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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Farmers and policy makers speak out about possibly the largest agricultural success in India in decades

Hyderabad, India (21 November 2015) — The State of Karnataka has succeeded in large scale implementation of better soil and farm management to consistently achieve about 5% annual growth in the agriculture productivity for more than five years after previous years of stagnation. The state Agriculture Minister, government members, farmers and technical experts speak out on the success through a *100 Voices* video series (www.icrisat.org/icrisat-100voices-bhoochetana.htm) being launched today by the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) who played a key role alongside the government and farmers to turn around agriculture in the state.

Key to the success was the large-scale adoption of integrated soil management practices in agriculture. The video series, which includes 11 video interviews initially, is aimed to capture diverse views from farmers, policymakers and technical experts on how to implement initiatives on a large scale and adoption from the farmers' perspective.

According to Mr Krishna Byre Gowda, Agriculture Minister, Government of Karnataka, the Government of Karnataka's Department of Agriculture has adopted the Bhoochetana project on a large scale, trying to raise awareness amongst farmers on managing their soils better, paying attention to soil health, so that overall yield enhancements benefit the farmer.

"Micronutrient application helps increase soil fertility and increases the capacity to keep soil moisture locked. We are finding a difference in the flowers, fruits, buds and yield," says Mahadevi Morbad, women farmer from the Dharwad District of Karnataka.

ICRISAT partnered with the Department of Agriculture, Government of Karnataka to ensure that there was agricultural growth – which was stagnant from 2001 to 2008 and 70% of the population in the state depended upon agriculture for their livelihood.

"The major driver of success in Bhoochetana was the scaling-up initiative, which reached more than 4 million farmers over the last 4 to 5 years – and benefited farmers by increasing their crop yields by 20 to 66 %, " said Dr Suhas Wani, Director, ICRISAT Development Center.

"It also helped the state of Karnataka to achieve annual growth rate of more than 5 % since 2009 – which was earlier stuck at 1% during 2001 to 2008," Dr Wani added.

Total benefits accrued from the Bhoochetana in the state have been estimated at more than \$242 million US dollars during 2009 to 2012.

Based on success of Bhoochetana in Karnataka, on the request of Governments of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, ICRISAT has been working in both the states. In Andhra Pradesh, ICRISAT is actively involved in designing Strategy for Primary Sector Mission, as part of Swarnandhara-2029, and is part of its execution in all 13 districts, through 13 pilot sites, each with 10,000 ha

This is the second *100 Voices* video series launched – the first one being *100 Voices on The Future of Genomics* (<http://www.icrisat.org/icrisat-100voices-genomics.htm>), which was launched in July this year.

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About ICRISAT

The **International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid-Tropics** (ICRISAT) is a non-profit, non-political organization that conducts agricultural research for development in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa with a wide array of partners throughout the world. Covering 6.5 million square kilometers of land in 55 countries, the semi-arid tropics have over 2 billion people, and 644 million of these are the poorest of the poor. ICRISAT innovations help the dryland poor move from poverty to prosperity by harnessing markets while managing risks – a strategy called Inclusive Market- Oriented development (IMOD). ICRISAT is headquartered in Patancheru, Hyderabad, Telangana, India, with two regional hubs and six country offices in sub-Saharan Africa. It is a member of the CGIAR Consortium.

About ICRISAT: www.icrisat.org; For ICRISAT's scientific information see: <http://EXPLOREit.icrisat.org>

CGIAR is a global agriculture research partnership for a food secure future. Its science is carried out by 15 research Centers who are members of the CGIAR Consortium in collaboration with hundreds of partner organizations.

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