Knowledge Networking Initiatives of the Indian National Agricultural Research and Education System (NARES)

Veeranjaneyulu, K.

veeru030463@gmail.com

Abstract

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), the apex body for co-ordinating, guiding and managing research and education in agriculture including horticulture, fisheries and animal sciences in the entire country, consists of 101 ICAR institutes and 71 agricultural universities spread across the country and one of the largest national agricultural systems in the world. The human resources developed by the NARES have been primarily responsible for green, white, yellow, and blue revolutions signifying respectively increase in food grain, milk, oilseed and fish production. Realising the importance of the libraries, the ICAR through successive plans supported development of agricultural libraries in India. During the Agricultural Human Resources Development Project (AHRDP), funding support was extended for the collection development of select agricultural libraries. The focus was shifted towards development of hardware, software and connectivity during implementation of National Agricultural Technology Project (NATP). During implementation of National Agricultural Innovation Project (NAIP), much importance was given by the ICAR to agricultural libraries to move towards digital landscape. Flagship projects were implemented during this period to bring the libraries into limelight *viz.,* Consortium for e-Resources in Agriculture (**CeRA**) – the national level e-resource consortium for agricultural libraries which connects all major agricultural university and ICAR institute libraries in India and ensure seamless access to more than 3000 online journals; **KrishiKosh** – a digital repository where all major agricultural libraries of the country are able to upload their digital knowledge resources for wider access. KrishiKosh provides ready software platform to implement all aspects of the open access policy, similar to 'Cloud Service' for any agricultural institution's self-managed repository with central integration. At present the number of documents available in KrishiKosh exceeds 1.00 lakh. All 39 participating libraries of e-Granth project were automated using Koha ILMS and a digital library platform "**IDEAL**" (Indian Digital Ensemble of Agricultural Libraries) has been developed for capturing, digitizing and online sharing of library resources in order to cater to the increasing requirements of the stakeholders.**EPubs** is another digital initiative of the ICAR which facilitates the development of open access, peer-reviewed publishing using Open Journal System (OJS) platform. It provides the technical infrastructure not only for the online presentation of journal articles, but also the entire editorial management workflow including article submission, multiple rounds of peer-review and indexing and so far 36 scientific journals of various universities and professional societies are making use of this platform. This paper attempts to give an overview of these initiatives.

***Keywords:** Knowledge Networking, e-Resources, Indian Council of AgriculturalResearch, NARES, CeRA, KrishiKosh, IDEAL, EPubs, OJS*