Asia

As rural transformation advances and education opportunities increase, many partner countries in East and South-East Asia are developing research capability that requires a new approach to their partnerships with ACIAR.

Key features and priorities for ACIAR in the operating environment of our East and South-East Asia region are listed as follows.

- » Increasingly, capitalising on market opportunities that can transform smallholder systems is the focus of ACIAR research in East and South-East Asia, as the region undergoes rapid urbanisation and globalisation of agrifood chains.
- » Challenging issues related to acute poverty still affect Timor-Leste and discrete areas within other countries in the region. These issues require very specific targeting for research collaboration between those partner countries and ACIAR.
- » Understanding and addressing the impacts of climate change on food systems and livelihood security is an increasing priority for many partner countries in the region.
- » Opportunities exist for greater regional cooperation and trilateral collaboration in research between ACIAR and partner countries in East and South-East Asia.

South Asia

Agriculture remains the key driver of economic growth in most partner countries in South Asia.

Key features and priorities for ACIAR in the operating environment of our South Asia region are listed as follows.

- » Understanding and addressing the impacts of climate change on food systems and livelihood security is an increasing priority for partner countries in the region.
- » Developing sustainable and equitable water management systems at the farm, community and institutional level is an ongoing priority for partner countries in South Asia.
- » Intensifying cropping systems, climate resilience, and soil and water management issues continue to be a priority of partner countries, and a focus of ACIAR collaborations in the region.
- » Security is an ongoing and significant consideration throughout South Asia, and accordingly, all ACIAR-related research is planned and implemented with a high degree of caution.

Eastern and Southern Africa

Agriculture is key to the transformation of most African economies. The ACIAR program in Africa fills a niche not addressed by many donor organisations, i.e. agricultural research-for-development.

Key features and priorities for ACIAR in the operating environment of our Eastern and Southern Africa region are listed as follows.

- » Australian dryland and irrigated farming systems and science are highly relevant to much of Africa, and Australian firms are keen to engage.
- » Finance to agriculture is flowing but impacts are slowed by a lack of investment in the innovation needed to unlock the potential of smallholder agriculture.
- » Sustainable crop and livestock systems, addressing the impacts of climate change, plant biosecurity and stimulating commercial options for smallholder farmers are a priority in this region.
- » Co-investment with development partners, notably the Canadian International Development Research Center (IDRC), remains a feature of ACIAR work in the region.

