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CCAFS, CGIAR, and ICRISAT: Who Runs India’s Climate-Smart Villages

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CCAFS, CGIAR, and ICRISAT: Who Runs India's Climate-Smart Villages

Some Indian villages test farming for a changing climate. But who runs the research behind them, and where do they sit?

This lesson names the research bodies behind India's climate-smart villages and shows how they fit together.

> **The idea in brief**
>
> - **CCAFS** was a CGIAR research programme.
> - **CGIAR** headquarters: Montpellier, France.
> - **ICRISAT**: a CGIAR centre in India, for semi-arid crops.
> - **GACSA** is a separate alliance.

Who Runs the Network

What is CGIAR?

CGIAR is the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research. It was formed in **1971**.

It began with four research centres. It grew to thirteen by 1983, and today it has **15 independent centres**.

Each centre keeps its own status and sits in a host country. The CGIAR headquarters has been in **Montpellier, France** since 2012.

Sources: cirad.fr; cultivation.hps.cam.ac.uk

What is CCAFS?

CCAFS stands for **Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security**.

It was a **CGIAR Research Program**. It ran as a research programme, not as a separate institution.

CGIAR Research Programs were approved and funded through a CGIAR Fund. The 15 centres did the field work.

Sources: globalvoices.org; rural21.com

> **Quick check 1.** True or false: CCAFS was a research programme of CGIAR. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓



A research field at ICRISAT, one of CGIAR's international research centres, located in India. Photo by Negikun, public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.

ICRISAT, the Centre in India

What does ICRISAT do?

ICRISAT is the International Crops Research Institute for the **Semi-Arid Tropics**. It sits in India and belongs to the CGIAR system.

It began formally on **5 July 1972**. Its first mandate crops were sorghum, pearl millet, chickpea and pigeonpea.

Groundnut was added in 1976. **Finger millet** joined later, because it matters in eastern and southern Africa.

Sources: fao.org; cultivation.hps.cam.ac.uk

Why was it set up in India?

Planners wanted a world research centre for dry, **unirrigated** farming. India has large semi-arid areas.

The centre was also meant to improve cropping and farming systems in low-rainfall regions.

Its India centre acts as the **global centre** for most strategic research and advanced training.

Sources: fao.org; cirad.fr

> **Quick check 2.** True or false: ICRISAT works mainly on rice and wheat. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

How do the three names fit together?

Think of a tree. CGIAR is the trunk, ICRISAT is one branch, and CCAFS is a research programme running through it.

Name	What it is	Link to the others
CGIAR	Global network of agricultural research centres, formed 1971	The parent system
ICRISAT	Centre for semi-arid crops, formed 1972, in India	One of the CGIAR centres
CCAFS	Research programme on climate, farming and food security	Ran under CGIAR; worked with centres

Sources: cirad.fr; rural21.com

What a Climate-Smart Village Does

What is a climate-smart village?

It is a village where farmers test practices that fit a changing climate.

Researchers, farmers' cooperatives, government bodies and private firms **work together**. They find which practices raise income and cut climate risk.

Climate-smart farming is **highly local**. A practice that works in one place may not suit another.

Sources: rural21.com; globalvoices.org

Where were they in India?

The project ran in **Haryana, Bihar and Punjab**. Anjanthalli in Haryana was the first climate-smart village there.

The same model also ran in Khulna in Bangladesh and Rupandehi in Nepal.

One year, messages reached **1,400 farmers in 50 villages** in Karnal and Bihar, and 10 villages in Punjab.

Sources: globalvoices.org; cirad.fr

What did farmers actually try?

Farmers got **weather forecasts** by voice and text twice a week in Hindi or a local language.

They used tools such as a **tensiometer** for soil water and a **leaf colour chart** for nutrients. New rice planting methods saved water and labour.

The programme also tried climate insurance for farmers who lose crops to natural calamities.

Sources: globalvoices.org

> **Quick check 3.** True or false: climate-smart practices are highly local. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Quick check 4. True or false: the Indian villages were run only by Indian government departments. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Do Not Confuse It with GACSA

How is GACSA different?

GACSA is the Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture. It came out of a UN climate summit in September 2014.

It began with **16 countries and 37 organisations**. It aims to help **500 million farmers** practise climate-smart farming by 2030.

It is a separate alliance. CGIAR and CCAFS are research bodies, not the alliance.

Read more in the GACSA article.

Sources: rural21.com

Quick check 5. True or false: GACSA and CGIAR are the same organisation. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

The UPSC 2021 Question

How do you solve the UPSC 2021 question?

