

- 1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- 2. Achieve universal primary education
- 3. Promote gender equality and empower women
- 4. Reduce child mortality
- 5. Improve maternal health
- 6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- 7. Ensure environmental sustainability
- 8. Develop a global partnership for development



IRRI

INTERNATIONAL RICE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Rice Research and the UN Millennium Development Goals



Achieving United Nations Millennium Development Goals begins with **rice research**

A rice farming family in the northern highlands of Laos



Goal 1 Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger Most of the world's poorest and least food-secure people live in rice-producing Asia. Many are rice farmers and even more are urban slum-dwellers or landless farm laborers who buy their daily rice. Rice is so central to their lives that any solution to global poverty and hunger must include research that helps farmers earn a decent profit while growing rice that is affordable to consumers.

Goal 2 Achieve universal primary education Asia's poorest spend 20-40% of their income on rice. Helping farmers grow rice more efficiently means cheaper rice for consumers, higher income for producers and more money for both to invest in their children's education. More efficient rice farming also lightens the labor burden on farm households, leaving children more time for their studies.

Goal 3 Promote gender equality and empower women Women traditionally shoulder many of the chores of rice farming and today are assuming additional responsibilities as their menfolk seek off-farm employment. Research that makes rice farming more efficient frees women to grow cash crops and independently pursue paid activities to support personal fulfillment and cover school fees for all of their children, boys and girls alike.

Goals 4 & 5 Reduce child mortality & improve maternal health Because Asia's poorest depend on rice for most of their calories and protein, many suffer dietary deficiencies of iron, zinc and vitamin A. Globally, "hidden hunger" for these essential micronutrients afflicts more than half of humanity, especially pregnant and lactating women and young children. Making rice more nutritious will help protect those most vulnerable to hidden hunger.

Goal 7 Ensure environmental sustainability Rice occupies more farmland in Asia than any other food crop — 60% or more in the poorest countries. Rice research that improves the productivity of existing fields boosts harvests in line with growth in the number of mouths to feed, without encroaching on forests and other natural areas. Research that optimizes farmers' pesticide and fertilizer use improves their income as it protects the environment.