
UNIT 2 EXTENSION MANAGEMENT

Structure

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2.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This unit aims at introducing you to the concept of Extension Management, the Extension Strategies employed in achieving the set objectives, the component of Input Management in Extension, as well as the Professionalism of Extension Services.

After studying this unit you should be able to :

- identify the management functions, basic elements and characteristics of extension management.
- describe the three extension strategies which are involved in the process of development.
- understand the nature of programmes executed and the impact of each extension strategy.
- indicate the importance of management of inputs and credit in an extension organisation, and
- understand the need for professionalism in Extension, Subject Matter and Communication.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Management makes human efforts more productive. In some form or other it exists in every type of human organisation — be it an Extension organisation, Cooperative organisation, a Panchayat organisation and so on. We are all affected by good or bad management practices. Therefore, you have to understand the concept of management, the influence of the quality of management in getting better dividends out of any organisation like the extension organisation. In recent years management of Agricultural Extension is emerging as an important aspect in contributing to the effectiveness of Extension Organisation in terms of reaching large number of rural audiences. There are well defined functions of extension management and these functions have been identified through the acronym POSDCORB-COMEU. These functions need to be understood and performed well by any executive, project leader or an extension professional to achieve the set goals. Many organisations involved in Community Development, Rural Development and Agricultural Development have different objectives, organisational set ups, implementation strategies, target audiences, resource bases etc. So, you should have some understanding of these organisations in which you have a role to play as a functionary or as a member of the target group.

Agricultural Development System covers all kinds of farmers who are striving to provide food for the growing population. The success of any organisation or strategy depends much on the efficient management of production inputs like improved seeds, fertilizers, chemicals, water, etc. Likewise the proper utilisation of credit goes a long way in generating more employment, higher production and income. Further the extension workers or agencies should have attained

professionalism in subject matter and communication which will have tremendous impact on successful execution of rural development or agricultural development programmes.

In this we shall discuss all these aspects of Extension Management per se. We shall first consider the concept of Management, and its various dimensions before we discuss the other three aspects.

2.2 EXTENSION MANAGEMENT

Rural Development and Agricultural Development programmes are implemented by either Government or non-government organisations. The successful attainment of goals by any organisation depends on the efficient management, which involves basically the coordination and integration of the both human and technical resources.

2.2.1 Meaning of Management

Management is the process by which people, technology, job tasks, and other resources are combined and coordinated to achieve the organisational objectives. The word management has no standard meaning although most people agree that it involves getting things done through and with people. So, management deals with human behaviour, the human interactions and the human relationships in an organisation. Here, basically we study the extension organisations.

2.2.2 Management Function

Many management books have identified the management functions through the acronym POSDCORB. Most of the Management organisations have used these managerial functions in achieving success. Four more functions have been added to the earlier seven functions and thus the recent listing of management functions includes POSDCORB-COMEU. This acronym includes the functions like :

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|----------------|-----------------|
| — Planning | — Communication |
| — Organising | — Monitoring |
| — Staffing | — Evaluation |
| — Directing | — Utilisation |
| — Coordinating | |
| — Reporting | |
| — Budgeting | |

Let us try to understand briefly each one of these functions since an extension leader or an executive has to perform most of these functions.

Planning : Planning is a decision making process and it involves selecting and integrating the courses of action that an organisation and the individuals in it will follow to attain its objectives. Planning is virtually deciding in advance as to what to do, how to do, when to do, who is to do, and with what results. In Extension sometimes planning is done for possible future situations which are not expected to occur but may occur, and this exercise is called contingency planning.

Organising : It is the establishing of effective behavioural relationships among persons, so that they may work together efficiently and gain personal satisfaction of doing selected tasks in an enterprise, for achieving selected objectives. The line and staff functions indicate the pattern of distribution of authority in an organisation.

Staffing : It is the process of selecting, maintaining and developing personnel in position, to fulfil the organisational objectives. The process is also referred to as human resource management. The effective staffing requires well defined organisational roles, selection and placement of qualified personnel, written job charts, inservice training and performance assessment.

Directing : It is the continuous task of decision making, and embodying decisions in instructions and serving as the leader of the enterprise. The effective directing/leading requires motivating the members to work for attaining the objectives; harmonising goals of the personnel with those of the enterprise, consistent communication and use of appropriate informal organisation.

Coordination : The term coordination refers to establishing harmonious relationships between the efforts of individuals and groups in order to achieve the desired objectives. You are aware that the coordination is essential even among the members of your family for its smooth running; so, it is with an organisation as well. It is desirable to have cordial relationship and coordination not only of the staff within an organization but also with other line organizations.

