

**National Seminar**  
**on**  
**Transforming Rural Livelihood Landscape in India:**  
**Challenges and Pathways**  
**(23-24 January 2025)**



**- ORGANISERS -**



Institute of Livelihood  
Research and Training

**Institute of Livelihood Research and Training**  
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## National Seminar on Transforming Rural Livelihood Landscape in India: Challenges and Pathways

India, with a population of 1.4 billion and a workforce participation rate (WPR) of 56%, faces significant challenges in creating sustainable livelihoods. Systemic issues such as the predominance of a large population in the primary sector, which contributes minimally to the national GDP; limited employment opportunities in rural areas due to the underdevelopment of the non-farm sector; livelihood losses in rainfed and hilly regions caused by climate change; poor skill sets among the workforce in the primary sector; low female labour force participation; and high youth unemployment, underscore the complex interplay between rural livelihoods and India's socio-economic fabric. Addressing these sectoral, segmental, and spatial challenges is essential to unlock new opportunities for sustainable growth.

The primary sectors, including agri-horticulture, animal husbandry, and fishing, which sustain rural livelihoods, are hindered by small landholdings, low productivity, environmental degradation, limited skill development among primary producers, and poor access to modern technology. Efforts to diversify livelihoods through manufacturing and services have yet to adequately address the labour market needs, particularly in rural areas. Marginalized groups, including women, Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and ethnic minorities, continue to face significant vulnerabilities. While the unorganized sector provides considerable

employment, it is marred by instability and insufficient social protections, exacerbating inequality. Rural regions, especially those in geographically challenging areas, suffer from poor infrastructure, inadequate services, and limited market access. These issues are further amplified in disaster-prone regions, which are frequently affected by floods, droughts, and other natural calamities due to climate change.

Government initiatives like the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) along with efforts by civil society organizations and corporate social responsibility (CSR) programmes have aimed to address these livelihood challenges. However, gaps persist, particularly in reaching marginalized communities. Meanwhile, the integration of India's economy with global markets is progressing rapidly. The growing penetration of the internet and mobile technologies has reduced information gaps, and start-ups and innovations targeting rural farm and non-farm sectors are emerging rapidly, supported by an enabling policy environment. Nevertheless, the challenge of promoting sustainable livelihoods for the socio-economically disadvantaged, including the youth entering the workforce annually, remains a pressing concern for policymakers, planners, researchers, and practitioners.



The key questions arise about how to address the sectoral, segmental and spatial livelihood challenges of the poor and create new pathways for employment, integrate marginalized communities into the economy, and build resilient and sustainable livelihoods in the context of India's rapidly globalizing economy.

This seminar aims to discuss these challenges and chalk out strategies for transforming India's rural livelihood landscape by leveraging innovative approaches and emerging solutions.

With these objectives, the Institute of Livelihood Research and Training (ILRT), a pioneer in practice-based research and livelihood promotion, and the Madhya Pradesh Institute of Social Science Research (MPISSR), a leading social science research institute, jointly propose to hold a National Seminar.

### **Sub-Themes of the Seminar:**

The seminar will cover the following themes:

- (1) **Sectoral Challenges:** Exploring issues in agriculture, agri-allied activities, rural manufacturing, and services, focusing on productivity, sustainability, and market access.
- (2) **Segmental Disparities:** Addressing barriers faced by women, marginalized communities, and youth in accessing sustainable livelihoods.
- (3) **Spatial Disparities:** Investigating livelihood challenges in geographically difficult regions, including rural-urban divides and areas vulnerable to disasters and climate change.
- (4) **Livelihood Innovations:** Examining innovative approaches and practices, including models that address sectoral, segmental, and spatial issues in sustainable livelihood promotion, and their impact on marginalized groups.

### **Seminar Details:**

The National Seminar will be jointly organized by the Institute of Livelihood Research and Training (ILRT) and the Madhya Pradesh Institute of Social Science Research (MPISSR) at the MPISSR campus in Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh.

We invite academicians, development professionals, policymakers, civil society activists, academicians, researchers and scholars to participate in the National Seminar on ***Transforming Rural Livelihood Landscape in India: Challenges and Pathways***. Selected papers will be published in an edited book by a reputed national or international publisher.

