

AIFSRC Monitoring and Evaluation Scorecard 2014

The Australian International Food Security Research Centre (AIFSRC) is pleased to present its first Monitoring and Evaluation Scorecard and Dashboard.

The AIFSRC seeks to understand and improve adoption processes in agricultural research and ensure that its research projects contribute to development outcomes. To assess how well it is progressing towards these aims, a [Monitoring and Evaluation \(M&E\) Plan](#) was developed that offers a framework for integrating data about its research programs and activities. Implementing the plan will help the Centre meet corporate requirements and ensure its programs are contributing meaningfully to improving adoption and reaching development outcomes

The development of the M&E Plan was a collaborative effort with project teams and ACIAR research managers. The act of completing the Scorecard for the first time in itself has delivered learning's that have already resulted in the fine-tuning of some of the rating categories to reduce inconsistencies, improve clarity and better represent reality.

Results from the Scorecard show that in 2014, the Centre is on track across the four M&E elements of operational effectiveness, strategic direction, accountability and transparency, and knowledge sharing.

The narrative below details the 2014 results.

Scope of work



The AIFSRC is working in all of its 10 priority countries in eastern and southern Africa: Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

In 2014 the AIFSRC is implementing 19 initiatives - comprising ten projects, four major alliances and five contracts - to support food security activities in this region.

These initiatives are being implemented with 95 partners ranging from universities and research institutions including the international agricultural research centres (such as CGIAR), government or research agencies within Australia and developing countries, sub-regional organisations, non-government organisations and private sector partners. Some partners are involved in a number of projects, such as the Ethiopian Institute for Agricultural Research who is engaged in five AIFSRC projects in 2014.

For the 2014 Scorecard, data was collected from six AIFSRC projects. These projects aim to impact 225,100 farmers by the end of the projects through the uptake of new innovative technology, such as two-wheeled tractors and small scale irrigation monitoring, innovative production and market access including peri-urban vegetable production and poultry systems to improve household nutrition status.

Operational Effectiveness

Research Activities

Are AIFSRC projects on track?

Of the six projects reviewed, four are 'on track for meeting output targets and quality standards' while two are 'making reasonable progress but encountering obstacles that could have implications for meeting output targets'. This is indicated on the dashboard under the heading 'Progress with Initiatives'.

All projects are demonstrating adaptiveness in their project management. There was an even split with half the projects conducting 'regular and in-depth scrutiny of obstacles with timely and focused response occurring' and the other half demonstrating 'some discussion about key obstacles with some corrective action but more is required to ensure targets are reached'. The project teams in the latter group are working with their respective Research Program Managers to address issues that have been identified. The Centre's initial projects will be undertaking their Mid-Term Reviews in 2015 and this is an excellent opportunity for critical reflection, to assess whether any variations are needed and address any issues that have arisen. Performance in this area is indicated on the dashboard under the heading 'Demonstrated Adaptiveness'.

Corporate

Is AIFSRC corporate activity on track?

The AIFSRC functions within the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research's (ACIAR) procurement and financial management mechanisms guided by the PGPA Act. All requirements across procurement, support to projects, finance and communication with stakeholders in this area have met Australian Government expectations.

Strategic direction for impact

Is the AIFSRC strategy relevant and delivering against its goal and priorities as set out in its strategy?

All projects are 'on track' to achieve their targeted intermediate development outcomes across the programs.

The AIFSRC has three research programs (sustainable farming, value chains and policy, food nutrition and safety) and two capacity building programs (communication and knowledge management and capacity building), which are represented by a graphic on the dashboard. The bar graphs show the number of projects targeting intermediate development outcomes in each program and how they are progressing. A list of the intermediate development outcomes by program can be found in the [AIFSRC M&E Plan](#).

While each project sits within a program area, they generally also deliver outcomes against other program areas. For example, the *Trees for Food Security* project sits within the sustainable and productive farming systems program, but also delivers outcomes against the value chains and policy, food nutrition and safety, and capacity building programs.

