

# Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (MoA&FW) signs MOU for developing a National Interactive Digital Platform to strengthen extension system

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The Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Government of India signed a Memorandum of Understanding in New Delhi today with Digital Green under public private partnership framework to build a national level digital extension platform. The platform will host a digital library of curated multi-format multi-lingual content, help extension workers access and deliver curated content to farmers on time and upskill the vast network of extension workers for agriculture, horticulture, fisheries, livestock and rural livelihood missions through certified online courses.



Speaking on the occasion, Shri Manoj Ahuja, Secretary, MoA&FW, GoI said that "The proposed national digital platform will help make our extension system more efficient and effective by connecting farmers to the strong foundation of digital agriculture ecosystem that is being built by the government. Digital capacity of this extension system is crucial to help farmers reap the benefits of digital agriculture and will serve as one of the component of digital public infrastructure for Agriculture announced recently in the Union Budget".

There are over 200,000 extension workers in India in agriculture, livelihood and allied sectors. This ambitious initiative will converge the outreach efforts of departments of agriculture, horticulture, livestock, dairy, fisheries and rural livelihoods under a single digital platform through a decentralised content creation and targeted dissemination. To be launched within six months, the platform will have the portal and capabilities to serve the entire farming community in India and catalyse Agtech and other market actors with newer and higher value proposition.



The MOU is with Digital Green, an award winning social enterprise that is leveraging the power of technology to support small and marginal farmers to enhance their productivity and income, strengthen their agency and build community level resilience. Founded by Rikin Gandhi, a technocrat and social development enthusiast, Digital Green has been working with governments in Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, serving over 25 lakhs farmers and having enhanced the capacities of over 4000 front line workers.

According to Rikin Gandhi, technology has no value unless it makes a positive difference to the last mile farmer. Thanking the GoI for investing in technology to make Indian farm system future ready, he said that "we are honoured and proud to be partnering with Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare and be a key stakeholder in making our small and marginal farmers thrive and prosper. He further added that the envisaged platform will contribute to and complement the national systems to emerge as a digital public good for the farm sector in India."

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