Reporting : As you are aware a report refers to a formal record of performance which generally reflects the achievements or failures of a project or a programme. The report serves as a written document of what has been done and provides feed back information to the funding agency and the general public.

Budgeting : Budgeting refers to the allocation of the funds for different sectors of the project/ programme. Budgeting aims at achieving better results with the least cost possible. Budgeting allows for utilising the resources and funds properly as per the directions of the funding agency.

Communication : In any extension organisation communication is very essential and it refers to sending information for effective implementation of the programme, and receiving the feed back information. In any organisation the communication flows downward, upward and horizontally. The communication may be verbal or written.

Monitoring : Monitoring refers to keeping track of the ongoing programme and taking corrective measures if it is not going according to the pre-determined objectives. Such intervention by an external agency provides for objective assessment of the performance.

Evaluation : Evaluation is the process of systematic and objective appraisal of an organisation, an extension programme or a project. Such evaluation can be done during the implementation of the programme or at the completion of the programme or a project. Both are equally important for knowing the achievements of the programme against the targets fixed.

Utilisation : Here, the utilisation refers to making use of the Monitoring and Evaluation Units in the generation of valid data regarding the programmes for critical analysis, and then taking appropriate action to overcome the deficiencies if any.

2.2.3 Basic Element in Extension Management

Some of the elements that are important in Extension Management (Benor and Baxter - 1984; Bhatnagar and Desai - 1987) need to be understood by everyone and these are :

Professionalism: Any extension organisation must have technically qualified staff to understand the problems of the farmers and guide them properly in adopting the agricultural technologies. Hence, their professional competence needs to be enhanced through inservice training. Every care has to be taken to select people of desired professional background depending upon the job requirements. They have to also understand the needs, aspirations, and attitude of farmers towards technology in order to plan appropriate educational programmes/activities.

Organisational Structure: An Extension organisation must have a sound organisational structure. The single line of command is always helpful than the dual control especially at the operational level. The single line of command is given greater emphasis in National Agricultural Extension Programme (T&V System) in India. Defective organisational structure leads to many organisational problems, making the agency ineffective.

Concentration of Efforts: The grass roots level extension workers would be more effective if they concentrate their work on any one area like, agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry or fisheries. Otherwise, he/she may not be able to comprehend all the technical problems related to these subject matter areas and provide solutions to farmers. The farmers always look for expert knowledge and guidance. The World Bank has advocated only agriculture in T & V System. The management of the system is easy if it has unified development goal.

Specificity: Any extension organisation should identify its target group, the nature of extension activity and the agricultural technology as such in specific terms. As you all know, there are different categories of farmers—marginal farmers, small farmers and big farmers; different kinds of extension activities like, campaigns, method demonstrations, result demonstrations, group meetings, farm and home visits and there are different agricultural technologies like, improved seeds, fertilizers, plant protection chemicals, irrigation etc. The extension worker should identify specifically his target group, extension activities and the technology and work to achieve the expected results.

Development of Professional Competence: The development of competence of the extension professionals through human resource development is essential in the context of fast changing technologies around the world. The need for updating the technical knowledge and skills of the extension professionals is vital. This can be done through on-the-job continuous training on the subject matter as well as on the extension methodology. The farmers today are more intelligent and knowledgeable because of their constant exposure to the mass media. Their demands for solutions to agricultural problems are many. Therefore the extension worker is to be better equipped to provide valuable suggestions and solutions to their local problems so as to maintain credibility with the people, failing which the extension worker can do no further extension work with those farmers.

Linkages and Coordination : An extension system should have effective linkages with the research system and client system, to obtain latest knowledge from research stations and to effectively communicate the same to the farmers for large scale adoption. The extension system should carry the problems of the farmers to the research stations and solutions from research stations to the farmers.

Coordination with Other Support Systems : The extension organisation must have coordination with input agencies and credit institutions to help meet the requirements of farmers. Coordination among all these systems is equally important to achieve the required results. Coordination with the emerging Panchayat Raj institutions is equally important in eliciting people's participation in development efforts.

Personnel Management Policies : There is a need for intelligent management of the personnel in extension organisations. The extension personnel (unlike others) have to deal with all kinds of people and take risks in promoting cost-intensive technologies. Some policy decision to promote these people on a time bound basis and/or on merit may go a long way in maintaining their zeal and enthusiasm to serve the people better.

