



NATIONAL CONSULTATION



BUILDING CLIMATE RESILIENT, SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE SEED SYSTEMS FOR FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY

Date: 27-28 February 2025 **Location:** Tribal Agrobiodiversity Centre, Jeypore, Koraput, Odisha

Organised by:



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

Food and Agriculture Organization
(FAO) of the United Nations



M.S. Swaminathan Research
Foundation (MSSRF)



Government of Odisha
(GoO)

BACKGROUND

Seed security is fundamental to both global food security and local nutritional security. A well-functioning and biodiverse seed system enables farmers to access seeds of a wide variety of crops at the right time and at an affordable cost, ensuring food and nutrition security. Seed systems are critical for increasing food production, enhancing resilience to climate change, and addressing malnutrition. In the era of climate change, strengthening seed systems becomes even more crucial, as resilient and sustainable seed systems help farmers adapt to unpredictable weather patterns while ensuring food diversity and nutritional health.

Seed systems can broadly be classified into formal and informal systems. The formal seed system focuses on the production and distribution of improved seed varieties, often supported by research institutions and regulatory frameworks. In contrast, informal seed systems, which are prevalent in rural/farmed, forested and tribal areas, are community-driven, focusing on the local exchange and *in-situ* conservation of local



crop varieties. These informal systems are vital for preserving crop genetic diversity, maintaining agro-ecological resilience, and promoting food security, especially in regions with rich biodiversity.

In the context of Odisha's Koraput District, which is recognised by FAO as a 'Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System' (GIAHS), the role of seed systems in conserving both agro-biodiversity and biocultural traditions is particularly critical. Known for its rich crop and ethnic diversity, Koraput presents unique challenges and opportunities for strengthening seed systems, particularly in tribal areas.

In the recent past, there have been efforts taken at State and National level to mainstream community-managed crop genetic resources and related knowledge. Although India has legal provisions guaranteeing farmers' rights and the sharing of benefits for managing of such invaluable resources, operationalisation of such provisions in the context of farmers rights and access and benefit-sharing protocols are evolving.

The Consultation will serve as a platform for exchanging ideas, identifying challenges, and formulating strategies to strengthen seed systems to operationalising existing protocols, with a special focus on the unique agricultural landscapes and communities of Koraput. It will emphasise the importance of integrating both formal and informal systems, recognising the value of local knowledge, measures to link legal provisions to conservers and promoting agricultural biodiversity for sustainable food systems.



OBJECTIVES OF THE CONSULTATION

The National Consultation aims to bring together experts, policymakers, community leaders, and stakeholders to discuss and develop strategies for building resilient and sustainable seed systems that promote food and nutrition security in the face of climate change. The objectives are as follows:



01

To explore the changes and challenges of the current formal, semi-formal and informal seed systems in the context of socio-economic transformations and climate change, particularly in rural and tribal areas.

02

To examine the role of formal, semi-formal and informal seed systems in ensuring food, nutrition, and livelihood security, with a special focus on the KORAPUT- GIAHS

03

To assess scope and identify strategies for integrating informal seed systems and traditional agricultural knowledge with formal seed systems to enhance resilience and promote sustainable agricultural practices.

04

To discuss the scope in operationalizing the legal provisions of Farmer's Rights and Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) policies

05

To create actionable recommendations for policy interventions leading to sustainable and gender equitable seed system development at the local, national and regional levels.



PROGRAMME

National Consultation on Building Climate Resilient, Sustainable and Inclusive Seed Systems for Food and Nutrition Security

DAY 1 | THURSDAY , 27TH FEBRUARY

10:30 - 11:30 AM Inaugural Programme and Setting the Context of the Consultation

Dr. G.N. Hariharan

Executive Director (R&D), MSSRF

Dr. Soumya Swaminathan

Chairperson, M.S.Swaminathan Research Foundation

Dr. Konda Reddy Chavva

Assistant Food and Agriculture Organization Representative (Programme), FAO, India

Dr. Kuldeep Singh

Head, Gene Bank, ICRISAT, Hyderabad

Dr. C. Tara Satyavathi

Director, IIMR, Hyderabad

Rapporteurs:
Girigan
Oliver King

Mr. Prashant Parida

Director, TABC, Odisha

This consultation is organised as part of the MSS@100 Year celebrations, honouring the life and enduring legacy of Professor M.S. Swaminathan. It also marks the remarkable milestone of 30 years of successful work by the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) in Odisha.

