

## WORKSHOP

### **AASSA-INSA-NISCAIR Regional Workshop on ‘Sustainable Development Goals: Communication Strategies’**

CSIR-National Institute of Science Communication and Information Resources (CSIR-NISCAIR) organised a Regional Workshop on ‘Sustainable Development Goals: Communication Strategies’ during 16-18 November 2017 at the NASC Complex, New Delhi in collaboration with the Association of Academies and Societies of Sciences in Asia (AASSA) and the Indian National Science Academy (INSA).

The Workshop brought together a diverse array of partners to communicate the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Scientists, communicators and policy makers from South Asian countries like Japan, South Korea, Indonesia, Georgia, Iran, Afghanistan and India deliberated on communication strategies and innovative initiatives in communication, especially in remote areas and for marginalized sections, risk and disaster communication, development communication, public scientific literacy, and communication challenges in the digital age.

“Rumours and misconceptions spread fast and last longer than good communication that we intend to educate the public with,” said Dr Narender K. Sehgal while inaugurating the AASSA-INSA-NISCAIR Regional Workshop on ‘Sustainable Development Goals: Communication Strategies’ on 17 November 2017.

Dr Sehgal, winner of the prestigious Kalinga Prize for science popularisation, further said that countering such misconceptions is not easy and takes extra effort. “We have a market for misconceptions,” he said, “and digital communication such as WhatsApp messages only serve to further confuse the audiences that we as science communicators intend to inform.”

Speaking on the relevance of institutions like AASSA, Dr Manoj Kumar Patariya, Director, CSIR-NISCAIR said that such



Dr Narender K. Sehgal, Former Adviser, Govt. of India giving the Inaugural Address agencies had become essential especially for developing countries where societies were facing problems different from those in developed countries. For instance, the lack of clean drinking water was a major problem in developing countries leading to many deaths.



Dr Manoj Kumar Patariya, Director, CSIR-NISCAIR delivering the Opening Remarks

Prof. A.K. Sood, President of the Indian National Science Academy (INSA) said that communication strategies were integral to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. But there were significant communication challenges too, he said, including lack of public scientific literacy.



Prof. A.K. Sood, President, INSA, giving his Opening Remarks



Prof. Yoo Hang Kim, President, AASSA, delivering the Presidential Address



Release of the *Workshop Book*. From Right: Dr P. Goswami, Director, CSIR-NISTADS; Dr Manoj Kumar Patariya, Director, CSIR-NISCAIR; Prof. Yoo Hang Kim, President, AASSA; Dr Narender K. Sehgal, Former Adviser, Govt. of India; Prof. A.K. Sood, President, INSA; Prof. Krishan Lal, former President, INSA; Mr S.P. Mishra, Deputy Executive Director, INSA

Prof. Yoo Hang Kim, President, AASSA, said that for communication strategies to succeed, widespread collaborations between stakeholders was the need of the hour.

In the first technical session chaired by Prof. Krishan Lal, former President of INSA, Prof. Lal gave a brief introduction of the AASSA project on Food and Nutrition Security and Agriculture (FNSA).

In his presentation, Prof. Yoo Hang Kim, President, AASSA mentioned about the IAP Inter Academies which includes IAP, IAC and IAMP. There are four regional networks — Asia/Pacific, Europe EASAC, America IANAS, and Africa NASAC. He

emphasised on links between scientists and decision makers, and said a scientifically literate society can have informed choice, promoting healthy food systems.

The second scientific session was chaired by Prof. Mooha Lee, Executive Director, AASSA and Prof. Finarya Legoh, Agency for Assessment and Application of Technology, Indonesia.

In the first presentation, Dr Mohammad Hakim Haider, Institute of Economics, Academy of Science of Afghanistan, gave a presentation on 'Sustainable Development: Communication from a Development Perspective'. He said that SDG's is a multi-dimensional approach, which requires people's participation. He focused upon eradication of extreme poverty, avoidance of exploitation of resources, decrease in pollution levels, and the role of media in filling the gap between the poor and the policy makers.

In the next presentation on 'Fundamentals of Communicating SHARE', Prof. Hak-Soo Kim, former President, AASSA said that there was no dearth of information providers, no lack of media channels and no lack of messages. All that was required was more of public engagement.

While Dr V.K. Srivastava, President, Indian Science Writers Association spoke about 'Emerging Perspectives in Health Communication', and the work done by ICMR in 41 villages where people suffered from protein energy malnutrition, Dr Kamal Kapoor, Associate Professor, University of Jammu, highlighted the merits of green chemistry.

In the third scientific session, Prof. Finarya Legoh said that technology innovation and social culture can be linked by Integrating work elements like Knowledge of management, Promotion and marketing, Science and technology communication and Social Responsibilities.

Miss Wiwi Syafarhadiati delivered a talk on 'Spreading technology development outcomes through e-Media', where she talked about the importance of social media in communicating science. She said that technology development has to be socialized.