2.2.4 Characteristics of Extension Management

The management properties of Extension include :

- The Policies of the Extension organisation should facilitate the organisation in recruiting, retaining and utilising the services of individuals having initiative, drive, integrity and honesty.
- Pre-service and inservice training programmes for the staff in order to develop their technical competence.
- The extension system should establish strong linkages with research systems to help scientists understand the farmers' needs and problems and finalise research priorities.
- The organisational climate to be conducive for the extension functionaries to perform better.
- A suitable model for the service and support function to cater to the needs of extension organisation in terms of quantity, quality and time of supply.
- Delegation of authority down to the field level to take decisions on matters, which deserve immediate action.
- A good organisational communication to facilitate free flow of communication upward, downward, and horizontal.

- The extension organisation, not only have a plan of action, but also to have a system of monitoring for taking corrective steps in an on-going action programme.
- Appropriate organisational design for large scale participation of people, both in planning and execution of agricultural and rural development programmes.

Check Your Progress 1

Notes : a) Write your answers in the space provided.

b) Check your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1) List the management functions identified in the acronym POSDCORB-COMEU.

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2) Why is the organisational structure considered an important element in Extension Management.

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3) Mention briefly any three important characteristics of Extension Management.

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2.3 EXTENSION STRATEGIES

Over the decades many extension strategies have been tried all over the world (including India) to improve the economic and social conditions of the people. From the early nineteen fifties to mid nineteen sixties the emphasis was on Community Development while since the late seventies, the emphasis has been shifted to the strategy of Rural Development, mostly because of the failure of the Community Development strategy to help the weaker section of the population—the rural poor. While the strategy of Community Development laid more emphasis for the development of the community as a whole both in rural and urban areas, it failed to promote the living conditions of the rural people. So, in order to give more emphasis for the development of rural people especially the rural poor the concept of Rural Development emerged in the international arena including India.

Let us try to understand the concepts of both Community Development and Rural Development, their objectives, target audiences, programme emphasis, as well as the impact. As majority of the population especially the rural people depend on agriculture for their livelihood, the strategy of Agricultural Development also has taken the prime place among the development strategies. It is therefore necessary for you to understand the strategy of agricultural

development, the programme content, organisational structure as also the strengths and weaknesses of T&V System as the main agency involved in Agricultural Development.

With this understanding the said three concepts are discussed as the three important extension strategies for rural development.

2.3.1 Community Development (C.D.)

The concept of C.D. has been variously defined by the professionals involved in Extension and Planning. It has been considered as a movement, a process, a method and a programme.

- C.D. is a movement designed to promote better living for the whole community with the active participation and on the initiative of the community itself.
- C.D. is a continuous process for the interrelation and co-operation of individuals and groups, working for the common interests and good of the people.
- C.D. is a method by which villagers are helped to organise their own efforts to accomplish some improvements, and through their organisation receive adequate and ready assistance from any and all development departments.
- C.D. is a programme for accomplishing certain activities in the fields concerning the welfare of the people.

Many leaders and planners of development nations viewed C.D. as the means of mobilising rural people to achieve economic, social and political objectives. After studying the definition of the concept of C.D. let us try to understand the objectives of C.D.

Objectives of Community Development

The objectives of C.D. are :

1. An all round development of the community in a planned and a democratic manner.
2. To achieve the economic development, social justice and equitable growth through:
 - development of villages with rural primary institutions viz. school, panchayat and cooperatives.
 - preparation of development plans for family, village, and block/district.
 - improving agricultural production.
 - providing minimum basic health facilities and medical care.
 - providing basic education for rural adults.
 - development of infrastructure for communication, recreational, housing facilities i.e. complete development of man.

Community Development Movement

Sometimes Community Development is perceived in terms of a formal programme, namely, Community Development Programme (India, Bangladesh and Pakistan etc.), Animation Rurale (Senegal), and Self-help (Africa). The C.D. movement experienced phenomenal growth in 1950's because of the financial support and initiative by the United States. This was considered as the C.D.'s decade of prominence. By 1960 over 60 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America had C.D. programmes in operation. About half of them were national in character and the rest were regional programmes.

Community Development Programme of India

The Government of India sponsored a nation-wide Community Development Programme (CDP) in the year 1952. Initially 55 community projects were launched in the country. The very

next year National Extension Service (NES) came into being. The NES phase was initially for a period of three years. After three years, the blocks covered under NES were converted into CDP blocks. In the First Five Year Plan, 1060 blocks were covered; by the end of the Second Plan, the coverage was 3,110 blocks and by the end of the Third Plan all the blocks were covered.

The Block was considered as the unit of administration with Block Development Officer (B.D.O.) as the head supported by a team of extension officers specialising in Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Cooperation, Industries, Rural Engineering, Social Education and Health. Each Block had 10 multipurpose Village Level Workers to implement all development programmes at the community/village level.

