

Researchers to begin rolling out disease-resistant, heat-tolerant grains to African farmers

There are four million people with limited access to food in Chad, which ranks as second hungriest of the 119 countries assessed in the 2018 Global Hunger Index (GHI). Chad is also hotter and drier now than it was 40 years ago, resulting in reduced crop production.

....[The International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics] ICRISAT is working to develop climate-smart crops to help improve farmers productivity.

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Typically, crops like pearl millet and sorghum....can grow under challenging conditions. In Chad, farmers who planted the S35 variety of sorghum (also developed by ICRISAT) are decreasing resource inputs by 33% and increasing yields by 51%, compared to yields of other sorghum varieties.

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ICRISAT has announced plans to distribute new varieties of finger millet that are even more disease-resistant. Finger millet is a highly valued crop grown in 24 countries in Africa and Asia....The five-year Crop Wild Relatives (CWR) project involved research on finger millet's wild relatives that have also developed tolerance to blast disease and striga, a parasitic weed.

Blast is considered one of the most destructive diseases of finger millet because of its aggressiveness. In East Africa, losses exceeding 80% have been reported in bad years. Striga can lead to complete loss of crop and once it is in a farmer's field, it is nearly impossible to eradicate

Read full, original article: [Researchers develop disease-resistant climate-smart grains to help eradicate poverty in Africa](#)