CGIAR

The Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research

1. Facts and figures

Type of organisation: Organisation consisting of 15 international agricultural research centres under the leadership of a consortium, financed by a World Bank donor fund

Established in: 1971

Headquarters: Montpellier, France

Number of country offices: 15 international agricultural research centres in 14 countries, most of which have local projects in several countries

Head of organisation: Chair of the CGIAR Consortium Board, Carlos Pérez de Castillo. As the World Bank's Vice President for the Sustainable Development Network, Rachel Kyte (UK) is Chair of the CGIAR Fund Council

Dates of Board meetings in 2013: Consortium Board meeting took place 2–3 October. Fund Council 23–26 April and one meeting is scheduled for 6–7 November. Funders' Forum is convened every other year, next meeting in 2014

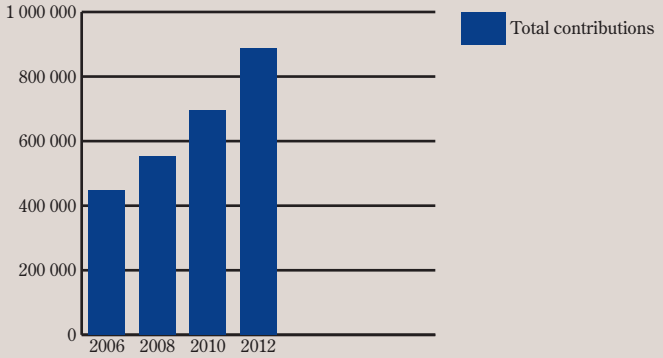
Norway's representation in Fund Council: Norway holds the Nordic seat in the Fund Council from 2013 to 2015. Three Institute Board members: Ruth Haug on the Board of IFPRI, Gry Synnevåg on the Board of ICRISAT and Trine Hvoslef-Eide on the Board of IITA

Number of Norwegian staff: None

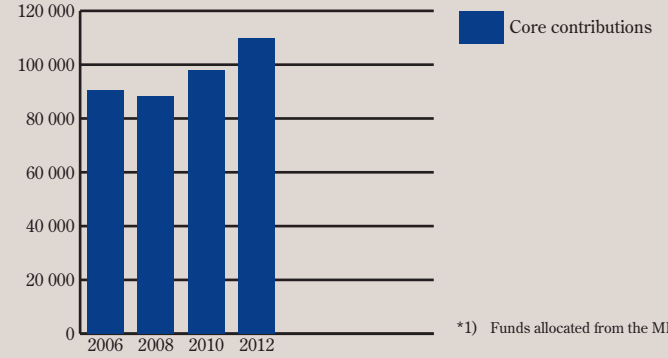
Competent ministry: Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)

Website: www.cgiar.org and www.cgiarfund.org

Total revenues (1000 USD)

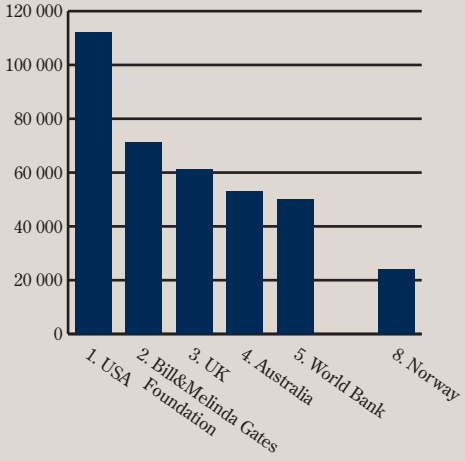


Norway's contributions*1) (1000 NOK)



*1) Funds allocated from the MFA's budget

The five largest donors, and Norway, in 2012 (1000 USD)



NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mandate and areas of activity

CGIAR (originally the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research) seeks to reduce rural poverty, improve food security, improve human health and nutrition, and promote sustainable use of natural resources. Work is carried out by international research institutes that are staffed and equipped to play a world-leading role in their mandate areas. Through network programmes, CGIAR joins forces with other actors: national research agencies, other international programmes and civil society organisations, and the private sector.

Efforts are organised through cross-cutting research programmes that cover all the important food crops and crop genetic resources and agroecosystems, livestock and fish, natural resources such as forests and agroforestry, water, climate change and policies, institutions and markets. In all these efforts, emphasis is placed on promoting women's interests, local partnerships and capacity-building.

