

**National Institute of Rural Development, Rajendranagar,
Hyderabad 500030, Andhra Pradesh**

Background Note

1. About NIRD

The National Institute of Rural Development (NIRD), an autonomous organization of the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, is the apex body for undertaking training, research, action research and consultancy assignments in the rural development sector in India.

NIRD has had its origins in the State of Uttar Pradesh, now Uttarakhand, when two separate institutions, i.e. Central Institute of Study and Research in Community Development at Mussoorie and Trainers Training Institute at Rajpur were merged in 1964 and the National Institute of Community Development (NICD) came into being. The NICD has been renamed as NIRD subsequently.

NIRD has contributed immensely to the rural development sector by developing the capacities of RD and PR functionaries. NIRD has academic linkages with reputed national and international organizations dealing with rural development. It is located in the serene rural surroundings of Rajendranagar about 15 kms, away from the historic city of Hyderabad in Andhra Pradesh.

The Institute celebrated its golden jubilee with the President of India as the Chief Guest in December 2008. Her Excellency the President of India, Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil delivered the Golden Jubilee Lecture. Her Excellency hailed the National Institute of Rural Development for emerging as one of the premier institutions of the country over the last 50 years, with a well-known training set-up for rural development managers and as an established centre of excellence. While lauding the important role played by the Institute in the evolution of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment which paved the way for the creation of the Panchayati Raj System and restructuring of rural development programmes, the President asked NIRD to augment its training infrastructure for extending capacity building support in various aspects of integrated rural development to the representatives of the Panchayati Raj Institutions, especially women. Her Excellency advised that NIRD should encourage the development of farmer friendly machines and make technologies available for developing rural communities. In this context she complimented the efforts made by NIRD towards creating a Technology Bank (TeBank).

2. The Vision

The Institute's vision focuses on the policies and programmes that benefit the rural poor, democratic decentralization process, the operational efficiency of rural development and panchayati raj functionaries including elected representatives of PRIs, promoting transfer of technology and environmental awareness.

As a 'think-tank' for the Ministry of Rural Development, NIRD acts as a storehouse of information on rural development and assists the Ministry of Rural Development in the policy formulation and choice of options in rural development to usher in the desired change.

3. The Mission

The mission of the NIRD is to examine and analyze the factors contributing to the improvement of economic and social well-being of people in rural areas on a sustainable basis with focus on the rural poor and the other disadvantaged groups through research, action research, consultancy and documentation efforts and to facilitate the rural development efforts with focus on the rural poor by improving the knowledge, skills and attitudes of rural development officials and non officials through organizing training, workshops and seminars.

4. The Mandate

The NIRD is mandated to conduct and assist in the organisation of training programmes, conferences, seminars and workshops for middle and senior development functionaries; undertake, aid, promote and coordinate research on it's own and / or collaborate with state, national and international development agencies; analyze and offer solutions to problems encountered in planning and implementation of the programmes for rural development, decentralized governance, panchayati raj and related programmes; and disseminate information and transfer

technology through periodicals, reports, books and other publications in furtherance of the basic objectives of the Institute.

5. Objectives

The objectives of the NIRD are as under:

- a) Organize training programmes, conferences, seminars and Workshops for senior level development managers, elected Representatives, bankers, NGOs and others.
- b) Undertake, aid, promote and coordinate research on its own and through other agencies. Greater emphasis is laid on the application aspects.
- c) Study various aspects of the Panchayati Raj Institutions, local level governance across the states;
- d) Analyze and propose solutions to problems in planning and implementation of the programmes for rural development.
- e) Disseminate information through periodicals, reports and other publications.
- f) Provide consultancy services to both national and international organizations as well as Ministries of Govt. of India and Departments of State Governments.

6. The Activities

The NIRD provides training to the rural development functionaries in the policies and programmes of Ministry of Rural Development, in the democratic decentralization process and promotes technology transfers

through its Rural Technology Park. The NIRD also engages itself in Research and Consultancy assignments for various National and International organizations with a view to gaining the most recent knowledge from the field. The Institute's services are available to different Ministries / Departments of the Central and State Governments, banking institutions, public and private sector undertakings, voluntary bodies, non-governmental organizations and international agencies concerned with rural development.

