

VOICE OF CIRDAP

Empowering The Rural Communities

ISSUE 4, DECEMBER 2024



Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP)
An Intergovernmental and Autonomous Organisation Working For
Strengthening Integrated Rural Development Systems in
15 Asian and The Pacific Countries

 WWW.cirdap.org

CIRDAP-Voice of Rural Communities

The Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP) is an Intergovernmental, Regional, and Autonomous organisation. It was established on 6 July 1979 at the initiative of the countries of the Asia-Pacific region and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations with support from several other UN bodies and donors. The Centre came into being to meet the felt needs of the developing countries at that time as an institution for promoting Integrated Rural Development in the region.

From the original six members, CIRDAP has now grown up as a Centre of 15 member countries. The member-countries are Afghanistan, Bangladesh (Host Country), Fiji, India, Indonesia, IR Iran, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

The main objectives of CIRDAP are to:

- ❖ Assist National Action;
- ❖ Promote Regional Cooperation; and
- ❖ Act as a servicing institution for its member countries for promotion: Integrated Rural Development (IRD) through Research, Action Research, Pilot Project, Training, and Information Dissemination. Amelioration of Rural Poverty in the Asia-Pacific region has been the prime concern of CIRDAP.

The programme priorities of CIRDAP are set under four Areas of Concern:

- ❖ Agrarian Development;
- ❖ Institutional/ Infrastructural;
- ❖ Resource development including human resources; and
- ❖ Employment.

Within these Areas of Concern, the thematic areas identified are: Poverty alleviation through participatory approaches with emphasis on social sector development (e.g. Health, Education and Nutrition); Employment generation through Microcredit support, Infrastructure Development and Local resource mobilisation; Gender issues; Governance issues; and Environmental concerns for Sustainable Rural Development.

Operating through designated Contact Ministries and Link Institutions in member countries, CIRDAP promotes Technical Cooperation among nations of the region. It plays a supplementary and reinforcing role in supporting and furthering the effectiveness of Integrated Rural Development Programmes in the Asia-Pacific region.

Voice of CIRDAP - Monthly e-Bulletin of CIRDAP

Voice of CIRDAP (VoC) is a monthly newsletter published by CIRDAP. The purpose of the VoC is to highlight various facets of IRD in the Asia-Pacific region and activities of CIRDAP with stakeholders.

The designations employed and the presentation of materials in VoC do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of CIRDAP concerning the legal status of any country, city or area, or of its authorities or boundaries. News items, viewpoints on IRD and related issues are welcome. All correspondence should be addressed to the Editor.

RURAL HEARTBEAT – 4: Be the CHANGE



Season's Greetings 2025

As we step into 2025, CIRDAP wants to extend heartfelt wishes for a year filled with success, good health, and happiness. Let us continue to work together, support one another, and aim for even greater success in Rural Development.



Dr. P. Chandra Shekara
Director General of CIRDAP

I am really excited to welcome New Year 2025 along with you all partners as it is going to be first year of celebration of WORLD RURAL DEVELOPMENT DAY (WRDD) declared by United Nations to be celebrated on 6th July, 2025. It is foundation day of CIRDAP declared in recognition of the contribution made by CIRDAP in Rural Development in Asia and Pacific region. CIRDAP sees this as a great opportunity to draw the attention of the world towards Rural Development in general and SDGs around Rural Development in particular. CIRDAP would make all efforts to transform WRDD celebration more meaningful and also Impactful with the active participation of Member countries, Embassies, NGOs, Partner Institutions and specifically CIRDAP Experts.

It is sincerely requested to chalk out any suitable programme namely Awareness Campaigns, Trainings, Seminars, quizzes, rural games, meetings, Social media campaigns, competitions etc. at your workplace and share with CIRDAP to magnify the impact through dissemination.

Empowerment of Rural Communities comes through Awareness and Education. I hope you will join this effort through your impactful activities which would be showcased in www.worldruraldevelopmentday.org.

CIRDAP has the ambitious goals to expand members' base, implement impactful activities, Useful publications, webinars and enriching the contribution through strategic partnerships. More Knowledge Exchange platforms and learning opportunities would be created in the days to come. Hope for your positive and active support through which together we can create synergetic impact on Rural Communities.

My heartfelt New Year wishes from CIRDAP family to you all and wish a grand success in all your professional and personal life.



