Low research spending

Although agricultural research spending in Cameroon rose by 10 percent between 2012 and 2014 due to increased funding from the government and other organizations, the country’s agricultural research spending as a share of AgGDP (at 0.34 percent in 2014) remains well below the minimum 1 percent target recommended by the African Union and United Nations. Greater investment is needed, particularly in training, baseline surveys, databases, laboratory equipment, and infrastructure.

Capacity challenges

The number of agricultural researchers employed at Cameroon’s main government agricultural research agency, IRAD, declined in recent years caused by staff departures due to job dissatisfaction and uncompetitive salaries, and retirements, exacerbated by an official retirement age of only 55 years. Staffing gaps are particularly serious in the areas of animal production, fruit tree research, nutrition and food security, and in areas of crop research, such as vegetables and indigenous food crops other than maize and cassava.

Key donor support

CD2—a program cancelling and converting bilateral debt to France through the French Development Agency—provided IRAD’s research projects with over 2 billion CFA francs in the three-year period from 2014. These funds have enabled important supplies and laboratory equipment to be purchased and upgraded. C2D funding was also allocated to a competitive fund in support of private-sector research projects.

Low government funding

In 2014, IRAD received just one-third of its funding from the national government. Other sources included donors, the sale of goods and services, and revenues from producer organizations. While this diversification helps to reduce overall funding volatility, the low share of government funding has negative implications for fixed costs, such as salaries. Lack of government funding limits overall staffing levels, as well as increases in salary levels to maintain parity, and hence competitiveness, with the higher education and private sectors.
**Institutional composition of Cameroon’s agricultural research**

Two government agencies and four higher education agencies conducted agricultural research in Cameroon in 2014. IRAD, the main government agency, employed three-quarters of the country’s agricultural researchers. Despite recruitment efforts, the number of agricultural researchers at IRAD declined between 2012 and 2014.

**Cameroon’s agricultural researchers by qualification level**

As of 2014, although IRAD employed three times as many agricultural researchers than the higher education sector (in FTEs), its share of PhD-qualified researchers was significantly lower.

**Cameroon’s agricultural researchers by age bracket**

As of 2014, half of IRAD’s PhD-qualified researchers were over the age of 50, which poses a serious concern given the retirement age is 55. Retirement has also been a factor in the overall decline in IRAD’s researcher numbers. Large-scale training and recruitment will be crucial to replace researchers due to retire in the next five years.

**Cameroon’s MSc- and PhD-qualified agricultural researchers by discipline**

As of 2014, the dominant disciplines of Cameroon’s PhD-qualified researchers included plant pathology, plant breeding/genetics, zoology/entomology, forestry, and soil sciences. Prevalent disciplines of MSc-qualified researchers included socioeconomics, crop sciences, natural resources management, and animal nutrition.
Cameroon’s share of female researchers
In 2014, 26 percent of agricultural researchers in Cameroon were female. On average, female researchers were younger and less highly qualified than their male colleagues.

| 2014 | 74% | MALE | 26% | FEMALE |

By qualification level, 2014

- BSc: 27%
- MSc: 36%
- PhD: 17%

By age bracket, 2014

- < 41: 39%
- 41–50: 21%
- > 50: 5%

Cameroon’s agricultural researchers by area of focus
In 2014, 59 percent of Cameroon’s FTE researchers conducted crop research, followed by livestock research (24 percent), forestry research (4 percent), fisheries research (2 percent), and natural resources research (1 percent). Major crops under investigation included bananas, maize, cocoa, rubber, oil palm, and beans and other pulses.

Sources of IRAD’s funding
Government funding to IRAD remained comparatively stable during 2012–2014, whereas donor funding—primarily from C2D—fluctuated. IRAD also generated a significant amount of income internally through the sales of goods and services during this timeframe.

| 2012 | 2,596 | 3,061 | 1,214 | 206 |
| 2013 | 2,256 | 1,976 | 1,185 | 201 |
| 2014 | 2,710 | 3,425 | 1,471 | 119 |

IRAD’s spending by cost category
During 2012–2014, salaries accounted for just 22 percent of IRAD’s total expenditures, which is very low by the standard of most African NARIs. Operating and program costs averaged 30 percent, and capital investments 47 percent, although levels fluctuated considerably from year to year due to the volatility of donor funding levels.

