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Reimagining Institutions for Sustainable Agriculture Development



COVER STORY:

Reimagining Institutions for Sustainable Agriculture

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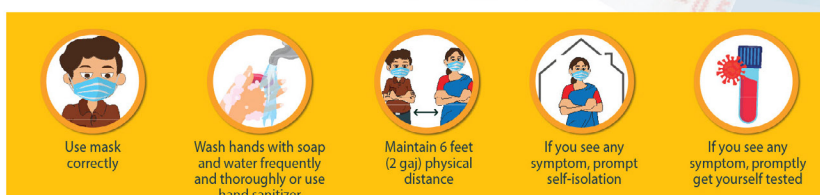
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When we are safe,
Nation is safe!





*The volunteers of Green Army feeding paddy mats, at Wadakkanchery in Kerala.
Photo credits: People's Archive of Rural India*

Reimagining Institutions for Sustainable Agriculture

Agriculture in the time of COVID-19

Role of agriculture lies with the fact that it is the largest provider of employment and livelihood opportunity for rural mass in India. It employs nearly 60 per cent of the rural population and contributes to nearly 20 per cent of country's GDP. The sector has been growing at around 3.4 per cent during this period where all other key sectors registered negative growth. There were several initiatives in the form of policies and programmes to accelerate agricultural growth for facilitating rural transformation. However, COVID-19 has dampened the growth prospects in the economy and agriculture sector was not spared. Interestingly, agriculture is the only sector that has registered a positive growth in the backdrop of a global pandemic that has disrupted productive economic activities and threatened livelihoods of millions of rural poor in the country. This reemphasises the critical role of agriculture and allied activities in defining rural transformation. However, the recent situation created

by COVID-19 pandemic emphasises the necessity of reimagining the institutional infrastructure required for transformation in the agriculture sector.

Centralised nature of agriculture development programmes and institutions

There were several strategies and policies since independence to foster growth in agriculture sector. This was very critical

Interestingly, agriculture is the only sector that has registered a positive growth in the backdrop of COVID-19 that has disrupted productive economic activities and threatened livelihoods of millions of rural poor.

not only to ensure food security and sovereignty of the nation but also to enhance the standards of living of rural population who were dependent on agriculture for livelihood. The policies and programmes for agriculture

development were largely centralised in which the State had a major role to play and helped us to achieve food self-sufficiency. The institutions that were set up for this transformation were largely public institutions which were centralised in character and execution. It was influenced largely by the fact that policymaking in Indian agriculture is a double-edged sword which could impact a large section of the vulnerable population on the demand (poor consumers in urban and rural areas) and supply side (small and marginal cultivators). Also the nature and characteristics of input and output markets in Indian agriculture demanded such institutions. Despite concerted efforts and interventions in the sector, growth in the sector was not impressive to the extent to bring a structural transformation. Several scholarly studies have identified the limiting factors and constraints that hold back growth in the sector and strategies to address them. However, various input and output market constraints affect the transformation of the agriculture sector.



The store set up by the Mayyil Rice Producer Company; Photo credits: Dr. Surjit Vikraman

Shift from global value chains to local and micro value chains

Global value chains and macro level processes got disrupted during the COVID-19 pandemic and have shattered rural livelihoods. Efforts are still being carried out to protect lives and livelihoods from this shock and bring the economy back on track in the interest of humanity. However, the pandemic has redefined the means, ways, processes and organisation of production, distribution and consumption. This also forces us to reimagine the nature, form, structure and role of institutions that has facilitated the production process and the nature and characteristics of distribution of benefits from agriculture.

As discussed earlier, agriculture is the only sector which has registered a positive growth during this period. The growth is largely fuelled with the support of micro value chains than macro level value chains. Promotion of micro value chains has the potential of equitable distribution of surplus among value chain actors and helps in efficient and sustainable use of resources used for production. This contributes to inclusive and sustainable development. 'Vocal for Local' and 'One District One Product' are examples of programmes supportive of this strategy

of promotion of micro value chains. There is a need for designing institutions to support activities and actors of such micro value chains. It should not only support aspects of output management but also take care of sustainable and efficient use of inputs as well.

Institutional innovations for agrarian market constraints

Despite significant gains on production and productivity front, agriculture sector suffers from several constraints, primarily due to factor and product market distortions. These market imperfections and absence of appropriate policy mechanisms to address these constraints result in low levels of returns to cultivators and landless agricultural labourers. There have been several policies and programmes aimed at addressing the constraints posed by these imperfections in various agrarian markets (input and output market constraints) that defines the characteristics of agricultural production systems and impact the welfare of farming community. This has resulted in several institutional innovations at different parts of the country that has tried to address various market imperfections. These institutional arrangements had their beginning in

the form of cooperatives, and later took the form of Self-Help Groups (SHGs), Group Farming Committees, Farmers Interest Groups/Clubs, Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) and several forms of farmers' organisations to address the constraints in availability and access to factors of production. Given the socio-economic situation and the changing policy environments, to improve the livelihoods of small holder farmer producers, they should be supported with an institutional arrangement which can:

- create scale economies through horizontal coordination, aggregation and marketing of output and purchase of inputs,
- improved bargaining position,
- technical support in production, identifying and prioritising buyers, prices, quantity and quality of commodities traded,
- reducing transaction costs in seeking information and organising production and marketing, and
- handle uncertainties and cushion risk in production and marketing.

Evidences of institutional innovations

There are several institutional innovations happening in the country side that have tried to address some of these agrarian constraints holding back the growth in agriculture sector and consequent setback in rural transformation strategies. In the current context, it is interesting to talk about two institutional innovations that were formed in response to constraints (input and output market constraints) in the agrarian markets in the State of Kerala. The first institutional innovation is the formation of "Green Army" which is an institutional arrangement to perform the agricultural

production practices in an irrigated rice production system in Wadakkanchery Block of Thrissur district in Kerala. It also serves as an institution to protect the welfare, and ensure a decent standard of living through creation of employment opportunities for agricultural labourers in the region, who are the most vulnerable sections of the society. The second institutional innovation is a farmers' group which has organised themselves into a Farmer Producer Organisation to sustain agricultural production and protect the livelihoods of households dependent on them. The Mayyil Farmer Producer Company in Mayyil Panchayat of Kannur district of Kerala has adopted a unique strategy of collectivisation of the agricultural operations to reap the benefits of performing operations collectively in scale, at the same time decentralising or disaggregating the output market activities. These two institutions were formed in line with the existing institutional models aimed at facilitating agriculture production, but deviate from them and maintain uniqueness in addressing the development challenges of the communities they are engaging with. They also attempt to improve the inclusiveness of the production process while ensuring sustainable returns from production.