Results achieved in 2012

The 2012 report is the first time that all of CGIAR's 16 research programmes (CRPs) have reported on their results (11 of them for the first time). Since the CGIAR reform is at an intermediary stage and the research programmes are at different stages of development, results are reported somewhat differently from one CRP to another.

The new activities launched by the CRPs seem to produce outputs and results more quickly than prior to the reform. Through its broader engagement with a greater number of partners, CGIAR has increased (i) the range of its scientific and developmental expertise, and (ii) the number of countries in which it is engaged. This increases the likelihood of success in addressing complex, difficult research questions, and can also accelerate the research process. The following synthesis and examples begin to indicate the significant impact potential of the CRP portfolio:

Over 1,200 publications have been produced by the CRPs in high-impact (ISI) journals. The list of these publications can be accessed through the web links in the individual CRP reports. The many scientific and popular articles issued by the CGIAR institutes now constitute the world's foremost knowledge resource within key CGIAR areas of activity, and may be found on the websites of the individual institutes.

A wide range of new technologies and enhanced farming practices were produced in 2012. These include improved, resilient crop varieties, forages, fish strains, distribution of vaccines against animal diseases, and numerous improved management practices (agriculture and forestry) for different types of farming systems.

The Global Rice Science Partnership (GRiSP), for instance, discovered a new gene (PSTOL1) after ten years of research. This gene enables rice plants to absorb phosphorus more effectively, thereby increasing the potential of rice to produce around 20 per cent more grain under specific conditions. GRiSP has also produced the new 5 SUB 1 variety of rice for distribution to 4 million producers. The 5 SUB 1 variety can survive underwater for long periods of total submergence, making it highly desirable in flood-prone areas.

The International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) has sequenced the complete genome for chickpeas, an achievement that will substantially increase the effectiveness and efficiency of breeding.

Wheat research produced two varieties of wheat that are resistant to Ug99, a stem rust fungus discovered in Uganda and Yemen that threatens major wheat-growing countries such as India. Stem rust is one of the most virulent plant diseases in history. In just a few weeks, it can destroy large areas of wheat, rye or oats. The disease is most prevalent in warm regions.

New knowledge was also produced in many other fields of research. The CRPs have developed a new technology for soil and landscape assessment based on a combination of advanced infrared soil spectroscopy, soil mapping methods and analytical tools for landscape assessment. This technology has now been made available through the Africa Soil Information Service, and significantly facilitates the identification of favourable areas for sustainable agricultural intensification.

CGIAR contributes to policy-making. For instance, long-term research by CIAT and IITA on coffee-based farming systems in East Africa and Central America enabled CGIAR's research programme on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS) to demonstrate that combining banana and coffee growing systems makes production more resistant to climate shocks than if the crops had been grown in a monoculture. As a result of this research, Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda, which previously supported coffee monocropping, now recommend intercropping bananas and coffee.

The CRPs have also developed a high-resolution map of rice that provides yield and production estimates for several Asian countries. The map, with a resolution of one hectare, combines satellite-based remote sensing with weather and crop modelling. It was developed for a number of South Asian and South-East Asian countries, and is a decision-support tool for partners and public and private actors in the rice sector.

In India, irrigation methods developed by the CRPs have led to a USD 1.2 billion investment to introduce the methods during a five-year period. The methods increase irrigation efficiency and lead to larger yields.

Thanks to new, improved CGIAR-supported varieties (ARICA), Africa's new varieties of rice continue to spread across large parts of sub-Saharan Africa. The varieties produce substantially larger crops than the traditional varieties and should be adapted to local conditions. The national research institutions will be important partners in achieving this objective.

In the livestock sector, the production and distribution of vaccines (178,000 doses) against East Coast fever has had a particularly strong impact. East Coast fever is a tick-borne disease that attacks cattle, sheep and goats. The disease kills around 1.1 million cattle in Africa every year. CGIAR has long focused on the disease, and has contributed to the development of a new vaccine that has now been approved in three countries and used on a large scale by the Kenyan authorities.

Work continues on further development of Nile tilapia (freshwater-farmed fish). Two genetically improved strains of Nile tilapia (Oreochromis niloticus) developed by WorldFish and partners are achieving growth rates that are up to 30 per cent faster than earlier tilapia. In Egypt, a breeding programme has produced "Abbassa", a Nile tilapia that grows faster and is heavier than the most commonly used commercial tilapia. This will help to provide protein for many Egyptians at reasonable cost.

