Social Media for Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services

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Social Media Tools

- Blogs
- Microblogs
- Social Networks
- Geo-Networks
- Video Sharing
- Photo Sharing
- Content Rating
- Bookmark Sharing
- Podcasting
- RSS Feeds
- Cloud Working
- Social Gaming
- Augmented Reality
Networking for AE&AS?

- New and complex challenges
- New capacities
- Increasing pluralism
- New relationships
- Knowledge flows
- Partnerships in AIS
Challenges

- Ensuring participation
- Internet and IT infrastructure issues
- Institutionalizing social media
- Continuous engagement
- Measuring the impact
- Creating awareness at organizational level
- Allocating time to update content

Opportunities

- Internet based apps
- Forming global/national interest groups
- Reaching one to many
- Greater engagement and dialogue
- Integration of a wide range of stakeholders
- Catalyst for resource mobilization
FACEBOOK
Most popular

1.9 BILLION
unique monthly users

predominantly female
83% of online women
75% of online men

AGES 18-49
best place to reach Millennials and Generation X
Generation X spends almost 7 hours per week on social media

75%
of users spend 20 minutes or more on Facebook every day
https://www.facebook.com/groups/Livestock.TN
https://www.facebook.com/groups/madhualan/
Twitter for ARD

@e_agriculture
A global initiative to enhance sustainable agricultural development & food security by improving the use of information and communication technologies. Join us!

@AgChat
A weekly conversation for folks involved in business of growing food, fuel, feed and fiber on Tues, 8-10pm ET. A project of AgChatFound.

@IFFCO
Farmers Cooperative, largest manufacturer & marketer of chemical fertilizers in India. Here for nutrition, health, agriculture and sustainable growth.

@YPARD
Network of Young Professionals for Agricultural Development Empowering Youth, Visionalizing Agricultural Leadership & Policy.

#50YearsofIFFCO

#AgVocate
Can't wait for November 29? Schedule your #GivingTuesday donation today at ow.ly/H8I30tfoF0 #AgChat #AgVocate

#GCARD3
5 months post #GCARD3 and Nikki's pure Gir breed cattle have arrived. Read more on her Agripreneurship journey at...
Punjab farmers turn to WhatsApp group for farming solutions

ANJU AGNIHOTRI CHABA
JALANDHAR, JULY 2

FROM CROP health to seed procurement, soil health, use of fertilisers and pesticides — farmers in Punjab can now get immediate advice via a WhatsApp group which includes agricultural experts.

The group, ‘Young Innovative Farmers’, was set up by Gurdaspur Agriculture Development Officer Dr Amrik Singh on August 15 last year. “I started it with four farmers, but Pradesha and Madhya Pradesh. State Principal Secretary K S Pannu and Gurdaspur Deputy Commissioner Dr Abhinav Trikha are also part of the group,” said Singh.

“We have a shortage of staff in our department. If we visit a few villages daily, we can only meet a few dozen farmers. But on WhatsApp we can interact with several farmers daily,” he said.

Some farmers upload photographs of their disease-hit crops to seek advice. “Whatever problem comes to us, we try to find a solution with the help of experts,” Singh said.

There is also an effort to create interest in the field of farming with farmers sharing good agricultural practices.

Jagroop Singh, who returned to his village in Gurdaspur after spending seven years in Australia, said he started farming after joining the group last November. He said that Dr Amrik Singh’s four research papers, published in various journals, have also been made available to the group.

“It has changed my views on farming. I now use limited fungicide-based fertilisers,” said Singh.

Gurdaspur agriculture officer using WhatsApp to connect with farmers.
YouTube in ARD
Blogs in ARD
GFRAS Global Survey on Social Media for Agricultural Extension and Social Media in Agricultural Extension in India
Online survey questionnaire - social media platforms Facebook and Twitter, emails, and web portals of AESA, e-Agriculture, and GFRAS

Global Survey

- Number of respondents: 229
- Number of countries: 62
- 78.5% respondents from developing countries

India

- Number of respondents: 264
- Respondents from 26 states and 3 UTs
In the global survey, 78.50% respondents from developing countries, 13.90% from developed countries and 7.60% of respondents were from underdeveloped countries.
Social media preference

**Preferred social media (Global)**

- Facebook: 64.7%
- WhatsApp: 37.3%
- Google+: 32.5%
- Wikis: 30.9%
- Twitter: 23.4%
- Blogs: 22.2%
- YouTube: 20%

**Preferred social media (India)**

- WhatsApp: 61%
- Facebook: 45.8%
- YouTube: 26.1%
- Google+: 16.3%
- Blogs: 9.4%
- SlideShare: 11%
- Wikis: 8.3%
- Twitter: 7.2%
- Academia.edu: 6.8%
- Instagram: 3.8%
Social media participation

Personal mobile phones (68.2% and 45.7% resp.), personal laptop (60.1% and 10.2% resp.), personal computer (49.8 % and 8.3% resp.), office computer (41.7 % and 24.6% resp.) were the preferred devices for accessing social media.