7. **Regional Centres**

The Regional Centre of the NIRD, established at Guwahati (Assam) in 1983, caters to the various crucial aspects of rural development and poverty alleviation relevant to the North-Eastern Region. Similarly, the Eastern Regional Centre, established at Patna in 2008, covers Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal. The establishment of a NIRD- Centre for Rural Employment and Livelihood Studies at Jaipur during 2009-2010 has been approved by the Executive Council of NIRD. Action is underway to start the activities of the Centre of NIRD at Jaipur during current year (2010).

8. **Structure and Organization**

The NIRD policy is determined by a forty-seven member General Council. The Union Minister of Rural Development is the President of the General Council. The management and administration of the Institute is vested in a fourteen member Executive Council, with the Hon'ble Union

Minister for Rural Development as its Chairman. The Director General is the Chief Executive Officer and is responsible for the management of the Institute. He is assisted by a Deputy Director General, Financial Advisor, Registrar and Director (Administration) and a multi disciplinary Faculty. The Academic Committee and Research Advisory Committee, under the Chairmanship of the Director General, facilitate planning of its training, research and consultancy activities.

9. Infrastructure

The NIRD has developed very good infrastructure facilities to effectively support its activities, which include well - equipped conference halls, computer lab with internet facility, furnished guest houses, a health centre, gymnasium, swimming pool and a community hall.

10. Computer Centre:

The Institute has a well equipped Computer Centre for in-house and classroom Training, Management Information System (MIS), Library documentation and data processing. It has a computer lab with 'state of the art' PCs. Other facilities include INTERNET and Local Area Network (LAN) connecting all the departments and Centres of the Institute. The Centre for Geo-Informatics Application in Rural Development (C-GARD) caters to the needs of GIS, GPS and Satellite Remote Sensing Applications in

rural areas. It offers custom designed solutions to Natural Resource Management and rural development oriented projects.

11. Faculty

The Institute got a strong strength of multi-disciplinary faculty members who are established specialists, trainers, researchers and consultants with proven credentials and long years of experience in their areas of specialization. The strength of NIRD lies in its well qualified and experienced faculty having international exposure. The expertise of faculty is divided into various Centres of specialization ranging from wage employment, self-employment, watershed and natural resource management, rural infrastructure, gender empowerment, equity and social development and human resource development etc.

A Faculty Development Scheme (FDS) is in operation in the Institute to address the professional development needs of the academic staff members of the Institute. This facilitates the faculty of the Institute to be abreast with the latest development in their respective fields. It also helps them to update their skills, apart from gaining an International exposure.

12. Centres

The NIRD is functionally divided into 19 faculty Centres, with about 80 qualified faculty with specialization in various subjects. Each centre has

a distinct mandate and usually has a programmatic focus on the Ministry's flagship and other programmes.

The NIRD's rural development vision emphasizes gender equality and women's advancement in the country. The Institute makes concerted efforts for combating problems of women in difficult circumstances, mainstreaming gender perspectives in rural development, and enabling women's empowerment.

The NIRD has set up an exclusive Centre for Women Development and Gender Studies (CWD&GS) to handle the capacity building as well as the research and policy advocacy issues. In addition to the initiatives of CGS, the NIRD through its various other centres also organizes capacity building programmes with convergence towards gender equity in wage employment, self employment, education, technology, decision making, rural infrastructure and skill development among women.

13. **Training Activities**

Training is a major activity of the Institute. It has a wide range of expertise and excellent infrastructure to train senior officers and executives in policy formulation, management and implementation of the rural development programmes. The Institute also conducts specialized training programmes for the benefit of elected representatives of PRIs. The training programmes of the NIRD are intended to create a knowledge base and

develop skills and understanding of the various dimensions of rural transformation. Besides training, the NIRD is involved in curriculum development, preparation of training manuals and training guidelines with special reference to different flagship schemes of the MoRD viz. MGNREGA, SGSY, Rural Housing, Watershed etc.

