

MINUTES OF THE TAA INDIA MEETING

TAA-India organised a round table meeting on September 28, 2017 at 39 Pritvi Raj Road - New Delhi which was participated by the following members/potential members.

S. No	Name	Membership	Current Association
1.	Dr. KK Upadhyay	Individual	Independent Development Professional
2.	Dr. RPS Yadav	Individual	IFFCO
3.	Dr, KG Wankhede	Individual	IFFCO
4.	Mr. Pramel Gupta	Institutional	Vrutti Livelihood Resource Centre
5.	Dr. Sudhrendar Sharma	Non-member	Independent Development Professional
6.	Mr. Saikrishna Nanduri	Non-member	National Skills Foundation of India
7.	Mr. Kiran Kumar	Non-member	National Skills Foundation of India
8.	Mr. Keith Virgo	Individual	Chairman TAA
9.	Mr. Girish Bhardwaj	Individual	Livelihood Solutions

Mr. Saikrishna Nanduri, CEO-National Skills Foundation of India (NSFI), along with his colleague Mr. Kiran Kumar participated during introduction session of the meeting as they visited the venue to meet Dr. KK Upadhyay. However, Mr. Saikrishna has been in touch for a couple of months with regard to membership of TAA. Dr. Sudhirendra Sharma, a known senior development professional, was specially invited to participate in the meeting.

Mr. Rajinder Singh Nijjar from Chandigarh, Mr. Rishi Narayan Singh from Lucknow and Reliance Foundation from Mumbai could participate in the meeting. As planned, the round table meeting focussed on sharing update on TAA globally along with future strategies, challenges faced in increasing membership in India, suggestions on increasing membership and deciding implementation strategies in India.

The introduction session was followed by sharing TAA updates by the Chairman covering historical background, objectives of the association, UK regional and overseas branches, specialist groups, services under different branches, publications along with news alerts including Journal on Agriculture For Development, TAAF, vacancies and membership. India-Organiser shared the challenges faced in inviting individuals and institutions to become TAA member. Mr. Pramel Gupta shared his experiences on how TAA Journal and alerts were found useful to his organisation. Dr. Sudhirendra Sharma raised question on need of TAA in India, whereas the design of the concept is relevant to the European professionals who are associated with a number of development initiatives across the developing countries.

In continuation to the previous TAA-India meeting held on 14th July 2017 at FICCI House New Delhi, the participants again felt a need to develop and circulate the online quarterly newsletter with a view to create TAA visibility in the region and to attract the individuals and institutions to join its membership. The newsletter may include content related to TAA activities, case studies, articles, policy issues, technological advancement, etc. The participants agreed to circulate the newsletter to the known contacts of the existing TAA members to begin with. It was agreed that all the existing members will share their contacts to develop a databank to include in the mailing list for regular communication and interaction with the recipients. Mr. Girish Bhardwaj and Dr. KG Wankhede took the responsibility to work on the newsletter issue. The format for newsletter may be designed with the advice of the TAA Coordinating Editor (Paul Harding).

It was also suggested that the Journal on 'Agriculture For Development', one of the most liked outputs of TAA, needs to be shared to the non-members in the mailing list as well to begin with. The initiative may help the recipients to understand the concept of global learning and sharing mechanism and encourage them to join TAA. This can be effected by giving the weblink to Publications which carries Ag4Dev editions (only members will be able to access full text of the three most recent editions). <http://www.taa.org.uk/publications.asp?menuId=4>

The issue of resource mobilisation for organising small events was also discussed. It was felt that the relevance of theme will decide whether the donor institutions will be interested or not. It was also suggested to ask for fee from the participants for attending the events towards the cost of food/snack and material. The possibilities may also be explored whether the member institutions can contribute to the events.

As discussed in the previous meeting, Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative (IFFCO) and National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) need to be tapped in for small funding. Dr. RPS Yadav and Dr. KG Wankhede would like to explore possibilities whether IFFCO would be interested in supporting small events.

The Chairman and India Organiser had telephonic conversation with Mr. BG Mahesh of Reliance Foundation just after the meeting. According to Mr. Mahesh, Reliance Foundation would be interested in joining hands with TAA for organising events including workshop/conference. In addition, Reliance Foundation would share the case studies or research papers for TAA to share it across all the members of TAA

TAA is a globally resource rich organisation in terms of expertise. However, the same is least or underutilised. The issue was raised whether TAA members can provide voluntary support to the member institutions or the needy non-member organisations in the areas of mutual interest. However, the cost towards logistic arrangements will be borne by the respective organisations. The concept of paid expertise utilisation for the members/non-members may be thought of at a later stage. Mr. Girish Bhardwaj committed to 15 days a year to provide voluntary support to the member organisations to begin with.

An idea was floated whether the former associates of DFID supported Western India Rainfed Farming Project (WIRFP) may be encouraged to join TAA. Probably Keith Virgo and Dr. RPS Yadav may take a lead with a view to mobilise individuals to join TAA.

As per the feedback from the participants through WhatsApp messages, the get-together was quite successful. The presence of Mr. Keith Virgo made the event more attractive.

Additional points noted by Keith on TAA Policy, at the meeting and shortly thereafter:

1. The number of email addresses provided for Institutional Members' staff could be increased from five.
2. TAAF Awardees would be welcome in India (although assignments are usually set by the host university)
3. TAA to consider lower rates of subscriptions for small NGOs who can't afford the full rates.
4. TAA to revise the criteria for Young Development Agriculturalist of the Year to make them less UK-orientated.
5. Template for visiting cards provided to Girish.
6. TAA India members welcome to post their 'profiles' on the website <http://www.taa.org.uk/taa-career-summaries.asp?subId=76&sub=yes>