The AIFSRC mission statement emphasises the intention to identify barriers to adoption and trial mechanisms to overcome these through its research projects. In late 2012, an External Review of ACIAR's operations¹ supported AIFSRC's work with a recommendation that states "over the longer term the orientation of the Centre be directed towards understanding the adoption process within agriculture with a view to the Centre becoming a global centre of excellence on this topic". Impediments include behaviours, relationships or actions that inhibit the adoption of food security enhancing practises, policies or science. At the beginning of each project, project leaders are asked to assess two questions:

- What are the impediments to adoption the project is trying to understand and overcome?
- Whose behaviour are you trying to change and in relation to what?

Behaviour change is occurring and 'on track' in all projects. Five of the six projects have delivered some insights into adoption processes but are likely to deliver more before their completion while the Adoption Pathways² project has already delivered multiple useful insights into adoption.

On the dashboard, results in this area are shown under the headings 'Creating Behaviour Change' and 'Adoption Insights'

A sign of confidence in the performance of the AIFSRC is whether the AIFSRC is sustaining and attracting strong partnerships, and that some of these partners co-invest. The AIFSRC Strategy lays out a mandate for the Centre to develop new ways of working (including competitive funding) and pursue opportunities to leverage the initial funds. The AIFSRC has invested A\$30,021,470 million in food security initiatives³ and in 2014 this investment was matched by co-investments averaging 61% of AIFSRC investments. This consists of two types of co-investment: 1) Alliance co-investment (unattached pooled funds allocated through shared decision making)– this totalled 105% of AIFSRC investments in 2014 and includes partnerships such as those listed below. These types of partnerships and co-investment are not typical within ACIAR.

- *CultiAF* competitive research fund with Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC);
- *Alliance for Agricultural R&D for Food Security* with the Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture and the Crawford Fund;
- Australian Africa Universities Network's (AAUN) *Partnership Research and Development Fund*;
- *Australia Africa Plant Biosecurity Partnership* (AAPBP) with CSIRO, the Crawford Fund, and CABI Africa.

¹ Independent Review of the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) available at http://aciarc.gov.au/files/node/15299/aciarc_review_report_pdf_12817.pdf

² Identifying socioeconomic constraints to and incentives for faster technology adoption: Pathways to sustainable intensification in eastern and southern Africa

³ Initiatives are defined as projects and alliances, to support international food security activities

The second type is Research Project co-investments (usually in-kind or attached project funds, which are typical in ACIAR projects) – which on average attracted 43% co-investment across the 10 projects.

Our performance in this area is represented on the dashboard under the heading ‘Co-investment as a percentage of total project expenditure’.

Accountability and transparency

Is the AIFSRC managing its resources efficiently and transparently?

The AIFSRC is meeting all ACIAR and Australian Government reporting requirements in a timely manner and implementing its M&E Plan.

The AIFSRC began developing its M&E Plan in 2013 in consultation with ACIAR and project partners, including a workshop with Research Program Managers. In 2014 we submitted the M&E Plan to the ACIAR Senior Management Team and introduced the framework with each project team at project inception meetings to guide the development of project M&E Plans that feed into the AIFSRC level M&E. 2014 marks the first round of reporting which will guide the adaptive management of the Centre and its programs in 2015.

Our performance in this area is represented on the dashboard under the heading ‘monitoring and evaluation’.

Knowledge Sharing

Is the AIFSRC effectively sharing what it is learning from its activities?

The AIFSRC team has been actively sharing knowledge through a range of media, including newsletters, ACIAR *Partners* Magazine, meetings and conferences, website, media, the Food System Innovation initiative and social media. There is evidence that these are being utilised by intended audiences, but we have not consistently measured this, due to cost. The team has also delivered a range of seminars and presentations to a diverse audience from schools and NGO seminars through to international meetings and conferences. The team continues to consult and meet regularly with stakeholders and partners in Africa, Australia and internationally. In 2014, for example, we visited all our project teams in Africa, our Canadian IDRC colleagues and presented to their agency in Ottawa, the World Bank Trustee in Washington, CGIAR Centres, RUFORUM and ASARECA, participated in the African Green Revolution Forum at the African Union, participated the African Australian Update Conference and in food security events at University of Sydney and Australian National University and hosted many international visitors to the AIFSRC.

