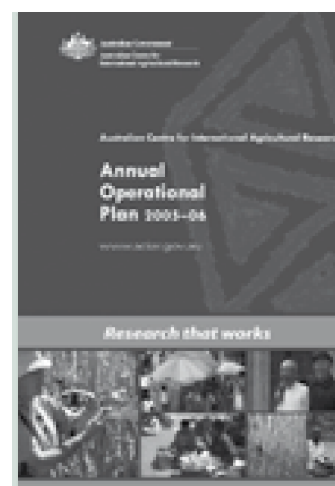


Tracking performance: against the 2005–06 Annual Operational Plan

ACIAR measures its progress in each country through key performance indicators (KPIs). These assist in the development of more focused programs in each country and also reflect the drive to refine and target programs more strongly to deliver research applicable to partner-country needs. Progress against country-specific KPIs is listed in the *Regional achievements* chapter, at the beginning of each country report.

AOP indicators are included for other core areas of operation, such as the *Multilateral program, Communicating research, Measuring research impacts* and *Building research capacity*, within the relevant chapters of the *Year in Review* section. Of the 99 indicators, 93 were achieved; six were not

Key performance indicators	Performance 2005–06
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management costs are kept to an acceptable level of 17% of total budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management costs were 16.2% of the total 2005–06 budget
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Running costs do not increase in real terms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACIAR's running costs were within the budgeted parameters of the Portfolio Budget Statement, being \$9.0m – (a saving of \$100,000 on budget).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All legislative and reporting requirements are met with no significant operational problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All legislative requirements for the 2005–06 financial year were met; tabling of the past year's Annual Report, the Portfolio Budget Statement, and other miscellaneous reporting requirements such as to the National Research Priorities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our operations are kept as simple as possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-house project development, approval and implementation processes were improved; Processes for approving and implementing projects were improved in several partner countries; A new form of contract – the Small Research Activity – was introduced to streamline processes relating to targeted research.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our corporate knowledge and information is readily accessible to all staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACIAR has investigated and begun implementing improvements to its record-keeping system; Online reporting of financial information was improved, allowing access to budgetary and expenditure information; The Project Information System was enhanced; ACIAR's Portal has become the main information repository for staff in Canberra and country offices; Wireless hotspots were enabled for travelling staff, giving them faster and more convenient access to ACIAR information systems while away.



ACIAR's 2005–06 research priorities were set out in its Annual Operational Plan (AOP). The AOP provides a transparent window into ACIAR's operations and research directions, including grouping research priorities by country and key program areas.

Portfolio management*

AOP budgeted expenditure in 2005–06	\$3,429,000
Actual expenditure in 2005–06	\$3,195,791
Proportion of total ACIAR expenditure 2005–06	5.8%

* includes Executive and Advisory (Executive Planning and Board/Policy Advisory Council/Policy Secretariat), Information Services, Information Technology and Infrastructure, Finance, Human Resources and International Support

ACIAR's Service Charter

During 2004–05 ACIAR launched its Service Charter, to embed a service delivery culture. The Charter outlines what can be expected when dealing with ACIAR and how individuals can contact the Centre to comment on performance. This includes service standards to be upheld for replying to emails, website and telephone queries and project development timeframes. The transparency of decision-making is also included, along with standards of accessibility.

ACIAR's Service Charter defines responsiveness, not accountabilities. The Centre's responsiveness to partners, government agencies, community groups and other stakeholders demonstrates ACIAR's commitment to doing the best job possible.

Since the Charter was launched no complaints have been lodged, nor have there been any other forms of feedback through the Charter. ACIAR continues to work to ensure that stakeholders have access to the most relevant and up-to-date information for project development and activities, that staff are accessible and that operations are transparent.

achieved due to delays and problems in project-related implementation beyond ACIAR's control.

At a broader level, 2005–06 saw a number of changes. Since the beginning of 2005, seven new Research Program Managers have commenced at ACIAR. The new appointees are now familiar with the priorities and networks in the key partner countries, allowing the continuation of a solid program of project development. Other notable initiatives include significant growth in the Pakistan and Indonesia programs in collaboration with AusAID, commencement of the large Seeds of Life 2 project in East Timor, and significant expansion of the John Allwright Fellowship program. An approach to seek Expressions of Interest for projects in Papua New Guinea is being trialled, following on from a similar pilot in the Philippines and Indonesia five years ago. The trial call in Papua New Guinea aims to further enhance transparency of project selection and identify both new project ideas and potential new research providers.

ACIAR's projects rely on partnerships that operate within a complex international, collaborative and inter-governmental environment. Effective project implementation and the delivery of results in this environment require sound portfolio management. This is delivered through a sound administrative underpinning and an investment in information technology and services.

The Information Technology and Infrastructure unit is responsible for the technical requirements needed for a safe and secure working environment, including issues relating to compliance on technical matters. The unit also supports appropriate technology use for ACIAR country offices and between ACIAR and relevant Government departments. Wireless technology has been adopted to enable travelling staff more convenient access to ACIAR information systems. Infrastructure in ACIAR's headquarters and management of environmental impacts from day-to-day operations are also serviced by the unit, with security of the ACIAR building and assets being upgraded following the recommendation on a risk management review.

ACIAR's operations also require an investment in overseas offices that is sufficient to facilitate a collaborative approach, in which partner-country priorities are heard and addressed.

The International Support program administers the development and implementation of project activities through the provision of services in seven ACIAR country offices and the Centre's headquarters. The program advises senior management and stakeholders on country contexts and project development, approval, legal-contractual requirements and project implementation. Offices are located in Australian missions in Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, China and India, with some providing support for ACIAR programs in neighbouring countries.