Type of user (Global)

- **Introvert** - only update profile and mostly communicate through private messaging
- **Novel user** - updates profile, actively seek out information, spend time tagging photos, logs in between 1-5 hours a week
- **Versatile user** - updates profile, sends public and private messages, shares links, comment on discussion threads, mostly in social media for professional activities
- **Expert communicator** - logs in several times a day, actively engaged in all social media/networking activities, stay updated and interact very frequently both professionally and personally

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<th>Type of user (Global)</th>
<th>Percentage of respondents</th>
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<tr>
<td>Introvert</td>
<td>19.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expert-communicator</td>
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<tr>
<td>Novel user</td>
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<td>Versatile user</td>
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• 21.7% of the respondents used social media for 1-2 hours a day, 19.5% used for 31-60 minutes a day, and 19.5% used social media for 15-30 minutes a day

• 11% of the respondents said they did not use social media everyday. Of those, 66% used it for 3-5 times a week

Global

• 23.5% of the respondents spent 31-60 minutes a day on social media, 23.1% spent 1-2 hours a day, 22.3% spent 13-30 minutes a day

• Only 5.3% did not use social media everyday. Of those, 42.8% used social media 3-5 time a week

India
TIME SPENT ON SOCIAL IN A LIFETIME

= 5 YEARS, 4 MONTHS ON SOCIAL MEDIA
95% of respondents believed social media to be useful in AEAS

**Advantages of social media**
- Global audience: 79%
- Knowledge pool creation in real time: 68.9%
- Discussion among local and global: 66.2%
- Interactive and multimedia content: 49.8%
- Ensures better feedback: 47.9%
- Others: 5.9%

**Disadvantages of social media**
- Lack of authenticity: 48.6%
- Confusing: 45.9%
- Absence of professionals of higher: 43.2%
- Location specific nature of social media: 32.4%
- Distracting to many: 24.3%
- Others: 8.1%

95% of respondents believed social media to be useful in AEAS.
Concerns for not using social media for agricultural information (Global)

- Research-extension-farmer-market linkage is not yet cohesive
- Lack of authentic information
- Very few use social media for professional use
- Lack of awareness and competence on use of social media among extensionists
- Slow/faulty internet connection

Concerns for not using social media for agricultural information (India)

- No social media account dealing with agricultural information
- Lack of interest
- No social media account
Advantages of social construction of information (Global)

- Creation of user-generated content: 75.1%
- There is value creation of knowledge to users: 71.4%
- It allows anyone to create/publish information: 53.1%
- Seamless collaboration in knowledge creation: 39.4%
- Others: 0.5%

Drawbacks of social construction of information (India)

- Discussions lose focus and get diverted: 57.9%
- Not suitable for in-depth scientific discussions: 39.5%
- Impractical ideas may get popular: 39.5%
- It cannot be practically applied in EAS: 21.1%
- Others: 7.9%

- Social construction of information: Development and publication of information socially by the users through and in social media.
- 95.20% of respondents globally believed social construction of information is an important feature of social media for agricultural extension while 4.80% respondents globally disagreed
Organizational use of social media
77.50% of the respondent said their organization used social media to connect with the clients.

66.70% respondents’ organization used social media to communicate with clients.
Number of clients directly reached through social media (Global)

- Less than 100: 16%
- 100-500: 19.3%
- 501-1000: 19.8%
- 1001-10,000: 25.1%
- 10,001 and above: 15.5%
- Other: 4.3%

Number of clients directly reached through social media (India)

- Above 10,000: 8%
- 1001-10,000: 9%
- 501-1000: 14.8%
- 101-500: 30.7%
- Less than 100: 37.5%
GoI has a social media guideline for its employees across sectors and organizations.

Social media policies and guidelines are some broad outlines about how to behave online and maintaining decorum when representing the organization online.
Training programs on SM use by respondent's organization (Global):

- Yes: 33%
- No: 67%

Training programs on SM use by respondent's organization (India):

- Yes: 19%
- No: 81%

Major areas of training:

- Use of Facebook, blogs, Twitter, cloud computing
- Web 2.0 technologies for development
- Awareness about social media
- Using social media in transfer of farm technologies
- Training on creating blogs
- Making web pages and social media accounts
### Type of information shared through social media (Global)

- Publications in agriculture/EAS: 65.1%
- Recent developments in agriculture: 64.5%
- Videos/podcasts/pictures: 55.9%
- Farmers' fairs/conferences/seminars etc.: 55.9%
- Communication with other members: 46.2%
- Recruitment of new members/clients: 26.3%
- Influencing key members/opinion leaders: 23.7%
- Crisis communication: 9.7%
- No specific objective: 6.5%
- Other: 4.3%

### Type of information shared through social media (India)

- Recent development in agricultural technology: 71.6%
- Farmers fairs/conferences/seminars and…: 69.8%
- Videos/podcasts/pictures related to…: 61.7%
- Publications in agricultural/agricultural…: 53.6%
- Communication and engagement with other…: 47.3%
- Recruitment of new members/clients for the…: 32.9%
- Influencing key member’s/opinion leaders…: 23.9%
- No specific objective: 17.7%
- Crisis communication: 16.7%
- Others: 1.8%
Institutional difficulties in using social media (global)

- Not deemed important by higher authority: 45.6%
- Restricted use of SM: 23.8%
- SM policy is not flexible towards its use: 18.1%
- Other: 28.1%

Institutional difficulties of organization in using social media (India)

- Social media policy in the organization is not...: 24.1%
- Social media is not deemed important by...: 31.8%
- Social media use by employees are restricted...: 32.2%
- Others: 11.9%
SOCIAL MEDIA: NEW GENERATION TOOLS FOR "AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION"?