- Training: As an academic arm of the MoRD, NIRD's mandate includes capacity building of Rural Development functionaries of governmental and non-governmental sectors working for the cause of Rural Development. The major thrust is on development of knowledge, skills, attitude and behavioral change. Capacity building of trainers of SIRDS and related rural development institutions is another mandate which is expected to be achieved through training of trainers' courses and development of training curricula and training modules.
- Objectives, Strategies and Methods: The training endeavors of NIRD revolve mainly around the core concerns of rural development in terms of poverty alleviation and improved quality of life. Its array of training programmes include short courses, training of trainers (ToT) courses, certificate courses, international training courses, workshops, seminars, general and video conferences, retreats, colloquia, orientation, sensitization and interface events meant for Rural Development functionaries.

- The participants largely include over 10,000 senior and middle level rural development functionaries representing almost all the district and state level line departments of Central and State Governments, corporations for SCs and STs, autonomous rural development societies such as the DRDAs, ITDAs, Bankers dealing with rural development programmes, faculty members of SIRDs, heads of ETCs, senior officers/ heads of NGOs and Panchayats, among others.
- The focal areas of training include wage and self employment (E.g. NREGS, SGSY...); land, water and forestry management; drinking water and sanitation; rural health care and primary education; rural technologies, industries and marketing; development of SCs, STs, women and children; rural financing, credit and micro-finance; quantitative techniques, information technology and geo-informatics; documentation, communication and media applications; and planning, monitoring and evaluation.
- A large number of training programmes are organized at the headquarters. A fifth of all the programmes are organized at the SIRDs and other related rural development institutions. Towards enhancing the outreach of the NIRD programmes, emphasis is laid on the organization of training courses in eastern and north-eastern India. Efforts are also on for developing and conducting a larger number of training of trainers courses for capacity building in a cascading mode.

- Towards building the knowledge base and imparting skills to the participants, attitudinal and behavioral change is considered as important. A mix of training methods is required. The training methods are so designed as to generate interactive learning. The major training methods include experience sharing, experiential learning, group and sub-group discussions, case studies and case discussions, role play, simulation games, lecture-cum-discussions, panel discussions, guided field visits, exposure visits to best practices sites, participatory training methods, project assignments etc.

The profile of the Participants trained by the NIRD is as under:

- Government Officials:

The number of key Rural Development functionaries is estimated at 5.57 lakh. Following is the break-up of the type of functionaries:

- a. Project Directors of DRDAs;
- b. District Development Officers/Chief Development Officers / Deputy Development Commissioners;
- c. CEOs of Zilla Parishads;
- d. Project Directors of ITDAs; and

Heads / Coordinators of Rural Development related line department such as Agriculture, Soil Conservation, Animal Husbandry, Horticulture, Cooperation, Rural Industries, Water Supply and Sanitation...

- Elected Representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI):

The number of PRI representatives is estimated at about 31 lakhs. Of these about 12 lakhs are considered as key functionaries. They include Chairpersons, Vice-chairpersons, and Heads of Standing Committees at Zilla, Block and Gram Panchayat level.

While NIRD is involved in the training of key district-level rural development functionaries as outlined, the SIRDs are also to train the sub-district and block level functionaries. The gram panchayat level functionaries are trained by the ETCs.

A brief about the category, type and nature of the Training Programmes conducted by the institute is given below:

- General Training Programmes:

The focus of the training programmes by and large is on rural development in general and poverty alleviation programmes in particular. The duration of each of the short training programmes is about 6 days. The participants are officers working in different States on the theme of the training topic. These training programmes are open for government officials, elected representatives, Bankers, non-governmental organizations and individual activists working for the upliftment of rural people.

- Workshops and Seminars:

The workshops are organized on the current themes which are very important in policy formulation. Experts working in the specific field in different parts of the country are invited to interact on the subject. At the end of the workshop or seminar, recommendations would emerge which will be useful for policy formulation.

- Training of Trainers (ToT) Programmes:

ToTs are organized for identified trainers and related stakeholders who would become masters in the topic and become capable to organize training programmes independently. When there are a large number of persons to be trained this kind of cascading training method can be used to cover large numbers of field functionaries.