The 2021 paper gave three statements. First: the Climate-Smart Village approach is part of a CCAFS project. Second: CCAFS is under CGIAR, headquartered in France. Third: ICRISAT in India is one of CGIAR's research centres.

All three are correct.

Link them in a chain: village approach, CCAFS, CGIAR in Montpellier, ICRISAT in India.

See the question in the 2021 paper.

Sources: cirad.fr; globalvoices.org

> **Quick check 6.** True or false: CGIAR's headquarters is in Montpellier, France. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Exam Traps

CCAFS is a research programme, not a country body.

CGIAR HQ: Montpellier, France.

ICRISAT: semi-arid crops, based in India.

Not GACSA: that is a separate alliance.

Count: 15 independent centres.

Practice MCQs

1. What does CCAFS stand for?

A. Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security

B. Crops, Climate and Farming Systems

C. Climate Control for Agriculture and Soil

D. Central Council for Agriculture and Food Supply

See answer ↓

2. In which city has the CGIAR headquarters been located since 2012?

A. Hyderabad

B. Manila

C. Montpellier

D. Nairobi

See answer ↓

3. In which year was CGIAR formed?

A. 1951

B. 1971

C. 2011

D. 1991

See answer ↓

4. How many independent research centres does CGIAR have, per recent histories?

A. 4

B. 9

C. 15

D. 40

See answer ↓

5. ICRISAT mainly works on crops of which kind of region?

A. Coastal wetland

B. Semi-arid tropics

C. Cold mountain

D. Temperate grassland

See answer ↓

6. Which crop was added to ICRISAT's mandate in 1976?

A. Groundnut

B. Rice

C. Wheat

D. Maize

See answer ↓

7. In which Indian states did the climate-smart village project run, per Global Voices 2014?

A. Odisha only

B. Kerala, Goa and Assam

C. Haryana, Bihar and Punjab

D. Gujarat only

See answer ↓

8. UPSC 2021: In the context of India's preparation for Climate-Smart Agriculture, consider the following statements:

1. The 'Climate-Smart Village' approach in India is a part of a project led by the Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS), an international research programme.

2. The project of CCAFS is carried out under Consultative Group on International Agriculture Research (CGIAR) headquartered in France.

3. The International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) in India is one of the CGIAR's research centres.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only

B. 2 and 3 only

C. 1 and 3 only

D. 1, 2 and 3

See answer ↓

Answer Key

1. **A.**
   CCAFS is Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security, a CGIAR research programme.
   Sources: Global Voices, climate-smart villages report 2014 · Rural 21, Moving towards One CGIAR 2021.
   ↑ Q1
2. **C.**
   CGIAR has had its headquarters in Montpellier, France since 2012.
   Sources: CIRAD, CGIAR board news 2020 · Cambridge HPS, CGIAR histories.
   ↑ Q2
3. **B.**
   CGIAR was formed in 1971 with four founding centres.
   Sources: Cambridge HPS, CGIAR histories · Rural 21, Moving towards One CGIAR 2021.
   ↑ Q3
4. **C.**
   The founding four grew to thirteen by 1983. Recent histories count fifteen.
   Sources: CIRAD, CGIAR board news 2020 · Cambridge HPS, CGIAR histories.
   ↑ Q4
5. **B.**
   ICRISAT is the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics.
   Sources: FAO, ICRISAT medium-term plan history · Cambridge HPS, CGIAR histories.
   ↑ Q5
6. **A.**
   The FAO history says groundnut was added to the list of crops in 1976.
   Sources: FAO, ICRISAT medium-term plan history · Cambridge HPS, CGIAR histories.
   ↑ Q6

7. **C.**
   The project ran in Haryana, Bihar and Punjab.
   Sources: Global Voices, climate-smart villages report 2014 · CIRAD, CGIAR board news 2020.
   ↑ Q7
8. **D.**
   The approach is part of a CCAFS project. CCAFS is under CGIAR in France. ICRISAT is a CGIAR centre in India.
   Sources: Global Voices, climate-smart villages report 2014 · CIRAD, CGIAR board news 2020.
   ↑ Q8

Quick-check answers

1. **True.** CGIAR ran CCAFS to study climate change, farming and food security. ↑ 1
2. **False.** Its mandate crops are dry-land crops such as sorghum, millets, chickpea, pigeonpea and groundnut. ↑ 2
3. **True.** What works in one place may not suit another. ↑ 3
4. **False.** Researchers, cooperatives, government bodies and private firms worked together under an international programme. ↑ 4
5. **False.** GACSA is an alliance of countries and organisations. CGIAR is a research network. ↑ 5
6. **True.** It has been there since 2012. ↑ 6

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