

FEED THE FUTURE

ASIA INNOVATIVE FARMERS PROJECT

The Feed the Future Asia Innovative Farmers project, funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development Regional Development Mission for Asia, introduces technologies into new markets with potential to support millions of smallholder farmers to boost their incomes and improve food security.

Despite reductions in extreme poverty in Asia, food insecurity and poverty persist. Millions of smallholder farmers in South and Southeast Asia struggle to improve their livelihoods, build resilience to climate change and adjust to shifting market demand. Adopting new agricultural technologies that make food production and distribution more efficient can assist them to achieve these goals.



Farmer tests a new automated irrigation technology that uses sensors and wifi, one of the many innovative technologies being used in Asia to improve farming efficiency. Photo credit: Winrock International

This project focuses on regional trade and knowledge transfer among countries in Asia by strengthening technology networks via a Regional Innovation Hub based at Kasetsart University in Bangkok, Thailand. Challenge competitions are used to discover the most promising technologies, support partnerships and ultimately bring successful tools and practices to farmers in all stages of the supply chain – from production to marketing. The approach brings technology and innovative ideas from other countries within the region to focus countries such as Bangladesh, Cambodia and Nepal, with the possibility for expansion to other countries in the region until 2020.

Commercial Pathways to Sustainability

Partnerships with the private sector help ensure that technologies are commercially viable and that local market systems will support their availability and expanded adoption long after the end of the project. In 2016, the project began initiating partnerships for two technologies: eFishery (an automated fish feeder) and Pest Exclusion Nets. By connecting change agents across the region – researchers, importers, manufacturers, regional networks, governments and associations – through regional and national innovation hubs, the project will help create a sustainable network. The hubs, in turn, will support the multi-stage challenge competitions for technology, which include business facilitation, proof of concept and exposure stages.

Focus Areas

The project targets youth – the innovative and essential future of agriculture – through social media, so they can see farming as a business opportunity. Supporting resilience to climate shocks is also a key element, along with targeting women farmers as a critical, yet often untapped, source of change and growth.

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