

Documenting Success Stories

Collaborative training by National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE) and ICAR-National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI)

February 3-7, 2020

ICAR- NDRI, Karnal, Haryana



ICAR-National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI), Karnal, Haryana and National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE), Hyderabad, Telangana jointly organized a 5-day training programme on 'Documenting Success Stories' at NDRI, Karnal between 3 - 7, February, 2020. Shyam Suraj

SR, Dr. K. Ponnusamy and Priya Sharma share their experiences of the training programme.

CONTEXT

Success stories are acknowledged, documented and disseminated for inspiring and motivating people towards development. In agriculture, it is imperative to exemplify that if one farmer can succeed, so can others, and if an agricultural technology yields good dividends, it can be replicated for the larger benefit of the society. Success stories in agriculture serve as vehicles to showcase the end result of hard work and efforts, and provide readily available information on programme impact and its accountability. This warrants the need to document success stories especially by extension functionaries, who have detailed information and exposure in field situations and can effectively serve the farming community.



With this background, ICAR-National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI), Karnal, Haryana, and National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE), Hyderabad, Telangana, jointly organized a 5-day training programme on 'Documenting Success Stories' at NDRI, Karnal, between 3 and 7, February, 2020. There were 33 participants representing 11 states, including faculty of KVKs and SAUs, SAMETI, NHRDF, ICAR institutions and State Animal Husbandry department. A total of 13 lectures and 3 field visits were conducted as a part of the programme.

PROGRAMME

Day 1



The 5-day programme was inaugurated by Dr. A.K. Tyagi, Joint Director (Research), NDRI, who urged the trainees to remove inhibition in writing any document, including success stories. Dr. A.K. Misra, Principal Scientist and In-charge, ATIC, welcomed the participants and Dr. Lakshmi Murthy, Deputy Director (Documentation), MANAGE, gave orientation

about the programme. Dr. K. Ponnusamy, Principal Scientist (Agricultural Extension), NDRI, while offering the vote of thanks, indicated the design of whole training programme for five days' duration.

The technical session that followed started with a lecture by Dr Lakshmi Murthy on the need and importance of process documentation in agricultural development projects. The aim was clearly understanding key concepts such as 'Task, Process, Process Documentation' and



developing skills in process documentation activity. The features of 'Task' and steps in undertaking a task were deliberated. This was followed by features of 'Process' and importance of 'Process Documentation'. The significance of 5 W's (What, When, Where, Why and Whom) and 1 H (How) on writing were presented. The interaction which followed extended from success narratives to the plight of farming community and marketing hitches in agricultural sector.

In the afternoon session, Dr. Ritu Chakravarthy, Principal Scientist, Dairy Extension Division of NDRI focused on the methods, tools and techniques for capturing stories. Discussion revolved around the methods of Interview and Focus Group Discussion. She emphasized that writing a success story is an art as well as science. This was followed by a topic on 'Writing News Stories' by Dr. Pradeep Kumar Jakhad, Assistant Professor (Mass Communication) of Pt. Chiranjee Lal Sharma Govt. College, Karnal, who started his career with the daily 'Dainik Bhaskar'. He explained the major requirements of news stories and exposed the participants to different news stories published in local newspapers.

Day 2

The second day started with a lecture by Prof. Meena Malik, NDRI, on the styles of reporting in success stories. She emphasised the importance of SREE (Situation, Response, Results and Evidence) in the writing and 3 C's (Clear, Concise and Coherent) of story writing. In addition, features and format of success story were expounded. This was followed by a lecture on 'Application of mobile phones in disseminating agricultural information to farmers' by Mr. Dharendra Kumar, CEO, Xonier Technologies Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi. He talked about android apps for farmers, how apps benefit farmers, features and steps for developing agricultural apps.



During the afternoon session, the participants, assisted by NDRI for documentation of success stories and guided by Dr. K. Ponnusamy, made two visits. The first was to a Self Help Group under the leadership of Mrs. Ushadevi at Sadarpur village, where women prepared products like Gulab Jamun and market it at fairs and stalls to earn their livelihood. This group also opened a shop in the village itself. The second was to document the success of a dairy farmer, Mr. Multan Singh of Kutail village, who successfully used herbal preparation made from Neem (*Azadirachta indica*) and Nirgundi (*Vitexnegundo*) leaves to treat ticks and mites in dairy animals. The participants gathered enough information and took photographs of both the accomplishments for documentation.



