

Indian agriculture experts discuss 'Open Access Policy'

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Working in this direction, a workshop on "Open Access to Agricultural Knowledge for inclusive Growth and Development" was inaugurated at National Academy of Agricultural Research Management (NAARM). The two-day (29-30 October, 2014) deliberations are expected to develop the strategies for not only access to data but also the improved content and turning them into solutions utilizing appropriate applications.

The workshop was jointly organized by NAARM and the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR) and FAO Rome, as a part of 'Open Access Week'. The Workshop aims to review the current status of open knowledge resources in agriculture in India, identify the gaps and needs to improve open knowledge access, and use and scope for further collaborations with national and global agencies.

Dr Ajit Maru, senior knowledge Officer, FAO, Rome, delivered opening keynote address stressing on aspects like India's potential for agricultural development and challenges; choices for agricultural information and knowledge services and sharing. He touched upon global movement in open agricultural data and information and knowledge, and benefits that India can reap in this field.

Speaking as guest of honor, Dr KR Murali Mohan, adviser, Department of Science and Technology (DST), New Delhi elaborated on 'Big Data Initiative' taken up by DST highlighting economic benefits and employment potential of this initiative across the sectors in India. The agricultural technocrats can make the difference in the country by adopting and practicing the open knowledge through technology platform created by National Informatics Centre (NIC) i.e., data.gov.in, he said.

Prof. M Moni, former DG, NIC, New Delhi, stressed on inclusive growth with the power of open data knowledge management. Library science professionals should be in the forefront on achieving accessibility and sharing of data, he added. He also suggested establishing 'India ring' similar to 'China ring' with the help of ICTs.

Earlier, Dr D Rama Rao, director, NAARM welcomed the gathering. He elaborated on Open Access initiatives in ICAR and explained key features of the OA policy. Around 80 farmer representatives, scientists, faculty, and officers from ICAR, CSIR,

NGOs, DST, CBOs, private sector and State Agricultural Universities are participating in the workshop.