The 3-tier Panchayat Raj System introduced in 1959 brought in democratic decentralisation and the B.D.O. became the Chief Executive Officer of the Taluk Development Board. Till the middle of the 1960's many administrative changes were introduced but still the programme failed to succeed even though it registered some success in the initial years.

The Approach in C.D. Programmes

The approach of the Community Development Programme was to take up comprehensive development schemes in the villages on the basis of the felt needs of the people. The C.D. activities were initiated by appointing a multipurpose Village Level Worker at the grass roots level. S/he was to serve as a catalyst to guide and assist villagers in identifying their felt needs and then translate these into village development plans and implement them preferably through village leaders. The Village Level Workers (V.L. Ws) were supported by Subject Matter Extension Officers. The V.L.W. was to provide technical guidance, organise demonstrations, conduct meetings, organise campaigns and utilise several other extension methods in motivating the people to adopt agricultural technologies. V.L.W's provided subsidies, matching grants to people to carry out village projects and plans.

The India's C.D. programme served as a model for other Asian countries and it gave the C.D. movement a boost. The initial progress made by India, and many other countries like Pakistan, Phillipines, Egypt, Iran, Bolivia, Jamaica and Peru was to great extent impressive.

Decline of Community Development

By 1960 the C.D. programmes started drifting in India and some other countries. By 1965 most of the nations curtailed or terminated the C.D. programme because of the (1) disillusionment with the performance of the programme with reference to goals set; (2) drastic reduction in the financial support from U.S., UN and other donor agencies; and (3) lack of people's participation. The Indian C.D. programme also failed to achieve its objectives; the food scarcity remained while the gap between the rich farmers and poor farmers increased.

2.3.2 Rural Development (R.D.)

As you are already aware, the strategy of Community Development failed to achieve its objectives in many countries and it widened the gap between the urban and rural communities, and between the rich and the poor. In the late 1970's the then President of the World Bank pledged to redirect its resources towards improving the productivity and welfare of the rural poor in the poorest countries. It was felt that with nearly 80% of the population living in rural areas, any strategy of Socio-economic development in India that neglects rural people and rural areas could not be successful. The rural character of the economy and the need for regeneration of rural India was stressed by Mahatma Gandhi also in his writings. So, Rural Development was considered as an absolute and urgent necessity in India in the later part of 1970's.

Let us try to understand the meaning of the term Rural Development :

- As a Strategy R.D. is designed to improve the economic and social conditions of a specific group of people — the rural poor (World Bank).
- As a Concept R.D. connotes overall development of rural areas, with a view to improving the quality of life of rural people.

As a Phenomenon R.D. is the result of interactions between various physical, technological, economic, socio-cultural and institutional factors.

As a Discipline it is multidisciplinary in nature representing an intersection of agriculture, social behaviour, engineering and management sciences.

The United Nations conceived the goals of R.D. as not simply agricultural and economic growth in the narrow sense but as a balanced social and economic development with emphasis on the equitable distribution of income, widespread improvements in health, nutrition and housing. From these foregoing explanations you can understand the meaning of Rural Development in the present context.

Policies for Rural Development

The Government has to frame public policies to achieve the objectives of rural development and translate these policies into a number of programmes and projects for implementation. Some of the specific reasons for Government intervention in rural development in countries like India are : Rural poverty and income inequality, predominant place of agriculture in country's economy, high fluctuations in agricultural production, prices and incomes, inadequate poor basic infrastructure in rural areas and small, scattered, unorganised rural enterprises.

Let us look at India and see how it switched over from the concept of Community Development to Rural Development in the later part of 1970's.

Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) in India

The Indian Science Congress held at Waltair in 1976 proposed a concrete plan of action to the Government for Integrated Rural Development. Consequently the Integrated Rural Development Programme was launched in the year 1967-77 in India. The aim of this programme was to provide income generating assets and employment opportunities to the rural poor to enable them to rise above the poverty line once and for ever. The IRDP in effect sought to redistribute assets and employment opportunities in favour of the rural poor and it was the single largest anti-poverty programme in the country. No special agency was identified for the implementation of IRDP. The existing C.D. blocks and special agencies were being utilised in implementing its programmes. Subsequently there was a Department of Rural Development at the Centre and also at the State levels (in some States) to oversee the implementation of this programme. Initially the programme was launched in 20 selected districts and by 1980 all the 5011 development blocks in the country were covered by this programme. The B.D.O. at the Block level implements the IRDP programme with the help of one additional AEO and few V.L.W.'s, and with the support of the District Rural Development Agency.

