

## Bringing green revolution to eastern India (BGREI)

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The programme of "Bringing Green Revolution to Eastern India (BGREI)" is intended to address the constraints limiting the productivity of "rice based cropping systems" in eastern India comprising seven states namely; Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Eastern Uttar Pradesh (*Purvanchal*) and West Bengal so that agricultural productivity is reasonably enhanced and stabilized in these areas. The programme has been conceptualized as a short-term and medium-term strategy to improve water management infrastructure at individual farmer level coupled with a mix of innovative crop production and protection technologies and appropriate extension support by way of convergence of inputs and services from various programmes and Institutions. The programme is expected to expose the farmers of eastern India to recent technologies with adequate technical backstopping from resource institutes to attain higher skills and economic empowerment. Besides, holistic programme module, appropriate practices of controlling the use of resources in terms of cost, time, manpower, technological support, inputs and deliverables of the project on the lines of modern project management have been put in place. The provision of strong monitoring at each level of implementation of the programme has been made, including change, control and risk management aspects to take care of uncertainties and to accommodate such changes deemed necessary to minimize their effect on the programme.

**Background:** The increase in food grains production from 97.32 million tons in 1950-51 to 233.88 million tons during 2008-09 was mainly from the traditional food bowl area of Punjab, Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh. However, sustainability of food security in long run from this area is under threat due to over exploitation of natural resources in terms of ground water, soil and excessive consumption of energy.

In order to reduce the over exploitation of the natural resources in North Western region, there is need to utilize the resource rich high rainfall areas of Eastern India for enhancing agriculture production. Eastern India having two to three times more rainfall compared to the Northwestern States, unexploited good quality ground water aquifers, and vast resources of social capital have relative advantage for sustainable production of crops, where rice based cropping system is prominent. In spite of availability of abundant natural resources, the agricultural productivity in this part of the country is low due to several biophysical, technological, socio-economic and institutional constraints effecting the agricultural production

In order to exploit the under utilized resources of Eastern India, the programme of "BGREI" was launched on the recommendations of an Inter-ministerial task force constituted by the Government of India in December, 2009 under the chairmanship of Secretary (Agriculture) to make short-term and medium-term recommendations on efficient management of water, power and other inputs to maximize agricultural production on a sustainable basis including that of the Eastern India. The main objective set for the task force were; (i) assessing the current scenario of water resources development utilization and management for food grain including rice production in the country with reference to North-Western and Eastern India. (ii) Developing short, medium and long term action plan for sustainable food security in the country keeping in the mind the adequate infrastructure relating to water, power, marketing, storage and rural connectivity in potential Eastern and North-Eastern regions. The report of the task force was submitted in the month of June, 2010. The major recommendation of task force was for promoting efficiency in water management and encouraging innovative precision farming practices in consultation with the state Governments. It made specific recommendations for improving the rice productivity in the Eastern States.