



MANAGE Bulletin

From the National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management

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National Workshop on Kisan Call Centres

Kisan Call Centres (KCC) were launched in 2004 to help farmers find solutions to their problems through a telephone call. Though these Call Centres are meeting farmers' requirements, a need was felt to review KCC experiences across the country to further augment the services for the benefit of farmers. A need was also felt for backstopping these centres to deliver various services viz. technology dissemination, marketing, processing or information dissemination on government schemes through a single window to the satisfaction of the farmer.

In view of this, a national-level workshop was organized during August 30-31, 2012 at MANAGE for - sharing experiences of KCCs across the country, strengthening linkages among experts at levels II & III, strengthening and supporting the scientists/officers at level-II for their critical role in providing authentic information, facilitating exchange of information among KCCs, brainstorming on enabling access to other need-based information for farmers, reviewing and improving access of Kisan Knowledge Management System (KKMS) at various levels.

Inaugurating the Workshop, Shri B. Srinivas, IAS, Director General, MANAGE complimented the agents at levels-I, II and III, scientists and officers for achieving 80 lakh calls over the last 8 years.

Shri Suresh Kumar, IAS, (Retd.), former Director General, MANAGE, emphasized the need for pro-actively calling the farmers and also advised the level-II and level-III agencies to analyze Block-wise call data and ensure more 'Inclusiveness', with special focus on difficult, tribal and naxal affected areas/districts.

Dr. R.K. Tripathi, Director, DoE, MoA, GoI made a comprehensive presentation on the current status of KCCs and call details since launching. He also explained the new "Call Escalation Matrix" as communicated to the States.

Dr. V.P. Sharma, Director (ITDP), MANAGE, made a presentation on the level-III support being provided by MANAGE to KCC, Andhra Pradesh. He stressed the need for regular monthly training of level-I agents by SAUs, Departments of Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries and Agricultural Marketing, and shared details of calls from various districts of AP over the last 8 years. Subsequently, there were presentations from officers at level- II & III representing different States.

Shri Sanjeev Gupta IAS, JS (Extension), during his interaction with the delegates, emphasized on logging of all the calls in the KKMS, improving the awareness of KCC agents about other sources of information, training KCC Agents in accessing state-specific information to answer farmers' queries more completely and requested all the SAUs and State Departments to submit the latest advisories/information to KCC to ensure that the functionaries at level-I are better informed.

There were 56 participants at the workshop. They suggested to improve the participation of level-II officers and the number of calls in various States.



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National Review Workshop on Agriclincs and Agribusiness Centres Scheme

The Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India, launched the Central Sector Scheme of Agriclincs and Agribusiness Centres (AC&ABC) during the year 2002. The objectives were to create gainful employment opportunities for supporting unemployed agricultural professionals to establish Agri-Clinics & Agri-Business Centres in rural areas as well as to supplement the efforts of public extension by providing extension and other services to the farming community.

The Scheme provides for a 2-month free residential Training in Agri-Entrepreneurship Development and “one-year post-training hand-holding support” through 72 identified Nodal Training Institutes (NTIs) spread across the country. MANAGE is the nodal agency for implementation of training and handholding services components of the AC&ABC Scheme.

A review workshop was organized at MANAGE on 7th August 2012 to review the status of implementation of the AC&ABC Scheme, discuss issues relating to release of loans and subsidies, mainstreaming Agripreneurs in extension activities of ATMA, strengthening training content, DPRs and Handholding support to Agripreneurs etc.

Shri B. Srinivas, IAS, Director General, MANAGE, in his inaugural address expressed that the deliberations of the workshop were expected to take the AC&ABC Scheme to a higher plane and improve the quality of extension services to the farmers.



Participants at the Workshop



Shri Sanjeev Gupta IAS, Joint Secretary (Extension) (centre) addressing the officers. Shri B. Srinivas, Director General, MANAGE is to his right

Discussions during the workshop were on the status of implementation of the AC&ABC scheme, release of loans and subsidies and strengthening of training and hand holding support to Agripreneurs.

Issues addressed during the workshop included mainstreaming Agripreneurs in extension activities of ATMA, enhancing awareness about the Scheme and strengthening training content, etc.

Sri Sanjeev Gupta, IAS, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, GoI reviewed the deliberations of the workshop, shared his views and solicited suggestions on various issues from all the stakeholders present in the workshop with a view to improve the implementation of the scheme.

Recommendations of the Workshop related to covering more states, monitoring release of loans and subsidies to Agripreneurs, timely release of subsidy to banks, reducing delay in sanction / rejection of loan applications, electronic tracking of loan/subsidy status, encouraging participation of members of SC/ST in the AC&ABC Scheme, involving ATMA in implementation of the scheme, sensitizing the Bankers on the Scheme and other aspects.

There were 50 participants including Officials from the Ministry of Agriculture, NABARD, Departments of Agriculture of various States, Banks, Nodal Training Institutes, MANAGE and some Agripreneurs.

