

# INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

India is a founder member of the FAO and has been taking part in all its activities. During 2006-07, the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation participated in international conferences/meetings/seminars/workshops, etc., dealing with various aspects of agricultural development organised by the FAO and other international agencies including the Asian Productivity Council etc. An Indian delegation led by the secretary, Department of Agriculture and Cooperation also attended the 131<sup>st</sup> Session of the FAO Council held at Rome, Italy, from 20-25 November 2006.

**20.2 World Food Day:** The World Food Day is celebrated throughout the world on 16 October to mark the establishment of the FAO. The theme selected for this year was 'Invest in Agriculture for Food Security'. The occasion was marked by a telecast and broadcast of the Union Agriculture Minister's message, as well as its publication in leading national dailies. This was followed by celebrations at the Rajendra Agricultural University, Pusa, Samastipur (Bihar), and participation of the State Government/UT administrations, as well as financial institutions like NABARD, FICCI and CII, in wide dissemination of the message through various mediums.

**20.3 Technical Cooperation Programme:** India receives assistance from the FAO from time to time in the form of training, consultancy services, equipment and material in the field of agriculture and allied sectors under its technical cooperation programme. The details of the projects which are currently under implementation with FAO assistance are as under:

**20.4 Developing National Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System (FIVIMS) in India:** This project aims at developing and testing a mechanism that would enable the Government of India itself to produce updated, relevant, high-quality information derived from the regular monitoring and cross-sectoral analysis of a limited number of specific indicators relevant to food insecurity and vulnerability, in a user-friendly format at different administrative levels. The Department of Food and Public Distribution is the nodal department for implementation of this project.

**20.5 Development of a Technical Capacity Base for the Promotion of Organic Agriculture:** This project was signed on 15 December 2004, for a period of 18 months with FAO contribution of US \$ 2,16,000. The project aims at developing a comprehensive package of information and know-how to promote organic agriculture as a means of enhancing livelihood options for small and marginal farmers. The Department of Agriculture and Cooperation is the nodal agency for implementation of this project.

**20.6 Capacity Building in Support of Cleaner Fishing Harbours:** This project was signed on 24 May 2006, for a period of 18 months with FAO contribution of US \$

3,02,000. Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries is the nodal department for implementation of this project.

**20.7 Participation in International Seminars/Workshops/Conferences:** During 2006-07 (up to 31 October 2006), the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation participated in 51 international events organised by the FAO and other international organisations, dealing with various aspects of agricultural development.

**20.8 Office of Minister (Agriculture), Embassy of India, Rome:** The Government of India for the purpose of maintaining liaison and coordination with the FAO has nominated the Indian Ambassador in Rome as its permanent representative to the FAO. Keeping in view, the specialised nature and the increasing volume of interaction with the FAO and its various bodies, an agricultural wing headed by a senior officer of the rank of Joint Secretary to the Government of India with the designation of Minister (Agriculture) has been set up in the Indian Embassy, Rome. A provision of Rs 1.29 crore has been provided during 2006-07 for meeting the expenditure in respect of the Office of Minister (Agriculture), Embassy of India, Rome.

**20.9** The Union Minister (Agriculture) has been designated as India's Alternate Permanent Representative (APR) to the FAO and the World Food Programme (WFP). The minister represents Indian interests at the meetings of FAO/WFP and other agencies having their headquarters in Rome e.g. International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), dealing with issues relating to agriculture.

**20.10 Projects aided by the World Bank:** Presently, there are five agriculture sector-based projects which are being operated with the World Bank assistance as per details given at **Annexure - 20.1**. These projects mainly relate to watershed development, soil water conservation and overall agricultural development-related issues. These projects, taken together, involve a total International Development Agency (IDA) credit of Special Drawing Rights (XDR) 401.236 million. Cumulative drawls of the IDA credit assistance by all these five ongoing projects since their individual inception up to September 2006, aggregated to XDRs 185.388 million, constituting about 46.20 per cent of their total committed IDA credit assistance worth SDRs 401.236 million.