Objectives : The three important objectives are : Production and growth, distributive justice, and full employment within certain time limit. The target group consists of the poorest of the rural poor viz., small farmers, marginal farmers, agricultural and non-agricultural labourers, rural artisans and craftsman who live below the poverty line.

In this programme, substantial assistance was given to the poor to help increase their income and cross the poverty line. The programme covered industrial and tertiary sectors in addition to agricultural sector. Thus, every viable economic activity was covered in this programme.

Block level planning and implementation has been given greater importance in this programme. Loans with subsidy component ranging from 25% to 50% were being given to beneficiaries depending on the category. A second assistance was also given to beneficiaries who did not receive maximum permissible subsidy in the first assistance. Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment (TRYSEM) was introduced as a component of IRDP in 1979, and Development of Woman and Children in Rural Areas (DWACRA) as sub-scheme of IRDP in 1982. During the 7th plan period 181.8 lakh families were assisted with a total investment of Rs. 8888 crores. These programmes have been recently revamped and are now replaced by a programme called Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY).

Some of the other Rural Development Programmes which were in operation in 1980's include:

- Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP)
- Desert Development Programme (DDP)
- National Rural Employment Programme (NREP)
- Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP)
- Minimum Needs Programme (MNP)
- Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY)
- Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP)
- Centrally Sponsored Rural Sanitation Programme (CRSP)

Impact

According to the Concurrent Evaluation Studies (CES) conducted in India (1989) about 81% of the old families had crossed the poverty line of Rs. 3500/- and 28% the revised poverty line of Rs. 6400/-. However about 78% of the families had incremental income. Nearly 25% of the assisted families belonged to destitutes and 46% to the very very poor group. Over 45% investment went to SC/ST families as against the target of 30%. Coverage of women also increased to 25.6%. Subsidy available to SC families increased to 50% and monetary ceiling to Rs. 5000/- from 1990-91. A major impact of the programme was that it benefited the poorest and the most deprived sections of society as also women in such large measure. Unfortunately, the organisation is not strong and as such the technical guidance to the rural poor to pursue the projects is lacking. The revamping of these programmes is expected to overcome some of these constraints.

2.3.3 Agricultural Development

We have already studied the strategy of Rural Development which encompasses varied fields of rural reconstruction including agriculture. But agricultural development has become an important development activity as majority of the people largely depend on agriculture for their livelihood and agriculture takes a predominant place in country's economy. Hence, Agricultural Development is also considered as an important extension strategy.

The developing countries have been faced with many problems like low growth rate in food production, environmental degradation, growing population, droughts, low level of adoption of agricultural technologies by farmers, high cost of inputs, fluctuating prices, etc. In many developing countries more than 80% of the population has been directly involved in agriculture. But the Departments of Agriculture did not have well trained personnel to transfer the latest technologies to all farmers quickly and on a regular basis during the early 1970's. Even though there was increase in the level of food production in some countries, this was not keeping pace with the rising population. Hence, many countries were looking for some drastic changes in the extension methodology to reach effectively all the farmers and to raise the productivity per unit area.

Training and Visit System (T.V. System)

At this junction, the Training and Visit System (T & V System) an Agricultural Extension Methodology advocated by Daniel Benor was introduced and tried successfully in Nepal Burma, Sri Lanka, Turkey, Thailand and Indonesia. Later this system was introduced in India with the assistance of the World Bank during the year 1974-75 in Rajasthan and further extended to different States in the country, as the best method for boosting agricultural production. The broad objective of this system has been to bridge the gap between average productivity on the farmers fields and the potential; the strategy has been to increase the productivity per unit of crop area. The basic technique utilised in this system was, systematic training of the Agricultural Assistant combined with frequent visits by him to farmers fields.

The T&V System provides for a management system which can ensure delivery of expert know-how to almost every field on a statewide basis every week or fortnight. Preference has been given to farmers cultivating small farms using traditional methods.

The T&V System has a hierarchical organisation right from state level to village level. At the District level a team of 3-4 Subject Matter Specialists headed by a Principal Agricultural Officer, and at the sub-division level, a team of 3-4 Subject Matter Specialists headed by an Assistant Director of Agriculture formed the teams for importing training to the field extension staff. The Master Trainers of the Agricultural University bear the responsibility to train the Middle-Management functionaries at the District Level every month. At the circle level an Assistant Agricultural Officer supervises the work of eight Agricultural Assistants (AAs) who are really the basic field workers in this system. Each Agricultural Assistant through discussions and field visits provides technical know-how to 800 farmers once in a fortnight in non-command areas and to 500 farmers once in a week in Command areas. These Agricultural Assistants work through contact farmers selected from among the farmers of different categories at the proportion of 1 : 10.

