



Sri Lanka and IRRI Partnership

Rice in Sri Lanka

Rice is the staple food in Sri Lanka and, until recently, the country had achieved self-sufficiency in rice production. However, in 2017, Sri Lanka experienced its worst drought in 37 years. This was followed by heavy rains resulting in major floods in many areas, affecting over half a million people. This prompted the country to import 700,000 tons of rice. Thus, climate change is presenting a huge challenge for achieving the country's food and nutrition security goals.

The government of Sri Lanka has stepped up its efforts in re-invigorating the country's rice sector to ensure food security through environmentally sustainable approaches. Innovative solutions and partnerships that address the nation's current challenges in agricultural production will help Sri Lanka reach its goal of restoring self-sufficiency in rice.

The International Rice Research Institute continues to support the Sri Lankan government as it strengthens the country's resilience against emerging challenges in agriculture.



Opportunities for collaboration

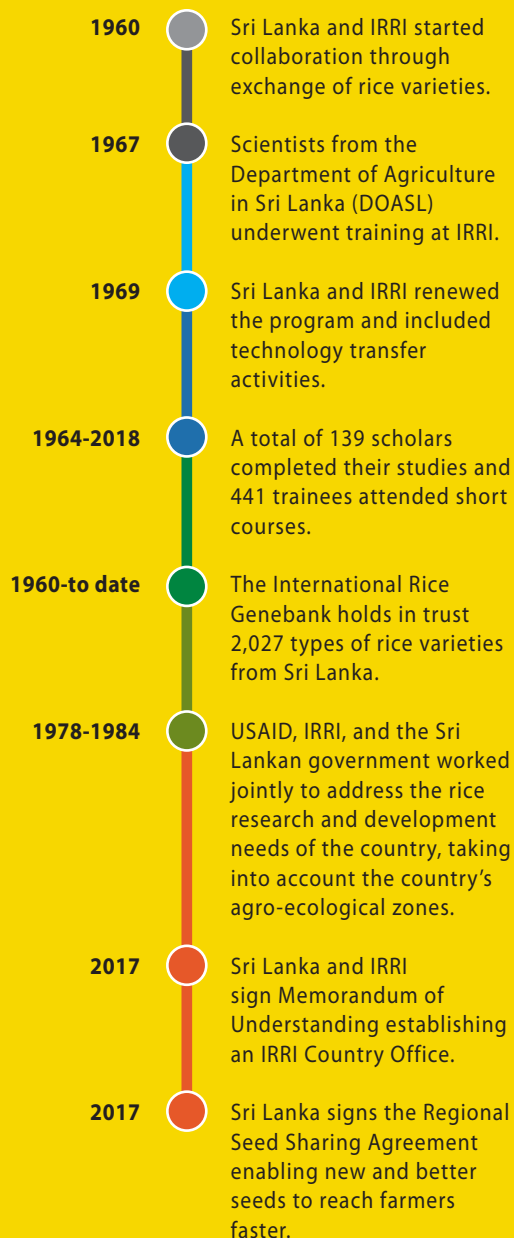
- Reducing production costs (labor and inputs) through increasing mechanization in rice-based farming systems
- Increasing rice yields and improving farmers' income through climate-resilient rice varieties and better natural resources management
- Policy analysis helping to guide strategies for developing the national rice sector
- Training the next generation of rice scientists on cutting-edge breeding technologies
- Increasing cooperation between private and public sectors to achieve a more efficient rice value chain

IRRI and Sri Lanka's partnership, which has spanned more than 50 years, helped the country towards rice self-sufficiency. To date, there have been a total of 43 IRRI projects (current and completed) in Sri Lanka.



Current initiatives

- **Breeding better rice varieties to cope with climate change.** Under three projects, IRRI is helping Sri Lanka develop varieties such as: Green Super Rice, which produces stable yields with less input; Hybrid Rice which produces more yields and is climate-resilient; Climate-smart rice, which can withstand the effects of climate change.
- **Use of socioeconomic data toward reducing poverty.** IRRI is tracking the diffusion of rice varieties across South Asia and aims to generate widely accessible databases on crop improvement. This will allow better understanding of the impact of food-crop genetics research on increasing availability of food for the poor and food-insecure in the region.
- **Fine-tuning rice farming systems.** The Closing Rice Yield Gaps with Reduced Environmental Footprint (CORIGAP) Project is one of several projects by IRRI, which aims to raise the productivity, profitability, and resilience of rice farming systems while ensuring environmental sustainability.



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International Rice Research Institute

IRRI aims to improve livelihoods and nutrition, abolishing poverty, hunger, and malnutrition among those who depend on rice-based agri-food systems. In doing so, IRRI's work protects the health of rice farmers and consumers, and the environmental sustainability of rice farming in a world challenged by climate change. IRRI's work promotes the empowerment of women and supports opportunities for youth in an equitable agri-food system.