EXHIBITION:

Inauguration of Koraput Seed Festival

11:30 - 12:00 PM

Dr. Konda Reddy Chavva, Assistant Food and Agriculture Organization Representative (Programme), FAO, India along with Dignitaries, Custodian Farmers, NGOs, CBOs & State government officials

Co-ordinators: Mr. Niranjana, Dr. Kartik Charan Lenka, Ms. Surajita Kumari Turuk

SESSION 1

12:00 - 01:30 PM

Community Managed Seed Systems - Status, Challenges and Opportunities

Understanding the current status and critical challenges and emerging opportunities for strengthening Community-managed seed systems through integrated science, technology and civil society partnership, engagement and governance

Rapporteurs:
Pratheepa
Akshay Panda
Raju

Chair & Lead speaker: Dr. C. Tara Satyavathi, Director, IIMR, Hyderabad

Speakers:

Dr. E.D. Israel Oliver King, Director, Biodiversity, MSSRF

Dr. Vetriventhan Mani, Senior Scientist (Genetic Resources), ICRISAT, Hyderabad

Dr. Bhaskar Chandra Patra, Principal Scientist, Head Crop Improvement, NRRI, Cuttack
Community Members - **Ms. Raimati Ghiuria, Mr. Padam Pradhani**

01:30 - 02:30 PM - Lunch



SESSION 2

02:30 - 04:00 PM

Seed System Transformation Functions and Stakeholders – National and International Perspectives

Understanding the roles of various actors involved in seed production, exchange, participatory plant breeding and governance, including farmers, community organisations, researchers, and policymakers with special attention to key actors involved in the informal community-managed seed systems

Chair & Lead speaker: Dr. Konda Reddy Chavva, AFAOR, New Delhi

Speakers:

Dr. K.S. Varaprasad, Advisor, APAARI, Thailand

Dr. Kuldeep Singh, Head, Gene Bank, ICRISAT, Hyderabad

Dr. Costanza Conti, Sustainable Transformation Researcher, Sweden

Community Members - **Ms. Rukmani Khilo, Mr. Laichan Sukia**

04:00 - 04:30 PM - Tea

Rapporteurs:
Prajeesh
Pratheepa

SESSION 3

04:30 - 06:00 PM

Scope and opportunities in Operationalising Farmers Rights and Access and Benefit sharing Policies

Discussing the potential areas of Farmers Rights in the Article 9 of the International Treaty as well as PPV&FR Act 2001 and ABS policies linking the context to the GIAHS region and farming communities

Chair & Lead speaker: Dr. G.N. Hariharan, Executive Director (R&D), MSSRF

Speakers:

Shri. Dipal Roy Choudhury, Joint Registrar, PPV&FR Authority

Ms. Shalini Bhutani, Senior Legal Researcher, Policy Analyst, FAO, New Delhi

Mr. Dinesh Balam, Associate Director, WASSAN, Hyderabad

Community Members - **Ms. Sunamani Paroja, Mr. Budura Pradhan**

Rapporteurs:
Prajeesh
Oliver King

DAY 2 | FRIDAY, 28TH FEBRUARY

SESSION 4

09:30 - 11:00 AM

Seed Systems linkages and synergy enhancing Food, Nutrition, Health and Climate Resilience Building

Exploring the relationship between seed systems and local dietary diversity, nutrition & health, and environment; Discussing how seed systems can be designed to help farming communities adapt to changing climatic conditions while preserving local agricultural practices and traditions.

