

## Regional Seminar on 'Agrobiodiversity conservation' organized at ICAR-CAZRI, Jodhpur under UN Environment Protection-GEF project

A regional seminar (Hot arid region) on 'Agrobiodiversity conservation and use for climate resilience and livelihood improvement of farmers' was organized on 7<sup>th</sup> March, 2022 at ICAR-CAZRI, Jodhpur. At the onset, Dr. Rajwant K. Kalia, Project Coordinator (Hot arid region) and PI of the project told about the project objectives and the seminar, while Dr. S.K. Singh, Head of Division-III welcomed the guests. Dr. D.C. Bhandari Former Head, NBPGR, New Delhi briefed about the importance of crop, livestock and micro-organism biodiversity in the desert ecosystem and the need to preserve the traditional knowledge of farmers. He emphasized on the importance of crops and multipurpose trees of arid regions and the use of integrated farming for increasing the income of farmers. Dr. Rakesh Bhardwaj, PS, NBPGR New Delhi focused on incorporation of biodiversity in the food habit (multiple cereals, legumes, oils, vegetables, etc.) for a healthy lifestyle. Dr. Pradeep Pagaria, KVK Gudamalani (Barmer) told about value-addition and processing of different products for additional income generation. He cited examples of different FPOs in Rajasthan and discussed their success stories. Ms. Sanju from GRAVIS briefed about the need, structure and principles of FPOs. She detailed the successful formation of two FPOs constituted in Osian and Phalodi on cumin and coriander. Mr. N.K. Ramani, DDM, NABARD emphasized about the role of NABARD, and gave details of various government schemes which extend financial support during development of FPOs. Mr. R. L. Nath, Former LDM from UCO bank told about the importance of financial literacy among farmers and gave information about different types of bank loans and accounts from which farmers could get benefits.



Sh. Mangi Lal, a progressive farmer and member of a Farmer Interest Group (FIG) shared his journey, experiences and benefits of being a member of FIG and FPO. Dr. Bindu Nirvan, Seed Officer, RSSC, Mandore briefed about the procedure to be followed by farmers for procuring seed material, different types of seeds, and the basic requirements for seed production. She requested farmers to join the participatory seed production program. Sh. Punam Chand, Dy. Seed Certification Officer, RSSOCA, Mandore told about seed certification procedures and methods, field inspection, seed testing and certification of organic fields. Finally, Dr. J.C. Rana, National Coordinator, Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT, New Delhi focused on extension of products and crops beyond their traditional areas of cultivation. He emphasized on agrobiodiversity conservation for long term sustainable use, and natural farming. Participants from Bioversity International New Delhi, NBPGR New Delhi, Agricultural University Jodhpur, AICRP on Pearl millet, Jodhpur, Gramin Vikas Vigyan Samiti (GRAVIS), Rajasthan State Seed Corporation (RSSC), NABARD, KVK Gudamalani, Rajasthan Agriculture Department and UCO Bank along with 35 farmers from Osian block, Jodhpur participated in the seminar. In the end, Dr. Reena, Co-PI of the project proposed the vote of thanks while Dr. R.K. Kakani, Co-PI of the project gave a tour of the experimental areas of CAZRI farm to the participants.