Addressing input market constraints:

Green Army

Formation of Green Army is a significant intervention that led to the creation of an institution to address the challenges in agriculture development. It was formed in the Wadakkanchery

Block Panchayat of Thrissur district in Kerala, when the area was facing decline in agriculture production and reduction in the area under paddy cultivation. It resulted in farmers shifting away from cultivation. They identified that increased cost of cultivation was the major reason for loss in agriculture, which is primarily driven by the higher cost of labour service. The traditional way of agriculture practices followed and lack of adoption of modern machineries and technologies were the other reasons for raising the cost of cultivation. The labourers were also facing a lot of problems, including the uncertainty of the fixed working days and lack of social security and other benefits. The stakeholders of the agriculture sector intervened in this issue by formalising and institutionalising the labour sector. The output was the formation of Green Army.

Green Army transformed the entire status of labourers and thereby agriculture sector in the Wadakkanchery Block Panchayat. They organised the scattered labourers and gave them training in skill enhancement and capacity building to make a skilled labour force. They also entitled various social security measurements, fixed working days and fixed salary which empowered the labourers. It also brought a mechanisation to the fields of Wadakkanchery where the traditional agricultural practices were followed. This resulted in the reduction of cost of production and organised farming system in the area which attracted the farmers towards the Green Army and cultivation of paddy. Green Army grew into a system



A Green Army volunteer performing the paddy mat feeding process; Photo credits: People's Archive of Rural India

which provides all agriculture activities on contract basis at a specified charge for each work. It reduced the risk of farmers engaged in paddy cultivation. Green Army helped to strengthen the Padashekhara Samiti* and also provide banking support to get various loans and financial facilities and thus, contributed to creation of sustainable livelihood options in agriculture sector.

Decentralised marketing and centralised production: Mayyil Rice Producing Company (MRPC)

The institutionalisation of paddy cultivation in Mayyil by Mayyil Rice Producing Company (MRPC) helped to create sustainable paddy cultivation by a centralised production and decentralised marketing in the area. MRPC ensured a fair price for the farmers and extra income through value addition which promoted

**A padasekharam is a contiguous stretch of paddy field which can operate as a natural unit. This is formed by collectivisation of several plots of land owned by different cultivators. Most often agronomic constraints and advantages in irrigation management facilitates formation of a padasekharam. A Padasekhara Samiti is the body of owners of individual plots of land which carries out the production process and management of padasekharam.*



An MRPC staff displaying varieties of polished rice; Photo credits: Dr. Surjit Vikraman

more farmers towards cultivation and make it as a persistent livelihood option. It also could transform agriculture sector from a mere livelihood option into a successful enterprise.

The distinctive feature of this initiative was a centralised production and decentralised marketing strategy. The rice produced by a collective process of cultivation by Padashekara Samiti was then processed with the help of mini rice mills that can be operated at the household level. Mini mills have an important role in the success of Mayyil model to make it a decentralised value addition and marketing network. This is effective for areas where most of the farmers have small and marginal landholding and are constrained by access to large capital requirements for establishing centralised post-harvest handling facilities. This situation is almost same in India which has more number of small and marginal farmers.

These two institutional innovations have tried to address the major agrarian market constraints that pull back the performance of the sector and have contributed to the lives and livelihoods of population dependent on them.

The most important factor that has contributed to the emergence of these institutions is the leadership

and intervention of the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), which are the institutions for local self-governance. The PRIs of the respective regions facilitated and supported the formation of these two institutions and ensured a smooth sail towards their establishment to address the agrarian constraints. They played a major role in creating a platform that ensured collaboration of various research institutions, agricultural development agencies, communities engaged, and financial institutions in the region to work towards finding a solution to the problem.

A detailed social and economic assessment was carried out to find the possible ways of addressing these constraints and they came up with a strategy that is suitable for the region as well as ensured support and participation from the community. This facilitated the convergence of institutions engaged in research, technology transfer, natural resource management, agriculture and rural development programmes, financial inclusion and local governance towards establishment of a sustainable agricultural production system.

The formation of the two institutions studied has made significant contributions towards

a) bringing convergence of institutions of local self-governance, agriculture

research, technology transfer, financial access and inclusion, natural resource management and rural development.

b) improving the skill levels and performance of agricultural labourers, provision of dignity of labour, financial inclusion and social security support that has significantly improved their standard of living.

c) adopting measures that are gender sensitive and resulting in gender empowerment.

d) ecologically sustainable strategies for natural resource management through convergence of various agriculture and rural development institutions.

e) inclusive and sustainable development of farming community through locally adaptable interventions.

These two institutional innovations have tried to address the agrarian market constraints which in order have shown the importance of decentralised planning and role of institutions of local governance (PRIs) in finding solutions to micro level issues that constraint sustainable development, thus contributing to macro level benefits.

These are small steps towards finding local solutions to global problems that constraint sustainable rural development. It is high time that we look for similar 'neo-institutions' which are decentralised, inclusive and supportive of rural livelihoods to bring sustainable rural transformation.

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Cover page/Contents page photos:

People's Archive of Rural India

Cover page design: **Shri V.G. Bhat**

MoRD, NIRDPR organise SARAS Aajeevika Mela – 2021 at Noida Haat, Uttar Pradesh from 26th Feb to 14th Mar



Shri Narendra Singh Tomar, Hon'ble Minister of Rural Development, inaugurating the SARAS Aajeevika Mela- 2021

Marketing of products of the self-help groups (SHGs) is one of the major concerns of the Ministry of Rural Development. In order to empower the rural women artisans, to bring them above the poverty line through access to better market and marketing systems, the Ministry of Rural Development has been supporting the organisation of exhibitions under the brand name of 'SARAS' where SHGs from different States participate and sell their products.

'SARAS Mela' is a noteworthy initiative of the Ministry of Rural Development which aims to provide a platform to rural artisans to showcase their skills and products and also to develop a market for themselves. It provides a lucrative opportunity to rural producers to sell their products directly in major markets, to interact with the buyers; to study and comprehend the latter's tastes, preferences and choices. The Mela aims to eradicate middlemen between the craftsman and the local buyers and ensures to increase the margins for the artisans. It also aims at facilitating and motivating the beneficiaries of Self Help Groups (SHGs) supported by Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana -National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) scheme of

Ministry of Rural Development, to exhibit and sell their products and to provide them with an opportunity to additional income, exposure and interactions on a large scale.

To fulfil the above purposes, the Ministry of Rural Development and National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR), have been organising SARAS fairs at Delhi/ NCR on various occasions. Taking this forward, NIRDPR and Ministry of Rural Development initiated a new step by organising a 'SARAS Aajeevika Mela - 2021' at Noida Haat, Noida, Uttar Pradesh from 26th February to 14th March, 2021, in which around 150 women SHGs from 27 States/UTs of the country participated for exhibition and sale of their products. This exhibition-cum-sale under the brand name of 'SARAS' has brought to its audiences a wide range of products handcrafted by the rural artisans, craftsmen and beneficiaries of self-help groups (SHGs) promoted by DAY-NRLM from all over the country.

