



# Evaluating the impact of CABI's Development Funding

2007

2007  
CABI Corporate



CABI improves  
people's lives  
worldwide

by providing  
information and  
applying scientific  
expertise to solve  
problems in  
agriculture and the  
environment





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## evaluating the impact of CABI's Development Funding

In 1990, at the request of our Member Countries, we set up the Partnership Facility funding mechanism between donors, CABI and developing countries, enabling us to respond directly to the needs of the poor and deliver our expertise in information, science and communication in support of sustainable agricultural development. The Facility is presently sponsored by DFID, CABI, SDC and ACIAR.

Donor support is used and reported as a pooled fund to enable CABI to initiate and take forward programmes in our areas of unique competence, our projects responding to priorities expressed by our Member Countries and in line with the development objectives of those providing the funds. Where requested, in some cases this is used to directly add further value to existing programmes supported by the donors concerned. Other Partnership project inputs are supported from CABI's self-generated income and from contributions from other funding agencies.

Partnership Facility funding is leveraged and often co-financed through commitments from institutions in our Member Countries, thereby creating active partnerships to deliver our joint goals.

The funds are used for activities that:

- add value to existing national and regional initiatives
- support critical research programmes for agricultural sustainability
- improve access to information and scientific services for capacity building
- facilitate the introduction of new technology
- enable rapid responses to emergency situations

The Facility provides the essential underpinning for CABI's involvement in global policy initiatives, for support to regional and national development processes and to directly support poor farmers as they seek to increase their incomes or manage particular production constraints. It thus provides direct support for CABI's activities in development.

In response to a direct request from CABI's Executive Council, DFID increased their support to CABI in a step-wise manner from 2003/4. That contract phase finished in March 2007. As part of the renewal process, DFID has requested an evaluation of the development impact obtained from the Partnership Facility.

In response, CABI has undertaken a major evaluation of the impact of projects supported through the Facility over the last five years. Leaders of all projects undertaken during this period reviewed the impacts of their work against a standard evidence-based template, exploring impact at global, regional/national or community scales.

In 2007, this funding mechanism has been re-named The CABI Development Fund, to make its international development purpose clear to all.

### these assessed:

- Achievements of a project, programme or strategy under the PF (tangible outputs)
- The direct and indirect effects of the programme, e.g. regarding sustainability and poverty alleviation (development impacts)
- How development progress was realized, i.e. what success factors and obstacles/risks were responsible for any resulting effects (lessons learned)

### evaluation considered two time scales:

- I. Where the project took place recently (last 5 years), immediate impacts would be in the most part at policy & institutional level, rather than reaching through to communities. Evaluation here highlighted operational issues, policy influence and institutional capacity building. In most cases, this was undertaken by direct consultation between project leaders and their partners (primarily as desk studies) on impacts and lessons learned from the processes. These will be followed in the next year by follow-up survey with the intended beneficiaries.
- II. Longer term impacts – some case studies were compiled for specific Facility-funded involvement up to 10 years ago, where that has since led into larger programmes that have resulted from the initial investment. Desk study evaluation was here combined with quantifiable impacts on poverty & beneficiaries using data obtained from these projects.

The report provides a full summary of the impressive impact achieved through this direct programmatic funding. It also highlighted the need for a mechanism to build closer linkage with the specific regional needs of our developing Member Countries as demand for our programmes. To this end, CABI proposes to hold a series of regional consultations later this year, bringing together our Member Country liaison officers in Africa, Asia and Latin America/Caribbean. These meetings will explore key priorities for CABI's development activities and identify the funding mechanisms and mutual commitments by which these partnerships can grow after initial support from the Facility.