The T&V System has some special features which provides for better and systematic functioning of the organisation. Let us see what these special features are :

- Systematic training and visits
- Unified extension service
- Extension exclusively
- Concentration of efforts
- Imitable contact farmers
- Best use of local resources
- Recommendations according to ability
- Provision for input and credit supply
- Linkages with research staff
- Continuous improvement in the programme.

Some of the objectives of this system include : (1) to motivate the farmers for adopting improved agricultural technologies; (2) to establish close liaison between research and farmers through extension functionaries and (3) to improve the knowledge and skills of the extension workers to carry out the extension work effectively.

Impact

The impact of T&V System as revealed by some of the studies conducted in India indicates certain achievements and limitations.

The training programme increases the technical competence of the extension functionaries. The area under high-yielding varieties increased and consequently the yield levels of crops also increased marginally. There are several other achievements too.

Some of the important limitations of this programme include : limited participation of farmers in the field visits organised by the Agriculture Assistant; many contact farmers were not aware that they are contact farmers; majority of the Agriculture Assistants had low job satisfaction and achievement motivation, and technical knowledge related to other land based programmes were not provided to farmers.

The T&V System as an effective agricultural extension service is crucial for agricultural development; but it can be effective when it is combined with input supply, credit and marketing in addition to the coverage of all land based activities. In some countries the World Bank has virtually employed the modified T&V System.

Check Your Progress 2

- Notes : a) Write your answers in the space provided.
b) Check your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

- 1) What are the major causes for the failure of Community Development Programme?
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- 2) What is meant by Rural Development? How has the IRDP helped the rural poor to rise above the poverty line?
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- 3) How does the T&V System ensure transfer of technology to all farmers every fortnight/week?
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2.4 INPUT MANAGEMENT IN EXTENSION

In any extension strategy the extension functionaries should give more importance for input management in order to help better utilisation of the scarce and costly resources by the farmers. It is only with efficient input management that the farmers would be able to derive better yields and higher net income. But it is the responsibility of the extension personnel to provide timely technical guidance to farmers in efficient input management practices. Unfortunately, this aspect is not given much importance in many of the extension strategies. Let us discuss the input management under two sub-heads : Production Inputs Management and Credit Management.

2.4.1 Production Inputs Management

The seeds, fertilizers, plant protection chemicals and the water are the major inputs in achieving higher crop yields. The high-yielding varieties of wheat, rice and sorghum, hybrid varieties of maize played a pivotal role in ushering in the green revolution in India. The farmers have to be educated about the use of a high-yielding variety better suited to their situation.

Balanced NPK application at the appropriate time and placement through seed cum fertilizer drill or any other device increases the quantum of nutrients availability to the plants. Of late, the need for application of micro-nutrients alongwith nitrogen, phosphorus and potash has been found necessary to keep pace with their continued exploitation. Organic farming for achieving sustainability in agricultural production is advocated. The farmers have to learn compost making and use of biofertilizers to maintain soil health. Fertilizers being costly inputs, their efficient management is of paramount importance in getting higher profits. Plant protection chemicals, being costly, higher knowledge about the correct use of the chemicals, the concentration and time of spray are equally important to derive better benefits out of their use. Integrated pest management, cultural practices and organic methods of control of pests and diseases, are to be resorted to achieve better crop yields. Water is again an another input which is very scarce. In Dryland areas, the rain water has to be conserved and used to the maximum extent through soil and water conservation practices, or watershed management practices. The farm ponds have to be utilised to recycle excess water during dry spells or drought. Indiscriminate use of water in the command area is to be avoided to maintain soil

health and to derive sustainable yields. Under well or tube wells irrigation, water can be saved significantly through drip irrigation, alternate row irrigation etc. Mulching can check water evaporation to a greater extent.

The extension personnel are to be trained on all these aspects to enable them to educate the farmers in right earnest. The improved seeds, fertilizers and plant protection chemicals have to be stored and made available to the farmers at the appropriate time through cooperatives or other sale points for their immediate use.

2.4.2 Credit Management

Because of the high cost of production inputs, the small and marginal farmers are reluctant to use the recommended levels of fertilizers and plant protection chemicals. Therefore they have to be guided in getting credit through banks, cooperatives, and such other agencies. The credit has to be made available well in advance of the season, so as to enable the farmers to use the credit for the purpose it was sanctioned. Unless the loans are properly used, the farmers may not be able to raise their income and repay the loan. The extension agents have to help them to purchase the required inputs and use them appropriately. In IRDP, a lot of subsidies were given to the rural poor, so also in oilseeds production programme and several others. The drip irrigation appliances are also supplied at subsidised rates. In T&V System as you are aware this aspect was not given importance and so this has become one of the factors that have contributed for its failure. Input linked credits are helpful. In this context the single window concept advocated by many extension professionals, needs special attention of the policy makers.

