



CONCEPT NOTE

The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2 focuses on ending hunger, achieving food security and improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture. The SDG 2 and related targets comprehensively deal with issues of food production, distribution and access as well as nutrition of people of all age groups, gender and social categories, supported by sustainable agriculture and are intrinsically linked to other SDGs.

As a part of its role of overseeing the implementation of SDGs in the country, NITI Aayog, has been conducting a series of National Consultations on SDGs involving Central Ministries, State Governments, experts, academia, CSOs, multilateral organisations and other stakeholders. The National Consultation on the SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) is going to be held at the India Habitat Centre (Juniper Hall), New Delhi on 13th April 2017. The objectives of the Consultation are to:

- Facilitate deliberation on key thematic areas and issues around the SDG 2, related targets and possible national indicators;
- Identify critical gaps and important ways forward to successfully achieve the targets under the SDG 2;
- Bring together and strengthen SDG-oriented partnership among various stakeholders.

Sessions and Thematic Areas

The Consultation will have three technical sessions to deliberate on the themes and issues relevant to the SDG 2 and related targets. Brief details on these sessions are given below.

Food and Nutrition Security

India has experienced remarkable economic growth in recent years and remains one of the fastest growing economies in the world. However, poverty and food insecurity are still areas of concern in spite of many strides. In 2016, India ranked 97 among 118 developing countries according to the Global Hunger Index (GHI). About 15% of under-5 children still suffer from 'wasting' and 39% from stunting. According to NHFS-4 data, though 58.4% of children remain anaemic in 2015-16,

there has been a substantial improvement from 2005-06 levels by 11 percentage points. Incidence of anaemia among pregnant women has gone down by about 8 percentage points between 2005-06 and 2015-16: from 57.9% in 2005-06 to 50.3% in 2015-16. About 53% of the non-pregnant women (15-49 years) suffered from anaemia in 2016 as compared to 55.2% in 2005-06. On the other side of the pendulum, incidence of obesity has almost doubled over the decade ending 2015-16: from 9.3% to 18.6% among men and from 12.6% to 20.7% among women. Thus, while the food security situation is progressively improving, access to balanced food is problematic for the vulnerable population.

India implements one of the largest food security measures in the world, the National Food Security Act (NFSA) 2013. The NFSA is being implemented across the country addressing the availability, accessibility and affordability dimensions of food security. The Scheme covers around 800 million people, about 67% of the country's population. In addition, the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) aims at addressing nutrition security of under-6 children, lactating mothers and pregnant women. The National Programme of Mid-Day Meal in Schools aims to provide nutritious meals to children in primary schools. Under the Antyodaya Anna Yojana, families with income of less than Rs. 250/- per capita per month are entitled for 35 kg. rice at subsidised rate. Improving the effectiveness of these programmes will be central to improving the food and nutrition security situation in the country.

Agricultural Production and Climate Change

India continues to be a key global agricultural producer, irrespective of the declining share of agriculture in the economy. It has the world's largest area under cultivation for wheat, rice, and cotton, and is the world's largest producer of milk, pulses, and spices. Agricultural productivity in the country's semi-arid tropical region is constrained by water scarcity and recurring drought. The whole country remains prone to environmental degradation and weather-related disaster risks. Climate change poses new challenges by bringing about higher temperatures, changes in precipitation, and higher atmospheric CO₂ concentrations, which may significantly impact rain-fed agriculture in 55% of croplands. Increased droughts and floods are likely to adversely impact production. Agriculture in the coastal regions may be affected because of vulnerability to inundation and salinization.

The National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture, together with other missions under the National Action Plan on Climate Change, strives to implement adaptation strategies to mitigate the impact of climate change and sustain agricultural productivity. The adaptation measures focus on 10 key dimensions, i.e. improved crop seeds; livestock and fish cultures; water use efficiency; pest management; improved farm practices; nutrient management; agricultural insurance and credit support; markets; access to information; and livelihood diversification.

Considerable progress is being made on several fronts through interesting initiatives. Soil Health Cards (6.2 crore SHCs issued so far) with crop-wise nutrient management recommendations enable farmers to make judicious use of inputs and improve productivity. Land under organic farming has registered more than 17-fold increase over the last decade or so. While also encouraged under several schemes, organic farming is specifically being promoted under the *Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana* (PKVY) in a cluster mode in an area of over 2 lakh ha since 2014. The Sub-Mission of Agroforestry is accelerating the '*Medh Par Ped*' programme to quickly increase intermittent plantations in farmlands and block plantations in cultivable wastes. Crop insurance has been revamped under the *Pradhan Mantri Fasal Beema Yojana* (PMFBY) and farmers are increasingly being covered under the scheme. Access to new information, knowledge and skills is being

revitalised improved through strengthening the Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) network, and implementation of the *Pandit Deendayal Unnat Krishi Shiksha Yojana* and other educational initiatives.

Sustainable Agriculture and Doubling Farmers' Income

Recurrent cases of farmer suicides highlight the agrarian distress in the country. Considering the agricultural income, 53% of farmers are below poverty line as compared to the national average of 28%. In 1983 a farmer's income was one-third of a non-farmer's income, which went down to being one-fourth in next 20 years and then slightly improved to around 29%. Thus, it is imperative to raise farmers' income by adopting different strategies. The National Round Table on Doubling Farmers' Income by 2022 has suggested a five-part strategy for the purpose:

1. Improving productivity through greater use of biotechnology, intensifying watershed management and access to micro-irrigation facilities and bridging crop yield gaps across States by implementing evidence-based specific action plans.
2. Reforming water and agri-input policies for rationalization of fertiliser and pesticide use, farm mechanisation tailored to small farm requirements and focused on efficient use of tools and equipment, and integrated and efficient water use by farmers.
3. Promoting Integrated farming system approach involving synergic blending of crops, horticulture, dairy, fisheries, poultry, etc. to provide regular income, *in situ* employment and climate change resilience.
4. Ensuring better market price realization by reforming the APMC Act to facilitate competitive pan-India trade, providing access to National Agricultural Marketing (NAM) platforms, and improving agri-infrastructure including storage facilities.
5. Implementing special policy measures for diversification of crops, integration of Central and State subsidies, Establishing Special Agriculture Zones (SAZ), ICT-based agricultural extension, etc.

Encouraging progress under several programmes/schemes augurs well for the success of the composite measures being taken for doubling farmers' income. Following NITI Aayog's advocacy of a model land leasing legislation, several States have gone ahead with revision of land leasing Acts. It would expedite tenancy reforms to provide sharecroppers and landless lessee farmers improved access to land and better scope for investment and capital accumulation. Diversification of crops has been actively promoted, while production in allied sectors like fisheries and poultry has gone up. During 2015-17, an area of about 13 lakh hectares has been brought under micro irrigation under *Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana* (PMKSY). Integrated agricultural marketing is proceeding apace under the NAM initiative and 250 mandis from 10 States have been integrated with the e-NAM Platform. The innovative provision of neem-coated urea has reduced production cost of farmers, improved crop productivity and arrested diversion of urea for unauthorised uses. Development/strengthening of indigenous breeds of cattle is being pursued through a number of initiatives, i.e. use of advanced breeding technology, introduction of genomic selection process for increasing milk production and productivity, and establishment of *e-Pashudhan* portal, a market for bovine germplasm (in the form of bovine semen, embryos, male & female calves; heifers and adult bovines). These are a few instances of the well-rounded strategy being implemented to ensure doubling of farmers' income in a period of 7-10 years.