

**National Consultation on
Technology Development and Delivery Models for Sustainable Livelihoods**

26th-28th July,2007

M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, Chennai, India

In collaboration with
Department of Science and Technology, Government of India
Gender, Equity and Rural Employment Division
Food and Agriculture Organization, Regional Office for Asia- Pacific Office
State Bank of India

Technical note

Context for consultation

Knowledge and innovation are key drivers of the Indian economy. Today India has positioned itself as a leader in global scientific community in various fields. In the home front, Indian vision was one of science and technology driven development for improving living levels of the people. Since independence, Indian government has made significant investment, to utilize science and technology to improve agriculture and rural livelihood. India's standing as a dominant actor in global economy symbolizes the outcome of its investment in science and technology. India is also a country with a large population and a sizeable proportion of the population lives and works in rural areas. A rural- urban development divide presents challenges to achieve the goal of growth with equity. A country with commitment to erase rural disparity and to meet the growing aspirations of rural population faces the task of exploiting technology to improve rural livelihoods. Furthermore, the competitiveness in global economy would also demand a paradigm for development that advances the knowledge of the rural communities to augment livelihood with optimal application of technology. It is no longer an issue of rural lag in achievement, but absence of right technology among rural producers with important implications for economic growth.

Global consensus for closing the development gap resulted in Millennium Development Goals that present targets for 2015. In the context of this consultation the important ones are eradicating hunger and poverty, environment, education, science and technology for development and partnership, It is being increasingly recognized that science and technology could be a pathway to achieve sustained growth as well as to bridge the development achievement divide. In India recent national initiatives to renew and reenergize investment in knowledge systems and institutions of learning demonstrate the national commitment to endow people with knowledge and information.

Within the broad canvas of national agenda for knowledge empowerment for development, a critical aspect is science and technology for rural livelihood. The 11th five year Plan (2007-2012) is planning to set up "Rural Technology Delivery Centres" and

also proposing to take up a programme on “Science and Technology for Rural Industrialization, Development and Employment” (STRIDE).

The investment in research and development at national level should form the basis to generate innovations acceptable and adoptable among people. The scientific products should become innovations that bear economic benefits for rural people. Such an agenda would require that the scientific community should acknowledge that science and technology become transforming rural livelihood innovations only when the people adopt and apply them in their productive endeavors.

The conceptualization of technologies for sustainable livelihood should incorporate dual objectives, namely sustainable natural resource base for rural livelihood and sustained access to household resources to guarantee economic, food and health security. Hence, the rural people’s social and economic realities should shape technology development, transfer modalities and technology service support processes. The technology policies and programmes for improving rural livelihood should address the relevancy of technologies to achieve these dual purposes. The assumption that the current technologies on the shelf or in the making would automatically cater to the felt needs of the rural communities may have to be examined. Effectiveness of traditional and emerging modalities for technology delivery to reach diverse social groups to reap benefits of innovations on equitable terms should be evaluated.

A broader perspective of technology system would incorporate technology development, technology transfer modalities, technology service packages and policies and programmes for technology development, delivery and adoption. The stakeholders would be inclusive of all actors involved in these processes within technology system. The convergence of purpose on employing technologies for advancement of rural livelihood would be to design inclusive technology system that is responsive to felt needs and adoption constraints of all social groups in rural communities.

Consultation focus:

The national consultation on “Technology Development and Delivery Models for Sustainable Livelihoods,” will explore the four facets of inclusive technology system identified as technology development that is responsive to diverse rural clients, technology transfer modalities and technology service processes that transcends social inequities and policies and programmes for inclusive technology development, delivery and adoption. The inclusive perspective would examine the social and economic inequities that perpetuates technology divide in rural communities. The partnership considerations would explore the multi-sector partnerships to improve technology development and outreach among the rural households. The consultation aims to generate recommendations to the policy makers, technology development and transfer organizations, and other stakeholders. These recommendations guide the pathways of the multi-sector stakeholders to refine and reform the technology development and delivery modalities to improve the rural livelihoods.

The consultation will also include a technology pavilion to showcase spectrum of technologies and information on delivery modalities from institutions represented at the meeting.

Consultation collaboration

The national consultation will be through collaboration among M.S. Swaminathan Foundation; Department of Science and Technology, Government of India; FAO Regional Office of Asia and the Pacific; and State Bank of India.

Consultation participants

The participants will be drawn from national and international agencies who are stakeholders to promote inclusive technology system involved in technology generation, transfer and service delivery. The representatives from government agencies, Non-government organizations and private sector will share respective perspectives with thematic papers, case studies on people centered technology delivery models and constraints to technology adoption and application for improving rural livelihoods.

Consultation programme

The enclosed provisional programme presents the various thematic areas that would be addressed during the consultation. The consultation will be organized at M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, Chennai, India. It will be held from July 26th to 28th, 2007.

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