

# **NIRDPR and ICRISAT Sign MoU to Promote Dryland Crops and Climate-smart Farming in ‘Rurban’ Clusters**

Media Release

**Partnership between NIRDPR and ICRISAT is expected to have a significant impact on rural development, poverty alleviation, and food security at the village level. The two institutions are committed to leveraging each other's strengths to achieve their common goals and create a better future for ‘rurban’ communities in Asia and Africa.**

The National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR) and the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen evidence-based research and capacity building on critical development issues.

The MoU, signed on March 13, 2023, aims to promote collaboration between the two premier institutions in areas such as climate change adaptation, rural entrepreneurship development, value chain development, sharing international best practices, scaling-up of identified agricultural and rural technologies, and livelihood development.

Under the agreement, the two institutions will focus on different collaborative activities by sharing each other's strengths, including developing ‘Rurban’ clusters for ICRISAT mandate crops through value chain development, encouraging rural incubation and entrepreneurship development by integrating with National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) activities. Enhancing the value of new generation watersheds through climate proofing of Gram Panchayats in India and promoting international best practices for poverty alleviation through agriculture and rural development programs is also included.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr G Narendra Kumar IAS, Director General, NIRDPR, emphasized that the collaboration between the two institutions is very important in the background of international opportunities and enabling exports of agri-products from dryland areas.

**“The technical competence of ICRISAT in research and development on high-yielding varieties and related value-added products, and the strength of NIRDPR in creating business opportunities and marketing support through self-help groups (SHGs) under NRLM across the country, will act in synergy to transform rural livelihoods,” said Dr Narendra Kumar.**

Dr Jacqueline Hughes, Director General, ICRISAT, expressed her desire for the two institutions to work together for Africa, as they have several commonalities in terms of their vision, mission, and focus areas.

**“Let us work together for Africa and share the facilities that the two of us have in the region and not duplicate them. The MoU is a good starting point. Specific work plans, projects, and related funding need to be discussed down the line,” said Dr Hughes.**

The MoU signing ceremony was attended by prominent members from both institutions. NIRDPR staff included Prof. RS Gavali, Dr M Srikanth, Dr K Krishna Reddy, and Dr Kathiresan. ICRISAT staff included Dr Sean Mayes, Dr Victor Afari-Sefa, Dr M L Jat and Dr Hari Kishan Sudini.





