

Intervention:	Ghana Grains Development Project (GGDP)
Country:	Ghana
Date:	1979 – 1997
Objectives:	The original aim of the project was to support research and technology transfer to increase the output of maize and cowpeas. Over the years, the Project objectives evolved to support cropping systems research, gender sensitive programming and, ultimately, the sustainable institutional development of the host Ghanaian research and extension organizations.
Approach of the Intervention:	<p>CIDA provided a broad spectrum of support for technical assistance, human resources development, research station facilities, extension training and training materials development, and on-station and on-farm research operations. These funds were complemented by considerable appropriations by the Ghanaian government, and supplemental support from both CIMMYT and IITA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ The project emphasized the development of well-adapted maize and cowpea varieties and a widely-tested package of management practices for each of the major agro-ecological zones of Ghana. □ The project also had a substantial component of technology dissemination, which was later complemented by other extension projects, including the NGO Sasakawa Global 2000. □ As the project evolved, considerably more emphasis was placed on early farmer involvement in defining researchable issues and in evaluating research. This resulted in concerted efforts to involve women farmers in all stages of the research process and to examine the socio-economic dimensions of technology development. □ The host research organization, the Crops Research Institute, became the first agricultural research group in Ghana to create staff positions for agricultural economists, sociologists, a gender specialist and an extension specialist. Within CRI, the plant breeders, agronomists, extension specialist and social scientists created teams dedicated to working in the separate agro-ecological zones, and based their research work plans on well-attended, facilitated planning meetings with farmers, usually held in the local languages. □ By the Project's end, the GGDP was entirely managed by the Crops Research Institute, which was responsible to a Management Committee comprised of a broad range of stakeholders. By this time, CIMMYT, the executing agency for CIDA, provided only modest support and mentoring.
Benefits and Impacts:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ By 1987, the project was already showing considerable impact; a high proportion of farmers in selected areas had adopted the improved varieties and some of the recommended management practices. By 1990, with the help of the large-scale extension program of SG2000, over half of the maize farmers in Ghana had adopted some elements of the technology. Similar success has been registered in the 1990s with cowpeas. □ The GGDP supported the development by a Ghanaian maize breeder of fully adapted, open-pollinated quality protein maize (QPM) variety, and QPM traits have since been incorporated into most of the improved maize varieties in Ghana. Surveys from the health ministry showed a wide appreciation in communities of the nutritional benefit from "Obatanpa", which means "good nursing

	<p>mother.” SG 2000, seeing the potential to improve early childhood nutrition, sponsored exchange of this material in other parts of Africa with the technical support of Ghanaian scientists.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ GGDP supported the advanced education of nearly fifty MSc and PhD scientists. The rates of returning and retained professional staff were extremely high. At the end of the project in 1998, only a few scientists had moved out of their positions in Ghanaian institutes. Nearly all were still actively working on Ghanaian agriculture. This high degree of retention has been attributed to (1) a stable and gratifying working environment, and (2) a tendency among Ghanaian professionals to prefer to work in Ghana on Ghanaian problems.
Lessons learned:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Although the GGDP has clearly been one of the real success stories of donor support to agricultural research in Africa, it has not been without its problems. In hindsight, there should have been more efforts made by the GGDP to support a broader range of crops research; under GGDP, maize and cowpea research received considerably more funding than other crops, though this was progressively being rectified in the 1990s when the Management Committee was authorized to expand crop coverage. Likewise, more attention could have been paid to post-harvest technologies and marketing; these aspects were beginning to receive support when the project ended. □ The key difficulty, however, is in sustainability. As often happens with donor projects, the GGDP was considered outside of the main budgetary process of the research system. In spite of assurances given, when the project ended, the Government did not allocate more funds to the Crops Research Institute and it has suffered from a lack of operating expenses; this has resulted in, among other things, a reduction in its on-farm research program – the cornerstone of GGDP success. While it can take many years to develop institutional capacity, it does not take much time to diminish productivity. Facilities will deteriorate; competent staff may leave for a better situation.
Wider application:	□
Implementing agency & partners	CIDA, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, the research institutes, CIDA, CIMMYT, IITA, the Grains and Legumes Development Board and farmer organizations
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