Prof. Krishan Lal, former President, INSA; Prof. Hak-Soo Kim, former President, AASSA; Dr Mohammad Hakim Haider, Afghanistan; delivering their presentations



Prof. Finarya Legoh, Indonesia and Miss Wiwi Syafarhadiati, Indonesia

Dr N. Murugan, Former Director, All India Radio, Chennai delivered a talk on ‘Significance of Science Communication through regional languages to reach the unreached’. He highlighted the success of Radio and said it is the cheapest medium to reach people.

Dr M.A. Ansari, Professor, Agriculture Communication, GBPU, Uttarakhand, in his presentation on 'Communication strategies for sustainable agricultural development,' explained the sustainable agricultural development goals as increasing agricultural productivity, increasing production efficiency, increasing farm profitability, and enhancing socio political policy.

In the last scientific session on 18 November 2017, in a session chaired by Prof. Yoo Hang Kim, President, AASSA and Prof. Kankan Bhattacharyya, Vice President (Science Promotion), INSA, while Prof. Avtandil Korakhashvili from National Academy of Sciences of Georgia, Georgia gave a presentation on 'Adaptation of Food Safety communication systems RASFF and INFOSAN in Georgian Cheese production', Prof. Iraj Malakmohammadi, University of Teheran, Academy of Sciences, Islamic Republic of Iran, presented his research on 'Communication Strategies to Empower Sustainable Development Technology Users in Digital Age'.

Prof. Mastaka Watanabe from the University of Tsukuba, Japan, presented his views on 'The Sprout of Science: How to grow it in Society' highlighting the major programmes being organized in Japan in recent years. These include youngster Science festivals, Exhibitions, workshops, Science Agora, Folk Literacy, Science cafes, etc.

Shri V.P. Singh, President, Indian Science Communication Society, presented his views on 'Human Resource Development in Science Communication'. He talked about the importance of developing our human resource to develop science communication. He mentioned that there is a need of creating positions of science communicators in our laboratories and research institutes, so as to fill the gap between scientists and layman.

The highlights of the Workshop included two Scientainment programmes. Dr Pradeep Shrivastava, former Chief Scientist, CSIR-CDRI addressed the workshop on the topic 'Scientoon as a tool for Communicating Science, Environment and Risk'. Scientoons, he said, not only make you smile and laugh but also provide information about new researches, subjects, data and concept in a simple, understandable and interesting way.



Dr Pradeep Srivastava (above) and Dr Rickey Kej (below)

Dr Rickey Kej, Grammy Award Winner and conservationist gave a musician's perspective of Sustainable Development Goals. Dr Kej gave live demonstrations of hazards associated with climate change through his films and music.

The final component of the Workshop was a Round Table Discussion and Summing Up, chaired by Prof. Mastaka Watanabe, University of Tsukuba, Japan and Prof. Avtandil Korakhashvili.





Prof. Avtandil Khorakhashvili from Georgia and Prof. Masataka Watanabe from Japan chairing the final session of the Regional Workshop

While Prof. Kankan Bhattacharyya emphasised that education lasts for long and that social media is the best medium for science communication, Dr Ankuran Dutta, Associate Professor and Head, Department of Communication and Journalism, Gauhati said that we need to encourage people to get involved to bring about change in the society. He also spoke about the success and popularity of community radio across the world.

Shri Shabir Ahmad Shabir, Secretary, Student Welfare Association, Srinagar, spoke about the development and awareness programmes organized by his institution. Dr Jagdish Chander, Advisor, International Cooperation, Department of Science and Technology, focused upon the hybridization of ideas, need for objectives and communication strategies to be adopted. Dr V.K. Shrivastava said that Indian science writers are doing well but it is not enough. While Dr Murugan commented on the need for establishing a science channel, Dr Mohammad Hakim Haider appealed to fill the gap between policy makers and the public.



Dr Jagdish Chander, Adviser (International Cooperation), DST



Dr V.K. Srivastava, President, Indian Science Writers Association and Dr M.A. Ansari, Professor, G.B. Pant University of Agriculture & Technology expressing their views during the final session of the Regional Workshop



Dr Manoj Kumar Patariya, Director, CSIR-NISCAIR summing-up the proceedings

While summing up the deliberations of the AASSA-INSA-NISCAIR Regional Workshop on 'Sustainable Development Goals: Communication Strategies', Dr Manoj Kumar Patariya, Director, CSIR-NISCAIR highlighted some of the strategies and best practices for SHARE Communication in the form of

recommendations for member countries. These included training of scientists and journalists in science communication, publication of suitable resource materials, encouraging regional and local languages, implementing outreach and public engagement activities like science fairs, lectures, demonstrations, films, debates of emerging scientific issues, etc. to be implemented, emphasising digital modes of communication, government support for science communication activities, and national level studies to gauge public understanding of science.