This funding has enabled CABI to contribute extensively both to global thinking and policy, and to regional and national initiatives



## executive summary

CABI's international development activities are focused on three themes. These were identified through extensive consultation with our Member Countries and from 2002 our work has been aligned with the Millennium Development Goals and relevant international Conventions and programmes. Our operational focus has since been refined as:

- Knowledge for Development, strengthening the knowledge and innovation systems supporting agricultural development;
- Invasive Species, the management of invasive species damaging agriculture, trade and environments and
- Commodities, improvement of the livelihoods of smallholder producers of commodity crops. Here, we describe the impact of Partnership Facility funding in the context of these themes.

The evaluation examined all projects supported through the Facility over the last five years. It combined thorough self-evaluation (to a standard method) by those directly involved in these projects, with feedback received and requested from our partners and external evaluation of individual programmes or of the wider rural development programmes they have generated.

Development returns on Partnership Facility programmes are striking. For a relatively small external investment, coupled with direct investment by CABI and by our partners in the countries concerned, the Partnership Facility has enabled pilot activities that have achieved specific impacts across a wide range of countries. These have in turn leveraged much greater support for large-scale initiatives led by CABI's developing Member Countries, addressing rural development needs across the regions concerned.

In financial terms, a total external investment via the Facility of £2.9 million over the 5 years of the study (£3.9 million since 1997) has directly catalysed rural development and agricultural research programmes to a value of at least £17.6 million. External evaluations have repeatedly shown that the benefits from our resources and activities greatly exceed their costs.

The Partnership Facility has enabled CABI to contribute extensively both to global thinking and policy, and to regional and national initiatives, in our areas of expertise. Key impacts of PF funding within each of the CABI themes include:

### Knowledge for Development:

(50% of PF funding)

- Development of consortia, including developing country institutions, to leverage funding for development and dissemination of encyclopaedic compendia.
- Making CABI's information available to developing countries through involvement in pre-funded networks
- Participation in the shaping of global agricultural research policy, linking science and society.
- Development of novel farmer-centred approaches to sustainable seed systems.

### Invasive Species:

(25% of PF funding)

- Input to the Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP), supporting the implementation of CBD commitments on invasives.
- Through GISP, development of new regional strategies and policies on invasive species.
- Improving sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) skills in Africa and Southeast Asia, helping countries to overcome trade barriers and access lucrative export markets.
- Enabling rapid response to specific pest outbreaks around the world.





we directly address key development needs in each region, with our Member Countries themselves shaping and committing to the programmes addressed

## commodities:

(25% of PF funding)

- Input to the Sustainable Agriculture Initiative of the major international food companies, and production of the global reference work Cocoa Futures, directly influencing global commodity policies.
- Facilitating a regional coffee research network in Africa (CORNET) under ASARECA
- Initiating a major regional initiative to control coffee wilt disease, following an initial PF-funded survey in Uganda.
- Addressing the future sustainability of perennial crop systems

This evaluation has also highlighted issues that CABI needs to address to further improve development impacts from these programmes. These are discussed throughout the report. In particular, we are planning a series of regional consultations in 2007 to ensure high level identification of needs by senior NARES figures, so that our programmes become more directly responsive to regional priorities and our work is explicitly integrated with relevant policies and programmes from the outset. We are also broadening our involvement with private sector partners, such as the chocolate and coffee industries, to bring more direct engagement with markets and income opportunities for smallholder farmers.

The Partnership Facility is an innovative and exciting funding mechanism that brings our funders both reduced transaction costs and clear accountability for expenditure. Through it, we directly address key development needs in each region, with our Member Countries themselves shaping and committing to the programmes addressed. Demand for this way of working is increasing as Members come to realize the value of the approach. Various non-member OECD countries and some emerging economies are now actively considering direct funding of work with CABI via this mechanism. Increased direct programme funding via the Facility would bring further benefits of synergy and scale.

This funding is essential to CABI's ability to deliver development results. Raising awareness and helping countries to develop programmes relevant to their needs is a process that frequently takes years, even before practical actions begin. Without this support, CABI would not be able to maintain input to and connection with these programmes as they are shaped to best meet the needs of the poor. With it, we can help to empower the poor with the knowledge they need to achieve sustainable change and escape the constraints that keep them in poverty.



