



Informant

January 2013

SASAE Central Branch News Letter



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Editorial

The Informant had deemed it fit to conscientize members about the existence and availability of Agricultural Extension Manuals in the Branch. The Central Branch has developed training manuals for the benefit of extension practitioners across the board. The Manuals contain a vast amount of information that is very important for enrichment of knowledge in extension and advisory approaches and practices. The following topics have been covered therein:

- What is extension?
- Groups in agricultural extension work.
- Role of small-group techniques in agricultural extension.
- A manual to mobilize farmers into effective farmer groups for sustainable agriculture development.
- The role of the specialist and the generalist in extension.

- Preparing and presenting of a poster.
- Creating and presenting effective presentation.

Members are advised to contact the SASAE Secretariat at ben@sasae.co.za for electronic copies of the manuals (R50.00 each). They are also urged to advise SASAE Central Branch's Management Committee about any new topic that is not covered by the existing training manuals. Members can send their proposed topics to the SASAE Secretariat. *Editor*



CENTRAL BRANCH SYMPOSIUM 2012

The Symposium was held on the 5th September 2012 in Modimolle Sub-district of Limpopo province.

The symposium was rated successful through Symposium assessment instrument. The Management Committee of the Branch appreciates the efforts of all those who attended, participated, contributed materially and/or made presentations. Special gratitude goes to Manstrat in particular for their informative presentation they made on Extension Suite Online (ESO).

The Annual General Meeting was held wherein the following new Management Committee Members were elected into office:

Chairperson: Ms. Makola, E. S. (Limpopo)
 Vice Chairperson: Mr. Xaba, G. (Mpumalanga)
 Secretary: Dr. Diale, N. R (Limpopo)
 Additional Members: Mr. Stevens, B. (Treasurer)
 Co-opted members: Mr. Last, C. (North West)
 Mr. Mokoena, J. J. (Mpumalanga)
 Ms. Malefane, M. (Gauteng, Manstrat)
 Ms. Bornman, M. (Limpopo)
 Mr. Thusi, M. B. (North West)
 Mr. Mabuza, T. (Gauteng)

SASAE'S 47TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The SASAE's 47th Annual Conference will be held as scheduled:

Date: 03-07 June 2013

Venue: Bloemfontein

Central Branch members are urged to prepare themselves for presentations of papers and posters.



SASAE Awards

The SASAE's Central Branch Members are urged to submit their nominations for awards now. They are also advised to print copies of the nomination forms from the August 2012 issue of the *Informant* posted on the Central Branch Webpage at

<http://www.sasae.co.za/pdf/Informant%20Aug%202012.pdf>

Copies can also be requested from ben@sasae.co.za or nkgodidiale@gmail.com.

MEMBERS' ARTICLES

AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION AND ADVISORY SERVICE: PEOPLE-CENTRED DEVELOPMENT POINT OF VIEW

Diale, N. R.

Agricultural Extension dates back to 1870 (Brokensha & Hodge, 1969) with its primary aim of training people about new farming ideas in their own context (Bembridge, 1991); transferring agricultural practice and technology, and later to promote self-help projects in rural communities (Conwell, 1986 as quoted by De Beer & Swanepoel, 1998). As a development concept, extension's spirit is to *inter alia* empower and transform people through information and technology transfer into self-sufficient farmers. Its

philosophy is to *teach how to catch a fish* rather than to *give a fish*. This is therefore a process to *empower and let go* (Diale, 2011).

In other words, extension is a rural people-centred development process which is defined by Korten (1990) as “a process by which the members of a society increase their personal and institutional capacities to mobilize and manage resources to produce sustainable and justly distributed improvements in their quality of life consistent with their own aspirations”. Burkey (1993) agrees that people-centred development is a process by which an individual develops self-respect, and becomes more self-confident, self-reliant, cooperative and tolerant to others through becoming aware of his/her shortcomings as well as his/her potential for positive change.

We learn from these definitions that people-centred development is the processes by which people as individuals and structures make efforts themselves to improve their own quality of life according to their aspirations, and through the sustainable mobilization and management of available resources. This therefore means that development is a process through which people become aware of their capabilities, acquire knowledge and work in a collective to meet their abstract needs (Swanepoel and De Beer, 2006) such as self-respect, self-confidence, and self-reliance, and they also become collective in a social and economic interaction for positive change in their lives. The emphasis is that the decision on development of a society has to be in the hands of the community members themselves without any prescription from an outsider. This phenomenon may be a long process to allow the participating parties to develop such capacity to manage and mobilize the resources for their own benefit (De Beer 1997).

Our Extension and Advisory Service should be seen to be working towards empowering people in preparing them to take charge of their own agricultural development processes. As Extension Workers we therefore need to be prepared to work ourselves out of one community to another.

POSTERS CORNER

Informant has created this space for posters. SASAE members are therefore urged to submit posters for publication in its quarterly issues. Beginners in particular are advised to submit whatever they have, *Informant* will go through the posters and guide them towards a presentable poster which may eventually be presented in the SASAE Annual Conference or published in the newsletter. This will not only be for the information of readers but also to help the authors enhance their skills in development of posters for presentation in the Conferences. This also leads to skills in development of conference papers. The following is an extract of the Training Manual on Preparing and Presenting a Poster. The full version of the manual can be requested from the SASAE Secretariat at ben@sasae.co.za

A typical outline for a poster¹

- Title/Topic: (something catchy and descriptive). What is in it for the reader?
- Why? Provide context for your work. Explain the big picture and why the problem is important (Problem statement). Make sure that the reader can identify your objective(s).
- Methodology: When? Where? How?
- What did you find/learn? (Main findings: support with necessary statistics, facts)
- Conclusions and recommendations: So what? Interpret your findings so that readers can understand.

You should be able to answer each of these questions in a sentence or two, using language that your audience can understand. The broad outline should include a statement of the problem (Introduction and reason why it is important), a description of the methodology (when, where, how), a presentation of results, and then a discussion of the results and their implications for your field. Listing your method (when, where, how) is important, but most people are more interested in the "why" and the "so what" (what are the implications of your work for you as extension officer and the people you service) and the "now what" (what follow-up is intended). Emphasize these aspects more than your methodology. The most common problem is too much focus on methods. If your poster is about a new method, detail discussion of the methodology is important.

¹ Extract from SASAE Agricultural Extension Manual Booklet 7: Preparing and Presenting a Poster.

FAILURE, THE SUCCESS

Failures are those that fail nothing. This may in some consideration sound paradoxical. I just want to express a view point that those that have nothing to do have nothing to fail. In contrast, the hand that breaks is the hand that works. Everyone is capable of failure, not the less intelligent or the coward? You make or break it. It only needs one to have passion to embrace one's failures. Yes, Thomas J Watson says "if you want to succeed, double your failure rate". In other words, one must fail, and learn to do it right the second time around. Kevin Kelly agrees that a lot can be learned from something that went unexpectedly wrong. He gives an example that "engineers may push systems to the limit, breaking them to learn about them". They fail the first time, learn and succeed the second time around. Sarah Rapp confirms this when she says success always starts with failure. According to Tim Harford such a "success comes through rapid fixing of our mistakes rather than getting things right the first time". He uses Twyla Tharp and David Petraeus's *trial-and-error* philosophy in support of his argument. So, if you want it, do it. If you fail, you'll learn from it and do it right the second time for yourself, not for someone else.

Remember, in terms of criteria for failure, what is seen to be a failure by one person, may be considered a success by another. In this context, one's failure is another one's success. In other words, failure and success are equally acceptable. Therefore, why the fear? *Diale, N. R.*

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