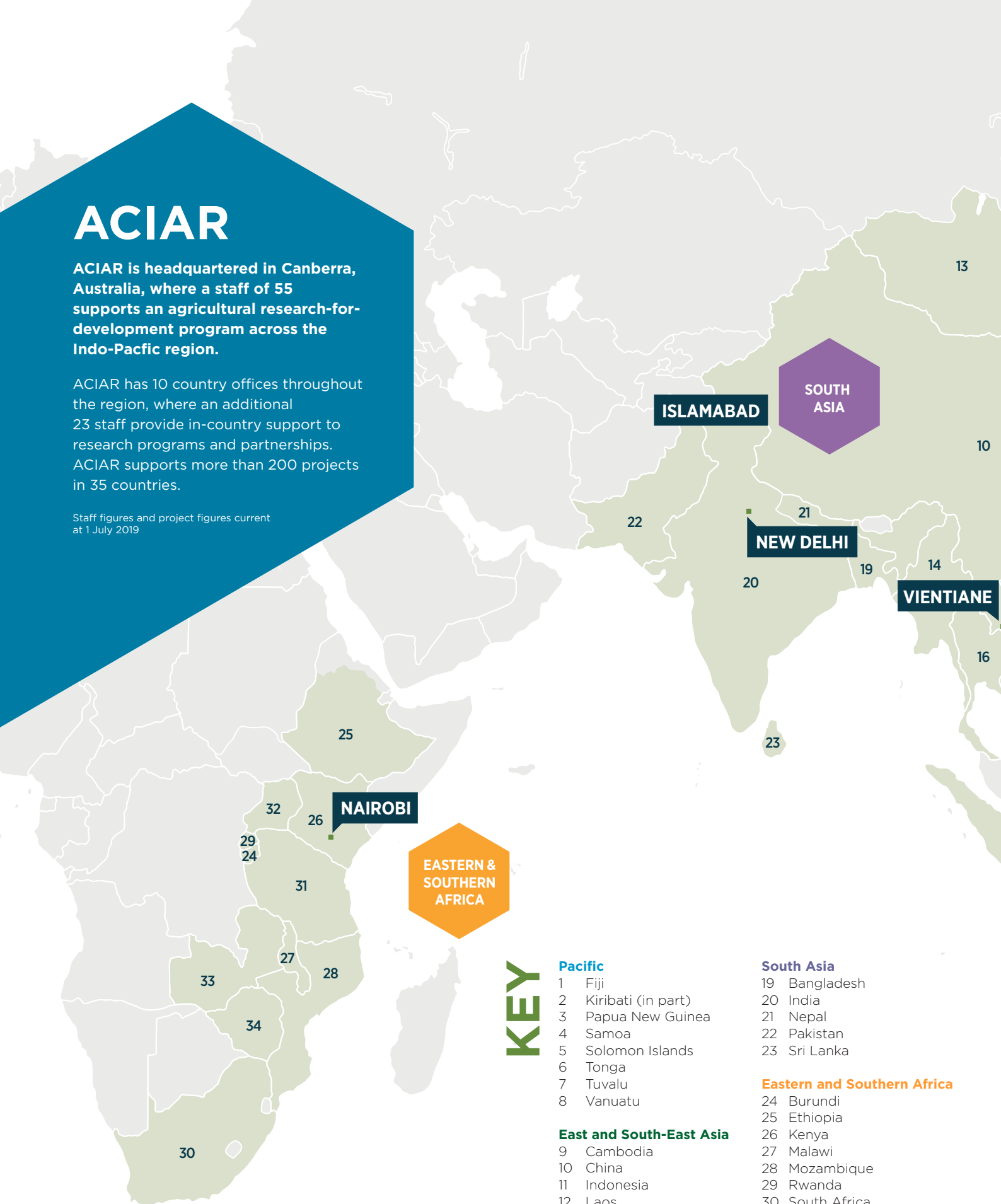


ACIAR

ACIAR is headquartered in Canberra, Australia, where a staff of 55 supports an agricultural research-for-development program across the Indo-Pacific region.

ACIAR has 10 country offices throughout the region, where an additional 23 staff provide in-country support to research programs and partnerships. ACIAR supports more than 200 projects in 35 countries.

Staff figures and project figures current at 1 July 2019



KEY

Pacific

- 1 Fiji
- 2 Kiribati (in part)
- 3 Papua New Guinea
- 4 Samoa
- 5 Solomon Islands
- 6 Tonga
- 7 Tuvalu
- 8 Vanuatu

East and South-East Asia

- 9 Cambodia
- 10 China
- 11 Indonesia
- 12 Laos
- 13 Mongolia
- 14 Myanmar
- 15 Philippines
- 16 Thailand
- 17 Timor-Leste
- 18 Vietnam

South Asia

- 19 Bangladesh
- 20 India
- 21 Nepal
- 22 Pakistan
- 23 Sri Lanka

Eastern and Southern Africa

- 24 Burundi
- 25 Ethiopia
- 26 Kenya
- 27 Malawi
- 28 Mozambique
- 29 Rwanda
- 30 South Africa
- 31 Tanzania
- 32 Uganda
- 33 Zambia
- 34 Zimbabwe

Ghana (not shown)



BEIJING

EAST & SOUTH-EAST ASIA

HANOI

MANILA

JAKARTA

PORT MORESBY

CANBERRA

PACIFIC

SUVA



Current at July 2019

Our risk management

Risk oversight and management systems are essential for ACIAR functions and operations, underpinning the achievement of its key objectives.

ACIAR ensures that its activities are delivered in scope within schedule, budget and quality requirements, and in a way that reduces the likelihood of preventable risks being realised.

Given the nature of our work and our operating environment, there is some high risk but potentially high payoff research. The ACIAR Risk Management Policy and Plan 2018-21 identifies the key strategic risks to ACIAR delivering on its objectives and measures to mitigate these risks.

