

Making a genuine difference

Managing change is an essential part of making a difference in the lives of smallholder farmers. Whether the changes are planned or unplanned, caused by nature's upheavals or human interventions, the challenge for ACIAR remains the same: how best can we work with our partner countries to reduce poverty and improve livelihoods of poor farmers?

China has been an ACIAR partner country since 1984. As China has grown and changed, the nature of the collaborative program has changed.

Earlier collaborative research with China covered most areas of agriculture and forestry, and involved institutions across the country.

Today ACIAR's program with China is strongly focused on better management of water, land and forest resources in the poorer regions of north-western and south-western China.

The pattern of investment has changed too, with Chinese institutions now able to contribute more of the total research costs.

Over the years, ACIAR has negotiated similar changes with several partner countries as their economies have grown – first with Malaysia, then more recently with Thailand.

Another change for ACIAR is a greater emphasis on supporting projects aimed at promoting adoption of the results of earlier work (see page 26).

ACIAR recognises that this shift will mean involving new partners – partners such as NGOs and other organisations with special skills in working with communities to help them adapt and adopt new technologies and approaches.

ACIAR also has a unique role to play in helping partner countries deal with the changes that follow conflict and natural disaster.

The tragic Indian Ocean tsunami is the most recent and devastating example. ACIAR will work with Indonesian institutions on specific aspects of restoring agriculture and fisheries productivity in northern Sumatra and Aceh. More information is on page 24.

PARTNERS IN RESEARCH FOR DEVELOPMENT

Partners in Research for Development presents articles that summarise results from ACIAR-sponsored research projects, and puts ACIAR research initiatives into perspective.

Technical enquiries will be passed on to the appropriate researchers for reply. Reprinting of articles, either whole or in part, is welcomed provided that the source is acknowledged.

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