Crop categories
- Cereals: 16%
- Roots and tubers: 6%
- Pulses: 5%
- Oil-bearing crops: 4%
- Horticultural crops: 14%
- Other crops: 14%

IRAD’s spending and funding compared
IRAD’s salary bill is entirely funded by the Cameroon government. During 2012–2014, both operating and program costs and capital investments were funded by the government (15 percent), donors (35 percent), the sale of goods and services (19 percent), and revenues from producer organizations (7 percent).

IRAD and CARBAP’s recent released crop varieties
IRAD released seven varieties of green beans, one of cowpeas, and one of sorghum during 2012–2014. CARBAP released six plantain varieties during this timeframe.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crop</th>
<th>Number of varieties, 2012–2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IRAD</td>
<td>CARBAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beans</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cowpeas</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorghum</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plantains</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The data underlying this factsheet were predominantly derived through primary surveys, although some data were drawn from secondary sources or were estimated. Agricultural research includes research conducted by the government, higher education, and nonprofit sectors; research conducted by the private for-profit sector is excluded due to lack of available data. ASTI bases its calculations of human resource and financial data on full-time equivalent (FTE) researchers, which take into account the proportion of time staff actually spend on research compared with other activities. ASTI presents its financial data in 2011 local currencies and 2011 purchasing power parity (PPP) dollars. PPPs reflect the relative purchasing power of currencies more effectively than do standard exchange rates because they compare prices of a broader range of local—as opposed to internationally traded—goods and services. ASTI estimates the higher education sector’s research expenditures because it is not possible to isolate them from the sector’s other expenditures. Note that decimal rounding can cause totals to be one point higher or lower than the sum of their parts.

For more information on ASTI’s data procedures and methodology, visit www.asti.cgiar.org/methodology.

Acronyms

- AgGDP: Agricultural gross domestic product
- CARBAP: African Research Center for Bananas and Plantains
- C2D: Debt and Development Agreement
- EFG: Garoua Wildlife School
- FTE(s): Full-time equivalent(s)
- IRAD: Agricultural Research Institute for Development
- NARI: National Agricultural Research Institute
- PPP(s): Purchasing Power Parity (exchange rates)
- R&D: Research and Development
- UD-FASA: University of Dschang - Faculty of Agronomy and Agricultural Sciences
- UM-ISS: University of Maroua - Higher Institute of the Sahel
- UYI-FS: University of Yaoundé I - Faculty of Sciences - Department of Plant Biology and Physiology

ABOUT ASTI, IFPRI, AND IRAD

Working through collaborative alliances with numerous national and regional R&D agencies and international institutions, Agricultural Science and Technology Indicators (ASTI) is a comprehensive and trusted source of information on agricultural R&D systems across the developing world. ASTI is led by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), which—as a CGIAR member—provides evidence-based policy solutions to sustainably end hunger and malnutrition and reduce poverty. The Agricultural Research Institute for Development (IRAD) is Cameroon’s principal agricultural research agency. Under the joint technical supervision of the Ministry of Scientific Research and Innovation and the Ministry of Finance, IRAD carries out research on crops, livestock, forestry, fisheries, and natural resources.

ASTI/IFPRI and IRAD gratefully acknowledge participating agricultural R&D agencies for their contributions to the data collection and preparation of this factsheet. ASTI also acknowledges the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and CGIAR Research Program on Policies, Institutions, and Markets for their generous support of ASTI’s work in Africa south of the Sahara. This factsheet has been prepared as an ASTI output and has not been peer reviewed; any opinions are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the policies or opinions of IFPRI or IRAD.

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