“The complex challenges facing dry areas cannot be solved with one silver bullet, but will require an integrated approach involving sustainable natural resource management, crop and livestock genetic improvement, as well as socio-economic innovation.”
Frank Rijsberman, Chief Executive Officer, CGIAR Consortium

Our program
The CGIAR Research Program on Dryland Systems is a global agricultural research partnership to realize the potential of dryland communities. The program brings together eight CGIAR Centers and numerous international, regional and national partners to engage in integrated agricultural systems research and unique partnership platforms to ensure improved food security, equitable and sustainable natural resource management, and better livelihoods for the world’s dryland communities. Our partnerships combine scientific research results with the skills and capacities of national agricultural research systems, advanced research institutions, non-governmental and civil society organizations, the private sector, and other actors to test and develop practical innovative solutions for rural dryland farming communities. The program is led by the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), a member of the CGIAR Consortium.

Our research
Provides policy makers with the research evidence to develop policies that will benefit marginalized farming communities living in the world’s dry rural areas.

Helps smallholder farmers to acquire skills in natural resource management that enable them to adapt to climate change and have better livelihoods and food security.

Ensures that the needs and priorities of women and youth are integrated in research activities.

Encourages equitable access to natural resources and better resource management.

Diversifies and adds value to production systems to create new agrobusinesses, new markets, and new jobs.

Improves crop and livestock productivity, stabilizes and adds value to agricultural production chains.

The difference we expect to make
By 2025, we expect to see that our research work has contributed to improved food security, increased incomes and opportunities, and a more equitable and sustainable management of land and natural resources for:

- 137 million people living rural in the West African Sahel and Dry Savannas (WAS&DS)
- 191 million people living rural in North Africa and West Asia (NAWA)
- 237 million people living rural in East and Southern Africa (ESA)
- 39 million people living rural in Central Asia (CA)
- 978 million people living rural in South Asia (Sa)

Flagship projects and action sites
In each of our five flagship projects, much of our work takes place in what we call ‘action sites’. Our action sites represent the main agricultural livelihood systems in each flagship project. This means that practices that prove successful in an action site can be applied rapidly or ‘scaled out’ right across similar dryland systems.

Resilience systems
In resource-lacking agricultural livelihood systems, we work to build resilience and provide farmers with innovative practices and technologies to deal with risks and minimize losses.

Intensifiable systems
In intensifiable agricultural livelihood systems, we work to provide farmers with innovative practices and technologies to intensify sustainable production.

For more information, please visit drylandsystems.cgiar.org