

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

A recent paper on innovations in Agricultural Extension services in China (Guo, 2014), brought forth the importance given by the country in arming its extension practitioners for effective agricultural technology transfer. With less than 9% of the arable land in the world, China has managed to feed 21% of the world's population. The development of agriculture, rural economy and farmers' prosperity (referred to 'San Nong' in China), is one of the major factors, the country believes, will ensure sustainability of its growing economy.

Using ICTs as well as traditional media to deliver information services to rural communities, and to train farmers is an important part of the cause to facilitate the 'San Nong' in China. In recent years, the Chinese Government has formulated and implemented a series of policies and programmes to facilitate 'Rural informatization', a popular Chinese approach. As a result, ICTs' adoption has increased tremendously in rural areas. With over a million grass-root extension workers (county and town-level) , China has the largest extension system in the world. As part of their mission to equip their grass root level extension agents, an innovative agricultural extension platform has been created in the country with the following facilities:

- o Construction of Agro extension Cloud platform: This platform provides for data storage with a storage capacity of over 100 TB.
- o Development of Browser and Android – based Agricultural Extension Applications: Information services for extension agents with text, voice and video, focusing on information collection, management and exchange.
- o Information resources collection: This is being done with the support of Universities and companies.
- o Selection of 3G capable smart services: Cost-effective smart devices for the grass-root workers that are water-proof, dust- proof, drop- proof and shock- proof.
- o Information technology training for Extension practitioners: On-site, online and video training are organized on storing and retrieving data for farm technology transfer.

Tasting success, the country is planning to scale up its efforts for creating a greater impact on agricultural extension and in turn on agricultural productivity.

This issue of JEE has papers on various important topics such as women empowerment, capacity building & entrepreneurship, attitude towards climate change, ITKs and on impact of development programmes. I hope the readers find them interesting.

Chief Editor