- Out-reach (Off-Campus and Regional) Programmes:

The outreach training programmes are organized at different SIRDs. These programmes are designed to meet the training needs of state government officials and other stakeholders. If the clientele group belongs to only one state, it is usually called as an off-campus programme. If the clientele group consists of more than two states the programme is called as a regional training programme.

- International training programmes:

Two types of international training programmes are being organized by NIRD. The first category of training programmes is sponsored by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India under the fellowship scheme called Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC)/Special Commonwealth African Assistance Plan (SCAAP). The programmes are meant for Africa and Pacific regions. The second category of International programmes is organized in collaboration with Centre for Integrated Rural Development in Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP). These programmes are organized in Asia and Pacific regions. A few programmes are organized within India and a few programmes are organized in other Asian countries.

The training performance of NIRD for the last few years is given in the following statement.

NIRD TRAINING PERFORMANCE

Year	Programs organized	Participants attended
2004 - 2005	215	6253
2005 - 2006	230	6453
2006 - 2007	271	7671
2007 - 2008	300	7942
2008 - 2009	300	10894
2009 - 2010	475	34156
2010 - 2011 (projected)	906	41000

The new dimensions taken up by NIRD during last 4 years for improving quality of training are as under:

- Conduct of on-line e-evaluation of NIRD programmes
- Study conducted on Impact Assessment of NIRD Training Programs by Administrative Staff College of India, Hyderabad.
- Apart from Off-campus programs, Regional programs at SIRDs have been initiated for the benefit of neighbouring States
- NIRD Collaborative programmes conducted for PDs of DRDAs
- Faculty Development Scheme intensified
- Increased Regional /Off-Campus Programmes

Steps are being taken to strengthen the existing Centre for Information Technology and Centre on Geomatic Applications in Rural Development. NIRD has also created new Centres such as (i) Centre on Wage Employment and Poverty Alleviation (CWEPA), (ii) Centre on Rural Credit and Development Banking and (CRCDB) (iii) Tribal Research and Action Cell (TRAC) to carry out training and research activities in their specific areas.

The training programmes of the NIRD are intended to create a knowledge base and develop skills and understanding of the various dimensions of rural transformation. Besides training, the NIRD is involved in curriculum development, preparation of training manuals and training guidelines with special reference to different flagship schemes of the MoRD viz. MGNREGA, SGSY, Rural Housing, Watershed etc.

14. Research

Research is one of the major activities of the NIRD. The research agenda of the Institute is planned keeping in view the shifts in development paradigms. The major themes for NIRD research include: poverty reduction and rural employment, environment and sustainable development, decentralization and good governance, and transfer of technology. It lays special emphasis on livelihoods of core poverty groups and empowerment of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and women. The Institute also undertakes action research projects on relevant themes. On an average, NIRD undertakes 20 research projects every year.

NIRD has been taking up research studies on several themes relating to development strategies, qualitative aspects of programme implementation, focusing on the MoRD schemes and emerging development issues. NIRD has been laying emphasis on the problems of core poverty groups, backward regions and also of the socially disadvantaged sections. In addition, case studies of successful initiatives are also taken up.

The studies identify the critical areas affecting the process of implementation, deficiencies and also clearly suggest action points based on the causative analysis.

Some of the themes on which research studies have been done for the past few years are mentioned below:

- ❖ Tribal and dalit issues
- ❖ Governance for the poor
- ❖ Technology transfer to the poor
- ❖ Access to quality credit to the poor
- ❖ Public-private partnerships
- ❖ Contract farming
- ❖ Tenancy relations and livelihoods of the poor
- ❖ NREGA, SGSY, IAY
- ❖ Water and Sanitation
- ❖ Community mobilization
- ❖ Natural Resources Management

Consultancy assignments are regularly taken up by NIRD on behalf of the Central and State Governments, Public sector undertakings and premier international organizations namely United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), Department for International Development (DFID), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), World Health Organisation (WHO), International Labour Organisation (ILO), World Bank, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), Centre on

Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP) and Afro-Asian Rural Development Organisation (AARDO).

The details of the research projects of NIRD which were completed during last few years and those presently are under progress are given below.

