



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ACHIEVING SDGs: GLOBAL COOPERATION FOR TRANSFORMING AGRICULTURE TOWARDS A FOOD-SECURE FUTURE.

The opening ceremony of the International Conference on Achieving SDGs: Global Cooperation for Transforming Agriculture Towards a Food-Secure Future, hosted by VAMNICOM, PUNE, was a significant gathering that brought together experts and stakeholders from around the world. Dr. Manoj Nardeosingh, the distinguished Secretary-General of the Afro-Asian Rural Development Organization (AARDO), graced the event as the guest of honor, adding to the prestige of the occasion. With participants hailing from 12 countries, the conference served as a platform for in-depth discussions on the pressing challenge of ensuring food security in the face of population growth and the impacts of climate change on agricultural systems.

Throughout the conference, there was a strong emphasis on the need for collaborative efforts at the international level to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) related to agriculture and food security. Delegates highlighted the importance of sharing knowledge and best practices across borders to enhance agricultural productivity and sustainability. The exchange of ideas and experiences among participants from diverse backgrounds enriched the discussions, leading to a deeper understanding of the complexities involved in achieving food security on a global scale.

The conference's theme, "**Global Cooperation for Transforming Agriculture Towards a Food-Secure Future**," encapsulated the overarching goal of the event—to foster collaboration and innovation in the agricultural sector to ensure a sustainable and secure food supply for future generations. This theme resonated throughout the conference, serving as a guiding principle for the discussions and shaping the outcomes of the event.



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In conclusion, the opening ceremony of the International Conference on Achieving SDGs was a pivotal moment that brought together experts, policymakers, and stakeholders to address one of the most pressing challenges of our time. The insights and recommendations generated during the conference are expected to inform future policies and initiatives aimed at transforming agriculture and ensuring food security on a global scale. The event served as a testament to the power of international

cooperation in addressing complex global issues and provided a platform for meaningful dialogue and collaboration.

The conference featured comprehensive discussions on a wide range of topics related to sustainable agriculture, food security, and international cooperation. These discussions were organized into thematic areas, each addressing crucial aspects of the overarching theme. Here is a detailed elaboration of the areas of discussion:

1. Sustainable Agriculture in Action: Case Studies from the Agricultural Sector:

- Participants presented case studies showcasing successful sustainable agriculture practices from different regions. These case studies highlighted innovative approaches to farming that prioritize environmental sustainability, social equity, and economic viability.

2. The Role of Food Systems Governance in Achieving SDG 2: Fostering Collaboration and Accountability:

- Discussions focused on the governance of food systems, emphasizing the need for collaborative efforts among stakeholders, including governments, international organizations, and civil society. Key points included the importance of accountability mechanisms to ensure progress towards SDG 2 (Zero Hunger).

3. Empowering Smallholder Farmers: Fostering Inclusive Agricultural Development:

- Participants deliberated on strategies to empower smallholder farmers, who play a crucial role in global food production. Topics included access to resources, market opportunities, and capacity building to enhance the resilience and productivity of smallholder farming systems.

4. Balancing Agricultural Productivity with Environmental Protection: Strategies for Sustainable Agriculture:

- This session focused on the delicate balance between increasing agricultural productivity to meet growing food demand and protecting the environment. Discussions revolved around sustainable farming practices, soil conservation, and biodiversity conservation in agricultural landscapes.

5. Climate-Smart Agriculture: Adapting to Climate Change and Mitigating Greenhouse Gas Emissions:

- Participants explored climate-smart agricultural practices that help farmers adapt to the impacts of climate change while reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Discussions highlighted the importance of resilient farming systems and technologies that can withstand climate variability.



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6. Technological Innovation in Agriculture: Driving Efficiency and Sustainability:

- The role of technology in agriculture was a key focus, with discussions centering on the latest innovations in farming, such as precision agriculture, digital farming tools, and biotechnology. Participants highlighted the potential of technology to improve efficiency and sustainability in agriculture.

7. Post-Harvest Food Loss Reduction: Strategies for Minimizing Food Waste across the World:

- This session addressed the issue of post-harvest food losses and waste, discussing strategies to minimize food waste at various stages of the supply chain. Topics included storage technologies, transportation logistics, and consumer behavior.



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8. Promoting Sustainable Agriculture in Africa: Overcoming Challenges and Seizing Opportunities:

- Given the significance of agriculture in Africa, this session focused on the unique challenges and opportunities for promoting sustainable agriculture on the continent. Discussions included topics such as water management, land tenure, and market access.

