



The Socialist Republic of Vietnam and ICRISAT

Persistent drought, unpredictable weather, limited and erratic rainfall, and very poor soils have to be met head-on by farmers in the dry tropics. The International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) helps farmers meet these challenges by generating cutting-edge technologies with partners. ICRISAT gives a humane dimension to agricultural research through its motto Science with a human face. This is pursued by tailoring its programs to empower poor farmers and vulnerable communities in the dry tropics and using an inclusive market-oriented development (IMOD) approach.

Vietnam's economy depends on manufacturing and agriculture. Originally an agrarian country, Vietnam still considers agriculture vital to its growth. The agriculture sector not only produces the food, but provides many of the jobs and incomes on which the world's most vulnerable people – the poor farmers – depend. The goal of ICRISAT is to harness the power of technology for development, food security, poverty alleviation and environmental protection, targeted at poor rural families in the semi-arid tropics of the world. Together, Vietnam and ICRISAT can make a difference in the lives of the poor in Vietnam.



The Director General of ICRISAT, Dr William D Dar and Vice-Minister, Dr Nguyen Van Lang of Vietnam exchange MoUs in September 2009.



Dr Bui Ba Bong, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, and his delegation at a meeting with the DG of ICRISAT.

Visitors from Vietnam

Over the years there have been several interactions between Vietnam and ICRISAT as dignitaries, government officials, scientists, trainees and students have visited since the 1980s. Some of them were:

- ▶ On 11 August 2010, Dr Bui Ba Bong, from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, visited ICRISAT-Patancheru along with a ten-member delegation. They visited the biotechnology lab and the Agri-Business Incubator.
- ▶ Dr Nguyen Van Lang, Vice-Minister, Ministry of Science & Technology, and team visited ICRISAT in September 2009. At that time ICRISAT and the Ministry signed an MoU under which ICRISAT agreed to help Vietnam establish agri-science parks and centers of excellence in biotechnology.
- ▶ In November 2008, an ICRISAT scientist and team conducted a six-week training course on aflatoxin detection and management in groundnut for two researchers from the Legumes Research and Development Center, Field Crops Research Institute, Hanoi.
- ▶ From 6 to 8 October 2008, a group of Vietnamese government personnel visited ICRISAT-Patancheru with the primary objective of learning about the various ICRISAT R&D activities and identifying the technologies that might be worth up scaling in Vietnam.
- ▶ A few participants from the National Agricultural Research and Extension Systems (NARES) of Vietnam attended a Master Class on Impact Assessment from 18 to 27 March 2009.
- ▶ Trainees and students: From 1987 onwards, 133 research fellows, scholars, and trainees were at ICRISAT, of whom 75 were male and 58 female.

Collaborating with Vietnam

ICRISAT and Vietnam collaborate on the following projects:

- ▶ *Farmer participatory improvement of grain legumes in rainfed Asia (2002-2006)*: The goal of this IFAD-funded program was to improve the well-being of the rural poor in the Asia region (China, India, Nepal and Vietnam), through sustainable increases in agricultural productivity based on wider adoption of grain legumes in cropping systems. In Vietnam, integrated crop management techniques raised groundnut and soybean productivity, which generated higher incomes for farming families, which in turn enhanced their health, education, and social standing.
- ▶ *Harnessing the true potential of legumes: economic and knowledge empowerment of poor rainfed farmers in Asia (2007-2011)*: The purpose of this project is to consolidate and scale up the gains from the above mentioned project as well as to enhance the food and nutritional security of poor farmers in Vietnam. The grant project activities concentrate on tribal and other marginal rainfed areas for empowerment of poor tribal and marginal farmers leading to their improved well-being and enhanced social status.
- ▶ *Program for linking the poor to global markets: pro-poor development of biofuel supply chains*: The purpose of the project, supported by IFAD, was to improve the livelihoods of smallholder farmers and landless rural households by enabling use of improved technology for bio-energy crop cultivation and enabling production-supply chain linkages through an innovative coalition of partners involving farmers, researchers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the bio-fuel industry for sustainable production of bio-fuels in Vietnam. It would lead to self reliance (sustainable and environment-friendly) in energy needs for household and agricultural operations as well as help to rehabilitate degraded lands.
- ▶ *Vulnerability to climate change: adaptation strategies and layers of change (2008 onwards)*: The identification of adaptation strategies and layers of resilience at the grassroots level is an essential step in addressing vulnerability to climate change especially on the rural livelihoods of the people dependent on agriculture. This ADB-supported three-year research project is envisioned to provide science-based solutions and pro-poor approaches to adapting agricultural systems to climate change for the benefit of the rural poor and the most vulnerable farmers in the semi-arid regions of Asia (including Vietnam). This will enable the prioritization of sectors most at risk and development of gender-equitable adaptation and mitigation strategies as an integral part of agricultural development programs in these less-favored regions.



Vietnamese delegates visit the fields at Patancheru.



ICRISAT scientists with trainees from Vietnam.

Conclusion

ICRISAT's integrated watershed management strategy in Vietnam has brought together improved agronomy and natural resource management practices for the benefit of dryland farmers. Furthermore, Vietnamese agriculture has benefited from the improved groundnut varieties received from ICRISAT. Together, ICRISAT and Vietnam are working towards addressing the needs of the poor and we truly value our partnerships with stakeholders, such as Vietnam, who help us in achieving our mission using the approach of *Science with a human face*.

About ICRISAT



The International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) is a non-profit, non-political organization that conducts agricultural research for development in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa with a wide array of partners throughout the world. Covering 6.5 million square kilometers of land in 55 countries, the semi-arid tropics have over 2 billion people, and 644 million of these are the poorest of the poor. ICRISAT and its partners help empower these poor people to overcome poverty, hunger, malnutrition and a degraded environment through better and more resilient agriculture.

ICRISAT is headquartered in Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh, India, with two regional hubs and four country offices in sub-Saharan Africa. It belongs to the Consortium of Centers supported by the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR).

ICRISAT-Patancheru

Patancheru 502 324, Andhra Pradesh, India
Tel +91 40 30713071 Fax +91 40 30713074

www.icrisat.org