### **Important Dates:**

Abstract Submission (200 - 250 words): **20 December 2024**  
Full Paper Submission (5,000 - 6,000 words): **3 January 2025**

### **Logistic Arrangements:**

Travel costs will be reimbursed by the organiser.  
Logistics will be arranged for participants during the seminar.

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### **Seminar Venue:**

**M. P. Institute of Social Science Research**  
6 Bharatpuri Administrative Zone, Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh – 456 010

### **Communication Details:**

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## About the Organizing Institutions:

### **Institute of Livelihood Research and Training**

Institute of Livelihood Research and Training (ILRT) is an academic institution promoted by Basix Social Enterprise Group (Basix SEG). Established to address development sector needs, ILRT focuses on research, capacity building, action research, piloting innovations, and policy advocacy on livelihood promotion and related issues in India. The institution aims to build a scientific knowledge base on livelihoods and disseminate it to practitioners, planners, and policymakers to promote sustainable livelihoods for the poor, including women, tribal communities, and other marginalized groups. ILRT was registered as an independent not-for-profit society under the AP Societies Registration Act 2001 on April 10, 2007.

VISION: “Knowledge and practice build on each other promoting dignified livelihoods for all.”

MISSION: “The Institute of Livelihood Research and Training shall strive to create an enabling environment for promoting dignified livelihoods for all and become a leading praxis institution in the field of livelihood promotion.”

#### **Recognitions**

- # Recognized as **Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (SIRO)** for Social Science Research by Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, Government of India.
- # **Centre of Excellence** with Value Chain Capacity Building Network, promoted by IFAD for technical support on **Scaling up Pro-Poor Value Chain & Market System Support** in the Asia Pacific region.
- # Empanelled as **Capacity Building Agency** with National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), Ministry of Rural Development and Government of India
- # Empanelled as **Resource Agency** with The National Fisheries Development Board, Government of India.
- # Empanelled with National Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Hub promoted by Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai for capacity building and support for livelihood promotion.
- # **Resource Organization** for Small Farmers Agri-Business Consortium (SFAC), Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer Welfare, Government of India
- # **Resource Organization** for Meghalaya Basin Development Authority (MBDA), Government of Meghalaya

ILRT has been engaged in large-scale applied research on livelihood promotion and related issues, promoting livelihood education to livelihood practitioners, piloting livelihood innovations through action research, policy analysis and advocacy and providing technical assistance to large-scale livelihood and developmental initiatives of governments, multi-lateral and bi-lateral agencies, CSRs and development sector organization in India and outside.



## **M. P. Institute of Social Science Research, Ujjain**

Madhya Pradesh Institute of Social Science Research (MPISSR), Ujjain is a premier research institute supported by the Indian Council of Social Science Research, Ministry of Education, Government of India, and Ministry of Higher Education, Government of Madhya Pradesh.

MPISSR is concerned with research, evaluation, monitoring, and training in the areas relating to social, economic, cultural, administrative, and civic aspects. MPISSR's core activities are addressed to problems and issues of Madhya Pradesh and adjoining states. The Institute has been working for the last three decades with an unfettered spirit of exploration, rationality, and enterprise to pursue research and training activities for generating understanding, knowledge, and linkages between field realities and public policies.

The basic aim of MPISSR is to engage in research on relevant contemporary issues and disseminate the research findings for the enhancement of existing knowledge and the well-being of society through policy input. MPISSR has been working on the following thematic areas: Panchayat Raj and Rural Development; Studies in Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes; Democracy, Electoral Behaviour, Social Justice and Human Rights; Development and Deprivation; Studies in Education; Gender Studies; Studies in Environment; Information Technology and Society; and New Economic Policy and Society.

MPISSR completed various contemporary research studies mostly related to rural development; tribal development, decentralised governance; elementary education; poverty and social exclusion; and food security for the purpose of policy input to the government. The institute has been publishing two peer-reviewed bi-annual journals in English and Hindi. The institute has published several books from reputed publishers and research papers in journals/edited books.

MPISSR caters to the needs of policy planners, academia, legislators, non-governmental organisations, researchers, research organisations, and functionaries of international organisations. Dissemination of knowledge through research publication; collaborating in research; imparting research training; and assisting and advising through policy research and evaluation studies are core activities of the Institute.

MPISSR is registered under Section 6(1) of the Foreign Contribution (Regulations) Act, 1976, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi. Donations made to MPISSR are qualified for exemption under section 80-G of the Income Tax Act, 1961.

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