Australian Government
Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research

Improving livelihoods with innovative cropping systems on the East India Plateau

Key details

Location
India

Duration
Start Oct 2012 **End** Jun 2017

Budget AUD 2,685,790

Commissioned organisation
Western Sydney University

Partners
Advanced Center for Water Resources Development and Management; Professional Assistance for Development Action; The World Vegetable Center

Project Leader
William Bellotti - Western Sydney University

Program Water

Project code LWR/2010/082

Overview

This project aimed to improve livelihoods by enabling local farmers to develop flexible and responsive cropping and livestock systems that better use available water resources, thereby making households more resilient to climate change/variability.

Endemic poverty on the East India Plateau is associated with food insecurity and civil unrest. Agricultural productivity is low, and there is little irrigation infrastructure. Population pressure has pushed cultivation of rice (the staple crop) onto the medium uplands. Previous ACIAR research showed that the dominant traditional cropping system of monoculture paddy rice is poorly adapted to these terraced and bunded uplands.

This project explored a proposed new cropping system that retains rice as the staple food crop but moved to shorter-duration, direct seeded rice using upland varieties. Direct seeded rice has been shown to be better adapted but its shorter duration creates an opportunity for growing several useful late kharif and early rabi crops.

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