The key strategic risks that may prevent ACIAR achieving its objectives are identified as:

- » ineffective business systems—reducing the ability to effectively support agricultural research partnerships and decreasing information security
- » absence of adequate records management systems—poor information management and recordkeeping practices resulting in an inability to fulfil organisational priorities and legal obligations
- » ineffective management of relationships—including those with the Minister’s Office, the Secretary and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, research partners, including those with existing and new partners, leading to poor working relationships and impacting the ability to effectively deliver on the ACIAR mandate
- » compromised safety of ACIAR staff or project personnel—due to threats posed in its operational environments.

Noting the ongoing investment underway in improving ‘back office’ systems and processes, and in upgrading capabilities across the country office network, ACIAR has appropriate internal controls in place for the oversight and management of these risks, based on sound judgment and the best information available. This supports our capacity to identify, manage and derive maximum benefits from new challenges and opportunities in international agricultural research partnerships.

ACIAR requires risk registers to be developed, maintained and owned by key functional groups within the agency. Risk registers are reviewed by the Executive Team and the Audit Committee and updated, as necessary, on a monthly basis.

All ACIAR staff are accountable for good risk management in their workplace and base their approach on an understanding of the likelihood and consequence of risks being realised when considering the impact of uncertainty on delivering ACIAR objectives.

Deteriorating security situations in some countries, generally or in localised regions, do present risks for the viability of ACIAR-funded research collaboration. These risks will be actively monitored and managed.

ACIAR will continue to invest in the capability of ACIAR staff to ensure that they are able to manage risk, and that they can engage external expertise when required to assist in effectively managing risks. ACIAR will also maintain an active internal audit program to continue to improve its approach to risk management.

Our performance

ACIAR is an investor, broker, facilitator and manager of strategic partnerships in agricultural research-for-development, to build knowledge and capacity. We are a learning organisation, evaluating and communicating research findings.

Our core business is to manage long-term relationships and identify research priorities collaboratively with our partner countries, alongside brokering research partnerships and commissioning research to tackle those priorities.

Since its inception in 1982, ACIAR has evolved a strong research partnership model that encompasses:

- » multilateral research collaborations
- » co-investment with research and development partners
- » bilateral country partnerships.

Each type of partnership has its own procurement pathway, governance framework, quality assurance and risk management. Achieving our purpose is enabled by our partnership model, which ensures that partner countries have input into and ownership of research priorities and delivery of programs. This model maximises the relevance of research and programs undertaken, and increases the likelihood that outputs and findings will be used and make a long-term difference in partner countries and in Australia.

Capacity building is an evolving and growing element of our business, and a natural extension of our partnership model. The value of the knowledge base generated by projects and programs with partner countries is greatly enhanced if our partners (individuals and institutions) have the skills and capacity to apply new the knowledge to research, management and policy. Capacity building also increases the likelihood that outputs and findings of ACIAR projects and programs will make a long-term difference in partner countries and in Australia.

Throughout the period of this Corporate Plan, 2019–20 to 2022–23, ACIAR will manage projects and establish relationships and programs that contribute to the achievement of our targets.

Monitoring and reporting

The impact of ACIAR projects, programs and partnerships is complex to measure, as it involves technological and sociological changes in developing countries in the Indo-Pacific region, which may be realised over many years, even decades, after the original research investment.

Our purpose is to contribute to reducing poverty and improving the livelihood of many in the Indo-Pacific region through more productive and sustainable agriculture emerging from collaborative international research. To achieve this purpose, ACIAR has three key areas of work:

- » multilateral research collaborations and co-investments
- » bilateral country research partnerships
- » capacity building programs.

Investment and design of projects, programs and partnerships within each area is guided by our high-level strategic objectives (ACIAR 10-Year Strategy 2018–2027) and tested against our performance criteria and targets (ACIAR Portfolio Budget Statements 2019–20).

Each area functions in a unique way but with a common goal of engaging with partners to achieve our purpose. ACIAR manages and monitors its investments in research and partnerships to maximise impact and returns. We have a well-established approach to assessing adoption of research results and their subsequent impact at a project level. More recently, we have developed a portfolio-scale approach to help refine our priorities, learn lessons from current and past projects, and report accurately to our Minister, the Parliament and the Australian public.