CABI adds value to the development work of our national partners by developing local skills and knowledge, and by bringing new ideas into national systems



## report synthesis

CABI adds value to the development work of our national partners by developing local skills and knowledge, by bringing new external ideas into national systems and by championing the needs of developing countries into international policy. Our strong partnerships with national institutions, civil society organizations and private companies, help the poor and under-privileged to benefit from the value of scientific knowledge in agriculture and the environment.

We are very grateful to the funding bodies that have so generously and actively supported CABI's role in international development via the Partnership Facility mechanism. This support, totalling £2.9 million over the 5 year period under review, has been used to catalyse and take forward specific initiatives in our key areas of operation. It has brought specific benefits in poverty alleviation, food security and environmental sustainability around the world, with a dramatic multiplication of their effect through subsequent larger programmes supported by development assistance agencies.

The impacts of particular projects are explored in more detail in the subsequent sections, but this report itself represents only a summary of some relevant findings. Detailed evaluation reports are available on request for each project/project cluster supported by the Partnership Facility.

Our rural development activities focus on three themes: Knowledge for Development, Invasive Species and Commodities for smallholders. The key impacts of Partnership Facility supported programmes are summarized here for each area:

### Knowledge for Development

Around half of our Partnership Facility expenditure over the last five years has been devoted to this area, in which CABI is widely known and valued. CABI's market-maintained information products themselves bring direct and tangible benefits to agricultural researchers and extensionists around the world and underpin our development work around this theme.

CABI's Abstracts database has been independently quantified by ACIAR as bringing time savings equivalent to:

- 3-5 working days per year for each researcher,
- a 1-2% increase in staff budgets for research institutions.
- a median value of at least AU\$470K-\$790K p.a. across Australian users of this information,

Partnership Facility support enables us to make our information resources accessible free of charge to users in developing countries, through our participation in international information networks such as AGORA, TEEAL and HINARI.

- These benefit nearly 1000 institutions, with over 250,000 documents downloaded by users through AGORA alone.
- Electronic compilation of archive data on human health has captured the knowledge in 800,000 scientific papers for future generations.

Development of concepts and content of the CABI Compendia has been strongly supported through the Facility. This has provided key catalytic funding, ensuring that developing country institutions are directly and actively involved as key stakeholders in their formulation and development:

- 70 different partner organizations are now in the Compendia consortia, including government agencies, private sector institutions and CGIAR Centres.
- Following start-up funding from the Partnership Facility, this consortium has now provided around £5.8 million in external funding for development of the Compendia over the last 13 years.
- Through these efforts, the Compendia are now widely distributed and used in at least 20,000 sites. Many copies have been made available free of charge to developing countries.





Use of the compendia for statutory functions could be considered equivalent to an extra 25% of operational staff time

- The Tanzanian Government is aiming to establish the Compendia into every extension office in Tanzania.
- A recent survey has shown that 70% of African users rated the Compendia as a very successful tool for extension and training.
- The value of these resources to agricultural production, environmental protection and national security has also been recognized by the US government, which has centrally purchased licences for free use in all 121 Land Grant Universities and has supplied 250 free copies to developing country users.

ACIAR recently externally evaluated these encyclopaedic Compendia and found:

- Australian specialists using the Compendia for statutory functions such as quarantine inspection in trade, each saved a median of 37-54 days work per person per year,
- This could be considered equivalent to an extra 25% operational staff time, by accessing verified and objective evidence both quickly and efficiently.
- This is a unique resource: users considered that searching relevant literature without CABI Compendia would be much slower and would yield only 75% of the results.

Through Partnership Facility support, CABI has also played a central role in global agricultural research policy:

We have been involved from the outset in the International Assessment of the role of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology in Development (IAASTD) and are one of only 6 scientific organizations on the Governing Bureau of the Assessment. Following this, we now also administer the involvement of UK authors, in a process actively supported by both DFID and DEFRA.