2.5 EXTENSION PROFESSIONALISM

By extension professionalism, we meant an extension service that is professional in all respects. Professionalism in Extension is fostered by the sensitivity of the rural people specially the farmers about the agricultural technology generated and transmitted to them for adoption. The rapid development of technologies and the problems associated with the adoption of these technologies demand increased level of specialisation of extension personnel. One of the effects of scientific and technical advances occurring through out the world has thus been to increase the number of professionals who acquire skills which are both more technical and diverse. Of late the farmers are more innovative and knowledgeable because of their increased mass media exposure. Their expectations and demands are high in terms of production practices and solution to their technological problems. Unless the extension functionaries are well trained in subject matter and communication skills, any extension system may fail to work effectively. Hence, it is appropriate for you to gain some understanding of professionalism in extension subject matter and extension communication.

2.5.1 Professionalism in Extension Subject Matter

Rural Development is a very complex process and it requires adequate knowledge on the part of development functionary to work with rural people. For example for an agricultural extension functionary to be effective, he/she should be well equipped in the subject matter of Agricultural Extension. Since an extension functionary is a friend, philosopher and a guide; s.o, he/she must have a better understanding of the target groups—their socio-economic, psychological and personal characteristics. They should have the knowledge of extension teaching methods, the Audio-visual aids—their advantages and limitations, as well as the media mix to be utilised under different situations. Programme Development process, the leadership, malady-remedy analysis are some of the other aspects about which one should have fairly good knowledge.

Further more, an extension functionary need to posses better knowledge of the subject matter to be taught to the farmers—crop production, plant protection, nutrient management, water management etc. There is need for updating the knowledge of extension workers on Agricultural Extension as well agricultural practices *per se*, through inservice trainings, higher training, participation in workshops, seminars etc. The T&V System provide for continuous training of extension personnel on monthly basis through workshops. But the same was not the case with

IRDP where the need for professionalism was much more. Today most of the Agricultural Universities in India, and several colleges patterned after Land-Grant Colleges of America around the world are offering post-graduate courses in Agricultural Extension to built in more professionalism in Extension Organisations.

2.5.2 Professionalism in Communication

For Extension strategy whether it is Community Development, Rural Development or Agricultural Development, to be successful, it should facilitate for effective communication of technologies to the target group. So, there is a need for professionalism in communication too. Communication necessarily implies active participation on an equal footing. This requires the extension workers' empathy with the farmers, specially the small and marginal farmers. Communication of agricultural technologies through meetings, group discussions, farm and home visits, field days, slides, leaflets etc., is essentially a profession with its own specific, complex techniques. The role of Subject Matter Specialists in a programme like the T&V is very important in imparting training to extension field workers, so also of an Agricultural Assistant at the grass roots level in motivating the farmers to accept varied technologies. The technical messages to farmers need to be framed in their own language for better understanding. Here the professional touch is required. So, some mechanism has to be worked out to minimise the loss of information at different levels of communication. Even written communication is highly a complex process as the education level of farmers ranges from illiteracy to graduation: so it is very difficult to write for this kind of cosmopolite target group. Only an extension professional in Communication can possibly handle such situations.

In effect, the extension personnel need training in effective communication both interpersonal and mass communication. There are many institutions available in India and abroad to impart training on communication.

Check your progress

Notes : a) Write your answers in the space provided.

b) Check your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

- 1) How are the management of production inputs and credit important in increasing agricultural production?

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- 2) Explain why professionalism is gaining more importance in extension in the recent years.

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2.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have dealt with the concept and importance of Management in Extension. Efficient Management involves basically the coordination and integration of human and technical resources to accomplish the organisational objectives. Some basic management functions identified through the acronym POSDCORB-COMEU have to be performed for better success. Also there are a few basic elements and special characteristics of Extension Management which deserve due consideration by the extension programme executives to be successful.

Community Development, Rural Development and Agricultural Development are the three Extension strategies utilised in India and many other countries of the world to improve the Social and Economic conditions of the people through respective national level programmes. Even though some success has been achieved in these programmes there is scope for improvement, as we all know.

Efficient management of production inputs and credit, building up of professionalism in Extension have far reaching effects on the successful functioning of Extension organisations.