The SARAS Aajeevika Mela - 2021 was inaugurated by Shri Narendra Singh Tomar, Hon'ble Minister for Rural Development along with Shri Kailash Choudhary, Hon'ble Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmer Welfare on 26th February, 2021 at Noida Haat.

Shri Nagendra Nath Sinha, Secretary, MoRD, Dr. G. Narendra Kumar, Director General, NIRDPR, Smt. Alka Upadhyaya, Additional Secretary, MoRD, Shri Charanjit Singh, JS (RL), MoRD, Smt. Leena Johri, JS (Skills) MoRD, Shri R. Singh Director (RL), MoRD and other senior officers from MoRD and various other spheres were present during the event. The cultural troops of Noida Haat had performed regional dances before the Hon'ble guests and spectators during the inaugural function. After the inaugural function, the Hon'ble Minister visited the stalls and interacted with the artisans.

The stalls displayed the skills, potential and hard work of women from across India. The products ranged from handlooms, handicrafts, artefact and heritage products, tribal ornaments, decorative items, metallic products, earthen utensils, paintings, organic food items, spices, processed food products, soft toys, utility items, brass and wrought iron products and many other exclusive items. To acquaint the public with the process involved in the manufacturing of handicrafts, live demonstrations were also organised at the SARAS Aajeevika Mela. The Mela has also created an opportunity for the general public to understand the various programmes and initiatives of the Ministry of Rural Development



Sadhvi Niranjan Jyoti, Hon'ble Minister of State for Rural Development, at SARAS Aajeevika Mela-2021

through the Information Centre and multiple IEC initiatives of the Ministry.

Cultural programmes by artists from various States were also arranged as a part of the Mela. A highly sophisticated cultural hall and stage were constructed at the Mela venue for performing cultural programmes. The Ministry has organised few workshops for the women participants for honing their soft skills as well as skills in packaging, managing consumers, etc during the Mela. Aajeevika India Food Court was set up by the Ministry through Kudumbashree, the State Poverty Eradication Mission of Kerala, which offered cuisines from 10 States during the Mela.

As part of the Mela, the Ministry invited all States/UTs across the nation for installation of 150 stalls for women SHG members, who are beneficiaries under the DAY-NRLM scheme of the Ministry of Rural Development. In addition, the Ministry also decided to invite Kudumbashree, the state poverty eradication mission of Kerala, to install 17 food stalls from various states across the country at the India Food Court. The SRLMs were instructed to send the nominations of SHGs through Online Registration Portal (<http://nrlm.gov.in>). The online registration system was made mandatory for all States to bring

more transparency and stall distribution was also taken care of through the portal. In total, 178 stalls, including those coming under the categories of States, VIP, RSETI, SARAS gallery and India food court.

In order to display the diversity of our country and varieties of similar items at a single location, the stalls were categorised under three categories, i.e. Natural Food, Handloom and Handicraft Items. Proper signage and indications were made to help the visitors for a hustle free shopping experience.

Some of the special attractions of SARAS Aajeevika Mela-2021 were as follows: Handloom: Kalamkari, leather lamp sheds, painting and woodcraft of Andhra Pradesh; Mehklachadar from Assam, Cotton and Silk Sarees from Bihar,

Kosa Sarees from Chhattisgarh, Bharat Gunthan and Patch work from Gujarat, Tussar Silk and Cotton from Jharkhand, Dupatta and dress materials from Jharkhand, Pashmina shawls of Jammu & Kashmir, dress materials, woollen shawls and jackets from Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh; handcrafted jutties, Ilkal from Karnataka, Chanderi & Bagh print material of Madhya Pradesh, Eri Products from Meghalaya, Tussar and Banda from Odisha, mojeris, leather items of Rajasthan, Kanchipuram from Tamil Nadu, Pochampalli from Telangana, Pashmina from Uttarakhand, bed sheets and cotton suit from Uttar Pradesh, Katha, Batik Print, Tanth and Baluchari Sarees and dress material from West Bengal.

Handicraft: Pearl jewellery from Andhra Pradesh, bamboo art, water hyacinth products and yoga mats from Assam; Lac bangles, Madhubani paintings and Sikki crafts from Bihar; bell metal products from Chhattisgarh; decorative items from Goa and Uttar Pradesh, mud mirror work and Dori work from Gujarat; metal art, terracotta items, artefacts from Haryana; artificial flower art from North East; jewellery from Karnataka; Sabai grass products and Patachitra on palm leaves from Odisha; Dokra craft, Sitalpatti, jute handbags and diversified products from West Bengal; tribal jewellery from Jharkhand.



Dr. G. Narendra Kumar, IAS, Director General, NIRDPR during the inaugural function. Also seen is Shri Narendra Singh Tomar, Hon'ble Minister of Rural Development

Natural Food Items: Natural spices, green products across States like spices, ginger, coffee, tea, pulses, rice, millets products, medicinal plants products, coffee, papad, apple jam, pickles, Gram flour, rice, cashew nut, organic pulses, rice, organic vegetables and spices, honey from Punjab, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Kerala and Uttarakhand, etc.

This apart, four stalls were also installed by the Foundation for Development of Rural Value Chains (FDRVC) for sale of the products of the SHGs associated with them. Five stalls were also installed by RSETIs (DDU-GKY Division of MoRD) for the sale of the products and also to provide the information related to their skill development programmes and three stalls were allotted for banks.

Kudumbashree, the State poverty eradication mission of Kerala, installed 17 food stalls from various States across the country at the India Food Court to showcase the diversity of India's ethnic cuisines from nearly 10 States prepared and served by SHG members. One transgender SHG from Kerala has installed a fresh juice stall in the food court. During the 17 days of the Mela, the India Food Court earned a total sale of around Rs.36.26 lakh.

Three workshops – 'Promotion of Rural Products through e-Marketing & Social Media' taken by Dr. Kaynat Kazi, renowned social media blogger and photographer, 'Better Designing & Packaging of Rural Products' taken by Dr. Ritika Agarwal, faculty of NIFT and 'Sales Communication & Psychology of Buyers' taken by Dr. Aparna Dwivedi, senior journalist – were organised as part of the event. Besides, the Ministry and FDRVC organised a 'Buyer and Seller Meet' with Flipkart, under the Chairpersonship of Smt. Alka Upadhyaya, AS (RD). Shri Charanjit Singh, JS (RL), MoRD elaborated the concept of the above-said meet in detail to the participants.

Sadhvi Niranjana Jyoti, Hon'ble Minister of State for Rural Development, visited the Mela on 9th March, 2021 along with other senior officials from MoRD and NIRDPR.



Smt. Alka Upadhyaya, IAS, Additional Secretary (RD) addressing the buyer and seller meet held during the SARAS Aajeevika Mela-2021

The Hon'ble MoS (RD) visited various stalls, interacted with the artisans and appreciated rural women SHGs for their skill and category of good quality products made by them.

