

BHUTAN

Key statistics	
GDP per capita (US\$) ^a	1,933
Population (million) ^a	0.7
Funding	\$m
2009–10 actual	0.17
2010–11 budget allocation	0.11
2011–12 budget estimate	0.18

^a data from 2009 & 2010 <<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/socind/>>

Smallholders working the fields, Bhutan

MEDIUM-TERM STRATEGY

Because of Bhutan's relative lack of capacity and the presence of several large donors competing for Bhutanese government and commercial resource support, the ACIAR program will remain small and very tightly focused. Earlier ACIAR research to develop Newcastle disease vaccine for village chickens was extended and adapted for the situation in Bhutan with the help of AusAID funding, and projects have been initiated on the management of fruit flies and on footrot management in ruminants. ACIAR's strategy for Bhutan is to work closely with the Bhutanese Government, local industry and other donors to ensure that planned R&D interventions are appropriate, consistent with the most recent government 5-year plan and complementary to the work of other donor agencies. A major initiative on improvement of citrus production (Bhutan's largest horticultural export industry) through improved planting material and ICM is currently being implemented. The Bhutan Government has identified crop irrigation management, ICM of vegetables (particularly chilli) and development of contract farming crops (e.g. walnut, grapes, asparagus, pomegranate) as priorities for future collaborative R&D.

Key areas identified as research priorities across the medium term include:

- Field crop germplasm improvement and utilisation
- Sustainable water and soil resource management

- » Water and soil resource assessment and the development and implementation of sustainable management plans, with an emphasis on community engagement and increased community-level co-management
- » Water harvesting and irrigation management technology development
- Horticulture, including crop management
 - » Development, adaptation and adoption of integrated and sustainable management practices for horticultural crops.

2011–12 RESEARCH PRIORITIES AND PROJECTS

Horticulture

HORT/2010/089 Integrated crop management of citrus in Bhutan

This project builds on an earlier project designed to develop on-farm best management practices for citrus production in Bhutan. The previous project also identified citrus greening, powdery mildew and irrigation management as additional constraints to be addressed. Integrated crop production management programs addressing these major constraints will be developed and adopted by growers, with a major focus on the districts of Chhukha, Wangdue, Thimphu, Punakha and Trashigang but with eventual roll-out to all major production areas.

Principal regional coordinator

Dr John Dixon

Key program managers

Dr Paul Fox, Crop Improvement and Management

Dr Andrew Noble, Land and Water Resources

Mr Les Baxter, Horticulture

Country manager

Dr Kuhu Chatterjee

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (2011–12)

- New/adapted integrated production technologies leading to increased productivity, enhanced nutrition, decreased water use, or resistance to pests and diseases being field-tested under commercial conditions in citrus

ACIAR project site, Bhutan