Eleven of the centres have gene banks with global collections of seed samples of all the culture plants that are important for world food security (a total of 700,000 accessions). These are the most important collections of their kind, particularly because of their accessibility in both practical and formal terms. The collections are searchable and at the free disposal of users all over the world. An agreement with FAO assures the collections' legal status as a global common public good (they cannot be patented). The collections have been duplicated and placed in safe storage in the seed vault on Svalbard. Renewing the collection and administering this facility is a key area of work.

A major research programme identifies genes related to climate adaptation in cultivated plants' wild relatives. These genes will be transferred to cultivate plants and made available for use in the development of new plant varieties. The programme is run by the Global Crop Diversity Trust, but is dependent on the capacity and expertise of several of the CGIAR institutes, which carry out essential, strategic parts of the programme. This is an example of strategic long-term research.

All this work is carried out in partnership at the local level with national research agencies, one of the objectives being national capacity-building. When activities were summed up in 2012, some 300,000 national experts had taken part in courses administered by CGIAR. In this way, national researchers gain access to strategic knowledge and necessary methodologies, and they are linked to international research networks that offer them continuous access to new knowledge and the experience of being part of a dynamic international research community.

2. Assessments: Results, effectiveness and monitoring

The organisation's results-related work

To some extent, it has been difficult to see the direct link between project-level activities and the overarching global objectives. A process has therefore been initiated to formulate intermediate development objectives and develop impact pathways. This work is expected to be completed in 2013.

Evaluations: An independent evaluation unit carries out rolling assessments of the entire portfolio. A Standing Panel of Impact Assessment has been established, based at FAO. The major donors also carry out their own evaluations.

Planning and budgeting systems

Projects are planned by the individual institutes, considered by the Institute Boards, quality-assured by an independent Science Council and presented through the Consortium for financing by the Fund. System-level processing is described in http://www.cgiarfund.org/fundoffice and is considered to be satisfactory.

Oversight and anti-corruption

Scientific oversight: The Science Council based at FAO assesses project proposals and systematically reviews the outcomes achieved by the entire project portfolio.

Audits: Audits are conducted by an external auditing unit.

Corruption: Following a single unfortunate incident, CGIAR is now reviewing its systems and procedures to intensify its vigilance and oversight. This is an ongoing process called a Governance Review, implemented in two phases. Phase 1 has been completed and Phase 2 is currently being carried out.

Institution-building and national ownership

All countries have national research agencies with which the CGIAR institutes collaborate on research projects, adaptation and the introduction of innovation. The national systems' ability and capacity to absorb new technologies vary significantly, ranging from the giants (China, India, Brazil), which make huge investments in research, to small countries that barely have a functioning national research agency. Some of the small countries are totally dependent on CGIAR to be able to deliver necessary research results at all. CGIAR's contribution to strengthening national systems consists of technology transfers and provision of training for local employees. This is important, but it is hardly sufficient as long as national budgets remain limited.

The cross-cutting thematic programmes are engaged in partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders: non-governmental organisations, universities, UN organisations and private-sector actors, in addition to national research agencies. This promotes the spread of relevant technologies and capacity.

Willingness to learn and change

CGIAR has changed considerably since its inception in 1971, at which time it mainly focused on following up on and diffusing the Green Revolution. A major reform was adopted in 2008 and has been implemented in the period since then. From institute-based research, the system has been reorganised into cross-cutting programmes in 16 thematic areas, offering scope for extended partnerships at the local, regional and global levels. In parallel with this process, the organisation itself also underwent a reform. Centres are no longer allocated basic funding. All projects must therefore be fully financed and great importance is attached to keeping overhead costs low. The changes that have taken place through the implementation of the 2008 reform indicate a substantial degree of willingness and ability to learn and change.

3. Norway's policy towards CGIAR

CGIAR's objectives are consistent with Norway's development assistance goals. Nevertheless, active efforts must be made to ensure that considerations that are important in Norwegian development assistance are prioritised and followed up. This is done primarily in the group of European donors, in which countries coordinate their positions in respect of CGIAR. At meetings Norway emphasises the Consortium's tasks and responsibilities in areas that are key Norwegian aid objectives, such as women and vulnerable population groups, climate adaptation, food security and sustainable development. Norway also seeks to ensure that genetic resources and technologies remain freely available as global common public goods, unlimited by patents or any other form of intellectual property rights.

The majority of Norway's funding goes directly to the Fund, not to individual institutes or thematic programmes. An exception is the work related to the Government of Norway's Climate and Forest Initiative, in which CGIAR is actively engaged.

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