**20.11 Foreign Assignments/Training:** Two scientists have been deputed to make on-the-spot assessment of areas of cooperation in the field of agriculture between India and Serbia and Montenegro. There were 48 officers of this Department/attached office/subordinate office who were deputed for foreign assignments/training/deputation etc., to Israel, USA, France, UK, Netherlands, Ethiopia, Namibia and Germany, Egypt, Thailand, Japan, Brazil, Singapore and Bhutan. One officer has also been deputed to Lesotho under the Ministry of External Affairs' Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme for two years. In addition, two officers participated in the Bamboo Exhibition in Bhutan.

**20.12 Foreigners Imparted Training in India:** The Government of India has been providing technical assistance under the various programmes of the Ministry of External

Affairs (including Technical Cooperation Scheme [TCS] of Colombo Plan, ITEC Programme, special commonwealth African Assistance Programme (SCAAP), Aid to Sri Lanka Programme etc.) to the member-countries in the form of training facilities in India. The Department of Agriculture and Cooperation arranges training of foreign scholars/experts in the field of agriculture and allied subjects under the programmes as stated above and also those sponsored by the FAO, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Bank, British Council etc., on a self-financing basis. The training is imparted by various institutes/centres, which fall under the administrative control of this Department. The training is given in the areas of cooperation, seeds, fertiliser, plant protection, agricultural machinery and agricultural extension and agricultural extension management. There are 20 candidates under the ITEC Programme of Ministry of External Affairs that have so far been imparted fertiliser quality control training during 2006-07. Foreign nationals imparted training were from Afghanistan, Kenya, Namibia, Nepal, Oman, Poland, Togolese, Uzbekistan, Cuba, Eritrea, Iran, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Philippines and Syria.

**20.13 Joint Commissions:** The Department of Agriculture and Cooperation is the nodal Department for the Indo-Burkina Faso Joint Commission for Economic, Cultural, Political and Technical Cooperation.

**20.14 Agreement/MOU Signed:**

- An MOU on cooperation between the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Agriculture of the People's Republic of China in the field of agriculture was signed on 28 March 2006.
- A Work Plan for the years 2006-08 was signed on 10 May 2006, under the Agreement of 1993 between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the State of Israel for Cooperation in the field of agriculture.
- An MOU between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Sudan in the field of agriculture and allied sectors was signed on 2 June 2006.
- An MOU on trilateral cooperation in agriculture and allied fields between the Government of the Republic of India, the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Republic of South Africa under the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Dialogue Forum Initiative was signed on 13 September 2006.
- A Work Plan for the years 2007-08 was signed on 10 November 2006 between the Ministry of Agriculture on behalf of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry on behalf of the Republic of Namibia in the field of agricultural research and training.

- An MOU on cooperation in agriculture between the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Agriculture of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan was signed on 1 December 2006.

20.15 The Department of Agriculture & Cooperation is the nodal agency for all matters pertaining to United Nations WFP in so far as India is concerned. The WFP, set up in 1963, is the food aid arm of the United Nations system mandated to combat global hunger. Since its inception in 1963, WFP has provided more than \$US 1 billion for implementation of food and development projects in the areas of supplementary feeding, forestry activities, livestock and dairy development, irrigation and rural development. The WFP has also participated in 14 emergency response operations.

20.16 The WFP's India Country Programme (2003-07) aims to help reduce vulnerability and food insecurity and to promote models that provide long-term food security in food insecure districts. The WFP's primary activities are (i) support to integrated child development services (nutritional support of women and children); (ii) food for education (school feeding); and (iii) food for work.

20.17 Currently, this programme is under implementation in the states of Gujarat, Orissa, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand. Over the course of the Country Programme, WFP aims to provide more than 450, 000 MT of food to approximately 2.2 million beneficiaries annually, more than 90 per cent of whom are women and children. In addition, a host of supplementary activities including technical assistance to the National AIDS Control Organisation for HIV prevention/treatment through food support are being carried out.