

## Strategic partnership between UN's World Food Programme and IIT Delhi

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New Delhi, June 19 (India Science Wire): The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) India and the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi join hands to develop innovative solutions for enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the Government's food safety nets through operations research. The overall aim of this partnership is to create sustainable models that can be replicated across the country, the region, and beyond.

The overall objective of this partnership is to use advanced analytics and operations research to develop practical solutions that support long-term strategic planning of procurement, storage, and movement of food grains by agencies such as the Food Corporation of India (FCI) and, at the same time, create cost-effective supply chain networks for distribution of these food grains under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) at the state level. This will be especially relevant for states such as Uttarakhand, where maintaining a consistent availability and supply of food grains year-round is a challenge due to factors such as difficult terrain, limited availability of transporters, restricted windows for transportation and disintegrated storage spaces.



Prof. V. Ramgopal Rao, Director, IIT Delhi, said, "IIT Delhi has strong research activities in several relevant areas of research such as nutrition, operations research, public systems, and policy. IIT Delhi also takes pride in the societal impact of its research and innovations, which is a core part of its vision and strategy. This strategic partnership is particularly important from this perspective, and has the potential to result in advanced solutions for key problems of India and the World. It also manifests

our intent to work closely with the government and other public agencies for systemic reforms. I am confident this partnership will showcase the extent of enhancements possible in our public systems when such partners join hands”.

In close collaboration with the state and national governments, IIT Delhi and WFP will use their technical expertise in operations research and supply chain optimisation to collect and analyse important operational data such as current stocks, projected harvest yields, and consumption figures. Together they will identify their challenges and constraints, which will lead to the development of TPDS supply chain networks that will ensure a constant supply of food grains under TPDS in the most cost-effective and administratively efficient manner.

“This partnership is of strategic importance, as it combines expertise in on-ground implementation with research and development to further strengthen systems in terms of sustainability and accountability to impact the lives of millions of vulnerable people. We hope that the evidence generated under this collaboration not only supports other states in India but can also be replicated in the region,” said Bishow Parajuli, Country Director of WFP India. (India Science Wire)

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