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IRRI partners with Advanced Chemical Industries Limited for a Limited Exclusivity Agreement to commercialize IRRI Rice Inbred Varieties

The International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) continues to build partnerships with private sector partners to bring innovative and beneficial agricultural technologies to more farmers.

IRRI has entered into a ten-year Limited Exclusivity Commercial License Agreement with [Advanced Chemical Industries Limited \(ACI\)](#) to develop and promote in Bangladesh the commercialization of two IRRI Inbred Varieties: IRRI 154 (BABI Dhan 1) and IR 91820-25-BAY 2-3-1 (BAU Dhan 3).

These two rice varieties, bred by IRRI using “in-trust” (*ex situ* germplasm collections held by CGIAR genebanks) materials from MultiLateral System (MLS), were first tested at ACI locations in Bangladesh, then selected by ACI for their good yield and performance in irrigated and rainfed areas, making them suitable for rice-growing areas in Bangladesh. One of the varieties, IRRI 154, was also introduced successfully in the Philippines and other countries in Asia, yielding up to 10 tons per hectare and on average 6 tons per hectare, an increase of +13% over established varieties. The two licensed varieties performed very well when tested by ACI in Bangladesh, and they were selected by ACI for development.

ACI is a publicly-listed corporation in Bangladesh with diversified activities in the country including rice breeding and agro-supply, and with a vision of improving the life of Bangladesh farmers through the responsible deployment of knowledge, skills and technology.

This limited-exclusivity commercial licensing agreement with ACI was necessary for increasing the speed, scale, and scope of distribution and dissemination of new IRRI-developed elite rice varieties so that it can reach Bangladesh farmers faster and contribute to food and nutrition security of the country.

As an international research-for-development organization, IRRI is well positioned to develop new elite rice varieties. However, IRRI does not have the in-country infrastructure and capability to provide the following: (1) Multi-location testing of new rice varieties needed by farmers in different agro-climatic zones of Bangladesh; (2) Ensuring high-quality seed production at a large scale within the territory; and (3) Distributing the rice seeds to Bangladeshi farmers through a network of dealers and distributors. IRRI needs in-country partners for this, and this agreement with a company like ACI, which can provide those needed elements, will be key for delivering and accelerating impact.

ACI commits to invest towards achieving impact through scaled-up development, production, and distribution of the new varieties, and meeting seed sales objectives. ACI investment will include: (1) Regular testing of several IRRI new elite varieties at ACI cost, to cherry-pick the best varieties for Bangladesh; (2) high quality commercial rice seed production; and (3) Commercial rice seed distribution using existing ACI distribution channels. ACI negotiated

with IRRRI for a 10-year commercial exclusivity for Bangladesh on these varieties so as to appropriately scale their long-term investment and efforts for seed production, marketing, and distribution. The 10-year exclusivity was a condition set by ACI for complying with IRRRI's requests.

ACI adheres to [IRRRI's Intellectual Property, Commercialization, and Communication \(IP&C\) Policy](#), as well as to the CGIAR Intellectual Asset Management Principles ("[CGIAR IA Principles](#)").

The licensed inbred varieties remain available to 3rd parties with no restriction for further research and breeding.

In line with the CGIAR Principles on the Management of Intellectual Assets for Limited Exclusivity Agreements (LEAs), the exclusivity conferred is of a limited nature, and IRRRI retains the right to provide access to the licensed inbred varieties for non-commercial research conducted by public sector organization ("Research Exemption"), and for use in the event of a national or regional food security emergency limited to the duration of the emergency ("Emergency Exemption").

The licensed varieties developed by IRRRI are derived from MLS ([Standard Material Transfer Agreement \(SMTA\)](#)) material. They were initially shared with ACI for research purposes, under SMTA and additional conditions. At this stage, the varieties were "PGRFA-UD" (Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture - Under Development) as defined in the SMTA.. In addition, as per IRRRI's policy, IRRRI decided to make voluntary payments to the benefit-sharing fund of the [International Treaty of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture \(ITPGRFA\)](#) and share the royalty received from ACI.
