



# Development of Saamajika Samaachar – An ICT based Home Science Extension Services for Empowering Farm Women

K Bhagya Lakshmi<sup>1</sup> and K Dhanasree<sup>2</sup>

Department of Home Science Extension and communication Management,  
College of Home Science, Guntur, Acharya N.G.Ranga Agricultural University (Andhara Pradesh)

---

## ABSTRACT

Information Communication technologies (ICT) showed the ways of disseminating information to the intended stakeholders. The advancements in ICT can be utilized for providing accurate, timely, relevant information and services for empowering farm families. Recent developments in ICT have introduced plethora of opportunities for development in every conceivable area, while traditional media such as radio and television have played a major role in dissemination of information to farm families. The present initiative was taken up to design and develop a portal named Saamajika Samaachar by Department of Home Science Extension College of Home Science, Guntur to disseminate home science information and technologies to farm women in specific and farm families in general. As a result, portal was providing information on nutrition and health, child development, resource management, textiles and clothing, environment education and extension management and communication. Present paper discusses the various steps and methodology followed for the development of the web portal.

**Key Words:** Communication, Empowerment, Dissemination, Farm women, Information, Web Portal.

---

## INTRODUCTION

The potential of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in the last decade has opened new avenues in information management, which will bring desirable changes in cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (Skill) and affective (Attitude) domains of the individuals. It also plays an important role in meeting the various challenges related to sharing, exchanging and disseminating knowledge and technologies. Today, ICT have been recognized as a key tool in changing the mode of extension services and knowledge sharing. The report of the Task Force on India as Knowledge Superpower (GOI, 2001) emphasized the necessity of developing the capacity to generate, absorb, disseminate and protect knowledge and exploit it as a powerful tool to derive societal transformation.

Mahant (2012) opined that adoption of ICT enabled information systems for agriculture

development and rural viability is a strategic issue part and parcel of agriculture and rural policies. Banerjee (2014) indicated that in present era ICT industry is contributing a lot into Indian national economy in various ways. The ICT development has made the rural people better informed about the market and the many Indian farmers are benefitted with the reach of ICT in the form of mobile phone or internet in the remote villages. Sharma *et al* (2012) reported that 41 per cent farmers had landline phone but only 47 per cent of them used it for agriculture purposes. Similarly, 98 per cent farmers possessed television set but only 49 per cent of them used for watching the agriculture related programs. The mobile phone ownership among farmers was more than 98 per cent which are mostly used by them as a social communication tool whereas, 78 per cent of farmers said that once in while they use their mobile phone for agriculture advisory liking calling

---

Corresponding Author Email : bhagya.dunga@gmail.com

<sup>1</sup>SMS (Home Science), KVK, Amadalavalasa

<sup>2</sup>Assistant professor

agriculture departments or relatives or commission agents to enquire about the rate of produce. Mobile phones were found to be the most powerful means of communication among farmers for exchanging agriculture information. By realizing the importance of ICTs in dissemination of scientific information to farm families, an user friendly web portal named Samajika Samachar has been developed for creating repository of information on various issues related for the development of farm families by the Department of Home Science Extension and Communication management. The objectives of the web portal was to provide ICT enabled extension services for empowering farm women.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Collection of information

Information was collected from primary and secondary sources such as State Agricultural Universities (SAU's), research stations, government organizations, non-governmental organizations, extension organizations, experts and publications based on the need. The information was collected on health and nutrition, , human development, textiles and clothing, resource management, environmental protection and extension and communication management

### e- Content Development

Pooled information from various sources was processed, organized, edited and converted into text, picture, video and voice formats. Content developed was presented on the web portal in different categories namely Feature stories, Popular articles, Success stories, Interviews, Videos and Text SMS.

### Designing of Web Portal

**a. Planning:** An appropriate sitemap was developed for dissemination of gathered information. The sitemap was a list of all the main thematic areas as well as sub-topics. This serves as a guide to know what content will be there on the site and acts as a navigator.

- b. Designing:** A prototype design was developed and tested for the acceptability by taking experts (Multimedia and extension professionals) opinion. The processed information was converted into text, video, voice and pictures based on the subject matter. The content which was posted on the web portal tested for validity and reliability by adopting the method of content validation.
- c. Development:** Based on the prototype selected the home page, followed by a “shell” for interior pages was created. After creation of shell the content was distributed on the site in the appropriate areas. Content management systems like login, search, updates, links, visitor count was created to facilitate the experts to contribute and end users to avail scientific information. Visitors can access website articles and share their opinions; they can post the comments at comments section at the bottom of every article. Scientists can reply to the comments posted by visitors. Visitors can view and rate the articles.
- d. Testing and delivery:** The content developed was uploaded on the portal by following the standards of web portal designing and development. The uploaded information was kept on the server. Domain name registration and web hosting services was done during this phase. Once these accounts have been set up the web portal was uploaded to the server.
- e. Maintenance:** The processed information on identified thematic areas will be uploaded on a regular basis to enhance the number of visitors.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Samajika Samachar – an interactive, user friendly web portal was developed for disseminating information for farm families on various aspects related to empowerment of farm families. It is a bilingual web portal in Telugu (vernacular language) and English. The processed information on identified thematic areas will be uploaded on a regular basis to enhance the number of visitors. The website

## Development of Saamajika Samaachar

contained number of articles such as importance of balanced diet, nutritional information, prevention and management of nutritional deficiencies under nutrition and health theme.

Information on Human Development component helps the rural women to understand the importance of immunization, antenatal and prenatal care, importance of preschool education, important services offered by Anganwadies, importance of informal education etc. Hence, the Saamajika Samaachar portal providing information on various aspects of child and human development. Under textiles and clothing component the portal providing information on uses of natural dyes whereas, in textiles and clothing component the website was providing guidance on consumer education, consumer laws, identification of food adulteration etc.

Environmental Protection component contained information natural resource conservation and management. Farm families, extension and communication management category provides information on agri-prenuership, importance of nutrition garden and terrace garden, Micro enterprises and various Extension programmers for the development of farm families.

**Images:** Various images were captured, collected and edited on relevant subjects.

**Graphic Design:** Graphic design was the process of visual communication and problem solving using one or more of typography, photography and illustration. In this web portal appropriate graphic designs have been developed by combining symbols, images and text to form visual representations of ideas and messages.

**Online databases:** Online databases were hosted on websites, made available as software as a service products accessible via a web browser. The



**Plate.4:** Graphic Designs developed on various themes of Samajika Samachar web portal

content which was posted on the web portal was made available for all the stakeholders on free basis.

**Downloadable Files:** The complete data posted on various themes can be downloaded from web portal at any time and can be used by multiple users. The available data on the website can be utilized by the farm families, extension functionaries, progressive farmers and scientists.



Plate.1: Homepage of Samajika Samachar web Portal

## CONCLUSION

Samajika samachar was one of the such initiative for providing information regarding nutrition and health, human development, textiles and clothing, resource magement, environment education and extension and communication management. The above article provides a road map for similar type of initiative for transfer of scientific information to farm families.

## REFERENCES

- Bahal R, Wason M and Isaar D 2004. Expert System for Effective Extension. *Indian Journal of Extension Education*. 20(1& 2):8-11.
- Gargi Banarji (2014) ICT Development in India: Current Scenario Int J Current Res 6, (01) pp 4685-4689.
- Manish Mahant (2012) Uses of ICT in Agriculture Int J Adv Computer Res 2(1) : 2277-7970.
- Sharma M, Kaur Gagandeep and Gill M S (2012). Use of information and communication technology in agriculture by farmers of district kapurthala. *J Krishi Vigyan* 1(1):83-89.