Our performance in this area is represented on the dashboard under ‘Implementation and Uptake’.

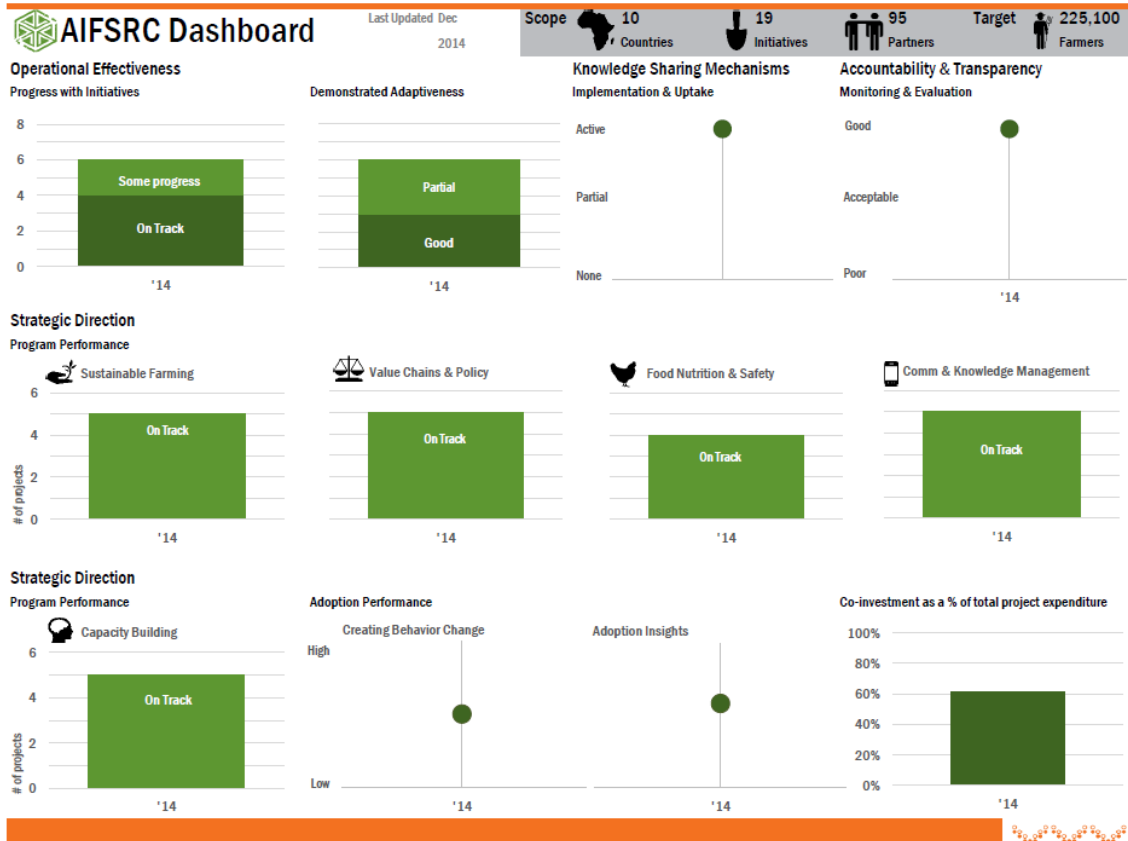
Project teams have also played a strong role in sharing the knowledge generated from their research. Tracking participation in research debates and contributing to communities of practice is a

new initiative so it was not possible to obtain a complete list of knowledge sharing activities for all projects this year. However we can use the *Strengthening food and nutrition security through family poultry and crop integration in Tanzania and Zambia project* as an example of the types of knowledge-sharing activities projects are engaging in.

