

Knowledge multiplication and mass communication for agriculture in arena of climate change

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General Note



Article is recommended to print as color version in recycled paper. *Save Plants, Save Climate.*

**NATIONAL LEVEL WORKSHOP ON-“KNOWLEDGE MULTIPLICATION AND MASS
COMMUNICATION FOR AGRICULTURE IN ARENA OF CLIMATE CHANGE;**

On -27th October, 2015

**At -Gujarat Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Gujarat Chamber Building, Ashram Road,
Ahmadabad, Gujarat, India**

Presidential Address:-Justice B.P Singh

On behalf of the National Council for Climate Change, Sustainable Development and Public Leadership and my own I welcome you to this very important National level workshop on Knowledge multiplication and mass communication for agriculture with respect to climate change.

I am delighted to the support of the NITI AYOOG for this deliberation because it reflects the commitment the political leadership has to help resolve some important challenges in this area of public engagement. It is heartening to see the level of response that is rather consistent here in this State of Gujarat with the direct involvement of the agriculture universities, leaders from industry and the government. Important learnings from this meeting can be contextualized with the outcomes expected from the Paris meeting of the Convention on Climate Change. You will all like to note that the NCCSD has been creating the much needed thrust at all levels over the last four to five years to highlight the interests of the farmers in particular. This has been with the State and the national governments and the United Nations through the meetings at the Conference of Parties. The NCCSD is driven with the basic agenda of improving preparedness of the already marginalized farmers to tackle challenges posed by climate change. The Council wishes to help reduce vulnerability of farmers in this context through robust local level engagement with all stakeholders to help deliver appropriate information in a timely manner. We have also highlighted successes this State has to offer to a wide variety of challenges in natural resources management. This includes water and water sheds, crop productivity and modeling to a certain extent. We will continue to give our best in this regard.

Before I go further I wish to focus on some amazing tenets of communication. This is with special reference to science and technology communication with implications for the aspect we are set to deliberate on over the next couple of days. Way back in the early nineties, the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources indicated through its Education and Communication Commission that people who receive information retain the right to never implement the learnings they derive from the information. This is a very important learning for public policies for communication. The central point here is to create the necessary enabling circumstances to convert insights and learnings into action. Information should also be on the availability of alternatives, ease of access to alternatives and most importantly ensure the relevance, need, benefits and comfort in using them too. This can pertain to materials and methods that are used directly used by the farmers. Information alone may not be effective to transform. Information however is a powerful forerunner to action. The present workshop I hope will deliberate on the contours of such communication strategies. It is equally important to take note of all the good work that has been undertaken already and not redefine the wheel as it were.

The second important learning on communication is from the recent study carried out in Canada on Science Culture. Specialists in communication therein have defined three distinctly different yet mutually reinforcing goals and approaches. The first is about communication just to raise awareness. The second is to communicate to build capacities for further communication. This implies training and capacity building to communicate. The third objective is public engagement and this opens up such aspects as the ability of the final receivers of information to exert their rights and influence decisions at the local level. Communication strategies should take note of these subtle differences and devise appropriate logical frameworks to optimize on outputs.

The NCCSD is aware of the involvement of Zonal Project Directorates (ZPDs) through the Technology Demonstration Component (TDC) under the National Initiative on Climate Resilient Agriculture, the knowledge missions of the Department of Science and technology,

and other mutually reinforcing missions through the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Government of India, the initiatives of the International Crop Research Institute in the Semi Arid Tropics, the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development, the South Asian Forum for Environment, the International Institute for Environment and Development, the Climate and Development Knowledge Network, the Watershed Organization Trust, the Shroff Foundation, the MS Swaminathan Research Foundation etc to mention a few. These institutions and several others are delivering invaluable inputs for collective benefits.

In this context the NCCSD wishes to highlight three important opportunities that have to be tapped on a priority basis to support such communication initiatives in a holistic manner.

1. We need to develop a compendium on best practices at the local level. This should be on practices developed by farmers based on their intensive and precise knowledge of crop systems and challenges to be tackled on a priority basis. Please note this has to be farmer centered.
2. Can we create a knowledge network run and evolved by the farmers by inviting them and hand holding them to communicate with each other?
3. Is it possible to establish a work station wherein tools and techniques are demonstrated on a regular basis and they too are regularly modified based on emerging knowledge? This is especially true for drudgery reduction and with special reference to women farmers.

I am sure we will find interesting options to consolidate these thoughts as projects and medium to long term programmes. I firmly believe there is enough space for all to work together and deliver well and in a timely manner for common good. We should demonstrate the true spirit of inclusiveness by creating spaces for all. We should remember this inclusiveness because we are dealing with our common spaces and properties of nature.

I wish the deliberations all success.