We assess our performance through an integrated approach to monitoring and evaluation at a project level and at a portfolio level. The following sections set out the performance indicators and targets for each area of our work that contribute to our annual performance within the Enhanced Commonwealth Performance Framework.

1

Multilateral research collaborations and co-investments

Recognising that agricultural research is an international enterprise, ACIAR fosters and manages multilateral research collaborations and co-investment programs.

Our investment in multilateral research collaborations gives Australia 'a seat at the table'. Through these investments we seek to maintain a strong, innovative voice in international agricultural research and contribute to maintaining a coordinated partnership approach to addressing challenges in global food systems.

As part of our statutory mandate, ACIAR manages Australia's investment in the international agricultural research system, chief among which is the CGIAR. Australia is among the larger investors in the CGIAR, with ACIAR staff involved in the highest levels of governance of the CGIAR system, and Australian scientists prominent in the leadership and governance of the 15 CGIAR centres.

ACIAR also manages co-investment programs, which take two main forms.

First are co-investment alliances, where the design and management of research programs are shared between all contributing donors, such as the Cultivate Africa's Future program, co-funded with Canada's International Development Research Centre.

Second are co-investment partnerships, where a donor will co-fund an ACIAR project, and ACIAR is responsible for the management of the project, such as projects managed by ACIAR under the DFAT-ACIAR Record of Understanding.

Together, these collaborations and co-investments enhance Australia's global reputation as a constructive development partner and position Australia to positively influence the international agricultural research agenda.

Performance within this area of work is tracked by monitoring:

- » Multilateral research collaborations:
 1. consistency as a donor
 2. influence as a donor
- » Co-investment alliances and partnerships:
 1. complementary expertise accessed through co-investment in emerging areas
 2. maximising investment in priority areas.

Key performance measures for tracking performance of multilateral research collaborations, 2019-20 to 2022-23

Area monitored	Performance indicator	Annual target
Consistency as a donor	% variation in financial support from previous financial year	Rated as <i>on track</i>
Influence as a donor	% of supported multilateral research collaborations in which ACIAR is represented on a governance body	Rated as <i>achieved</i>

Key performance measures for tracking performance of co-investment alliances and partnerships, 2019-20 to 2022-23

Area monitored	Performance indicator	Annual target
Complementary expertise accessed through co-investment in emerging areas	% of ACIAR portfolio managed through a co-investment partnership	Rated as <i>on track</i>
Maximising investment in priority areas	Ratio of total ACIAR committed funds: total co-investor committed funds	Rated as <i>achieved</i>

2

Bilateral country research partnerships

Bilateral country research partnerships between ACIAR and partner countries dominate our research portfolio.

In any one year, there will be approximately 200 ACIAR-supported research projects and small research activities underway in the Indo-Pacific region. The research is led by a commissioned organisation (universities, CSIRO, state government agencies or private firms) and/or international agricultural research centres, and is a collaboration between project leaders and in-country organisations. The ACIAR Research Program works closely with collaborators to determine and monitor the achievement of project milestones.

Some of these relationships are undergoing significant change as partner countries develop more confidence and capability in research.

Increasingly, ACIAR is engaged in partnership brokering as well as research prioritisation, to deliver research projects consistent with jointly agreed priorities.

Agricultural research has benefits at multiple levels and for multiple actors—farm, regional and national and to smallholders, community and industry. Our performance is measured at two levels. First, we set targets for project management and delivery of intended outputs. Second, we measure the contribution of our investment over time.

Performance within this area of work is tracked by monitoring:

1. project management
2. delivery of intended program objectives
3. program contribution to sector and participant outcomes.