The Facility has enabled CABI to play a central role in development of innovation systems thinking under the Global Forum for Agricultural Research (GFAR). This has attracted much interest and support from heads of African NARES and the sub-regional organisation CORAF and has helped shape policy among donor agencies. An innovation systems focus has recently been adopted as the central pillar of GFAR's programme for the next 3 years.

Novel farmer-centred approaches to sustainable seed systems, developed initially through earlier Partnership Facility and DFID bilateral support in Bangladesh, offer low cost means of improving yields and incomes through the production of good quality seed:

- Effective use of participatory videos enabled women farmers to directly and quickly spread innovative local practices to others, receiving an International Visual Communications Award.
- This work, broadcast regularly on national television in Bangladesh, has enabled millions of poor farmers in Asia to benefit from cheap, effective technologies.
- Through the PF, these approaches have been transferred to East Africa, linking with a wide range of partners and initiating a further £270K project, supported by SDC and a £38K cross-cutting project on seed issues related to DFID Crop Protection and Post-Harvest Research Projects.
- CABI is now helping East African farmers to improve their kale seed production, enabling them to directly benefit from marketing locally-selected varieties to others via links with national seed companies.
- WARDA has taken the video work to West African rice farmers and has translated and made these available in 4 African languages.



Specific regional programmes have brought agricultural knowledge alive to support local development

Specific regional programmes have brought agricultural knowledge alive to support local development:

- Technical underpinning to development of FARA's information and learning systems is enabling agricultural information to be shared across Africa.
- Input to the ASARECA-RAIN Steering Committee and the ASARECA Communication and Knowledge strategy has given these initiatives much valued technical support in practical networking of knowledge across 10 countries.
- India and African countries are now aware of the value in microbial resources and are now managing and making use of these, e.g. via the Indian National Bureau of Agriculturally-Important Microorganisms
- Engagement with the System-wide initiative on HIV/AIDS informed the CGIAR and partners on links between nutrition, health and community understanding of the disease.
- Innovative programmes in E Africa have linked farmer groups to markets by making use of affordable information & communication technologies.
- In Sri Lanka, work with a local NGO has developed a pilot agricultural knowledge system now reaching 1500 farmers.
- New low cost knowledge-transfer methods promoting direct interaction between extensionists, scientists and rural communities have supported post-conflict institutional development in Sierra Leone.
- Farmer field schools developed in the Caribbean have led to a self-sustaining regional IPM group with 85 members.

### **invasive species affecting trade, food security and environments**

Invasive species have enormous economic impact on agriculture and environments, running to billions of dollars per year, but are often neglected as a development concern. CABI has invested around one quarter of Partnership Facility funds in raising awareness of the significance of invasive species and helping developing countries to formulate appropriate programmes for their management.

The Partnership Facility has directly underpinned the Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP) which links CABI with major NGOs such as IUCN and The Nature Conservancy, to raise awareness of these issues and support implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). We have done much to help make sense of the proliferation of terms and concepts being used in legislation and activities around this rapidly evolving field, a contribution recognized by the CBD Secretariat. This high-profile partnership has led to CABI being requested to implement major UNEP/GEF regional weed management programmes across Africa. One such programme, approved in 2005, has a budget of £6 million.

CABI is a recognized 'appropriate international organization' under the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and has used Partnership funding to help meet the Convention's aims by training national staff in the COMESA and ASEAN trading blocs in management of risks to human and plant health that would otherwise be barriers to trade and growth. This has included:

- Regional training programmes supported by IDRC, FAO, African Development Bank and others.
- Endorsement by ASEAN of the Asian Plant Health Cooperation Network promoted by CABI, with CABI being identified as a preferred training partner by APEC and others
- Production of a draft Good Agricultural Practice protocol for Vietnam (based on EurepGAP protocols for fresh fruit and vegetables).
- Joint proposal between CABI and IPPC to the WTO-STDF to provide technical assistance to developing countries.
- GISP has produced and updated two global training manuals on Marine and Coastal invasive species and an introduction to the management of Invasive Alien Species.



