

## Country Profile - Ireland

Agricultural Research for Development

Irish Aid is Ireland's official overseas development programme, administered by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. It supports international Agricultural Research for Development (ARD) through contributions to the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and other research efforts.

### Key ARD objectives

- Irish Aid's research approach seeks to advance the utility of research to benefit the poor, influence policy and practice and build research capacity in partner countries.
- Ireland regards investment in agricultural research and innovation as a key component of enhancing food security and eradicating global hunger.
- Irish Aid works to ensure that agricultural research is beneficial for smallholder farmers, particularly women farmers, and to ensure linkages between agricultural research, improved nutrition outcomes and strategies to offset the negative impacts of climate change.



Interplanted maize and pigeon pea help to improve soil fertility in Malawi

Credit: © Irish Aid

### Summary

Irish Aid, a programme of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, supports international ARD as part of an overarching programme aimed at widespread and sustainable impacts on global hunger, poverty and food security. Most of this support is presently directed at a number of CGIAR centres and the joint CGIAR fund, to which Ireland has been an important donor for many years. In 2010 the foremost recipients of Irish Aid grants were the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), International Potato Centre (CIP), and International Crops Research Institute for the Semi Arid Tropics (ICRISAT).

Irish Aid prioritises the agricultural productivity of smallholder farmers, particularly women, in nine programme countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia. The Programme of Strategic Cooperation between Irish Aid and the Higher Education Authority will also support collaborative research between Irish institutions and southern institutions in these countries.

### Main ARD budget and beneficiaries for 2010

#### Contributors

Irish Aid, Department of Foreign Affairs	€ 7,621,539
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#### Recipients

International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI)	€ 800,000
International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)	€ 750,000
World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF)	€ 1,550,000
International Water Management Institute (IWMI)	€ 400,000
International Crops Research Institute for the Semi Arid Tropics (ICRISAT)	€ 840,000
International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA)	€ 490,000
International Plant Genetic Resource Institute (Bioversity)	€ 500,000
International Potato Centre (CIP)	€ 1,250,000
CGIAR Change Management Fund	€ 720,000
Overseas universities and research centres	€ 321,539

## ARD landscape

Ireland has provided significant and consistent support to agricultural research since the beginning of the Irish Aid programme in 1974. Following the recommendations of a White Paper on Irish Aid, the Hunger Task Force Report (2008) re-emphasised the need to prioritise pro-poor agricultural research as a means of tackling global hunger. The Report was prepared by a panel of national and international experts to advise the Irish government on how they could best address global hunger and undernutrition.

Ireland's Special Envoy on Hunger again highlighted the importance of agricultural research in his 2010 report on the implementation of the Hunger Task Force recommendations. In particular, the Special Envoy's Report stressed the need for:

- Stronger linkages between CGIAR and national agriculture research institutes and systems so that research is more needs-driven and can be applied rapidly, effectively, and at scale;
- Even closer engagement by CGIAR centres with smallholder farmers, and especially with women farmers, so that as far as possible research is focused on Ireland's priority target groups;
- Further research to be undertaken on how agriculture can in various contexts be adapted towards achieving stronger nutrition outcomes at a local level; and
- Closer alignment between CGIAR and other global efforts to address the massive challenges of climate change and energy shortages.



CIP project with improved 'Irish potato' seed in Malawi  
Credit: © Irish Aid

## Main ARD programmes

1. Ireland's support to agricultural research is primarily channelled through CGIAR, with additional support to other institutes and universities. In 2010 these included Hawassa University, Ethiopia; Sokoine University of Agriculture, Tanzania; Valid Nutrition, Ireland; Tufts University, USA; and Institute of Development Studies, UK.
2. A new scheme is under development which will support collaborative research between Irish institutions and southern institutions in Irish Aid programme countries. Known as the Programme of Strategic Cooperation, the programme will include support for collaborative agricultural research aimed specifically at tackling global hunger.
3. Irish Aid programme countries are Ethiopia, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Timor-Leste, Uganda, Vietnam and Zambia. Irish Aid prioritises the improvement of agricultural productivity of smallholder farmers, particularly women, in Sub-Saharan Africa.

## Perspective

Ireland strongly supports greater linkages between agricultural research institutions and national systems, development partners, the private sector, and of course smallholder farmers themselves. Irish Aid will continue to support the ongoing CGIAR reform process, with a particular focus on nutrition, climate change and promoting the role of women in agriculture and agricultural research.

## Further information

- [Irish Aid: Focus on Hunger](#)
- [Hunger Task Force](#)
- [Report of the Special Envoy on Hunger, 2010](#)

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*This country profile has been commissioned by EIARD (the permanent ARD coordination platform between the European Commission, Member States of the European Union, Norway and Switzerland) as part of a series providing an overview of policies and support for agricultural research for development by EIARD member countries. EIARD is not responsible for any omissions and inaccuracies contained within this document and the information is only correct up to the date of publishing.*

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