Shri Nagendra Nath Sinha, Secretary (Rural Development), visited the stalls and India Food court on 14th March. Commenting that the Mela is a great place for exploring SHG entrepreneurs to urban customers, he said appreciated the variety and quality of products.

Dr. G. Narendra Kumar, Director General, NIRDPR visited the stalls on 26th March to take an overall review of the preparation of organising the Mela. During the visit, he interacted with SHG members and gave valuable suggestions for the smooth functioning of Mela.

Smt. Alka Upadhyaya, Additional Secretary (Rural Development) also visited the stalls and India Food Court, and interacted with the artisans.

Several other dignitaries and distinguished personalities, including Cabinet Ministers, Secretary/senior-level officials from various Ministries, Members of Parliament, and dignitaries from various fields also visited the SARAS Aajeevika Mela-2021. Many celebrities including Richa Anirudh also visited the Mela and appreciated the event.

A team from Andaman & Nicobar and Cluster Level Federation (CLF) women members from Haryana State Rural Livelihood Mission visited Saras Mela at

Noida Haat for exposure and to share their experiences. They interacted with artisans to understand the entire process of making various products, the features of products and how to sell the products through these Melas and other marketing channels.

The Ambassadors/Diplomats of the countries including Uganda, Czech Republic, Iceland, Venezuela, Papua New Guinea, Serbia, Latvia, El Salvador, Yemen, Taiwan, Indonesia, Cambodia, USA and Tajikistan visited the Mela on 12th March and appreciated the event.

To generate awareness of various schemes and programmes of the Ministry of Rural Development, an Information Centre was constructed in the Noida Haat of SARAS Aajeevika Mela. Videos on various schemes/programmes of MoRD were played throughout every day. Attendants were also deputed to address the queries of the visitors and to provide information on the ongoing Mela.

The SHGs were strictly instructed to avoid the use of plastic carry bags during the Mela and directed to use eco-friendly bags only for delivery of items purchased by customers. To promote and inculcate the habit of plastic-free Mela, 60,000 eco-friendly carry bags were distributed to the rural artisans during the Mela.

All SHGs, visitors and officials were



Artefacts from Rajasthan put on display the Mela

instructed to follow a strict COVID-19 protocol at the SARAS Aajeevika Mela. As a preventative measure, 5000 masks were distributed to stallholders (artisans), staff, volunteers and other individuals. A health desk was set up with an ambulance on standby for any medical emergencies.

A team, including the members of NIC division, was constituted to record day to day sale of each stall in coordination with the respective State Coordinators. CRPs from the States of Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand and Telangana were also assigned to record the sales and assist & train the artisans on online activities. The total sale reported in 17 days came to Rs.3.83 crore from all the stalls including India Food Court.

Patrakar Didis from Jharkhand working under the DAY-NRLM scheme were invited to the Mela. Patrakar Didis kept their eyes on the Mela and took snaps on important incidents and prepared the newsletter. Banking Correspondents (BC) from Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh participated in the event. BC Sakhis facilitated the artisans as well as the visitors to deposit and withdraw cash within the Mela venue.

The Ministry organised the Self

Help Groups (SHGs) Award Function on 8th March, 2021 at Vigyan Bhawan on the occasion of International Women's Day. The Hon'ble Minister of Rural Development Shri Narendra Singh Tomar graced the occasion and around 23 participating SHGs of SARAS Aajeevika Mela (Noida Haat) attended the programme. Certificates acknowledging the participation of the SHGs, Food Court, Artisans, State Coordinators, CRP-EPs, BC Sakhis, Patrakar Didis, etc. in the SARAS Aajeevika Mela-2021 were issued on the closing day.

In total, the SARAS Aajeevika

Mela-2021 was a great success and it created an impact among the artisans as well as visitors. The participants/artisans expressed their satisfaction over the sales whereas the visitors also appreciated this initiative. The Mela helped in publicising the flagship programmes of the Ministry of Rural development, especially Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM). The online registration of participants, sales reporting, attendance and generation of e-billing through the mobile app were appreciated.

Shri Chiranji Lal Kataria, Assistant
Director & HoD (Marketing Cell),
NIRDPR Delhi Branch



The stall of Andhra Pradesh

Brainstorming session to formulate ToT for Bureau Chiefs/Editors on Rural Journalism

An online brainstorming session to formulate a training of trainers for Bureau Chiefs and Editors in covering rural issues was held on 15th March 2021 under the chairmanship of Dr. G. NarendraKumar, IAS, Director General, NIRDPR.

Apaprt from the Director General, Prof. K. G. Suresh, Vice Chancellor, Makhanlal Chaturvedi National University of Journalism and Communication, Bhopal, Shri Neelesh Mishra, Founder, GaonConnection, Shri U. Sudhakar Reddy, Editor-Investigations, Times of India, Dr. Joy Elamon, Director General, Kerala Institute of Local Administration, Shri G. Sajan, Head of Programmes, Doordarshan Kendra, Thiruvananthapuram and Dr. Akanksha Shukla, Associate Professor & Head (i/c), CDC, NIRDPR attended the session.

Dr. Akanksha Shukla gave an overview about the Institute to the panellists and explained the objective of the meeting.

Dr. G. Narendra Kumar, IAS, Director General, NIRDPR opened his statement by quoting Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo's research, which suggests people preferring television to staple food. "This shows the popularity of the medium and its relevance in the current era. Majority of the population lives in rural areas and hence, the problems of the unprivileged section need to be addressed by media. There are four kinds of people. One who work but are never covered in reports, others who work little at the same time get coverage; third is a set of people who hardly work, but hog the lime-light and fourth – is a set of people, who sell issues but do nothing to addresses solutions," he said, emphasising the need of the media to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the rural development programmes.

Prof. K.G. Suresh, Vice Chancellor, Makhanlal Chaturvedi National University

of Journalism and Communication, Bhopal said that communication is an integral part of rural development and local governance. "YouTube channels are predominant in India and hence, training should be imparted to those who can work in rural areas and start their own ventures in digital platforms. Many are depending on social media for information. A considerable number of them fall victims to fake news, which results in socio-political problems. Hence, identification of fake news should form an integral part of the training," he said.

"The rural population need general information, which is not reflected in mainstream media. Therefore, a new and

Rural Journalism Entrepreneurship/ Start-Ups as platforms like YouTube and Facebook are eating into their revenue. Training must include topics like RTI Act, media ethics, data mining techniques, media grants, basic elements of reporting, investigative techniques and creative writing," he detailed.

Dr. Joy Elamon, Director General, Kerala Institute of Local Administration noted that the negative side of the rural aspects are stealing the limelight, whereas developmental activities are not reflected. "Mainstream media is interested in finding fault and hence, local news gets poor coverage. Training must be imparted to local journalists/stringers,



vibrant initiative is required to bridge the gap between public broadcast media and mainstream media," he added.

