

Workshop on Extension Reforms and Human Resource Development

An experience sharing workshop on Extension Reforms and Human Resource Development was organized by the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation (DAC), Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India, during June 19-20, 2009 at MANAGE, Hyderabad.

The objective of the workshop was to review the status and progress of training planning under Extension Reforms by SAMETIs in different states, experiences by states regarding public-private partnership in extension, best extension practices, innovative activities, key components like Farm Schools, Commodity Interest Groups (CIGs) etc. under ATMA and operationalisation of Electronic Monitoring System in the states.

Participants included State Agriculture Secretaries, Agriculture Commissioners, State Nodal officers, Directors of State Agricultural Management and Extension Training Institutes (SAMETI), Principals of Extension Education Institutes (EETIs) from 25 States/Union Territories. Senior officials from the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture, Govt. of India and faculty from MANAGE also participated in the workshop.

Welcoming the participants, Shri K.V. Satyanarayana, IAS, Director General, MANAGE informed that the workshop aims at comprehensive review of extension reforms and HRD interventions. He stressed the need for comprehensive training planning by SAMETIs in states and Union Territories.

Shri Jiji Thomson, IAS, Joint Secretary (Extension), in his opening remarks, elaborated on the idea behind this workshop and the initiatives intended to be undertaken.

Emphasizing on the importance of ATMA and interventions to be carried out, Shri Thomson emphasized the need for strengthening ATMA, in terms of infrastructure support, connectivity, manpower etc. Keeping in view the need to improve agricultural productivity in which agricultural extension plays a pivotal role, the Joint Secretary (Extension) stressed on the need for comprehensive training planning at state and district level, capacity building of extension functionaries, and need to address issues in areas like adaptability to climate change.

Shri Jiji Thomson, Joint Secretary (Extension) expressed concern over the non utilization of funds and delayed submission of work plans by some of the states and exhorted



Shri Jiji Thomson, IAS, Joint Secretary (Extension) addressing the participants

the states/UTs to speed up the pace of utilization of funds. He stressed on the need to mobilize Commodity Interest Groups (CIGs) in states and set up more Farm Schools. There is also a crucial need to involve the private sector in extension, he stated. He mentioned that it is application and diffusion of knowledge which significantly contributes to generation of output from a given set of resources. He emphasized on the importance of the reforms process and the need for bringing about a change in the mind-set of the stakeholders.

Following this, there was a presentation by Dr. M.N. Reddy, Director (Agricultural Extension and Communication) MANAGE on SAMETI, which focused on key functions, proposed areas for capacity building under Extension Reforms and issues related to development of SAMETIs.

The inaugural session was followed by presentations by various states on the efforts made with regard to the training plan, focusing on role of various stakeholders in training need assessment; conduct of training programmes; state-wise institution-wise monitoring and evaluation of training efforts, training gaps and strategies and suggestions to improve the functioning of SAMETIs. This was followed by a presentation on trend analysis of ATMA performance by Ms. Neeraj Suneja, Joint Director (Extension Reforms), Ministry of Agriculture, Govt. of India.

On the second day there was a presentation by Shri Jiji Thomson which focused on the importance of having a vision, goal orientation, team work and motivation.

This was followed by a presentation by Dr. Muthuvel from Tamil Nadu Agricultural University wherein he shared

experiences with the Precision Farming project in Tamil Nadu. There were presentations from various states covering status of public-private partnership in extension, best extension practices, critical evaluation of key components viz., Farm Schools, CIGs etc., performance of innovative activities and status of operationalisation of Electronic Monitoring System (EMS).

In his closing remarks Shri Jiji Thomson, Joint Secretary (Extension) outlined the timelines for action on the following:

1. Improving Support to State Extension Programmes for Extension Reforms
2. Improving Agri Clinics and Agribusiness Centres (ACABC) scheme to enhance agri entrepreneurship and performance of the scheme
3. Organizing Model Training courses on topics of national and global relevance like climate change, rainfed farming etc.

Research Study on Organic Production

There has been increasing demand for organic produce from the consumer market in India, especially from well off consumers, due to concerns relating to food safety. Keeping this in view, the Government of India is encouraging organic agriculture not only as a strategy to mitigate pollution caused by agriculture, but also as a value addition strategy for farmers. Despite increase in the land area managed under organic agriculture, in India, supply of organic produce is not enough to meet the potential demand. Farmers are not in a position to realize the extra value gained from organic produce, though organic horticultural production is more remunerative for smallholders as compared to that of conventional horticulture.