Though Social Media applications can be effectively used by extension and advisory services, lack of awareness and skill about its use currently constrain its widespread use. Moreover the organisational culture within extension organisations also restricts exploitation of its full potential by extension professionals, argues Saravanan Raj and Suchiradipta Bhattacharjee in this blog.

Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services currently face several new and complex challenges. As articulated in the GFRAS Position Paper “The New Extensionist”, it needs new capacities to effectively deal with these challenges (Sulaiman and Davis, 2012). The increasing pluralism in extension funding and delivery demands new relationships, knowledge flows and partnerships among the wide range of EAS providers and other actors in the Agricultural Innovations Systems (Davis and Heemskerk, 2012). Social Media can play an important role in enhancing interactions and information flows.

Social Media for Rural Advisory Services

Compiled by: Raj Saravanan, Bhattacharjee Suchiradipta, Ataharul Chowdhury, Kelsey Hall and Helen Hambly Odame, August 2015

There is plenty of information available in the public domain that covers various aspects of extension and know-how and new methodologies for implementation. However, this information is often scattered and presented in complex academic language. Hence practitioners, who often have very limited time and/or may only have basic formal education, find it difficult to make use of this information.

The Global Good Practices Initiative aims to bridge this gap by providing information about extension approaches and methods in easy-to-understand formats. As part of this effort, it makes “Good Practice Notes” available to all at www.betterextension.org. This Note contains one of the extension methods included in this series.

Social media also makes it one of the most participatory mediums of extension. This makes the sharing of data, information, and knowledge faster, easier, and more cost-effective, while at the same time enabling collaboration and demand-based RAS.

Philosophy and principles
The basic philosophy of social media is the democratization of information, communication, and knowledge management. The following principles for using social media for RAS should be considered:

- **Involve and engage**: The ultimate end goal of a social media strategy should be the engagement and involvement of clients and other stakeholders, in order to achieve sustained communication processes.
- **Organizational policy on social media**: Sharing personal and professional information online needs guidelines. The key consideration is how users can differentiate between personal and professional opinions when using social media. A social media policy for organizations, including an ethical standard for users, can create a balance between maintaining a professional reputation and encouraging the free flow of information.

Introduction
Social media refers to the web-based tools and media that allow users to personally and informally interact, create, share, retrieve, and exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks. Social media includes social networking sites, blogs and microblogs, online forums, discussion boards and groups, and, socially integrated text messaging services, videos and podcasts, and many more. Rural advisory services (RAS) have seen enormous changes in the 21st Century that require interaction among multiple stakeholders – public, private, and non-profit – and learning to take collective action. These services have been called upon to be less “top-down” and more interactive, and social media can be a potentially powerful tool in this regard. With increasing reach among rural people, especially the youth, through increasing mobile phone subscriptions and decreasing data tariffs, social media can help RAS reach farmers more efficiently. The high level of user engagement in

GFRAS Global Good Practice Note

Social Media for Agricultural Extension

About the issue

Social media has changed the landscape of global development. Worldwide, it is not just shaping communication but also the future, by influencing opinions and mobilizing masses. This digital communication method has become an inseparable part of everyday life. With increased popularity, it has become the most used medium for business and development sectors alike.

This popularity though, is yet to reach a mass scale in agriculture all over the world and beyond the boundaries of developed nations. The documentation of the use of social media, in a few rural areas in lower and middle income economies, is minimal. Also, psychological, technical as well as institutional barriers, to some extent, limit the use of social media among the agrarian stakeholders.

Considering the growing popularity of social media among the young and old alike, irrespective of their urban or rural distribution, this issue focuses on the innovations, resources and examples that social media brings forth for agricultural extension and its implications on shaping the future of extension.
Implications for agricultural extension

• Makes extension professionals part of discussions and debates on extension

• Increasing awareness among urban consumers about farm to plate journey of food

• Increased reach

• Professional development of extensionists through networking, sharing ideas and opinions, conducting research

• Increased visibility of agricultural issues
• Helps crowd funding of development initiates in agriculture and allied sectors of rural development
• Provides insights and evidences required to influence policy and policymakers
• Capacity development for field functionaries, rural youth and farmers
• Facilitate innovation platforms for AIS
• helps to draw attention to the required interventions required for obtaining infrastructure, if not available
Thank You

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