

Address of Director General, CIRDAP H. E Dr. P. Chandra Shekara during Celebration of 46th Foundation Day of CIRDAP and World Rural Development Day-2025 held at CIRDAP, Dhaka

- ❖ Good afternoon and wish you all happy World Rural Development Day.
- ❖ Thank you all for joining the celebration of 46 th Foundation Day of CIRDAP
- ❖ Honorable Chief Guest Md. Ismail Hossain, Secretary, Rural Development and Cooperatives division, Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives, Government of Bangladesh,
- ❖ Honorable Guest Excellency Indra Mani Pandey, Secretary General, BIMSTEC
- ❖ Excellencies representing CIRDAP member countries, from the Embassies of India, Indonesia, Iran, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam, Excellencies from FAO, Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD), and SARC Agricultural Centre, Foreign Ministry of Bangladesh, valued partners, colleagues, journalists and friends of CIRDAP,
- ❖ With profound gratitude and boundless enthusiasm, I welcome you to this celebration of the 46th Foundation Day of the Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP) and World Rural Development Day (WRDD) on this momentous day.
- ❖ Your presence fills our hearts with pride and inspiration. Your unwavering cooperation and participation in this gathering are a powerful testament to our shared vision of transforming rural communities across Asia and the Pacific into vibrant hubs of opportunity, resilience, and prosperity.
- ❖ Together, we stand united in our commitment to this noble cause, and we are deeply honored by your presence today.

- ❖ As we celebrate WRDD under the inspiring theme **“Promoting Integrated, Inclusive, Sustainable, and Enterprising Rural Development,”** we are uplifted by the vibrant participation of our member countries. Celebrations in Fiji, Bangladesh, Iran, Pakistan, Myanmar, and India, with more reports streaming in from other member countries, reflect the global resonance of this day and our collective resolve to forge a future where rural communities thrive as pillars of sustainable progress.
- ❖ Since its founding on July 6, 1979, CIRDAP has been a beacon of hope, driving transformative change through collaboration, innovation, and an unwavering commitment to rural empowerment.
- ❖ Over the past 46 years, we have implemented over 212 Integrated Rural Development pilot projects and research studies, sharing best practices with our 15 member countries to uplift rural communities. The present research projects on Gender responsive budgeting in Nepal, Silk value chain in IR Iran, Transgender Action lab in India and Women and Youth in Rural Development in Sri Lanka are expected to give deeper insights, learnings to the critical areas of Rural Development
- ❖ Our 255 international training programs have empowered over 8,000 executives from CIRDAP member countries with cutting-edge knowledge and skills, fostering resilience and innovation across the region. These programs, conducted in various member countries, have addressed critical areas of rural development. For instance, in Malaysia, we held a transformative training program on rural tourism, unlocking the potential of rural landscapes to drive economic growth. In Thailand, our training on agricultural cooperatives empowered farmers to build sustainable, community-driven enterprises. In Pakistan, we focused on disaster management, equipping leaders to protect vulnerable rural communities from natural calamities. And in India, our program on micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) fostered entrepreneurial ecosystems that uplift rural livelihoods. These targeted initiatives exemplify CIRDAP’s commitment to addressing the unique needs of our member countries while fostering regional collaboration.
- ❖ Our knowledge-sharing platforms amplify our impact far and wide. The Asia Pacific Journal of Rural Development, CIRDAP’s rural development reports, and publications

reach 1.18 lakh stakeholders across our member countries, sparking dialogue and innovation.

- ❖ Our monthly e-bulletin, Voice of CIRDAP, connects with over a lakh stakeholders every month, delivering updates on groundbreaking innovations from member countries and CIRDAP's impactful activities.
- ❖ Our daily social media engagement and monthly international webinars, led by global rural development experts, inspire thousands of professionals and are accessible via CIRDAP's YouTube channel.
- ❖ The CIRDAP Knowledge Circuit, a pioneering platform, fosters regional collaboration by showcasing exemplary policies, programs, and innovations. Its inaugural session at the National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR) in India set a powerful precedent, while an upcoming session in Thailand will focus on Agri-startups and vibrant agricultural cooperatives, igniting entrepreneurial spirit and community-driven progress across our member countries. Followed by similar programs in Myanmar and Philippines.
- ❖ A milestone that fills us with immense pride is the United Nations General Assembly's recognition of July 6, CIRDAP's Foundation Day, as World Rural Development Day, celebrated globally starting this year.
- ❖ This historic achievement was made possible by the visionary proposal moved by Bangladesh, wholeheartedly supported by all CIRDAP member countries. On behalf of CIRDAP, I respectfully acknowledge Bangladesh's leadership and the unwavering support of our member countries, whose unity has elevated this day into a global platform for rural progress. This recognition is not merely an honor but a clarion call—a mandate to lead with purpose, innovation, and an unrelenting commitment to transforming rural landscapes into engines of inclusive and sustainable growth.

- ❖ Today, as we celebrate WRDD, we renew our pledge to empower rural communities with opportunity, dignity, and resilience. In a few moments, our Honorable Chief Guest, will launch the WRDD Poster, release a special edition of Agriculture World by Krishi Jagran, and unveil the book on Rural Tourism in Asia and Pacific. The special edition of Agriculture World, dedicated to CIRDAP's mission, is a remarkable contribution by Krishi Jagran, and we deeply appreciate their tireless efforts and support in bringing this publication to life, amplifying our vision for rural development to a global audience.
- ❖ CIRDAP is profoundly grateful to our Governing Council, Executive Committee, and Technical Committee, as well as our member countries, link institutions and CIRDAP Experts, for their steadfast support in establishing a robust framework for the effective implementation of our activities and responsibilities.
- ❖ We humbly seek your continued collaboration to ensure the delivery of our mission for the welfare of rural communities across Asia and the Pacific. We also acknowledge the invaluable contributions of CIRDAP experts, whose expertise and dedication drive our initiatives, shaping a brighter, more equitable future for rural populations.
- ❖ The valuable support of all of you, motivated us to think about CIRDAP Digital Rural Development Library for Asia and Pacific, Ambitious expansion of CIRDAP horizon through addition of new member countries, Strengthening CIRDAP Knowledge Circuit, faculty exchange, Internship and Scholarships for which CIRDAP will be seeking your support in future.
- ❖ As we stand at this pivotal moment, let us unite in our resolve to build a world where rural communities flourish as vibrant centers of innovation, opportunity, and hope. Together, we can forge a legacy of sustainable progress that resonates across generations, ensuring that every rural voice is heard, every rural dream is nurtured, and every rural community thrives. Thank you for being part of this transformative journey, and I wish you all an inspiring and meaningful celebration.