Founder of Gaon Connection Shri. Neelesh Mishra stressed the significance of documentation of success stories by the department themselves. "Parallel media is a necessity due to the lack of better synergy between the government and media to raise rural issues. In order to promote it, the trainers should take advantage of the camera handling skills of community/citizen journalists. There should be a mechanism at the state level to collate, edit and create content out of this," he said.

Shri. U. Sudhakar Reddy, Editor-Investigations, Times of India started with the issues faced by stingers covering rural issues, such as lack of protection, legal suits and low/no pay. "Their reporting skills, sources and story idea generation skills are weak. There is a need to have

district-level journalists and those sitting at the news desk," he said.

Mr. G. Sajan, Head of Programmes, Doordarshan Kendra, Thiruvananthapuram wanted to plan experiments in redefining rural communication. He said the emphasis must be placed on identifying the issue and empowering the citizens on community journalism. He added that technical training on software for recording and editing, and methods of storytelling must be provided.

At the end of the session, Dr. G. Narendra Kumar said that the training need to be planned by segregating the trainees as mainstream journalists, community/citizens journalists, etc., and the content and curriculum can be formulated independently.

Dr. Akanksha Shukla proposed a vote of thanks.

- CDC initiatives

Change in the demand for work by beneficiaries under MGNREGS: Preliminary observations based on field visit to Giridih, Jharkhand



The assets created under MGNREGS in Giridih district of Jharkhand State

A study on 'Change in the demand for work by beneficiaries under MGNREGS after providing them individual assets during 2013-14 to 2019-20' was carried out in Giridih district of Jharkhand State. The study was conducted in four sample Blocks of the district namely, Bengabad, Giridih-Sadar, Jamuva and Pirtand.

The initial observations were made through data elicited from focus group discussions in seven Gram Panchayats (GPs) covering four sample blocks during 5-9 February, 2021 involving the State (Commissioner, RD), District Officials (District Development Commissioner (DDC), Programme Officer, MIS Expert, Block Programme officer (BPOs) along with Enumerators and individual asset beneficiaries. The criteria for identification of shelf of activities in the State (location-specific and need-based) were as per MGNREGS guidelines.

The State Government has introduced a model asset creation platform for individual assets across the State and the major individual assets planned and implemented in the State are wells, field cum trench cum bunds, farm pond, poultry shed, cattle shed, kitchen garden, and plantation under Birsa Munda Bhagwani Yojana and Birsa Munda Harita Yojana. To implement

the Category-B assets, the chain of stakeholders under MGNREGA at the ground level, other than the ultimate beneficiary, i.e. the workers, are as follows.

S No.	Who	Main task	Focus
1	Gram Panchayat (GP)	Decides what works need to be undertake	Scheme implementation at village level ¹
2	Gram Rozgar sahayak (GRS)	Assists GP	
3	Mates (or mistris)	Supervise worksite/ group of workers At least 1 per 100 workers	Project-specific execution within time and quality specifications
4	Panchayat development officer(PDO)	Assist GP in planning MGNREGA works	Several projects
5	JE (works)	Technical supervision of projects	Several projects

At higher levels, i.e. at block and district levels, there are other stakeholders such as the Cluster Facilitation Team, Intermediate Panchayat, Programme Officer, Technical Assistant, Block Resource Centre, District Panchayat, District Programme Coordinator, Civil Society Organisations, Self-help Groups and Central and State governments.

Field Observations:

The criteria for individual asset identification and asset sanctioned in the sample GPs are based on the result of the model pilot approach - the assets being planned among individual

beneficiaries are construction of well, dhoba cum poultry shed/cattle shed and plantation (mango cum timber as border plantation). The economic potential of

the sample GPs has mostly diversified agriculture due to the construction of irrigation infrastructure (wells and farm ponds) creation of Category-B assets under MGNREGS. Prior to this, the beneficiaries had resorted to single cropping depending on the monsoons. The employment engagement was also very meagre (on an average 40 days employment in agriculture). Three seasonal crops are being cultivated now due to the availability of irrigation sources. The major crops are rice, jowar, maize, potato, wheat and vegetables. The employment engagement by the household in agriculture has also

increased tremendously (on an average 250 days in a year). There is a comparative advantage in both the creation of irrigation infrastructure under MGNREGS as well as the availability of market facilities in and around the vicinity of these GPs. The proximity of urban centres, transport facilities and road connectivity have helped them to sell their agriculture products in time and the demand for fresh vegetable continues in these centres. Though the support services and other institutional platforms are very premature in nature (SHGs- II linkage, FPOs in formation stage), MGNREGS has created a very good platform (provision of wage employment and creation of useful assets) for strengthening the existing livelihoods, enhanced employment and food and nutritional security. The success rate of these positive impacts is assessed as good informative, supportive and cooperative nature of the officials to the workers in the sample GPs. The participation of labour in preparation of labour budget and identification shelf of activities is very low as it was observed that most of these activities are exercised by Block Level Office staff (BDO). The social audit process is outsourced by the State government and it was done thoroughly in these GPs. The entire MGNREGS programme

implementation was assessed and verified properly during 2017-18, and there were not many grievances raised.

Despite the support extended to the marginal, small and other vulnerable sections through Category-B assets under MGNREGS and evidential benefits accrued from these assets in the form of diversification of agriculture and enhanced employment for those who have received assets, this impact is not translated on the ground. In terms of change in demand for work by beneficiaries under MGNREGS after providing them individual assets, the preliminary data shows that there is not much change in demand for work under MGNREGS towards less demand/no demand. The influence factors of demand for work are employment opportunities within the periphery/vicinity of the village, job security, MGNREGS-unskilled labour related works and direct benefit transfer. The preliminary observations are as follows.

- The first is augmenting rural incomes through intensification of agriculture/crop diversification due to assured irrigation facilities (construction of well, dhobha (farm pond), etc. Another set of works relate to augmenting productivity of agriculture through investments in land and water: water conservation and harvesting works as enabling diversification of crop production for the market, maintaining livestock, and expanding the area under irrigation and cultivation - all of these works not only

augment the productivity of marginal farmlands, an increasingly important resource base for food production.

- A third dimension includes greening initiatives via MNREGA-Plantation (Birma Munda Bhagwani Yojana (BMBY-19/06/2018) & Birsa Harit Gram Yojana (BAHY- 13/5/2020)) with carefully selected species of trees. During COVID-19, the demand for employment was met from these plantation schemes as well as under MGNREGS balancing both material and wage component ratios.

- MGNREGS with the departments of Animal Husbandry, Jharkhand State Livelihoods Promotion Society (JSLPS) and Forest Department: A second thrust came from convergence initiatives, which is envisaged dovetailing MGNREGA with existing programmes in other departments. The labour and wage component would come from MGNREGA while the material and technical inputs would come from other departments. Although it was not clear what convergence had or had not achieved in the initial years, there are many examples of meaningful convergence having augmented livelihoods of beneficiaries, without undermining the spirit of the programme in the recent years.