As Mahatma Gandhi said “BE THE CHANGE YOU WISH TO SEE IN THE WORLD”

LET US BE THE CHANGE

With Warm Wishes

Dr. P. Chandra Shekara

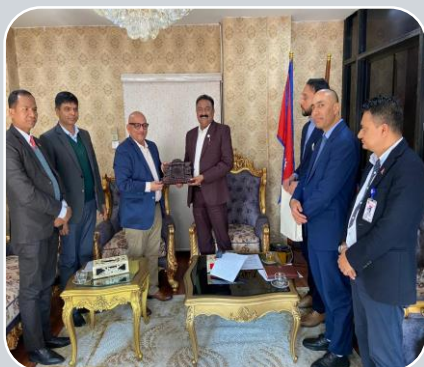
Director General, CIRDAP

DG, CIRDAP attended International Conference on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI), Chitwan, Nepal during 11-13, December, 2024

International Conference on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) was organized at Chitwan, Nepal during 11-13, December, 2024 by USAID and Tuskegee University, USA. More than 150 participants from USA, India, Bangladesh and Nepal attended the conference. DG, CIRDAP HE Dr.P.Chandra Shekara attended the conference as panelist in the session chaired by Dr.Kareem Maredia, Director of, International programs, Michigan State University. The panel discussed on Tools of Trade in Diversity, Equality and Social Inclusion. The theme has greater relevance in the days to come in developing world. Panel also identified the tools at various levels for operationalization.



DG CIRDAP Meeting with the Honorable Minister of Federal Affairs and General Administration, Nepal



DG,CIRDAP HE Dr.P.Chandra Shekara had Courtesy Meeting with Honorable Minister of Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration MoFAGA, Nepal Sri.Raj kumar Gupta at Singh Durbar, Kathmandu. DG appraised Honourable minister on the initiatives of CIRDAP and sought the participation and support of Nepal.



DG, CIRDAP HE Dr.P.Chandra Shekara had Courtesy Meeting with Honorable Secretary of Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration MoFAGA, Nepal Sri. Bharath Mani Suvedi at Singh Durbar, Kathmandu. DG appraised Honourable Secretary on the initiatives of CIRDAP and sought the participation and support of Nepal.



DG,CIRDAP HE Dr.P.Chandra Shekara had Courtesy Meeting with Mr. Kanun Lal Chaudhary, Executive Director of the Local Development Training Academy, Venue: Local Development Training Academy (LDTA), Jawalakhel, Lalitpur, Kathmandu, Nepal. Heads discussed about areas of mutual interest. DG also interacted with participants of training and faculty.



The Rural Development Policy 2030(RDP 2030) has envisaged a "Prosperous, Inclusive, Sustainable and Holistic Rural Living" as the main agenda of rural development approach in Malaysia by 2030. The "Prosperous Rural Living" vision reflects the Government's aspiration to ensure rural communities have access to infrastructure and social amenities comparable to the urban communities. The 21st Century Village Programme is a strategic initiative to transform the rural area into successful economic hubs as outlined under Thrust 1, RDP 2030: To achieve a competitive and sustainable economy. Introduced in 2013, the main objectives of the programme are to enhance the capability of rural communities in planning and implementing business ventures in their village as well as to develop viable economic activities which leads to job opportunities and wealth creation by utilizing community cooperatives as an essential vehicle/mover.

The 21st Century Village Programme is also a comprehensive and integrated approach to rural development as it comprises of development in all aspects of economic, infrastructure and human capital. Through the programme, the rural economic sector is further strengthened in close collaboration with ministries, regional development authorities and various government agencies at the Federal and State level together with rural villages across the country. It empowers rural and community leaders and villagers to actively participate in the planning and implementation of economic projects in their respective regions. Villages are rigorously assessed upon nomination by the State Agencies/State Governments based on the following criteria:

- Award-winning villages with strong leadership and active youth participation in economic and social activities of the community.
- Robust, viable and innovative economic business proposal in livestock/agriculture/retail/tourism/manufacturing sector.
- Basic infrastructure and facilities (roads, electricity, water supply, and social amenities).

Upon successful selection, villages are awarded grants to implement their business ventures and is expected to achieve the following performance target:

- 70% of the cooperatives is able to generate income after a year of implementation; and At least five (5) new jobs are created in each village after a year of implementation.

