

Cooperation in Rice Seed:

A Potential Way to Sustainable Rice Production in Bangladesh and India

Background

Rice is a staple food for both Bangladesh and India. However, it is observed that rice yields are lower than global average. One of the most important reasons for this is lack of availability and accessibility to adaptable varieties of rice seeds. Considering that both the countries are characterised by similar agro-climatic conditions, it could be economically rewarding if the two cooperate and jointly develop varieties suitable for the local conditions. Thus, creating an enabling environment for promoting cooperation and facilitating trade in High Yielding Variety (HYV) rice seeds is a necessary step.

Synthesis

Policy initiatives taken by India and Bangladesh for generating HYV seeds production and distribution is one of the reason for higher rice production over the past few years, but still these initiative are not sufficient to meet the growing seeds and rice demand of increasing population. Surplus of one country can fill the demand gap of another country, and this can be done only by cross-border formal trade of HYV rice seeds. Currently, formal trade of HYV rice seeds between India and Bangladesh is very low, even though there are no tariff barriers. In the absence of formal trade, informal trade of HYV seeds has become a phenomenon, especially in the border areas.

Challenges

The challenges in rice seeds availability and accessibility in India and Bangladesh can be divided into two broad categories: one is the domestic constraints which includes infrastructural, administrative, financial and other structural gaps; second is the constraints in the cross border movements of seeds which are due to lack of harmonized standards, laboratory requirements. This study urges that governments of both the countries should take initiatives such as: facilitating the role of private sector in the rice seeds market; initiatives between certification and standard setting bodies of both the countries etc.



Addressing Barriers to Rice Seeds Trade between India and Bangladesh (RISTE Project)