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Associate Professor, Centre for Wage Employment and Livelihoods, NIRDPR

Shri Kiran Kumar Singh,

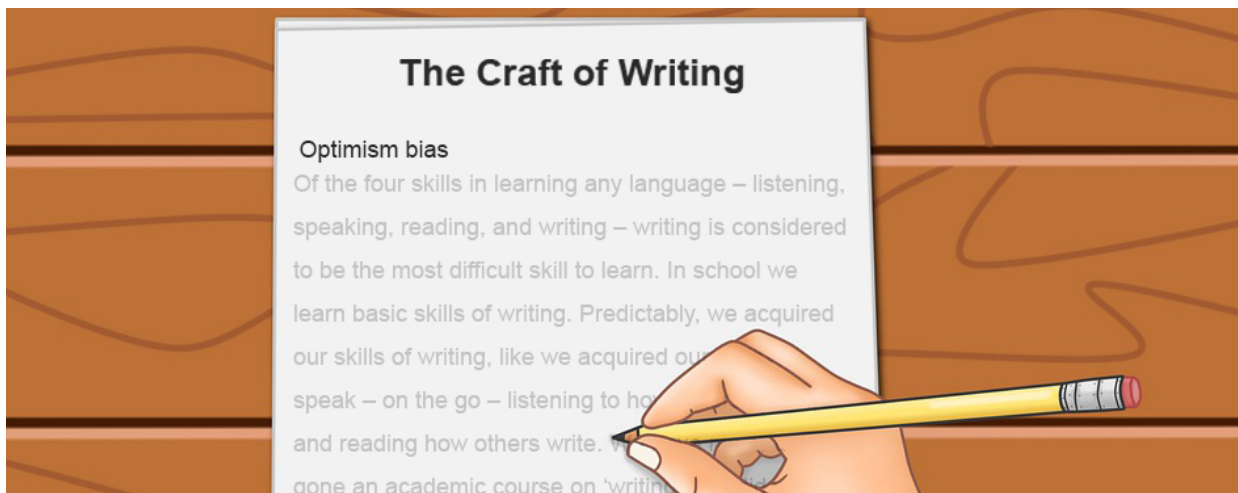
Research Associate, CWE&L



Beneficiaries near a well constructed under MGNREGS



A farm pond constructed under MGNREGS



Optimism bias

Of the four skills in learning any language – listening, speaking, reading, and writing – writing is considered to be the most difficult skill to learn. In school, we learn the basic skills of writing. Predictably, we acquired our skills of writing, like we acquired our ability to speak – on the go – listening to how others speak, and reading how others write. We have never undergone an academic course on 'writing', nor did we get a formal training in writing. Yet, it's our fond wish or optimism bias that makes us think - we write well. We write almost daily – we write official e-mails, e-office notes, field notes, case studies, research reports and so on.

As trainers, researchers, and development professionals, time and again we face situations where we have to write reports or official notes all the time. In order to write successfully, you don't have to become a great writer. I am not one for that matter. Present yourself to readers as a professional who cares, and as someone they would welcome into their homes. All you need is care, and a strong desire to improve.

What is Field Notes and what is a Field Diary?

It often happens that we do not care to differentiate Field Notes from a Field Diary. We easily use bullets where

bullets are inappropriate, and the usage sanctions numbering when we have to list out certain items. We do not pay attention if vertical listing or horizontal listing is appropriate in a given context. We write 'summary' of our research work, and call it 'abstract' or vice versa.

You write the 'abstract' of a research article for a peer reviewed journal, with no trace of any syntax in 'how you have formulated your abstract'. The abstract of a research paper must be written with a formula veiled in it so as to drag your reader into reading the entire article. Do you have that formula? I shall give you one or two at the end of this article. These and other such details are called 'nuts and bolts' of good writing, which we should have learnt in an academic course at university. But no university seems to offer it as part of any academic programme. Yet, we write.

Achieving world-class mastery in writing

We picked up intuitive grammar as a cultural tool by listening to our teachers and others talk. We started talking with some kind of pidgin grammar. We bank on the same skills to put it in writing, calling to aid some of the high school English grammar.

Speaking in English, possibly, gives us the confidence that we can put 'the same thing in writing' - that's all it's there

to writing, we think. Perhaps, a footnote is missing here. That is 'Of course, we have to take care of the commas, and full stops while writing'. No. It is not as simple as that. The journey to get to grips with good writing skills does not end there.

In order to appreciate a good writing, consider the following excerpt from 'The Banker to the Poor (The Story of Grameen Bank)' by Prof. Muhammad Yunus. "To me, the poor are like Bonsai trees. When you plant the best seed of the tallest tree in a six-inch deep flower pot, you get a perfect replica of the tallest tree, but it is only inches tall. ... There is nothing wrong with their seeds. Only society never gave them a base to grow on." Three sentences speak a thesis, right? This is being a master crafts-person. This is writing the way we take photographs – having full control over the depth of field.

Therefore, writing, like how we speak, does not augur well because speaking and writing are two different media of communication. If you approached writing as a purposeful craft or scientific practice, you will understand that there are different types of writing that serve diverse purposes. Your e-office note cannot read like a technical essay, nor can your journal article read like what you write to a newsletter. Only when we begin to criticise our own writings, we realise these complexities. It's very true they say half of writing is rewriting.

Half of writing is rewriting

While writing this article, a doubt appeared: Is it Speak English or Speak in English? 'Speak English' refers to your ability to speak, whereas 'Speak in English' is about a language choice. Subtleties such as this one should serve as speed-breakers so that we master the craft of writing. We look up dictionaries, or call online help and so on.

We rarely pay attention to these trivial details. We indulge in a happy-medium saying: 'English is not my mother tongue'. When most of what we do involves writing, and if we consider these details as being trivial, there is no point in talking about professionalism in our craft. A football player has to watch the ball, a driver has to watch the road, and a writer has to watch each word. I am not a writer, for sure. But, most of what I do involves writing. I write for others to read. I ought to respect my reader. Through your e-mails, e-office notes and other writings you host an exhibition of how proficient and masterful you are in your craft; or how cluttered your mind is and how uncoordinated you are.

Master the skills of your craft

One must view writing as carpentry, where you can work with a set of tools. Tools such as online dictionaries, online thesaurus, and the dictionary of collocations help us remove the clutter in our writing and achieve clarity, if only we wish to achieve clarity. The right click in your computer mouse helps, but to a limited extent. If you recollect the high school English grammar you learnt, you can realise that in high school, we were taught about the rules that constrain rather than tools that enable. We need to break with past, and find modern tools and online help that 'enable'.

