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# IRRI researchers identified rice varieties which can deliver genetic gain and farm productivity

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Researchers in India have identified new rice varieties that could adapt to specific requirements of the different environments in the country after a series of on-farm trials (OFT). The results of the rigorous trials were presented in a two-day technical workshop online organized by the India Seed System and Product Management team of the International Rice Research Institute on 5-6 May, 2022.

A total of 27 new varieties, including some pipeline varieties were validated as nominated by more than nine Indian National Agricultural Research & Education System (NARES) breeding network partners. The research also identified promising varieties and how they adapt in the various target environments. During these trials, researchers collected feedback about the varieties from farmers and extension personnel.

â??The development and identification of suitable rice varieties for specific environments in Indian farms are the critical first steps in helping the farmers increase their yield and productivity. The identified new varieties when positioned rightly in the seed system, can lead to actual delivery of genetic gain in the farmer field. In addition, the smallholder farmers of the country need all the support to ensure they have awareness and equitable access to these new varieties and quality seedsâ? said Dr Swati Nayak, South Asia Lead â?? Seed Systems & Product Management at IRRI.

Researchers have continuously developed technologies and various interventions that could be adapted to increase the productivity in the country. At the same time, they have also promoted the cultivation of hybrid rice varieties.

The newly-identified rice varieties were a product of the 2021 Kharif (wet season, June-October) OFTs implemented extensively across four states in Eastern India, including Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, and Uttar Pradesh. A total of 559 OFTs were implemented in partnership with government organizations such as Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), State Agricultural Universities (SAU), and non-government organizations (NGO) as collaborators in Eastern India.

In the current trials conducted, researchers found specific rice varieties with favorable response for different farm locations and environments. These selected varieties will be further disseminated for extensive promotion through demonstration, and are expected to help increase rice yield and profit against existing varieties. Researchers are also looking into infusing these varieties in the seed chain of respective states for speedy quality seed access to the farmers.