Key performance measures for tracking performance of bilateral country research partnerships, 2019–20 to 2022–23

Area monitored	Performance indicator	Annual target
Project management	% of annual deliverables submitted on schedule	Rated as <i>on track</i>
	% of annual and final reports submitted on schedule	Rated as <i>on track</i>
Delivery of intended project objectives	% of projects concluded during the financial year that rated as good quality or above on the effectiveness criteria in final project reviews	Rated as <i>on track</i>
	% of projects concluded during the financial year that rated as good quality or above on the gender equity criteria in final project reviews	Rated as <i>on track</i>
Contribution to development outcomes	% of long-term adoption studies completed during the financial year showing evidence of significant use of identified project outputs by next and/or final users	Rated as <i>on track</i>
	% of long-term economic impact assessments completed during the financial year showing benefit:cost ratio of 3:1 or above	Rated as <i>on track</i>

3

Capacity building programs

ACIAR delivers a comprehensive suite of programs designed to build the capacity of researchers and leaders in agricultural research in our region.

The flagship programs, the John Allwright Fellowship and John Dillon Fellowship, focus on career development and executive leadership for post-graduate students and mid-career researchers, respectively.

In recognition of gendered inequalities in access to agricultural education and leadership positions, a new fellowship program for women agricultural researchers commences in 2019-20, delivering on a commitment in our Gender Equity Policy and Strategy 2017-22. The program includes workshops for in-country mentors and key people within the fellows' workplace, recognising the importance of fostering institutional support for women's leadership and career development.

Additionally, ACIAR works with past fellows in their home countries to build strong alumni programs to support continuous capacity building to meet self-identified needs. Alumni programs highlight the diverse achievements, knowledge and influence of all alumni and seek to create a network of professionals who support excellence in agricultural research.

Performance within this area of work is tracked by monitoring:

1. project management
2. delivery of intended program objectives
3. program contribution to sector and participant outcomes.

Key performance measures for tracking performance of capacity building programs, 2019-20 to 2022-23

Area monitored	Performance indicator	Annual target
Project management	% of annual deliverables submitted on schedule	Rated as <i>on track</i>
	% of total participants identifying as female or non-binary	Rated as <i>on track</i>
Delivery of intended project objectives	% of total program participants successfully completing	Rated as <i>on track</i>
	% of participants who self-assess their experience of the program as satisfactory or above at completion	Rated as <i>on track</i>
Contribution to development outcomes	% of total program alumni profiled in qualitative case-studies annually who are engaged in relevant sectors	Rated as <i>on track</i>
	% of total program alumni profiled in qualitative case-studies annually who self-assess the program as a significant contribution to career development	Rated as <i>on track</i>

Our capability

ACIAR aims to be a valued broker and partner in agricultural research through close working relationships with stakeholders, and provision of timely and consistent funding support. We promote the development and coordination of regional, national and international agricultural research systems in the Indo-Pacific region.

Since 1982, ACIAR has contributed significantly to improving the productivity and sustainability of agricultural, fisheries and forestry systems in our region. ACIAR maintains and builds on this success through five distinct areas of operation.

Research Program

The Research Program conceives, commissions, brokers and assesses research projects that deliver against our strategic objectives. The program is designed around key agricultural sectors (crops, fisheries, forestry, horticulture and livestock), as well as the science to sustain the resource base (soil and land management, and water and climate) and generate social and economic benefit (agribusiness and social sciences). Key cross-cutting issues such as gender, climate change, integrated farming systems, economics and policy and the link between livestock and human health risks (One Health), are encompassed by the program. The impact of our work is monitored at project and portfolio level, to understand the impact of our achievements and guide future investment.

The Research Program is guided by our six strategic objectives to ensure we achieve our mission of more productive and sustainable agricultural systems. In order to design and implement a successful research program, our experienced Research Program Managers will continue to work with partners to ensure the best possible research is designed to address priority issues. Selected research programs and their outputs will be evaluated for benefit and impact, to continue to evolve and deliver effective research.

ACIAR is a learning organisation. We implement both formal and informal processes to review, assess and learn from the work we do throughout the Indo-Pacific region. This learning builds individual and institutional knowledge from project outputs, as well as enhancing our understanding and building our experience to enable continual improvement of the programs that ACIAR develops and supports. Throughout the period of this Corporate Plan, ACIAR will continue to develop and implement its Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy.

Country Programs

The Country Programs oversee the management of ten country offices across the Indo-Pacific region. These offices (all led by locally engaged staff) support the development and regular recalibration of our bilateral country relationships. Our country offices play an increasingly important role in facilitating research on the ground, providing logistical support for Australian researchers in-country, and keeping abreast of emerging local issues that have implications for Australian aid policy and ACIAR research investments at country and regional scales.