NIRD RESEARCH PERFORMANCE

Year	No. of Research Project s Completed
2004-2005	30
2005-2006	25
2006-2007	34
2007-2008	30
2008-2009	15
2009-2010	13
2010-2011 (on-going)	68

15. Publications

The Institute disseminates the results of the research studies and recommendations of its various seminars and workshops through a number of publications. It brings out a quarterly Journal of Rural Development and monthly NIRD Newsletter in English and Hindi. The Journal of Rural Development, a peer-reviewed quarterly publication is rated highly among the academicians. The journal publishes theoretical and empirical articles and provides a forum for exchange of views between various policy makers, planners, researchers and functionaries concerned with rural development.

With over 350 publications to date, NIRD is a leading publisher of Rural Development literature in India. Its “India Rural Development Report” and “Panchayati Raj Report” have attracted a great deal of attention from academicians and policy planners. The Centre for Media and Rural Documentation (CMRD) of the Institute acts as a referral and serving agency for the rural development sector as a whole. The Institute has a well organized and rich library with a collection of 1,06,000 volumes and subscribes to over 200 journals.

16. **Post Graduate Diploma Programmes and Distance Education Programmes**

The Institute has forayed into teaching programmes in August 2008 through its one-year long Post Graduate Diploma in Rural Development Management (PGDRDM) in 2008-09. The aim of the programme is to develop a committed and competent cadre of rural development management professionals in the country. Another one year PG Diploma Programme through Distance Mode in Sustainable Rural Development was also launched by the Institute in December 2009 in association with University of Hyderabad, which is the first of its kind in the country.

The strategy of the PG Diploma programmes is (a) to offer a range of courses that address key policy and management issues in rural development, (b) to provide students with core development and management insights and impart analytical skills for planning and managing

Rural Development Programmes and (c) to develop the capacities and infuse right attitudes.

17. Rural Technology Park

The Rural Technology Park (RTP) spread over 62 acres of land was established at NIRD campus in 1999 as an instrument for transfer of technologies to the villages, with a vision to accelerate wider dissemination of appropriate and affordable technologies to the rural poor for increasing productivity and enhancing the quality of life, thereby enabling the community to move towards sustainable development and employment generation. The RTP aims at spreading awareness on current rural technologies and promoting sustainable rural development. The RTP has established some production-cum-training units of affordable and cost effective technologies for rural areas, and offers skill oriented training. The solar power unit is managed by illiterate women who have become barefoot solar engineers and execute turnkey solar electrification projects in the rural areas. The National Rural Building Centre and the sanitation park in RTP showcases model rural houses constructed with forty different technologies applicable to Rural India. The RTP showcases a variety of low cost Rural Technologies and also provides for capacity building in terms of skill development and entrepreneurship. Transfer of technology process and activities are also carried out by RTP for sustainable livelihoods. The RTP also organize training programmes.

18. Networking with State RD Training Institutions

NIRD has been trying to establish a very dynamic linkage with all the SIRDs and now efforts are intensified to strengthen it further. Under State Link Officer (SLO) Scheme, NIRD designated Professor & Heads and other Senior Faculty Members as State Link Officers for each State / SIRDs, who are supposed to help in developing the State Specific Training & Research programmes and also try to function as link between the NIRD and SIRDs in all their activities. In deed NIRD is trying to have collaboration with SIRDs in a larger way by roping their faculty in the NIRD research and training programmes, in addition to assisting them in undertaking short-term research projects under NIRD funding. It is pertinent to point out that NIRD has already got involved in helping the SIRDs in the following manner.

With a view to developing close and intimate linkages, NIRD organizing Annual National Colloquium with State Secretaries [RD & PR] and Heads of SIRDs, in which Senior Officers from MoRD participate.

Action Research is a location specific research in which theme/model is field tested, step by step, while implementing the Project, for which a policy has been evolved by NIRD for development of capabilities of SIRDs in undertaking research.

In line with the above, NIRD started assisting the SIRDs in conduct of Regional Training Programmes and extending funding support to the SIRDs for taking up short term Research. Regional Training Programmes are intended – To promote the training function as well as capacity building of

faculty members at SIRDs. This measure has also benefited the faculty members of SIRDs and are able to organize similar programmes on their own.

