Partner with ICRISAT

About ICRISAT
The International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) is a pioneering, non-profit international scientific research for development organization, specializing in improving dryland farming and agri-food systems. The Institute was established in 1972, by a consortium led by the Ford Foundation and Rockefeller Foundation with the support from the Government of India. ICRISAT works with global partners to develop innovative science-backed solutions to overcoming hunger, malnutrition, poverty and environmental degradation serving the 2.1 billion people who reside in the drylands of Asia, sub-Saharan Africa and beyond.

Accolades
- Africa Food Prize 2021
- 9th India CSR Award 2020
- National CSR Award India 2019
- King Baudouin Award 1996, 1998 and 2002

Varieties/hybrids released
1,184 ICRISAT varieties released in 81 countries across the globe as of 2021

Germplasm shared
More than 1.5 million seed samples distributed to 149 countries

ICRISAT locations
ICRISAT - Hyderabad, India (Headquarters); New Delhi, India (liaison office).
ICRISAT - Nairobi, Kenya (Regional hub ESA); Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; Lilongwe, Malawi; Bulawayo, Zimbabwe; Maputo, Mozambique; and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.
ICRISAT - Bamako, Mali (Regional hub WCA); Niamey, Niger; Kano, Nigeria; and Dakar, Senegal.

[Image of three scientists examining crop plants]

Research focus
The challenges facing the drylands are inextricably linked. As such the Institute adopts an holistic approach to its research with a focus on:

1. Evidence based solutions
2. Markets to make farming more profitable
3. Partnerships
4. Environmental and business sustainability
5. Participation, gender and social inclusion
6. Our genebank conserves biodiversity
8. Seed systems provide access to high quality modern variety seeds
9. Inclusive and sustainable value chains, post harvest management, processing
10. Market access and linkages
11. Capacity development, raising entrepreneurs
12. Women and youth empowerment
13. Climate resilience
14. Water management, prevention of soil degradation and nutrient loss
15. Digital agriculture and geospatial technologies

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Challenge

The majority of the world’s undernourished are found in Asia (381 million). More than 250 million live in Africa, where the number of undernourished people is growing faster than in any other region of the world.

- The state of food security and nutrition in the world, 2020, FAO

Proven solutions

Dryland crops are a major source of nutrition in the semi-arid regions of Africa and Asia. ICRISAT was awarded the 2021 Africa Food Prize for its work that resulted in improved food security across 13 countries in sub-Saharan Africa. The upcoming UN International Year of Millets – 2023 provides new opportunities for ICRISAT’s millet research to counter the triple burden of nutrition (underweight, obesity and micronutrient deficiency).

Our approach

- Develop improved varieties
  - High yielding and stress resistant varieties ensure more food supply. Biofortified crops bred for improved iron and zinc provide a cost-effective and sustainable approach for addressing malnutrition.

- Build healthy farm systems
  - Our extensive work on reducing aflatoxin contamination has radically improved food safety and continues to prevent food loss. Good agricultural practices ensures that the produce is safe to consume.

- Foster nutrition entrepreneurs
  - Agribusiness incubation support, food-processing training and India-Africa cross learning platforms foster nutrition entrepreneurs.

- Promote sustainable diets as Smart Food
  - Building the value chain and mainstreaming Smart Food - food that is good for you, the planet and the farmer - to address the dietary needs of women and children.

Successful impact of ICRISAT’s interventions

Biofortified crops: High iron and zinc pearl millet (Dhanashakti) is the first biofortified crop cultivar to be officially released in India. It has been included in the Nutri-Farm Pilot Program launched by the Government and 94,000 households benefited from its cultivation. High iron and zinc sorghum (Parbhani Shakti) has a higher yield of 10-15% and higher protein content as compared to other varieties. High-oleic acid groundnuts (Girnar 4 & 5) contain about 35-40% higher oleic acid as compared to regular varieties.

Agribusiness: Trained tribal women in Telangana, India, run licenced units to process and package ready-to-eat millet and pulse foods formulated by ICRISAT, which are supplied to their community centers (anganwadis).

Addressing hidden hunger: In Kenya, about 8,000 women who attended nutrition workshops registered an increase in their dietary diversity score (15% in women and of 80% in children).