Day 3

The highlight of third day was developing the success stories from previous day visits. The participants were divided into four groups. Each group discussed and analysed the information from the field and prepared the stories in chart papers under the supervision of Dr. Lakshmi Murthy. The groups presented the stories in Hindi, English and Punjabi and were evaluated by faculty and participants. The presentations were applauded with suggestions for improvisation. The afternoon session was followed by a lecture on 'Effective Writing and Editing' by Dr. Anuj Kumar Rai, ICAR-Indian Institute of Wheat and Barley Research. He gave the 5 S's of effective writing – Simple, Short, Sweet, Straight and Single idea, and shared his personal experiences on preparing reports and pamphlets, writing articles and news stories.



Day 4

In the morning, Ms. Vinaysree Khurana, Programme Executive from All India Radio, Kurukshetra, explained scripting for radio and television. She not only gave theoretical orientation on script writing, but also demonstrated the way it was done using audio and video. The lecture focussed on preparing script for drama, creating the character and scenes, conveying emotions and incorporating music. The script of a programme developed by All India Radio for 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan' was taken as a case study to illustrate scripting. Also, storyboard preparation for television was detailed.

Dr. Gopal Sankhla, Principal Scientist, NDRI, discussed the use of photography and videography. He comprehensively explained the different styles of photography – Portrait, Landscape and Documentary. Contrast, rule of thirds, proximity and point of view are the tools to master photography, he noted. This was followed by a practical session on shooting video and editing the footage using editing software, guided by Mr. Paramjit, Video lab, NDRI. The participants and faculty visited the historic places of Kurukshetra ('the land of Bhagvad Gita') in the afternoon and it served as a break from the tight schedule of teaching-learning.

Day 5

The fifth day started with a talk about documentation on social media and digital publishing platforms by Dr. Lakshmi Murthy. She discussed writing about agriculture effectively on social networks (like Facebook, WhatsApp and LinkedIn), blogs, microblogging (like Twitter, Instagram), online collaboration (like wikis), video sharing (like YouTube), photo sharing (like Flickr, Pinterest) and cloud storage applications with illustrations. The participants were introduced to apps for convergence class like Kinemaster, Filmic Pro, Videolicious, PicPlayPost, Quik, Storyflow and others. During the practical session, the participants downloaded Filmora Go (Video editing software) and created short videos which were posted within no time in the WhatsApp group formed initially.

In the valedictory that followed, the participants reflected on the training programme and congratulated both Dr. K. Ponnusamy and Dr. Lakshmi Murthy for organising this great learning experience. They expressed their appreciation for the arrangements at Kalki Bhavan, NDRI, where food and accommodation was organised for the participants. The



KVK personnel opined that they are aware of many success stories from their field visits and this programme has inspired them to document each and every success story either through writing or small videos. Many participants regularly make reports for their institutions and have plenty of data, but these are rarely used beyond official reporting. They opined that this programme motivated them to use the data for effective documentation. Participants felt that all field extension personnel should be given training on documenting success stories for effective extension. Dr. M.S. Chauhan, Director, NDRI, distributed certificates to the participants and conveyed the message that one should not restrict their role only in writing success stories, but also inspire the farmers to innovate and adopt improved technologies so that they can realise better livelihoods

OUR REFLECTIONS

Many of the agricultural officials either in academics or in field extension are disinterested in writing success stories which they come across on a daily basis. Even those who initiate one, discontinue when they face meek hurdles. This programme was able to make a change in this mindset of the participants. Every speaker stressed ridding oneself of the inhibitions to



write success stories. The different formats of documenting success stories - written, visual, audio and video, enlightened us. It was nice to realize the importance of video films of very short duration, farmer-friendly apps and dramatic presentations in radio as effective means to document and disseminate success stories.

The participants enthusiastically participated in the practical session on writing stories of the entrepreneur group and dairy farmers they visited. These session also witnessed worthy debates and discussions about corrections in the drafts. It was amazing to have first-hand information on a bunch of digital publishing platforms and related apps for creating stories. The deliberations on the importance of language and styles of reporting informed us about the importance of simplicity, clarity and readability. It was indeed a pleasant experience discussing the nitty-gritty of documenting success stories. We feel that the content covered during the 5-day training should be made an integral part of the under-graduate programme of agriculture and allied subjects to produce insightful grassroots officials. Frankly, this meeting note is an outcome of the enthusiasm instilled by this training programme.

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