At national level, this funding has enabled CABI to respond rapidly to specific requests for assistance from Member Countries faced with new outbreaks of pests

At national level, the PF has enabled CABI to respond rapidly to specific requests for assistance from Member Countries faced with new outbreaks of pests such as:

- The cattle tick spreading heartwater disease among Caribbean livestock.
- The coconut hispine beetle decimating coconut in SE Asia.
- The cocoa pod borer outbreak in Papua New Guinea – ACIAR has now identified a further project commitment of £300K to take forward management of the outbreak.

The quantifiable value of such work depends on the scale of the economy concerned. Programmes elsewhere in which our international activities supported biological control programmes for two invasive weeds in Australia are estimated by the Australian Government to have given an overall net return of AU\$232mn and \$20mn respectively; giving benefit: cost ratios of 108:1 and 18:1.

Through the Facility, CABI has helped China to develop a strategy for managing invasive species that cause annual losses of US\$7 billion. This has now led to a direct request from China for a joint laboratory and national summit to develop national capabilities in this area.

CABI's recognized unique capabilities in this area have also led to direct funding via the Partnership Facility of £204K from SDC for CABI to support an existing Indo-Swiss project developing biopesticides for poor farmers in India. PF start-up funding leveraged the essential engagement and discussion with our Indian and Swiss partners prior to this programme becoming established.

### support to smallholder commodity farmers

Smallholder farmers need technical knowledge to stay competitive in global markets and in some cases just to access these markets in the first place. We spent around one quarter of Partnership Facility funds in the last five years supporting small producers and promoting measures to enhance the sustainability of such production.

Cocoa producers face a wide range of threats to sustainability of the industry, from declining soil fertility to child labour concerns. Our support to cocoa smallholders has included production of a comprehensive volume 'Cocoa Futures', reviewing these issues, which has quickly become regarded as a key source of knowledge for cocoa producers and chocolate manufacturers alike.

Through the Facility's funding, we directly supported small farmers by developing participatory learning materials and catalysing the use of farmer field schools for cocoa by the USAID/chocolate industry-supported, Sustainable Tree Crops Programme across W Africa. The field school programme was:

- Externally assessed as the most successful programme under the STCP, this has become the 'flagship' programme of the STCP.
- This training programme also enabled uptake by farmers of outputs from four DFID RNRRS-funded research projects, addressing pests considered the most significant cocoa yield constraints across seven W African countries.

The trust and value placed in CABI by our Member Countries has also been seen in direct requests from the Chief Executive of the Ghana Cocoa Board (Cocobod) for CABI to help conceptualize policies on cocoa sustainability and pesticide minimization, which we have delivered through Facility support. We have also worked with Cadbury Schweppes plc to produce a newspaper on cocoa production that has reached 70,000 farmers.

African coffee farmers face particularly difficult times, through a combination of low prices, relatively high production costs and invasive diseases. Using funds from the Facility to support a variety of activities at both policy and farmer levels, CABI has been at the forefront of efforts to revive this important industry across the region, improving the quality of coffee produced to attract higher prices. This has now brought over £1mn in support from the Common Fund for Commodities (CFC) and private sector partners. Such processes enable realistic and informed investment decisions, introduction of new technologies and, by connecting directly to the market, help to avoid the boom and bust cycles that have bedevilled the industry. Together these measures have increased coffee quality by 60% and farm-gate earnings by around 30% in pilot areas.



