



ICRISAT

# Smart Food



## Background

'Smart Food' is food that fulfils the criteria of being good for you (nutritious and healthy); good for the planet (environmentally sustainable); and good for the farmer (climate smart with the potential to increase yields and have multiple uses).

ICRISAT's Smart Food initiative draws upon its extensive experience in dryland agri-food systems to diversify staples across Africa and Asia for enhanced food and nutritional security.



## Executive Council

The Smart Food Executive Council advises key stakeholders and advocates for 'Smart Food' at a policy level through a number of forums and mechanisms and comprises of the following institutes:



International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT)



Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA)



West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF)



The Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN)



Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI).





## Why “Smart Food”?

- “Smart Food” encompasses sorghum, pearl millet, finger millet, small millets and food legumes, including chickpea, pigeonpea, groundnut and green gram.
- “Smart Food” is environmentally sustainable and climate-smart.
- They have a low carbon and water footprint compared to other grains, need less inputs such as water, fertilizer and pesticide and can grow faster and mature earlier than many other cereals.
- They have multiple uses: food, fodder, and ready-to-use secondary products.
- They can survive with very little water, helping dryland farmers manage risks when faced with adverse climate change impacts.

Smart Food



Adding Value to the Value Chain

The International Year of Millets 2023 provided a unique opportunity to galvanize resources and know-how to increase sustainable global production, post-harvest processing, marketing, consumption and utilization by promoting millets as ‘Smart Food’ and as a key component of the food basket.

**The Smart Food initiative is evolving into a global movement with the following key objectives:**

- As a “Think Tank” for mainstreaming Smart Food through advocacy and policy recommendations
- Fund-raising through strategic partnerships
- Nurturing innovative R&D for evidence generation
- Catalyze demand creation through publicity, promotion and targeted value-chain interventions

ICRISAT is soliciting partnerships globally to further strengthen generation of evidence on potential opportunities for public and private investments across the “Smart Food” value chains as well as to link Smart Food crops with different government programs for enhanced food and nutrition security in different states/ locations/regions of Asia and Africa.

Emphasis will also be placed on partnerships to strengthen local chain interventions through nurturing and promoting entrepreneurship/start-ups/Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) and processing infrastructure while ensuring food safety and quality, promoting women and youth-led entrepreneurship, under the “Smart Food” initiative, to develop and commercialize technologies, creating a demand pull for “Smart Food” in Asia and Africa.



Smart Food for Africa’s partnership will leverage Africa’s agriculture and food innovation systems to galvanize partners and stakeholders around the Smart Food approach. This will be to demonstrate the tangible contributions Smart Food make towards attaining the development goals of the African Union Agenda 2063 and United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



Smart Food for Asia will strengthen Asia’s commitment to increased food and nutrition security against the backdrop of climate change, through resilient and nutritious millet and legume crops. While millets are popular in most parts of Asia, there are many opportunities to encourage greater consumption, particularly among youth, as well as to strengthen value chains while creating new job opportunities.

