



## From the Chairman...

The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.

—Lao Tzu

It is with immense pleasure and a feeling of great privilege that I present to you, the 40th NABARD Annual Report 2021–22.

It feels like it was only yesterday, that NABARD stepped up as the ‘development bank of India’ with the onerous duty of bringing prosperity to its rural citizenry. In reality, four decades have whizzed past since, as time is proverbially wont to—40 years of enabling, energising and empowering the agricultural and rural ecosystem of India. Looking back at the path traversed, our first Annual Report 1982–83, reported NABARD’s balance sheet size at ₹4,519 crore when India’s GDP was around ₹1.97 lakh crore and total foodgrains production was nearly 128 million tonne. Now, India’s GDP has crossed ₹236 lakh crore, foodgrains production has touched 314 million tonne and NABARD’s balance sheet size has reached a formidable ₹7.6 lakh crore!

True to its name, NABARD has dedicated itself to agriculture and rural development of India since inception. We have collaborated with stake holders,



created synergies with the banking system, on-boarded various government bodies, and diligently built a rural ecosystem of credit and cooperation (with support from the Reserve Bank of India). We have scripted innumerable interventions towards expanding the scale of finance, extending concessional credit, forming grassroots institutions (Vikas Volunteer Vahini, self-help groups, joint liability groups, farmer–producers’ organisations), designing customised financial products (like the Kisan Credit Card), building rural infrastructure, developing watersheds, and securing and diversifying tribal livelihoods, to name a few.

More recently, NABARD has contributed in no small measure to the resilience of the Indian economy in bouncing back from the pandemic impact, with an estimated growth of 8.7% over last year. Through the worst phases of post-pandemic recovery, NABARD kept up relentless efforts at offering hope, promoting growth, and delivering on its promise of prosperity to rural India. In FY2022, our balance sheet grew by 15.2% and loans outstanding registered growth of 13.3% to reach ₹6.8 lakh crore. As against the business target of ₹3.6 lakh crore, we achieved ₹3.78 lakh crore; our long-term and short-term refinance grew by 111% and outstanding refinance against medium and long-term investment loans provided by banks grew at 19.9%, boosting capital formation at ground level.

We continued our mission of building India’s rural infrastructure by deploying our own funds as well as funds vested with us as the nodal agency. Under the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF), ₹46,073 crore was sanctioned and two new activities viz. road over bridges on railway crossings and ropeways were added, taking the number of eligible activities to 39. So far, a total of 7.45 lakh projects have been sanctioned with cumulative amount of ₹4.5 lakh crore.

Through our various funds like NIDA, CFF, DRA, DIDF, FIDF, WIF etc., we promoted irrigation, health, education and other infrastructure such as housing through the Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana—Gramin and sanitation through the Swachh Bharat Mission—Gramin. We have done especially well in supporting food processing infrastructure in 16 states, through 17 mega food park projects, 8 agro processing clusters and 13 food processing units.

Utilising funds like FSPF, PODF, WDF, TDF, PRODUCE etc., we supported farming communities, farm innovations, and technology transfer with our ‘triple bottom approach’ of people, planet and profit. Our off-farm development initiatives in value chains, marketing, and sales infrastructure, capacity building of the stakeholders, etc., have borne fruit and the attitudinal shift of communities towards the off-farm activities, is clearly visible.

NABARD has been prioritising sustainable strategies and agronomic management in face of the growing impact of climate change on agriculture. Since early 1990s, NABARD has been working on sustainability through various initiatives such as soil and water conservation projects, watershed, farm ponds, groundwater recharging, renewable energy projects, etc. Our natural resource management projects on soil and moisture conservation and climate proofing have immensely benefited communities through higher productivity and alternative livelihoods.

As the National Implementing Entity for UNFCCC and NAFCC, in addition to being the Direct Access Entity for Green Climate Fund, NABARD ideated, funded, and promoted a range of measures to alleviate climate change impact on agriculture. We have established our own Climate Change Fund with a corpus of ₹20 crore for creating new avenues that maximise availability and utility of jal–jameen–jangal (water–land–forest) for future generations. A new initiative called JIVA was also launched, which aims to diversify crop systems, integrate livestock and trees, rejuvenate biological processes, and efficiently manage soil moisture and rainfall.

In celebration of Indian agriculture’s stupendous role as a pillar of strength as the economy floundered through the pandemic, we dedicate our theme chapter this year to Harvesting GOLD from Indian Agriculture. The pandemic proved beyond debate, what I never tire of reiterating—that in the ultimate reckoning, agriculture is at the core of our existence, ensuring human survival, and providing succour and strength for us to fight the next war. When all else fails, agriculture will still be there to bail us out, as long as we protect and preserve it in the face of natural resource degradation and climate change impact.

Of all the wonderful initiatives that we have embarked on during our eventful voyage, one intervention that has completely transformed the lives of millions of poor people is our Self Help Group Bank Linkage Programme

(SHGBLP). This unique pilot project launched in 1992 with a modest target of credit linking 500 SHGs has metamorphosed into a mammoth movement with more than 1.18 crore SHGs savings linked and 67.4 lakh credit linked, involving ₹47,240 crore deposits and ₹1.5 lakh crore in outstanding loans. While the statistics themselves are astounding, the impact of the programme in giving voice, identity, and economic agency to millions of marginalised rural women was nothing short of revolutionary.

To add to our jubilation, NABARD's subsidiaries, our seven sister concerns and extended arms, have done splendidly during the year and complemented our interventions with spectacular achievements. I have tremendous faith that they will scale greater heights in the coming years.

As Chairman of this hallowed institution, I have travelled extensively across the country, calling on Union ministers, chief ministers of states, Parliamentarians and meeting distinguished members of bureaucracy as well as civil society, to observe the prevailing conditions, gauge the needs of the rural ecosystem and to experience, first hand, the impact of NABARD's interventions. The enthusiasm, excitement, and zeal shared by one and all about the relevance and contribution of NABARD, makes my heart swell with pride.

As I reminisce about our 40-year journey, I'm struck by how young we are as an organisation and what monumental contribution we have made to our beloved nation in this sliver of time. Having spent my entire career in the rural development arena, I can say with some authority that, as a developmental financial institution, NABARD finds no parallel in the entire world, in terms of its scale, mission, vision, spirit, and ethos.

As NABARD enters its fifth decade, we're all overwhelmed by nostalgia and it seeps through our annual report as well. It is all the more poignant for me as my personal journey too started with the inception of NABARD, took baby steps side-by-side with the organisation, grew, prospered, and reached the zenith. I take this space to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Government of India, the Reserve Bank of India, other members of the banking sector, our channel partners, and most importantly, our revered farmers, without whom we would all cease to be.

Earth does not belong to us; we belong to earth. Take only memories, leave nothing but footprints.

**Dr G. R. Chintala**  
**Chairman**