The strength of our partnership model will be maintained through regular strategy discussions with country partners, consultation with Australian, regional and international research agencies, and continued support to the strategic capabilities of our network of country offices. ACIAR will maintain active communication with DFAT, and Heads of Mission, Ambassadors and High Commissioners in partner countries, to ensure alignment with and relevance to Australia's broader aid initiatives.

Global Program

Agricultural research is an international enterprise. Australia draws heavily on new knowledge from across the global agricultural innovation system, as well as making a distinctive contribution to that knowledge base.

The Global Program builds and manages multilateral partnerships with a range of international organisations, institutes and associations engaged in agricultural research and in the delivery of global public goods. The program implements one of our mandated roles of funding and supporting the international agricultural research centres. The program also manages a suite of co-funded programs across multiple countries in the regions of eastern and southern Africa, South-East Asia and the Pacific.

The Global Program will continue to manage and develop our multilateral partnerships with a range of international and regional organisations—the CGIAR being the primary one. Through co-investment partnerships with other like-minded donors and the private sector, the program will identify opportunities and partnerships, and continue to manage regional programs that enhance knowledge and capacity in partner countries.

Outreach and Capacity Building

Outreach increases the understanding of stakeholders and the Australian public of the impact of Australia's aid investment through ACIAR. Many platforms and channels are used to ensure that audiences in Australia and our partner countries can access, understand and use the outputs of ACIAR-supported projects and programs.

Our outreach strategy maintains its focus on international and domestic stakeholders. Tailored communication products and programs will extend results of research to targeted groups of smallholder farmers in partner countries, the research community and decision makers. Through our relaunched website and enhanced social media channels, ACIAR will communicate more broadly using video and photography; as well as through improved reports, information sheets and publications. ACIAR will target Australian media to raise our profile with domestic audiences.

Capacity Building works with individuals and institutions in the Indo-Pacific region to enhance scientific research capability, management, policy and governance. The program facilitates post-graduate and in-service training and supports project-based capacity building.

New capacity building programs will be implemented, including balanced researcher and internship programs for post-graduate students, a new fellowship program targeting women leaders, a farmers' volunteering program and activities targeting the Australian agricultural research community. A program of alumni events in partner countries is being developed to maintain and strengthen relationships and continue to build capacity.

Corporate Services

Corporate Services provides underpinning business systems across four departments: Human Resources; Finance, Procurement and Legal; Business Systems; and Overseas Corporate Management.

Our capability depends on the values and diversity of individuals within the organisation. Within the workplace, the way staff work and the development of workplace culture and diversity are influenced by our values of impartiality, commitment to service, accountability, and respectful and ethical conduct. These values demonstrate our commitment to upholding the APS Values and Code of Conduct.

ACIAR introduced its Gender Equity Policy and Strategy in 2017. The internal Gender Committee will continue working on the implementation of the strategy across all offices throughout the period of this Corporate Plan.