The Project Team has presented their research at FAO workshops, the Third International One Health Congress, the Agri-Food XXI Conference: Food, People and Planet, Conference on 'Food Cycles: Ethics, Welfare, Economics and Markets in Human Nutrition' as well as through various publications in EcoHealth, CAB Review, Planet@Risk and social media. One of the project team has also written a BSc(Vet) thesis based on the project. See **Appendix B** for the full list of knowledge sharing activities.



Attachment A: Dashboard



Attachment B: Tracking participation in research debates and contributions to communities of practice: 2014

As part of its M&E, the AIFSRC is monitoring how effectively it is sharing learning from its activities (knowledge sharing). The specific question on the AIFSRC Scorecard is:

5 b) Is the AIFSRC (staff, RPMs, partners and members of project teams) actively participating in research debates and contributing to communities of practice?

To effectively monitor this, the AIFSRC team, Research Program Managers (RPMs) and Project Teams are requested to record their participation in research debates and contributions to communities of practice (such as CGIAR Research Programs) for events/activities where they share knowledge generated by AIFSRC projects over a calendar year (Jan-Dec). This is a broad category that includes formal contributions such as peer reviewed papers, contributing at national and international conferences, workshops as well as more informal contributions such as blogs, interviews, social media and other opportunities. The AIFSRC will collect this information at the end of the calendar year.

As this requires data collection from the beginning of the year, this first time we have only presented one case study from the AIFSRC project, *Strengthening food and nutrition security through family poultry and crop integration in Tanzania and Zambia*

Date of event	Name of Event	Nature of Event	Who attended
3–5 Dec 2014	FAO National Workshop on Strengthening Poultry Producers through Organised Action, Harare, Zimbabwe.	Julia de Bruyn participated in this workshop and gave a presentation on 'Opportunities for improving village poultry value chains: experiences from Singida district in central Tanzania'	Julia de Bruyn
1 Dec 2014	Posted copy of an article to the animal health 'foresight' list and to the e-mail list of Charles Perkins Centre (CPC) CPC Global Food and Nutrition Security Project Node (see: http://sydney.edu.au/perkins/research/current-research/food-nutrition-security.shtml).	Mike Nunn posted a copy of a short article in the United Kingdom's veterinary journal the <i>Veterinary Record</i> that examined how 'improving animal health, particularly of poultry and working equids, has the potential to reduce poverty and promote food security and sustainable livelihoods in low-income countries'. The article highlighted Robyn Alders work on village/family poultry.	About 350 list members worldwide.
14 Oct 2014	Posted copy of an article to the animal health 'foresight' and to CPC Node e-mail list.	Mike Nunn posted information on videos developed by FAO in cooperation with the International Network for Family Poultry Development as part of the IFAD-funded 'Smallholder Poultry Development Program'. The videos included include one by Robyn Alders that provides background information about the	About 350 list members worldwide

