FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

My dear readers of Journal of Extension Education,

Wish you all a happy and prosperous New Year!

With widespread Internet access, the digital revolution is reaching every nook and corner of countries such as India offering new opportunities in agriculture. However, the rural digital divide is still a constraint, and the gap appears to widen with the introduction of new Internet technologies.

In 2015, FAO's *E-agriculture 10 Year Review Report on the implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) of the Action Line C7. ICT Applications: e-agriculture* concluded that, while substantial progress has been made in making ICTs available and accessible for rural communities, challenges remain with respect to seven critical factors for success.

Success factor 1: Content: Dissemination of information may be constrained if the nature of information does not match farmers' needs. Content should therefore be created and adapted from reliable and trusted sources, including local languages and taking into account the local contexts.

Success factor 2: Capacity development: Capacities need to be strengthened at all levels to enhance digital literacy by providing appropriate learning opportunities for men, women and youth.

Success factor 3: Gender and diversity: Women's and youth's access to technology and equipment, as well as potential consequences for social dynamics within communities, should be assessed *prior* to project deployment in order to address ICT gaps. Gender disaggregated data must be collected in projects and in national ICT related statistics.

Success factor 4: Access and participation: Collaboration and knowledge sharing in agriculture should be fostered via communities of practice, in order to showcase and promote models, methodologies and good practices, so as to achieve effective and equitable use of ICTs for sustainable agriculture and rural development.

Success factor 5: Partnerships: Public-private partnerships with a wide range of non-state actors such as small, local private companies, local producer organizations and community-based NGOs should be promoted for inclusive, affordable and sustainable ICT services and initiatives in agriculture and rural development.

Success factor 6: Technologies: Blended approaches, such as a combination of mass media, and locally relevant technologies selected on the basis of in-depth analysis of local needs and existing information systems, should be adopted to increase the efficiency of initiatives for ICT in agriculture.

Success factor 7: Sustainability: Access to mobile telephony, Internet and information in general should be possible, and within the price range of the poor. Open access policies and initiatives should be encouraged.

We need to put in to use the aforementioned recommendations, specific to the success factors, in order to effectively use ICTs for sustainable agricultural development.

From this year, we have planned to carry the **thesis abstracts** in the field of agricultural extension, in JEE's online version. We hope to continue to be an important channel for sharing extension literature. Do send your feedback to *editorextension@gmail.com.*

Chief Editor