2.7 KEY WORDS

Change agent : A person who tries to stimulate change among people or organisations.

Empathy : It is the power of projecting oneself into the thought pattern of another and to feel his emotions.

Extension methods : The methods of communication that can be used in extension for influencing the target groups.

NPK : Nitrogen, Phosphorus & Potash.

Strategy : The way to achieve clearly specified goals with a combination of means and within a certain time period.

Agricultural development : Refers to change in agricultural production techniques and in the structure of agricultural enterprises towards a more desirable situation in which farmers use more agricultural research findings and practice less subsistence and more market oriented agriculture.

Rural poor : These are the individuals who are living below the poverty line in rural areas.

Contact farmer : A farmer who acts as an intermediary between fellow farmers and the Extension Agency (in T&V System).

Opinion leader : A person who has a relatively large influence on the opinion of others in the group to which he belongs.

2.8 SUGGESTED READINGS

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2.9 MODEL ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

- 1)

—	Planning	—	Communication
—	Organising	—	Monitoring
—	Staffing	—	Evaluation
—	Directing	—	Utilisation
—	Coordinating		
—	Reporting		
—	Budgeting		
- 2) Any Extension Agency should have a sound organisational structure in order to meet the requirements of the Agency at different levels may be from National level to Grassroots level. The top management level functionaries play the role of taking policy-decisions, planning and guidance, the middle management functionaries supervise the work of field extension workers, while the field extension workers implement the plans and programme of the agency. Also, there is a need for an organisational structure for establishing network for upward, downward and horizontal communications, and for having linkages with research and client systems. Organisational structure is therefore, considered as an important element in management.
- 3) Among the several characteristics the following three are most important ones.
 - i) Extension policies to facilitate the Agency to recruit, retain and utilise the services of persons possessing initiative, integrity, honesty and drive.
 - ii) The extension organisation to provide for large scale peoples participation in planning and execution of programmes.
 - iii) Pre-service and inservice training to be imparted to develop the technical, extension and managerial competence of the staff.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Several technical, administrative and financial constraints have led to the failure of the programme; however, a few important causes were :
 - i) Lack of people's participation in planning and execution of the programme
 - ii) Drastic cut in the financial aid of US and other donor agencies
 - iii) Failure of the V.L.W. in reaching the rural poor, and
 - iv) More concentration on construction of buildings, roads, etc. rather than on agricultural production.
- 2) According to the World Bank, RD is a strategy designed to improve the economic and social conditions of a specific group of people — the rural poor.

IRDIP identifies the rural poor based on the income criteria and provides substantial financial assistance through banks for any viable economic activity undertaken by the poor, under agricultural, industrial and/or tertiary sectors. Subsidies are provided ranging from 25% to 50% of the loan depending upon the participation of lower level employees in decision making, category of the beneficiaries. The rural poor are assisted by Village Level Workers in preparing the bankable schemes, getting the bank loan and subsidy, purchasing the assets, marketing of the produce/products and repayment of loan. But, it is up to the individual beneficiary to take advantage of the programme and rise above the poverty line.

- 3) The T&V System ensures regular training of Agricultural Assistants by Subject Matter Specialists and they inturn visit 800 farmers every fortnight in non-command areas and 500 farmers every week in Command areas, and provide technical guidance through

group discussions and field visits. Since the Agricultural Assistant has a fixed schedule of visits to villages, the transfer of Technology is ensured to all categories of Contact Farmers and through them to follower farmers. Since, the Contact Farmers are selected from each category of beneficiaries in the ratio of 1 : 10, each Contact Farmer is expected to provide technical knowledge to other 10 fellow farmers.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) With the release of Hybrids and High Yielding varieties, it is possible to increase agricultural production with the optimum use of major inputs like fertilizers, plant protection Chemicals and water. The efficient use of these inputs depends on the managerial abilities of farmers. The balanced use of NPK, time and method of application of fertilizers; taking Preventive and control measures by using plant protection chemicals in correct concentrations and at recommended frequency; conservation of soil moisture and providing irrigation at required intervals, contribute considerably for the increase in crop yields. Credit if managed properly for the purchase of inputs and carrying out agricultural operations, would certainly help the farmers to gain more income from crops.
- 2) The large scale generation of agricultural technologies, the greater awareness—knowledge of farmers about these technologies through mass media in the present times, soil health, pest and disease problems associated with the adoption of hybrids and high yielding varieties, have all forced the extension professionals to develop professional competence to comprehend the problems and suggest appropriate measures to the farmers to overcome these problems and adopt technologies on a large scale. The farmers also require better guidance in efficient use of scarce resources for getting higher profits per unit area.