The return from  
R&D spending on  
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Coffee production has been hard hit by coffee wilt disease that has recently spread through East Africa, after becoming established in plantings abandoned through conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The disease is still causing losses of £15million p.a. in Uganda alone. From an initial Partnership Facility investment of £25,000:

- CABI first diagnosed the problem and helped to establish a regional action plan for its management.
- Developed this process on with regional partners for a further 3 years, supported through our own income
- This has led to direct research and extension commitments to the region totalling £4mn from the Common Fund for Commodities, the EC and DFID-CPP.
- The CFC coffee wilt disease project has itself been externally assessed, with findings that:
  - The disease has had considerable impact on production and incomes among small scale farmers and their families.
  - Increased awareness of disease management was helping to slow the rate of disease spread.
  - The return from R&D spending on this project is £13 for every £1 spent.
  - Inhabitants of disease-affected areas were saving an average of £11 per head through the project activities.

CABI has also done much to support the sustainable development of other smallholder crops such as cooking banana, peri-urban vegetables and tropical fruits.



## lessons learned

### how we have changed

In the last five years, CABI and our partner organisations have changed dramatically. CABI, as a Member Country organisation, is directly accountable to over 40 national partners, 90% of whom are developing countries. We have worked closely with our Members to define the areas in which we can play a most useful part and in 2002 adopted an organizational framework that reflects our key roles in international development. We have made considerable efforts to increase our responsiveness to national and regional priority needs and to remain at the forefront of development thinking in our areas of focus.

We are an organization expected by our Members to be cost-efficient, openly accountable and sustained through market demand and our international value. The Facility has provided essential resources enabling us to engage with global development processes, link with regional initiatives and add new dimensions to national programmes, all of which would otherwise have been impossible to sustain. The growth in this funding has reflected increasing awareness and use of this mechanism among our partners.

We have also invested heavily in our development work through our own resources. The use of Member Country contributions to underpin our development activity is now made explicit in our financial structure and any surplus funds generated from our market-sustained publishing activity are used in the same way.

### what worked best?

Most projects supported through the Facility have been small-scale, catalysing wider engagement through further partnerships. Analysis has shown little direct correlation between the scale of an initial project funded through the Facility and subsequent take up by others. More important was that our inputs were:

- Timely,
- Appropriate to needs recognized by others,
- Directly supported by senior policy makers in the countries or regions concerned
- Well-buffered against changes in the operating environment and
- Learned from the successes and failures of previous approaches

This analysis has also shown that consistent commitment over years is required to catalyse wider programmes and build the understanding required for effective partnership.

By our international nature, most of our impacts have been at the national or regional level, but we have also done much to develop capabilities among our national partners, so that they can take such work forward themselves: it is through their work that the poorest farmers will receive most direct benefit from these programmes.

In a number of cases (e.g. Putting Knowledge to Work, Global Invasive Species Programme and Coffee sustainability), we have brought important issues and agendas to the attention of decision makers which have had a profound influence on international development. This policy-level work may have the greatest development impact of all in the long term, but is difficult to capture as effects are indirect.

Conversely, where projects have been developed scientist-to-scientist, they have often had immediate value via the quality of the work and specific outputs produced, but have then faded away without higher level support. To increase coherence and impacts from PF investment we are also tightening the direction of work in each area through global directors responsible for each theme.



This funding has enabled us to engage with global development processes, link with regional initiatives and add new dimensions to national programmes

## what of the future?

New mechanisms by which aid programmes are delivered, as identified in the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, are rapidly changing the operational basis for many organizations. By our structure, we should be ideally placed to work in close partnership with both OECD and developing countries, through programmes managed by developing countries themselves and made possible through direct budgetary support.

This is an exciting new path, by which our work can be aligned with poverty reduction plans and directly commissioned by those determining uptake themselves. The Partnership Facility establishes our first steps towards this, enabling CABI to deliver work in tandem with associated resource commitments from our partners.

Nonetheless, many interactions are required to build the understanding and trust required among both developing countries and donors for CABI to become directly commissioned in this way. This has begun to be recognized through specific programmes, but will take time to develop. The regional consultations with our Member Countries proposed for 2007 will be an important step in this direction.



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