

Country Profile - Italy

Agricultural Research for Development

The Directorate General for Development Cooperation (DGCS) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) is the main donor for Agricultural Research for Development (ARD) in Italy.

Key ARD objectives

- Address the needs expressed by local populations and smallholder farmers on the multiple functions of agriculture.
- Involve smallholder farmers and other stakeholders in research and innovation.
- Adopt an inclusive multi-stakeholder innovation system approach.
- Mainstream gender and environmental issues.
- Provide support to build capacities at all levels, strengthen national research systems, improve the international agricultural research system, strengthen the role of GFAR (Global Forum on Agricultural Research) and improve CGIAR (Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research) efficiency, effectiveness, and impact.



CredyCom Project, Guatemala
Credit: © IAO

Summary

ARD is primarily funded by the DGCS, who set development priorities. The Istituto Agronomico per l'Oltremare (IAO) is a scientific and technical branch of MoFA, which provides scientific and technical advice, implements some of Italy's agricultural development cooperation in Africa, Latin America and Asia, mobilises the Italian scientific and technical community, and runs specialised master courses.

The majority of DGCS funding goes to global/multilateral initiatives (e.g. through CGIAR, IAMB, IAO). The remaining funding goes to bilateral initiatives (Latin America 29%, Sub-Saharan Africa 10%, and the Mediterranean Region 61%). Research and training components are often embedded in rural development programmes.

Main ARD budget and beneficiaries for 2010

Contributors

Ministry of Foreign Affairs	€ 19,184,863
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Recipients

International Research Institutions (e.g. IAMB)	€ 6,667,055
Developing countries ministries and research institutes	€ 1,260,709
CGIAR	€ 2,800,000
IAO	€ 7,400,153
Italian organisations and NGOs	€ 1,056,906

Geographical focus

Global/multilateral	€ 14,900,347
Latin America	€ 1,239,302
Sub-Saharan Africa	€ 436,690
Mediterranean	€ 2,608,524

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ARD landscape

Through IAO, DGCS implements an umbrella initiative to participate in the international ARD system (CGIAR, GFAR, G8/G20, etc.), to programme, monitor, and evaluate support to CGIAR, to improve coordination with other donors (e.g. through EIARD), and mobilise Italian research institutions, civil society, farmers' and private sector organisations.

IAO works in close collaboration with other research organisations in Italy and abroad, is an active member of Agrinatura and participates in EC funded initiatives such ERA-ARD II and PAEPARD (Platform for African-European Partnerships on ARD). National public sector agricultural and research centres (CNR, CRA, ISMEA, and INRAN) and Italian universities are also involved in ARD initiatives. Areas of research include biotechnology, crop genetic improvement, food safety and food quality, environmental monitoring, water management, and nutrition.



Farmers' discussions at ICARDA conference
Credit: © ICARDA

Through national and international networks, NGOs are involved in agricultural research, on issues such as food security and food sovereignty, agro-biodiversity, GMOs, seeds, land and desertification. Slow Food is a global, grassroots organisation which began in Italy and now has supporters in 150 countries linking quality food production with a commitment to community and the environment. The private sector is also active on specific commodities and products (e.g. wheat, coffee, cocoa).

Italy hosts the main UN organisations on food and agriculture (FAO, WFP, and IFAD), Bioersivity International (CGIAR centre), the Global Crop Diversity Trust, the Secretariat of the CGIAR Independent Science & Partnership Council (ISPC) and the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR).

Main ARD programmes

1. Agricultural research and development for the Millennium Development Goals initiative (IAO).
2. CGIAR (unrestricted funding, additional bilateral support to Bioersivity International and to FARA (Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa) for the Sub Saharan Africa Challenge Programme).
3. IAO: (core funding, development projects, master courses (Geomatics, Irrigation)).
4. IAMB: (core funding, development projects, training initiatives).

Perspective

Italy will continue to focus on the MDGs, particularly focusing on poor farmers in the least developed countries in Africa, Latin America, the Middle East and the Balkan region. Agricultural research will also be funded through programmes and initiatives in emerging, transition and medium income countries.

Further information

- [Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#)
- [IAO](#)
- [Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Bari](#)
- [SlowFood](#)
- [Fondazione Illy](#)
- [Barilla Center for Food and Nutrition](#)
- [National Research Council Agrofood Department](#)
- [Agricultural Research Council](#)
- [Faculty of Agriculture of the University of Catania](#)
- [Faculty of Agriculture of the University of Florence](#)

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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