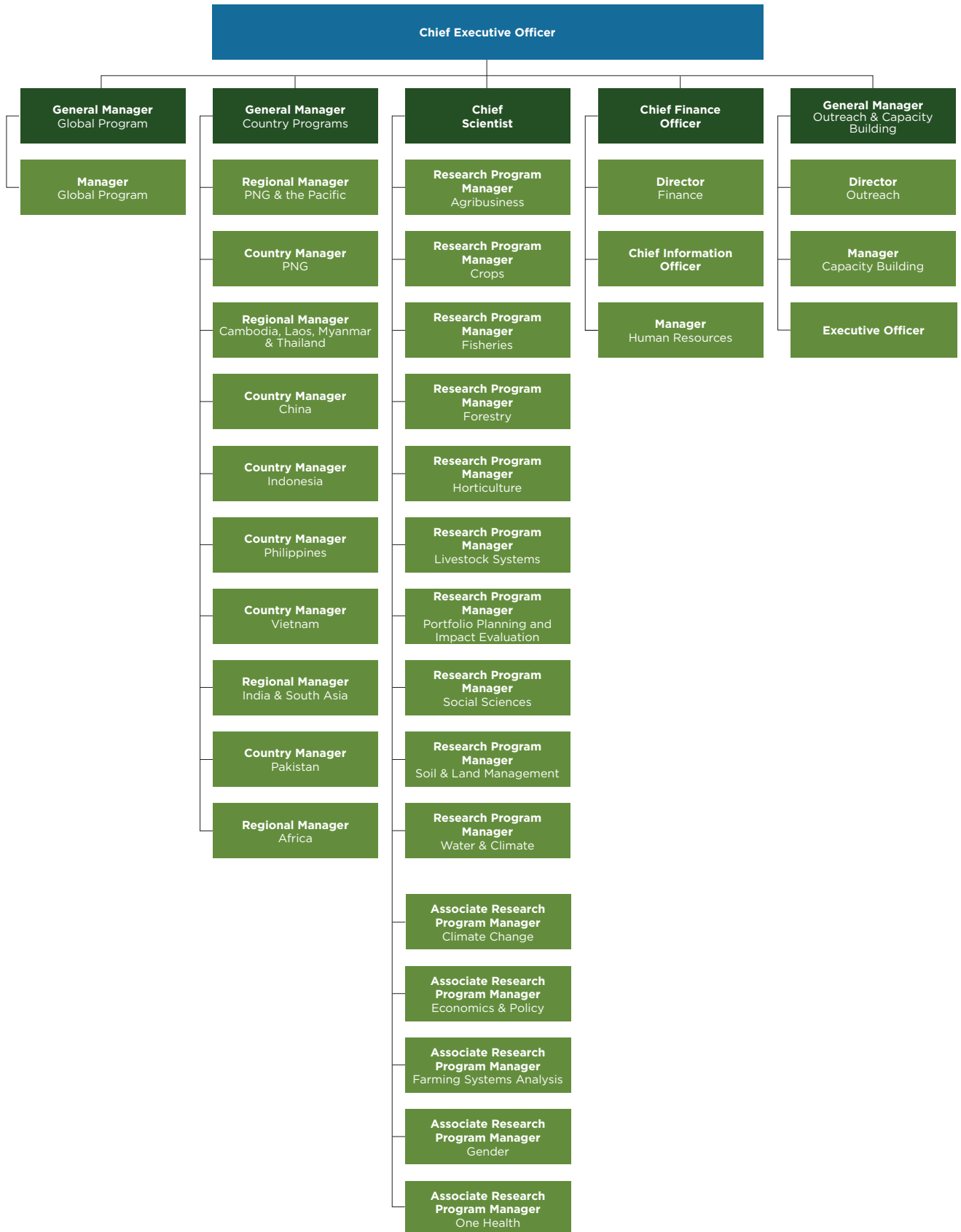
We will continue to develop our Capability Development Strategy to ensure that ACIAR staff has the capacity to deliver on its functions over the life of this plan. Staff is supported to enhance knowledge and skills through our Individual Development, Planning and Evaluation Scheme. ACIAR will continue to support the development of young professionals through direct involvement in research projects and early career positions for agricultural graduates in ACIAR and the countries in which we work.

A new cloud-based ICT platform (ACIAR Collaborative Environment or ACE) supports global collaboration between staff, research partners and stakeholders. The platform integrates program, project, partnership, finance, procurement, communication and stakeholder management into a single system that enables ACIAR to deliver more effectively and efficient project procurement and management. This new system will meet current and foreseeable future business requirements, including areas of new research or reporting requirements.

ACIAR workplace priorities

- » Enhance work health and safety systems to effectively manage risk
- » Enhance capability by developing a skilled and diverse workforce
- » Foster a culture of wellbeing to encourage engagement
- » Maintain a workplace that embeds our values and encourages participation
- » Facilitate the implementation of ACIAR Enterprise Agreements in Australia and overseas
- » Ensure that staff are aware of ACIAR values
- » Encourage executive management to be champions and role models
- » Ensure the integration and development of both our locally engaged staff and those who work remotely
- » Workforce planning to attract, develop and retain the right people in the right job at the right time

Organisational structure (July 2019)





ACIAR

aciarc.gov.au