In this background, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations took up a Research Study on Organic Production. Part of the Project work was assigned to MANAGE. The role of MANAGE was to undertake a survey on the risk and needs assessment of farmers in India covering their conversion to organic agriculture; translate the survey questionnaire on risk and needs assessment of farmers into the local language; conduct interviews to pretest the translated questionnaire on households producing organic rice, conventional rice, organic vegetables and conventional vegetables; conduct a survey of 300 households (150 organic and 150 conventional) producing vegetables or rice, and enumerate the collected data into a data base.

Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh were the three states selected for conducting the survey. Pre testing of the questionnaire was carried out in Kalwakurty of Mahaboobnagar district. A sample of 100 farmers including 50 farmers for organic production and 50 farmers for conventional production were selected randomly in each state. The report of the study has been submitted to FAO.

4. Human Resource Development of Extension officials of North East
5. Organizing National exhibitions, seminars, conventions and workshops
6. Expansion of the Diploma in Agricultural Extension Services for Input Dealers (DAESI) being offered by MANAGE
7. Setting up of a national task force to draw guidelines for convergence
8. Establishing model farms, model farmers, farming system models and model agricultural villages as hubs for extension activities
9. Harness mass media and Kisan Call Centres for dissemination of best agricultural practices
10. Restructuring of Extension Education Institutes (EEIs).

National Seminar on Agriculture Extension

As a follow up to the two-day National Seminar on Agriculture Extension organized by the Ministry of Agriculture Govt. of India, on February 27-28, 2009 at New Delhi, a series of meetings were held at MANAGE, under the chairmanship of Shri Jiji Thomson, Joint Secretary (Extension) for further discussion and synthesis of the recommendations.

Senior officials from the Ministry of Agriculture, Govt of India, faculty of MANAGE, NIRD, NAARM, NIPHM, DRR, ICRISAT, ITC-IBD, also participated in the meetings. The following recommendations have been prioritised for implementation by the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture, Govt. of India during 2009-10:

1. Capacity building of input dealers in crop technology and management practices is essential on the lines of DAESI diploma of MANAGE.
2. A National Task Force to draw guidelines for convergence in planning and implementation of RKVY, NHM, NFSM and NRM.
3. Establishing model farms, model farmers, farming system models and model agricultural villages as hubs for extension activities
4. Harnessing Mass Media and Kisan Call Centers for dissemination of best practices

MANAGE Extension Research Review is now Journal of Agricultural Extension Management

MANAGE Extension Research Review, a half-yearly journal published by MANAGE is now re-named as Journal of Agricultural Extension Management.

Articles relating to research in agriculture and allied aspects, covering new developments, concepts and their application are welcome.

All communication may be addressed to the Editor, Journal of Agricultural Extension Management, National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE), Rajendranagar, Hyderabad- 500 030.

Veterinary services in Rajkot by an Agripreneur - a Success Story

Dr. Nareshkumar Kalabhai Savsani, an agripreneur under the Agriclincs and Agribusiness Centres (ACABC) scheme from Gujarat has established “Hindustan Trading” a Cattle feed Supply Unit and Veterinary Clinic and is providing veterinary services in Rajkot area. Dr Savsani who holds a Bachelor’s degree in Veterinary Science and Animal Husbandry underwent training under the ACABC scheme at Shree Vivekanand Research and Training Institute, Mandvi, Kutch, Gujarat in 2008. The scheme is implemented by MANAGE and aims at establishing Agriclincs and Agribusiness Centres in rural areas for providing value-added services to farmers at their doorstep by promoting self employment opportunities among unemployed agricultural graduates.

Through his Centre “Hindustan Trading” he is providing veterinary and artificial insemination services, covering nearly 50 villages and 4000 farmers. He established the enterprise on August 4, 2008 with an investment of Rs. 15,00,000/- which



included Rs.5,00,000 loan from *Saurashtra Gramin* bank while Rs.10,00,000/- was his own capital. Today he has an annual turnover of: Rs.50,00,000/- and has plans to expand his unit further.

Best Extension Practices

Precision Farming in Tamil Nadu

-Dr E. Vadivel, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore

The Government of Tamil Nadu initiated a programme on “Precision Farming” with Tamil Nadu Agricultural University as the implementing agency. This project was pilot tested in 400 ha, in Dharmapuri and Krishnagiri districts. The mandate of the project is to cultivate 400 ha of vegetables making use of all latest state of art technologies including GIS and remote sensing for the benefit of the farming community. The focus is on enhancing yield and providing an improved market linkage.

Precision Farming or Precision Agriculture refers to developing agricultural management systems that promote variable management practices within a field according to site or soil conditions. It is a concept of using new technologies in relevance to the collected field information which would precisely estimate the sowing density, fertilizer requirement and other inputs besides accurate yield predicts.

