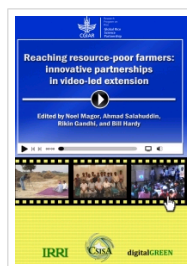# Reaching resource-poor farmers: innovative partnerships in video-led extension

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The Cereal Systems Initiative for South Asia (CSISA), funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and USAID, is a major joint initiative of IRRI, CIMMYT, ILRI, and IFPRI. Its vision of success over a 10-year period is the wide-scale adoption of resource-conserving practices that reach 6 million rural poor households with an annual income increase of at least US$350 per annum. Extensive partnerships with public, private, and civil society agencies are the principal means of dissemination. Digital Green (DG) is a relative newcomer to agricultural extension, operating in over 1,100 villages with more than 100,000 farmers across six states in India and Ethiopia, and it has developed a model that has been found to be at least 10 times more cost-effective per dollar spent compared with classical extension approaches. Its mission is to bring together technology and social organization to amplify the effectiveness of agricultural development efforts around the world.

CSISA seeks to reach large numbers of farmers, so collaborating with Digital Green was seen as an opportunity to leverage its technology-enabled model and grass-roots-level partnerships with local extension agencies and rural communities to improve the efficiency and efficacy of the approach. An agreement for an initial 6-month pilot in Bihar was signed in September 2011. The pilot essentially aimed to establish a two-way knowledge exchange among CSISA, digitalGreen, an extension system, and the local community. The pilot involved 20 villages in Bihar in which digitalGreen had partnered with an extension system operated by an NGO, Action for Social Advancement (ASA), and linked with CSISA's Bihar hub as a resource for technologies.

This report documents the pilot and its review that culminated in a mini-workshop of the main actors and potential stakeholders in March 2012.

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