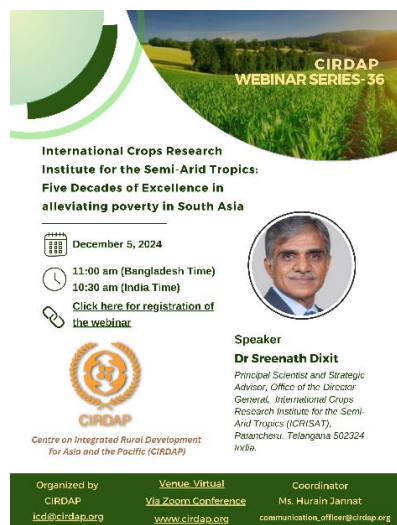
The 21st Century Village Programme is one of the model rural development programmes in Malaysia that embraces the principle of community-driven development. By using cooperative as a platform, the programme ensures high participation from the members of the communities from the planning, implementation up to monitoring and evaluation stages. Since its inception, a total of 137 villages have been selected to participate in the programme. There are many success stories of the cooperatives which has created spill over effect to the villagers, not only through creation of jobs but also through an increase in well-being among rural communities. Under the 12th Malaysian Plan, the programme will resume until 2025 and is expected to benefit up to 200 villages and ultimately achieve the RDP 2030 mission of "Leading the Rural Development."

Reference: *Rural Development Policy 2030 (2018), Ministry of Rural Development, Malaysia.*

CIRDAP KNOWLEDGE SERIES -36

CIRDAP Knowledge Series Webinar on ICRISAT's Five Decades of Excellence in Alleviating Poverty in South Asia

On December 5, 2024, CIRDAP organized a webinar titled "*International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics: Five Decades of Excellence in Alleviating Poverty in South Asia*". The keynote speaker for the event was Dr. Sreenath Dixit, Principal Scientist and Strategic Advisor at the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), based in Patancheru, Telangana, India.



The webinar marked the Institute's 50 years of pioneering agricultural research, focusing on improving dry land farming and agri-food systems in the semi-arid tropics. Dr. Dixit highlighted the institute's enduring focus on ensuring food security, improving nutrition, and promoting environmental sustainability in dry land regions. A key theme of Dr. Dixit's address was ICRISAT's innovative integration of ancient water management practices into modern technologies. He spoke about reviving traditional rainwater harvesting systems, such as *Haveli cultivation*, and adapting them to meet contemporary challenges.

ICRISAT, a globally renowned scientific organization, has been at the forefront of developing resilient, climate-smart, and nutritious legume and cereal crops through value web and value chain approaches. The institute envisions creating a prosperous, food-secure, and resilient semi-arid tropics, with its mission centered on reducing poverty, hunger, malnutrition, and environmental degradation.

The CIRDAP Experts' Meeting



On December 18, the CIRDAP Experts' Meeting was held virtually at 11 a.m. (Bangladesh time), with the participation of 26 experts from various disciplines across the CIRDAP Member Countries. Dr. P. Chandra Shekara, the Director General of CIRDAP, warmly welcomed all the esteemed experts and shared a brief overview of the organization's recent initiatives. He also emphasized the

importance of greater involvement from the experts to further CIRDAP's mission. Following the DG's remarks, the experts contributed valuable insights on several key areas, including enhancing collaboration in projects, increasing CIRDAP's visibility, and expanding its membership to strengthen its activities. Additionally, the experts provided strategic recommendations for the celebration of World Rural Development Day (July 6) in 2025.

Inauguration of CIRDAP Funded project titled "Capacity Development of Elected Representatives and Officials to Implement Gender Responsive Budget (GRB) at Selected Local Governments in Nepal" Initiated by The Local Development Training Academy (LDTA), the Link Institute of CIRDAP in Nepal during 19-20 December, 2024.





CIRDAP and **Krishi Jagran, a leading Indian agricultural media group**, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on December 1, 2024, to collaborate on promoting rural development, sustainable agriculture, and farmer empowerment across CIRDAP member countries. The MoU was signed by **H.E. Dr. P. Chandra Shekara**, Director General of CIRDAP, and **Mr. Dominic**, Chairman of KrishiJagran Group, in the presence of farmers and dignitaries, marking a significant milestone in fostering sustainable agricultural practices and rural progress across the region.

The Key highlights of the MoU include: **Media Partnership**: KrishiJagran will act as a key media partner to amplify awareness of CIRDAP's initiatives and projects, ensuring greater outreach and engagement with rural communities and stakeholders; **Expansion of the "Millionaire Farmers of India (MFOI) Awards"**: The prestigious awards, which recognize innovation and sustainability in agriculture, will now be extended to farmers from CIRDAP member countries, showcasing exemplary achievements in agriculture on an international platform; and the **Collaboration of the Celebration of the World Rural Development Day**: KrishiJagran will serve as the official media partner for World Rural Development Day, an initiative led by CIRDAP and recognized by the United Nations, furthering efforts to promote rural development globally.



