

## **Training Cum Workshop under Farmer FIRST Programme of ICAR**

Training cum Workshop under Farer FIRST Programme of ICAR was organized by ICAR-NAARM, Hyderabad at ICAR-IARI New Delhi from October 23-26, 2017. Participants were from different ICAR Institutes and State Agricultural Universities implementing the Farmer First Programme. Total 40 scientists associated with Farmer FIRST Programme participated in the programme. The Inaugural Programme of the Farmers FIRST project was graced by the Joint Director (Extension)- ICAR-IARI, Dr. J.P. Sharma, Asst. DG (Extension)-ICAR, Dr. V. P. Chahal and the Director- NAARM, Dr. Chi. Srinivasa Rao on 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2017 at the Conference Hall, Division of Agricultural Economics, ICAR-IARI. Scientists from NAARM, IARI and other ICAR Institutes and Central Agricultural University, Manipur were present in the occasion. In his brief note, Dr. J. P. Sharma indicated the role of today's extension beyond production and emphasized the need of enhancing farmers' income through value addition to stall the huge wastage of raw farm produce and group formation of farmers with clear division of roles of the partners – with equity in profit sharing among group members. He narrated the success stories of fruit growers of Maharashtra in this context. He also expressed deep concern of wastage of resources like fertilizers and water. He suggested input use on the basis of actual need of the locality and time. Dr. Srinivas Rao, Director, NAARM discussed the need of the Farmers FIRST project and the need of participation of farmers in decision making, problem identification. He also stressed upon the quantification of village ecosystem in baseline survey and representation of ecological indicators in the project documentation process. Dr. P. Venkatesan, NAARM gave a overview of the Farmers FIRST project and future work plan of NAARM i.e. invitation of PIs at NAARM with 3 farmers of different economic status from the respective project area for their experience sharing, establishment of Farmers FIRST library at NAARM, publication of a compendium of success stories by taking inputs from all partners, video of interventions, publication of newsletter etc. The various chronic problems of farmers were discussed in the opening session. He also urged to involve farmers in publication work at each stage and related successful examples of group activity of farmers in creating value chain of mango. Various matrices of the project and the problems the PIs facing was also discussed along with possible involvement of line departments and other village level functionaries were suggested. One of the most interesting topics of the programme was participatory technology development, where Dr. Venkatesan discussed various steps of the process where villagers are involved at every step from conception to final product release.. The quantitative analysis of the project work and the impact was discussed by Dr. Shivkumar, NIAP, with example of success story of Pusa-1121 over decades. The qualitative analysis method and various statistical techniques related to it was discussed by Dr. Shivramane, NAARM. The process of development of Farmers FIRST portal is on the way and the team from IASRI responsible for that distributed the instruments for scientists' opinion in the workshop. Dr. Mukesh Kumar, Dr. Rajni Jain, Dr. Soumen Pal and Dr. Anshu Bhardwaj related the various stems of the Portal development, input capturing forms for it, data organization and their need. The unique ICT tool for providing cheap and secured wi-fi connectivity with farmers, the 'Chhota Internet" by Amtrak Company was demonstrated by the company staff in the workshop. The sessions of Dr. Bharat S. Sontakki, NAARM of PRA exercise and Process documentation was highly informative and useful for information gathering, prioritization and documentation for any project work. Ms. Aruna T Kumar and Ms. Mitali Ghosh Roy, DKMA discussed the need and process of media reporting through social media and website for regular information dissemination of the project activity in public domain.

The valedictory programme was attended by Dr. A. K. Singh, the DDG,(Extension), ICAR and Director, IARI; Dr. J. P. Sharma, the Joint Director (Extension), IARI and Dr. V. P. Chahal, ADG (Ag. Extension), ICAR. The feedback of participants were very positive and constructive as the participants discussed various aspects of the workshop and ways to improve it further. Dr. A. K. Singh related the working principles and outcomes of various mega projects of the Government over decades and the role of the scientists in bringing out most from The Farmers FIRST project, that has been formulated on the basis of

the experiences with the previous mega projects. He conveyed his best wishes to all participants and organizers of the workshop and wished success of the project running at various parts of the country.