		importance of Newcastle disease control for family poultry producers and how to implement such control. http://teca.fao.org/technology/training-videos-family-poultry-production	
11 Sep 2014	Lunchtime Seminar, Faculty of Veterinary Science, University of Sydney.	Presentation by Julia de Bruyn on 'Ethical, efficient approaches to improving food and nutrition security in sub-Saharan Africa'.	Julia de Bruyn
24–26 Nov 2014	Agri-Food XXI Conference: Food, People and Planet, National Centre of Indigenous Excellence, Redfern, Sydney.	Conference abstract: de Bruyn, J., Alders, R., Bagnol, B., Darnton-Hill, I., Li, M., Maulaga, W. and Lumbwe, H. (2014) Family Poultry and Food Sovereignty: exploring locally-appropriate, sustainable solutions to child undernutrition in sub-Saharan Africa.	Brigette Bagnol and Robyn Alders (about 1110 participants).
9–13 Jun 2014	ACIAR, CSIRO, DFAT Food Systems Innovations Symposium, Brisbane.	Robyn Alders gave a seminar on 'Why is nutrition important for development?'	Robyn Alders
1 Dec 2014	Blog, Sydney Environment Institute.	<i>Blog on 'why mixed family farming is crucial to supporting balanced and diverse diets through the seasons': an excerpt from a paper by: Robyn Alders, Brigitte Bagnol, Julia de Bruyn, Joanita Jong, Mu Li, Hilda Lumbwe, Robyn McConchie, Wende Mualaga, and Johanna Wong. (see: http://sydney.edu.au/environment-institute/blog/why-mixed-family-farming-is-crucial/)</i>	Robyn Alders
17 Dec 2014	Conference on 'Food Cycles: Ethics, Welfare, Economics and Markets in Human Nutrition', CPC, Sydney.	Robyn Alders gave a presentation on 'Ethical nutrition' (by Robyn Alders, Margaret Allman-Farinelli, Teresa Davis, Christine Parker).	Robyn Alders
26–28 Aug 2014	Crawford Conference on 'Ethics, Efficiency And Food Security: feeding the 9 billion, well', Canberra.	Robyn Alders (recipient of the 2014 Crawford Fund Medal) gave a presentation and her work with village/family poultry was featured on a blog and on Twitter (see: http://www.crawfordfund.org/awards/crawford-fund-medal/crawford-fund-medal-robyn-alders-2014/).	Robyn Alders
Thesis	BSc(Vet) thesis, University of Sydney [submitted: awarded first class honours].	Ackland, L.A.: Rodents, food security and infectious disease in Tanzania.	Leigh Ann Ackland
Publication	Planet@Risk 2(3):187–190.	Alders, R., Aongola, A., Bagnol, B., de Bruyn, J., Kimboka, S., Kock, R., Li, M., Maulaga, W., McConchie, R., Mor, S., Msami, H., Mulenga, F., Mwala, M., Mwale, S., Rushton, J., Simpson, J., Victor, R., Yongolo, C. and Young, M. (2014) Using a One	

		Health approach to promote food and nutrition security in Tanzania and Zambia.	
Publication	Farming Matters (ILEIA) [accepted for Dec 2014 issue]	Alders, R., Bagnol, B., de Bruyn, J., Grieve, H., Jong, J., Li, M., Lumbwe, H., McConchie, R., Maulaga, W., Readford, P. and Wong, J. (2014) Mixed family farming crucial to supporting balanced diverse diets throughout the year.	
Publication	<i>EcoHealth</i> [accepted for publication]	Bagnol, B., Alders, R. and McConchie. Gender issues in human, animal and plant diseases: the importance of including gender sensitivity in the ecohealth paradigm.	
Publication	<i>CAB Review</i> [accepted for publication].	de Bruyn, J., Wong, J., Bagnol, B., Pengelly, B. and Alders, R. (2014) Family poultry and food and nutrition security.	
May 2014	ACIAR Publication: impact assessment series number IAS087 (released 29 May 2014).	The report — Newcastle disease control in Africa (see: http://aciar.gov.au/publication/ias087 and http://aciar.gov.au/files/ias_87-web.pdf) — summarises and assesses related work on which FSC/2012/023 builds.	
Ongoing	Facebook site: Food and Nutrition Security through a One Health Lens.	https://www.facebook.com/pages/Food-and-Nutrition-Security-through-a-One-Health-lens/155736987902817?ref=bookmarks	
May 2014	ACIAR blog site.	Children and chickens — a path to better nutrition in Africa (see: http://aciarblog.blogspot.com.au/2014/05/children-and-chickens-path-to-better.html#more). Note this builds on the November 2013 blog by Wendy Henderson ('In the field — chickens changing the lives of villagers in Tanzania': see http://aciarblog.blogspot.com.au/2013/06/in-field-chickens-changing-lives-of.html).	Emma Zalcman
15–18 Mar 2015	Third International One Health Congress, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.	Jonathon Rushton: Invited keynote speaker on the economics of One Health.	Jonathon Rushton
15–18 Mar 2015	Third International One Health Congress, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.	Brigette Bagnol and Robyn Alders: Presentation on 'Food and nutrition security through a One Health lens' [submitted].	Brigette Bagnol and Robyn Alders