

Seminar on Building climate-resilient agro-ecosystems

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The seminar commenced with a welcome address by Mr. V. Avadaiyappan, Team Leader, followed by the lighting of lamps by the participants. Mrs. S. Ahila Devi, Chief Executive of People Mutuals, delivered the keynote address. She elaborated on the various risks faced by the farming community and emphasized measures such as risk avoidance, prevention, reduction, mitigation, and transfer to minimize financial losses. Mrs. Ahila Devi stressed the importance of adopting an integrated approach to protect farmers from diverse risks, which vary across urban, rural, coastal, and hilly areas. Sharing best risk management practices among participants was encouraged to benefit farmers across different regions.

The session focused on enhancing agricultural resilience to climate change impacts. It emphasized the interconnected components of agricultural landscapes, including crops, soil, and water resources. Insurance was highlighted as a crucial element in family financial development, with current coverage in India standing at only 4%. Efforts need to be made to ensure comprehensive coverage for all the eligible family members under various insurance programs. Auto-renewal systems for insurance policies were proposed to facilitate continuous coverage, with insurance playing a significant role in lifting families out of poverty.

Mr. N. Venkatesan, Chairperson of People Mutuals, delivered a special address, highlighting the increased risks faced by present and future generations due to climate change, attributed in part to factors such as pollution and rising temperatures. He emphasized the need for innovative and affordable insurance products to safeguard livelihoods. Mr. Ajith Kumar,



Project Executive at People Mutuals, DHAN Foundation, discussed the design and features of heat index-based Livestock insurance products. He detailed the product's application in the dairy sector and emphasized the importance of innovative solutions to protect livelihoods in the face of climate change.

Dr. B. Bhakiyathu Saliha, Professor & Head and Chief Scientist at the Agriculture Research Station, Kovilpatti, presented on "Technology for Climate Risk Management Adaptation Practices." Topics included sustainable farming practices, climate-smart agriculture, soil health and management, and water management. Dr. Saliha underscored the role of technology in mitigating climate risks and outlined practices such as timely cropping and irrigation techniques to reduce vulnerability to climate change.

Group discussions yielded several recommendations, including the selection of suitable crops and varieties, timely weeding, and the adoption of drip irrigation systems. The Uzhavan app was highlighted as a valuable tool, with suggestions for widespread training among farmers. Soil testing and training on organic farming and integrated farming systems were also emphasized. The seminar concluded with a vote of thanks from Mr. Ajith Kumar, expressing gratitude to all participants for their valuable contributions.