9. Indigenous Knowledge and Sustainable Agriculture: Integrating Traditional Practices for a Food-Secure Future:

- The role of indigenous knowledge in sustainable agriculture was highlighted, emphasizing the importance of integrating traditional practices with modern techniques. Participants discussed how indigenous knowledge can contribute to sustainable farming methods and biodiversity conservation.

10. Measuring Progress towards SDG 2: Developing Robust Indicators and Monitoring Frameworks:

- Participants discussed the development of robust indicators and monitoring frameworks to track progress towards SDG 2. Topics included data collection methods, indicator selection, and the role of monitoring in policy formulation and decision-making.

11. Global Collaboration for a Food-Secure Future: The Role of International Organizations:

- The session focused on the role of international organizations in fostering global collaboration for food security. Discussions included the coordination of efforts, resource mobilization, and the promotion of best practices through international cooperation.

Overall, the conference provided a platform for in-depth discussions and knowledge sharing on diverse aspects of sustainable agriculture and food security. The exchange of ideas and experiences among participants contributed to a richer understanding of the challenges and opportunities in achieving a food-secure future through global cooperation and sustainable agricultural practices.



The role of the cooperative sector in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was a significant topic of discussion at the conference, particularly given the focus on participants from African nations. Many of these participants held senior positions in their respective countries and were actively involved in the cooperative sector back home. Their presence at the conference provided a valuable opportunity to explore the role of cooperatives in advancing sustainable development in Africa.

During the conference, participants highlighted the importance of cooperatives as a key driver of economic growth, social development, and poverty reduction in African countries. They emphasized that cooperatives play a crucial role in achieving several SDGs, including those related to poverty alleviation, food security, gender equality, and sustainable economic growth.

One of the key highlights of the conference was the sharing of experiences and best practices from the Indian cooperative sector, which has been instrumental in driving agricultural development and rural prosperity in India. Participants from African nations had the opportunity to learn about the successful models and initiatives implemented in India's cooperative sector and explore how similar approaches could be adapted to suit the context and challenges faced by their respective countries.

The discussions centered on the potential lessons that African nations could learn from the Indian cooperative sector, particularly in areas such as agricultural productivity, market access, value chain integration, and rural development. Participants emphasized the need for tailored approaches that take into account the unique socio-economic and agricultural landscapes of African countries while drawing inspiration from successful models elsewhere.



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Furthermore, the conference provided a platform for networking and collaboration among participants, fostering partnerships that could facilitate the transfer of knowledge and expertise between India and African nations. Participants expressed their commitment to leveraging the insights gained from the conference to strengthen the cooperative sector in their countries and contribute to the achievement of the SDGs.

The conference also highlighted the pivotal role of cooperatives in driving sustainable development in Africa and underscored the importance of cross-border learning and collaboration. The experiences shared and the lessons learned from the Indian cooperative sector are expected to inspire new approaches and initiatives that can contribute to the advancement of the SDGs in African nations.



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The valedictory function of the conference provided a fitting conclusion to the discussions, with guests from various corporate backgrounds offering their insights on how industries can contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and pivot their businesses in a sustainable direction. The function underscored the collective commitment to end hunger and promote sustainable agriculture by 2030, aligning with the global mission outlined in the SDGs. Engaging discussions unfolded on how cooperatives can collaborate effectively to achieve these goals, drawing on insights from international voices.

The function featured special guests, **Dr. Jagvir Singh Yadav**, Director COSAM, **Ms. Kavita Sharma**, Senior Manager at the World Resource Institute, and **Mr. Onkar Nath Nath**, Indian

Strategy Head at ICL Fertilizer India Pvt. Ltd. All the guests shared their wisdom and expertise on creating positive impacts for the SDGs. Their contributions highlighted the importance of corporate responsibility and sustainable business practices in driving progress towards the SDGs, particularly in the context of agriculture and food security.

The insights shared by the special guests resonated with the conference's overarching theme of global cooperation for transforming agriculture towards a food-secure future. Their perspectives offered valuable guidance on how organizations can align their strategies with the SDGs while addressing key challenges such as climate change, resource scarcity, and social inequality. The valedictory function thus served as a platform to inspire actionable initiatives and partnerships that can contribute to the collective effort of achieving the SDGs.

In conclusion, the valedictory function brought together diverse perspectives from the corporate sector, emphasizing the importance of sustainable practices and collaboration in achieving the SDGs. The event reaffirmed the commitment of participants to work towards a future where agriculture is sustainable, food security is ensured, and the SDGs are realized. The conference culminated with a vibrant cultural event which showcased the diversity of the institute and its significance as a leading nerve-center for the cooperative sector in the country.