The project was started with 100 ha during 2004-05, 200 ha during 2005-06 and 100 ha during 2006-07. The farmers were initially hesitant to accept; but the impact seen during the first year evoked a response for this concept.

Farmers who opted voluntarily for this system were identified and their fields were scrutinized by the scientists for suitability. Instead of individual approach, cluster of lands were identified and the beneficiaries were brought under “Precision Farming Association” with due registration under Societies Act. Presently 12 Associations are in existence. Enough exposure and capacity building was provided which eventually developed the farming community to identify suitable crops and varieties for the season through Market Intelligence.

Brand Equity determines the sustainability of any venture. To ensure this, the clusters were motivated to begin a producer company viz., “Dharmapuri Precision Farmers Agro Services Ltd.,” having 150 farmers as its share holders.



Benefits

- Produce fetched a premium price in nodal markets
- Due to improved technological interventions, labour dependence on weeding, irrigation and pest management was reduced.
- Drip irrigation system minimized the irrigation water.
- Joint input management by the cluster reduced the cost of inputs besides timely availability.
- Extended crop duration balanced the peak season price fall with off season yield.
- Quality and uniformity in produce is ensured.

With the listed benefits, precision farmers associations are negotiating forward contracts with companies like International Food Stuff Ltd., Sri Lanka and Bharti-Telecom for vegetables and banana respectively. Seeing the success, the Government is expanding this programme to all districts of Tamil Nadu.

Training Methodology for Decentralized Watershed Management

The Rainfed Farming Systems (RFS) Division of Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) Govt. of India and the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) are jointly implementing a project on “Strengthening Capacity Building for Decentralized Watershed Management “. A major component of the Project is to strengthen state level institutions and organizations for capacity building service delivery to watershed programmes wherein it is proposed to support the development of trainers and capacity building managers at the state level.

Training needs assessment was conducted in the three pilot states viz; Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, and Karnataka to look at the training delivery systems in these states, understand training needs of trainers, review existing training modules and best practices.

The Training Needs Assessment and review of existing

training modules revealed the need to focus more on training skills, adult learning process and related aspects. Accordingly a course was organized to enhance the ability of trainers to design and evaluate trainings for decentralized watershed management ; augment understanding of adult learning principles, methodology and participatory training processes ; familiarize with the new common guidelines with special reference to the capacity building component ; and orient them to emerging concerns viz; livelihoods issues, climate change and their significance in training programmes. The programme was organized during March 16-20, 2009 at Jaipur.

There were twenty-one participants who included senior trainers from Government and Non Government institutions, involved in watershed related training at District, Zonal and State level in the pilot states.

New Dimensions in Extension Management for officers of NETFISH

Network for Fish Quality Management and Sustainable Fishing (NETFISH) is a registered society formed under the Aegis of the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) Kochi with a view to impart knowledge to fisherman / fisherwomen and processing workers in fish quality management, conservation and sustainability of fish resources. In order to improve the training and extension skills of the coordinators involved in implementation of training programmes working under NETFISH in all the maritime states of India, NETFISH sponsored a five days training programme on “New Dimensions in Extension Management” to orient the coordinators on various aspects related to

extension management. The programme was organized during March 16-20, 2009 at MANAGE. Twenty-four extension functionaries attended the programme.

The training module broadly covered new dimensions in fisheries extension management; various extension methods; Commodity Interest Groups and federations; communication process and problems; information technology in fisheries development; fisheries market scenario in India and strategies for improvement; WTO and its implication in fisheries sector and aspects like team building; leadership for developmental projects etc.

Training Programmes - September 2009

SNo	Programme	Dates	Venue
1.	Promotion of Sustainable Agriculture	September 1-5, 2009	BAMETI Bihar
2.	Bridging the Knowledge Deficit in Agriculture: Role of ICTs- Options and Opportunities	September 1-5, 2009	TNAU, Coimbatore
3.	Review Workshop on Agri Clinics and Agri Business Centres Scheme	September 7-11, 2009	MANAGE
4.	Participatory Watershed Management under New Common Guidelines	September 7-11, 2009	Jorhat
5.	Tools and Techniques for Managing Development Projects	September 7-12, 2009	MANAGE
6.	Mainstreaming Gender concerns in Agriculture	September 14-18, 2009	SIAM Jaipur
7.	Managerial Skills for Extension Personnel	September 14-18, 2009	Uttarakhand
8.	ICTs in Agricultural Information Management and Networking	September 14-18, 2009	MANAGE
9.	Farm Business Management	September 14-19, 2009	MANAGE
10.	Preparation and Operationalisation of Comprehensive District Agricultural Plan (C-DAP)	September 22-26, 2009	Coimbatore

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