Success story

Take the Right Decisions at the Right Time - says Mr Shivale, a successful Agripreneur to Farmers

Soon after his post graduation in Agriculture from Konkan Agriculture University, Dapoli, Mr. Ashok Maruti Shivale started his career as a Research Associate in Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth Rahuri. In 2001, he had an opportunity to work with Ranade Agro Ltd. at Pune as a Lab Technician. This gave him a platform to acquire new technical skills, gain knowledge on marketing aspects, product promotion and also about maintaining various distribution channels and management. However, he had to resign due to family responsibilities.

He then learnt about the AC&ABC Scheme and decided to start his own business. He underwent training at MITCON Consultancy Services Ltd., Pune in 2005. In view of his previous experience and knowledge, he selected Agro Service Centre as his field of interest. He conducted market survey about market potential in his area, competitors and potential product lines, and chose Rajgurunagar town as a potential area where he could start his business. He was sanctioned a loan of Rs. 10 lakhs from Bank of Maharashtra for setting up an Agro Service Centre - Om Sai Agro Enterprises.

He visits the farm, diagnoses the pest or disease and then gives recommendations to the farmer. At the Agri Clinic, soil testing kit is provided. After soil testing of the primary parameters, recommendations for fertilizers are given. Farmers' visits for learning about newly introduced varieties are organised with the help of private companies. Demonstrations are also organized on farmer's plot. In order to create awareness among farmers about services and facilities provided by his enterprise, he started advertisement by distribution of printed material at Rajgurunagar. However this did not yield expected results because of farmers' loyalty with existing services. He then started meeting each farmer personally to know about their problems. He visited their farms, analysed the problem and recommended solutions free of cost.

Providing consultancy to farmers and serving them good quality products helped to build farmers' trust in him and thus helped growth of his business. Currently he is covering 500 to 600 farmers from 25 villages.



Farmers from far off villages are approaching him for suggestions and products. Since then, he has never looked back and his business graph continues growing upward.

He is now associated with pesticide/fertilizer companies like Indofil Chemicals Limited, Shriram Fertilizers & Chemicals, Basf, Bayer, Syngenta, Dupont, and seed companies like Ankur, Nobal Seeds, Krishna Vally Agro Ltd etc. He has a work force of three employees who are working as computer operator, helper and Drip technician.

He started business with an initial investment of Rs.3.5 lakhs. His turnover has been continuously increasing, from Rs.28 lakhs in 2007 to Rs.40 lakhs in 2008 and to Rs.1 crore in 2012. The motto of his business is to inspire the farmers to take right decisions at the right time so that they can get better remuneration for their work. He has organised around 4 to 5 campaigns on various improved practices in agriculture, free of cost, at his place. He has also linked farmers with management teams of companies like Reliance Fresh, Aditya Birla Retail Ltd., etc. which have facilitated farmers to sell their produce directly to the malls and earn reasonable profits.

His future plan is to expand his business by opening some more outlets in nearby villages. As he says it: "Success doesn't come to you...you go to it."

He may be contacted at: Om Sai Agro Enterprise, Opposite Bus Stand, A/P- Rajgurunagar, Tal- Khed, Dist- Pune M-9970816990

Training

Applications of ICTs in Modified Extension Reforms Scheme

The use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is being emphasized in the Modified Extension Reforms Scheme. All the Agricultural Technology Management Agencies (ATMAs) are connected and all the blocks are expected to be connected within next two years.

In view of the emphasis on ICT applications, workshops were organized with a focus on using ICTs for information delivery at ATMA and below.

The objectives were to sensitize the state and district-level extension officers about the role of ICTs in agricultural knowledge sharing and dissemination at district, block and village level, upgrade their skills to make best use of ICT connectivity established at ATMA/district level to access knowledge from various sources and to share lessons learnt from national experiences.

Six programmes were organized during July-August 2012 for functionaries of Agriculture and allied departments, ATMAs, KVKs and Agricultural training institutions.

Farm Journalism Skills for Extension Functionaries

In this era of knowledge intensive agriculture, farmers need timely and location specific information about farm practices. Farm Journalism can play a crucial role in collection, processing and dissemination of location-specific information based on scientific research, according to the needs of the farmers. Although electronic media are playing an important role in agricultural communication, print media will remain an important source of agricultural information. Hence it is necessary to build the capacity of extension functionaries in farm journalism for effective delivery at the field level.

Keeping this in view, programmes were organized by MANAGE to orient officers on the concept and importance of Farm Journalism in agricultural extension, and develop skills in farm journalism, exclusively on print media.

Two programmes were organized during July and August 2012 for officials of agriculture and allied departments, scientists from SAUs, KVKs and NGOs involved in documentation activities.

Journal of Agricultural Extension Management

The **Journal of Agricultural Extension Management** is a half-yearly publication from MANAGE to disseminate information relating to extension systems and practices, research on extension, innovations in technology transfer and other socioeconomic issues concerning agriculture and allied areas. Articles on new developments, concepts and their application in effective extension work are welcome.

Please submit your articles to:

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