On December 8, 2024, CIRDAP and **Nepal Farmers Advisory Council (NFAC) Pvt. Ltd.** have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen collaboration in advancing agribusiness and rural development initiatives in Nepal. The agreement was formalized by **HE Dr. P. Chandra Shekara**, Director General of CIRDAP, and **Dr. Yogendra Kumar Karki**, Chairman of NFAC, during a ceremony held in Kathmandu.

This strategic partnership aims to bolster **technical support, capacity building**, and the implementation of **climate-smart agricultural practices** in Nepal. CIRDAP, as an intergovernmental organization, will facilitate international knowledge exchange and provide exposure to Nepalese agricultural stakeholders, focusing on climate-smart agriculture (CSA) and e-agriculture technologies. In parallel, NFAC will work closely with all levels of government in Nepal to ensure the effective implementation of projects and initiatives stemming from this collaboration.

DG CIRDAP meeting with the Dignitaries of CIRDAP Member Countries



With H.E. Md Jashim Uddin the Foreign Secretary of Bangladesh



With H.E. Mrs. Makawadee Sumitmor, Ambassador of Thailand to Bangladesh



With H.E. Rinchen Kuentsylin Ambassador of Bhutan to Bangladesh

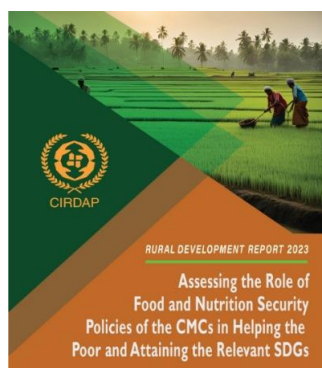


With Dr. Narendra Kumar, IAS DG of NIRDPR-National Institute of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, India

CIRDAP FLAGSHIP PUBLICATION

The CIRDAP Rural Development Report (RDR) 2023 is published now. It is now available to read in the Link below:

<https://shorturl.at/iwnS9>



RURAL DEVELOPMENT REPORT 2023 – Assessing the Role of Food and Nutrition Security Policies of the CMCs in Helping the Poor and Attaining the Relevant SDGs

CIRDAP-AHKNCRD International Training Programme on “Disaster Management and Climate Change Adaptation” will be organized in Pakistan during January 12th – 19th, 2025 in collaboration with Akhter Hammed Khan National Centre for Rural Development, Islamabad, Pakistan.

Thematic Areas that will be covered in the training : Basic Terms and Concepts of the Disaster Management, Disaster Management Cycle, Evaluation of DRR, Community Based Disaster Risk Management, Development and Dissemination of Effective Early Warning, Response Mechanism and Recovery Process after Disaster

ATTENTION OF THE CIRDAP EXPERTS

CIRDAP would like to seek the support of the CIRDAP Experts for their greater involvement in enriching the lives of rural communities on CIRDAP platform.

Experts are invited to contribute in the following ways:

1. Provide updated information as indicated below. ***This reply will be treated as Experts renewed interest in CIRDAP Activities.***

- i. Name, Designation, Office, Contact details
- ii. Photo
- iii. Country
- iv. No of years of Experience
- v. Areas of Expertise in Integrated Rural Development (Mention only FIVE important areas)
- vi. Complete CV

2. CIRDAP knowledge series (the Webinar series) involves the Experts Covering Member Countries as audiences. It is a great opportunity to share your Expertise with member countries. Hence, please indicate

- * A Topic for Webinar – Any topic of your Expertise in Rural Development and related subject.
- * Convenient month and date (please provide during 2025 and preferably on any Tuesday to Thursday of a week)

3. A monthly e-bulletin “Voice of CIRDAP” has been started by CIRDAP which is reaching 1.28 lakh stakeholders covering member countries every month. Experts are requested to give at least one Innovation on Rural Development with good photos in not more than 2-3 pages.

4. Please provide 2-3 minutes **video on any innovation, experience in Rural Development** which would be added to newly created CIRDAP YouTube Channel.

5. CIRDAP will be very happy to process/forward any of your national/International projects on Rural Development to funding agencies through **Project Facilitation Centre** of CIRDAP. If approved, the project will be led by the expert who prepare the project.

6. CIRDAP is planning to bring out **three International Publications** on **“Innovation in Rural Development”, “Disaster Management and Climate Change Adaptation in Asia and Pacific”, and “Rural Tourism”**. Experts are requested to give an article of around 10 pages. The authorship will be appropriately acknowledged.

You are requested to send all the above information to Ms. Hurain Jannat, Communication Officer, CIRDAP Email: communication_officer@cirdap.org with copy to chandradgcirdap@cirdap.org.



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CIRDAP Social Media Pages: Follow us for more update



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The Headquarter of CIRDAP**



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