Information Dissemination: This is an area where NIRD can be of great help to SIRDs. One of the major functions of NIRD is to collect, process and disseminate rural development information pertaining not only to India but also other developing countries for the use of development personnel. Against this background, NIRD with a view to further streamline the flow of information set up a computerised data base which is being maintained by Centre for Media and Rural Documentation. This facility is intended to cater to the information needs of NIRD and SIRD faculties to enrich their calibre. The SIRDs through Internet facility can draw up on the requisite material by having link up with NIRD website: www.nird.org.in.

The Government of India with technical guidance of NIRD is assisting the State Governments to strengthen/establish State Institutes of Rural Development (SIRDs) for research and training. These institutions are to act as link institutes of NIRD at State level. The Institute offers Trainer's Training programmes for the faculty members of SIRDs and Extension Training Centres (ETCs). Several off-campus programmes are conducted each year at various SIRDs by the senior faculty members from NIRD to provide guidance in training and research activities specific to each State.

As a part of its mandate to strengthen the rural development institutional network in the country, the NIRD provides guidance and

facilitates financial support under the Central Scheme from the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, to all the 28 State Institutes of Rural Development (SIRDs) and 90 Extension Training Centres (ETCs) for strengthening of the physical facilities and training infrastructure.

The NIRD, 28-SIRDs and 90-ETCs, put together, every year, training more than 10 lakh functionaries of both RD&PR sector, including the elected representatives of PRIs. The combined target fixed for current year 2010-11 for NIRD, SIRD and ETCs is conduct of 20,000 programmes and to train atleast 15 lakh functionaries.

19. Financial status of NIRD

The Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India provides 100% funding support towards plan and non-plan to the NIRD. The details of grants sanction by MoRD under Plan and Non-Plan are given in the statement placed below:

(Rs. in Lakhs)

NIRD : Plan and Non-Plan Receipts and Payments from 2004-05 to 2010-11

Year	Receipt		Payment	
	Plan	Non-Plan	Plan	Non-Plan
2004-2005	899.90	742.00	757.32	998.94
2005-2006	1000.00	792.00	1105.47	792.00
2006-2007	1200.00	886.00	953.04	962.00
2007-2008	1000.00	900.00	1031.27	996.79
2008-2009	1681.00	1153.00	1576.15	1352.34
2009-2010	3000.00	1727.00	3003.44	1722.20
2010-2011	10500.00	1600.00	329.45*	296.15

* upto 31.5.2010

20. **NIRD Vision Document**

NIRD formulated its Vision Document which provide for 18 aspects and the same was presented before the Executive Council of the Institute at its meeting held in August 2008. It includes- creation of a Technology Bank to be a repository and dissemination of both traditional and non-traditional technologies; acquisition and active propagation of Distance Mode of Education; deep involvement with NREGA through research mapping and otherwise; greater international engagement; technological up gradation of C-GARD; infrastructure through Automatic Mapping and Facilitation Management using GIS technologies; mapping of the subjects covered by NIRD through Modules; setting up of Centre for Resolution of Rural Conflicts; creation of new Centres on Health, Education and Drinking Water; Networking of credit institutions and development of alternative banking; taking the gender issues and empowerment forward; up gradation of facilities at NIRD; 'networking' of training institutions and 'envisioning' of State Institutes of Rural Development (SIRDs); evolving new dynamic public policy; creation of land bank; deeper engagement with PESA for better implementation of rural development programmes.

21. **Impact Assessment of NIRD Training Programmes**

The Administrative Staff College of India (ASCI), Hyderabad has evaluated the training performance of National Institute of Rural Development (NIRD) and has observed that the Institute has delivered

through its numerous training programmes and research studies. The study showed more than eighty percent satisfaction levels among the trainees. It was found that there were 'perceptible behavioural changes' because of learning through training. The study also emphasized increased adoption of group discussions as a pedagogical technique.

F.No:2010-11/RestructuringofNIRD

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**Committee constituted by MoRD
for Review and Revamping of
NIRD, SIRDs & ETCs**

Background Material



**National Institute of Rural Development
Ministry of Rural Development, GOI**

Rajendranagar : Hyderabad -500 030.