Chair & Lead speaker: Dr. Jai Rana, Country Representative, Bioversity International and CIAT, New Delhi

Speakers:

Dr. R. Rengalakshmi, Executive Director (Area Operations), MSSRF

Dr. R. Ananthan, Scientist-E, ICMR-National Institute of Nutrition (NIN)

Dr. A. Nirmalakumari, Professor and Breeder (Millets), TNAU, Tamil Nadu

Mr. Ekadashi Nandi, Chief Former Seed Certification Officer, Government of Odisha, Bhubaneswar

Community Members - **Ms. Tulsha Balia, Mr. Dama Jani**

Rapporteurs:
Bharathi
Asit Mansingh
Girigan



11:00 - 11:15 AM - Tea

SESSION 5

11:15 - 12:45 PM

Strengthening role of women and youth in advancing local seed systems in Koraput

Identifying specific interventions for women and youth to promote seed security in globally important agricultural heritage systems (GIAHS) regions like Koraput, which have unique agricultural practices and crop varieties, while also addressing the socio-economic needs of the rural and tribal communities.

Chair & Lead speaker: Dr. K.S. Varaprasad, Advisor, APAARI, Thailand

Speakers:

Dr. Lavanya Cherukupalli, National Expert-Participatory Plant Breeding, FAO India

Dr. Swati Nayak, Lead for Seed System and Product Management, IRRI, Bhubaneswar

Dr. Veenita Kumari, Deputy Director, Gender Studies, MANAGE, Hyderabad

Mr. Prashant Parida, Director, TABC, Odisha

Community Members - **Ms. Kuma Khara, Mr. Mangala Mali**

Rapporteurs:
Meher
Kartik Lenka
Surajita Kumari

SESSION 6

12:45 - 01:30 PM

Plenary Session: Science, Policy and Governance

Reviewing the science, policies, regulations, and frameworks that support or hinder the development of resilient seed systems, especially in tribal and biodiversity-rich regions; Identifying challenges and opportunities to enhance community involvement in the seed systems policy framework. Reviewing the strategies, programmes, or schemes at various levels that support community-managed seed systems.

Moderator: Dr. Soumya Swaminathan,

Chairperson, M.S.Swaminathan Research Foundation

Panelists:

Dr. Jai Rana, Country Representative, Bioversity International and CIAT, New Delhi

Ms. Shalini Bhutani, Senior Legal Researcher, Policy Analyst, FAO, New Delhi

Dr. K.S. Varaprasad, Advisor, APAARI, Thailand

Dr. Kuldeep Singh, Head, Gene Bank, ICRISAT, Hyderabad

Mr. V. Keerthi Vasan, IAS, District Collector, Koraput

Dr. Arabinda Kumar Padhee, IAS, Principal Secretary, DA&FE, Govt. of Odisha

Rapporteurs:
Oliver King
Prashant Parida
Girigan



EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The National Consultation is expected to produce:



A comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities in building resilient seed systems, particularly in the context of tribal areas and GIAHS region (Koraput).



Practical recommendations for improving both formal and informal seed systems to ensure food and nutrition security in the era of climate change.



Enhanced collaboration among stakeholders to develop community-driven and climate-resilient seed systems.



Policy proposals for government and non-governmental organisations to support the sustainable development of seed systems at the national and regional levels.



PARTICIPANTS

The Consultation will bring together a diverse group of stakeholders, including:

- Policymakers from government agencies, including the Department of Agriculture & Farmers' Empowerment, Government of Odisha.
- Representatives from FAO, Bioversity International and CIAT, ICRISAT, IRRI, IIMR focused on food security and agricultural sustainability.
- Experts in seed systems linking conservation, nutrition and climate change adaptation
- NGOs, CBOs and community leaders and farmers, particularly from tribal areas.
- Researchers and practitioners working on agro-biodiversity conservation and food security.





M S Swaminathan
Research Foundation
SCIENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



M S Swaminathan Research Foundation
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