Almost all classic guides to writing non-fiction (starting from the evergreen Strunk Jr and E. B. White, 1919 to today's Roy Peter Clark, 2019) tell us that we need to take care of two important things: (i) who is the reader of what you write;

and (ii) the purpose your writing is intended to serve. Thirdly, I wish to add, if what you are writing is a research report or an argumentative essay for a peer-reviewed journal, we need to get into the shoes of a critic and see what rival argument/alternative interpretation your critic could possibly come up with.

I realised while making a PowerPoint presentation recently that your listener could give a startlingly new meaning to what you put together in your presentation. Thus, my presentation that was meant to 'provoke thinking' [by raising a series of questions] came to be criticised as being cynical. I learnt once again that I failed to bear in mind the advice of giants like Strunk Jr (1919) and William Zinsser (2016).

Freedom from clutter

Academic writing is hardly ever taught as a course in university programmes that means we have never undergone any formal training in writing, except that we learnt some basic/traditional grammar from our high school English teachers. But, all of us write – sometimes it is clear, and at times it is vague. It's terrible when someone can read your text and take on a meaning that you never intended. This is because we often do not put in the effort required to eliminate the clutter in order to bring in a singular clarity. The 303-page book titled 'On Writing Well' by William Zinsser (2016) is entirely about how to achieve freedom from clutter.

Before I close this article, let me give you a few sample nuts and bolts that I promised at the beginning of this article that I shall give you.

(1) Vertical Listing or Horizontal Listing: This is presenting many complex pieces of information into manageable chunks. For example, instead of horizontal listing like this: I have designed a wastewater system bearing in mind four criteria. They are: It should not exceed Rs.1 lakh budget; it should not require power to run; it should not occupy large

land space; and it should involve minimal maintenance. [horizontal listing].

We could say this:

I have designed a wastewater system bearing in mind four criteria. They are:

- i. it should not exceed Rs.1 lakh budget;
- ii. it should not require power to run;
- iii. it should not occupy large land space;
- iv. and it should involve minimal maintenance.

[Vertical listing].

Similarly, when we write objectives of a research project, we should always number them. We should never use bullets. This is because you are unwaveringly clear about the number of objectives you shall include in your research. In other words, the number of objectives cannot keep growing as you make progress in your research work, whereas you don't use the same technique when you are listing out something like this. To describe the poor, we have rich vocabulary.

- The marginalized
- The downtrodden
- Underprivileged
- Destitute
- Poverty-stricken
- The empty-handed
- The fortuneless
- The penurious

[We use bullets here, and never number these items. This list can grow].

(2) How to write an Abstract?

I give below two patterns widely followed for writing abstracts of research papers. You can follow any of them.

Formula - 1: Context + Problem + Main point: The erstwhile Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (MDWS) introduced inclusive service delivery policy in 2011. [The context]. A study conducted by the UNDP has come out with results that show that the main villages in Gram Panchayats have been covered, whereas SC/ST habitations

are underserved [The problem]. In this study, it was found that equity has been achieved in terms of adequacy and safety of water supply, however, in terms of distance travelled and regularity of supply the SC/ST habitations are underserved [The Main Point].

Formula - 2: Context + Problem + Launching Point: The erstwhile Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (MDWS) introduced inclusive service delivery policy in 2011. [The context]. A study conducted by the UNDP has come out with results that show that the main villages in Gram Panchayats have been covered, whereas SC/ST habitations are underserved [The problem]. This study has made an attempt to find out if equity has been achieved in drinking water supply on four important parameters, namely (i) adequacy, (ii) safety, (iii) distance travelled, and (iv) regularity. [The launching point].

An abstract typically runs into 100 -150 words. In some rare cases, some journals allow up to a maximum of 250 words. An 'Executive Summary' typically may run into nearly 500 words, while a summary runs into nearly 2-10 pages depending on the purpose and length of the full report. A summary usually has sections such as: (i) Title of the Study; (ii) Study Team; (iii) Introduction; (iv) Objectives; (v) Methodology; (vi) Study Area; (vii) Findings; and

(viii) Conclusion.

In Executive Summaries, the most interesting points are presented in bite-size chunks. It should briefly set out: the report's purpose, main findings, main conclusions and the recommendations. The purpose is rapid understanding of the main issues, enabling busy readers to ignore everything else, and get to the action points proposed, and for an administrator to consider if the suggested course of actions sound financially viable, administratively feasible/implementable, and politically acceptable.

(3) Abbreviations and Acronyms: Students present abbreviations and acronyms in their dissertations, quite often, not knowing which is which. The list of abbreviations and acronyms frequently look fouled up. An abbreviation is typically shortened form of words used to represent the whole e.g., NIRDPR, CBI, IMF, GST and others such as Dr. or Prof. St., Dept., Govt., etc., are also abbreviations.

An acronym is an abbreviation used as a word which is formed from the initial components in a phrase or a word, and is pronounced almost like a word e.g., AIDS, NASA, PIN, OPEC etc. There is a third category in abbreviations, which are called contractions or contracted forms. They are: 'do not' written as don't; and cannot written as can't, etc. We list them out not knowing which is which.

I would like to end this article posing

a question to myself: who decides what is 'good writing'? This question can be answered by another question only. Why should a researcher follow APA Style Manual (7th Edition)? There are basic principles of plain English, and elements of good writing that have become universally recognised standard practice amidst the academic community. They are referred to as scientific writing, academic writing, style manual, etc., among the scholars in various branches of social sciences and humanities. It helps achieve universality in terms of standards.

Learning our craft this way helps elevate a good paper to great! The first step towards this is: acquiring clarity in writing. It is Tim de Lisle of The Connell Guide to 'How to Write Well', who says: If you can only be one thing, be clear. It sounds like a modest ambition, but we often fall short of it.

By the way, how is Field Notes different from Field Diary? Keep your reader in suspense. At the end, if you deliberately decide to leave your readers in suspense so that they will do their own search as well, that's a good strategy, indeed.

Dr. R. Ramesh

Associate Professor & Head,
Centre for Rural Infrastructure,
NIRDPR

Illustration: **Shri V.G. Bhat**, Artist, CDC

Training programme on training methods and techniques for faculty of rural development institutes

The Centre for Human Resource Development, National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Hyderabad organised a five-day online training programme on 'Training Methods and Techniques for Faculty of Rural Development Institutes' during 22nd -26th February, 2021.

This programme was designed by keeping in view the rural development

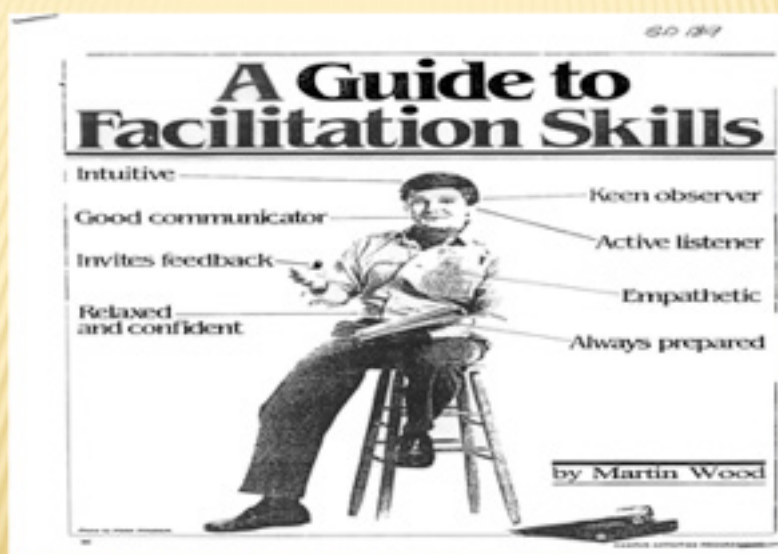
institutes' prime objective of training and capacity building of rural development officials and allied departments on the subjects where programmes/schemes can be implemented effectively. The need for this programme was expressed during different meetings at NIRDPR, Hyderabad.

The objectives of this programme were: (i) to equip the participants with the skills on training methods in

order to make training programmes effective (ii) to make the participants develop effective presentation skills and techniques (iii) to orient the participants on skills including soft skills and how to be an effective trainer, and (iv) to state the trends in training and capacity building approaches and strategies for rural development.

Dr. Y Ramana Reddy, Professor and

GOOD FACILITATORS KNOW HOW TO MANAGE GROUP DYNAMICS



A slide presented during the online training programme

Head, CHRD inaugurated the programme and welcomed the participants. He contextualised the need of the training programme for rural development institutes and made the participants understand its importance.

A total of 31 participants (22 male and 9 female) took part in this programme. They represented 11 States (Jharkhand, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Maharashtra). Among the participants were faculties from SIRDs, ETCs, PRTCs and DRCPs. The participants found the programme very useful and suggested that such kind of programmes should be conducted as physical training programme on regular intervals. It is reflected through their feedback that there is an improvement in their knowledge (94 percent), skill (94 percent) and change in attitude (92) after attending this programme.

The objectives, content, training methods and expected outcome of each session was planned according to the comments received from Training Quality Improvement Measures Committee.

The first day of the programme focused on importance of training and

development, training process and methods, learning principals.

On the second and third days of the programme, different training methods were discussed in detail. On fourth and fifth days, the focus was on techniques for imparting effective training such as designing a training programme-principals, evaluation of training - concepts and techniques, effective presentation skills, how to handle classroom dynamics, qualities of effective trainer and action plan for follow up. In addition, a recap of previous day's learning and assignments were carried out.

The experienced subject matter specialists included faculty of NIRDPR and external resource persons. Faculties invited from other centres of the NIRDPR were Dr. T. Vijaya Kumar, Dr. Rajesh Kumar Sinha, Dr. P. P. Sahu, Dr. M. Srikanth, Dr. R. Ramesh, and Shri K. Rajeshwar.

Few resource persons were invited from other reputed institutes, including Dr. G. Jaya, National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management, Hyderabad, Dr. C. S. Singhal, Professor (Retd.), NIRDPR, Dr. K. H. Rao, National Academy of Agricultural Research Management,

Hyderabad, and Dr. C. Rani, Former Director, School for Entrepreneurship and Extension and Chief Administrative Officer, National Institute for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Hyderabad.

Based on the suggestions and feedback by the trainees, CHRD is proposing this programme for the year 2021-2022.

The participants appreciated CHRD, NIRDPR for designing the programme in such a way that they could refresh and update their knowledge and skills on training methods and techniques. They opined that it would be useful for them to conduct training programmes for district-level officials more effectively so that they can implement rural development programmes at the grassroots level in a better way.

The course coordinator thanked all the participants and advised them to implement the training methods and techniques which they learnt here while conducting the training programmes in their respective institutions.

This programme was coordinated by Dr. Lakhan Singh, Assistant Professor, Centre for Human Resource Development, NIRDPR, Hyderabad.

Two-day hands-on training cum workshop on Rammed Earth and Poured Earth Wall Construction



Participants getting a hands-on experience on poured earth wall construction

The Centre for Innovations and Sustainable Technology for Skills and Jobs, National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR), organised a two-day hands-on training programme on 'Rammed Earth and Poured Earth Wall Construction' for architects, engineers and students across Telangana from 25th to 26th March, 2021. The programme was coordinated by Dr. Ramesh Sakthivel, Associate Professor & Head, CIAT&SJ, NIRDPR, who emphasised the importance of using of eco-friendly housing technologies in order for the overall sustainable development.

The process of mud wall construction is being extensively researched, and as a part of this effort, the Rural Technology Park, NIRDPR has constructed rammed earth walls of different types using conventional moulds. The experiment aims at developing an optimised formwork system so that the cost reduces and ease of construction increases.

This will help many people who have no access to materials and labour to build their homes independently. In recent years, the rammed earth and poured earth construction have become popular

amongst environmentally conscious architects as well as those seeking an element of exoticism. The poured earth wall uses building debris and thus works on the concept of reusing waste materials.

The participants of the workshop were from a wide range of backgrounds such as architects, engineers, interested individuals and students, which paved way for dynamic interactions during the course of the workshop. The workshop was organised in a manner to give a theoretical understanding of the technology of rammed earth and poured earth construction.

Dr. Ramesh Sakthivel, on the first day, gave an outline of the functions of CIAT&SJ, the various activities and initiatives of the Rural Technology Park and its role in the progress towards the goal of sustainable development. He also emphasised on the need for everybody to start thinking and adapting a sustainable way of living for a better tomorrow.

Ar. Bhavana and Ar. Vivek were the resource persons, who have plenty of experience in constructing rammed earth and poured



The participants in action

earth walls across the country. Their detailed presentation covered an understanding of the history, method of construction and usability in the current scenario of rammed and poured earth wall construction.

The session was followed by a detailed and technical tour of the National Rural Building Centre that showcases various eco-friendly and cost-effective technologies. The

hands-on experience of the poured earth mixing and pouring proved to be an interesting exercise on the first day of the workshop to the participants.

The step-by-step procedure was explained to the participants that enabled them to carry out the process with ease. The second day commenced with the assembling of the rammed earth mould and the hand mixing of the soil for ramming.

The two-day workshop concluded with a question and answer session, after which the certificates were distributed.

A total of 23 participants attended the workshop. Overall, the participants felt that the workshop exhibited and explained the various alternative technologies that can be used in construction in a simplified manner. They also expressed their desire to attend more workshops on sustainable construction technologies.



Dr. Ramesh Sakthivel, Associate Professor and Head (i/c), CIAT & SJ and team along with the participants

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Published By:

Dr. Akanksha Shukla, Associate Professor and Head (i/c), CDC on behalf of the NIRDPR, Rajendranagar, Hyderabad - 500 030.

