

2.1 Introduction

Planning is deciding in advance what to do, when to do, how to do it and who will be responsible for what. It is a form of decision taken to select the best possible option available from various alternatives. It deals with the future. It is a conscious effort by the extension worker to bridge the gap between where our farmers are and where they ought to be. Although, the exact future can seldom be predicted and the factors beyond the control may interfere with the best chalked out plans. But, it is a fact that with out planning, event is left to chance. This state of affairs is undesirable in extension work.

This unit is meant and revolves around the assumptions of extension programming and discusses the characteristics of a sound extension programme. Principles of programme development are also discussed for the guidance of our future extension workers. Various approaches used for building extension programmes are not only described but also critically reviewed keeping in view the inherent potentials and weaknesses. At the end some activities are suggested for the students hands on training. Self-assessment exercises are also given for the benefit of the students.

2.2 Objectives

After studying this unit, students will be able to:

- 1 narrate the assumptions of extension programme development,
- 2 describe the characteristics of sound extension programme,
- 3 compare different approaches used in building extension programmes,
- 4 illustrate the underlying principles of extension programme development.

2.3 Assumptions in Programme Development

Regardless of the form, an extension programme is based and build upon certain

assumptions described as under:

It is assumed that,

- Development is endless and continuous process
- Present ways and means of living and making a living of farmers are not what they should be like and some thing different can and should be done.
- It is possible to select, organize, and administer certain resources of knowledge, technology, personnel and physical environment and instructional methods to help farmers to live a better life.
- Farmers need help, cooperation and guidance of extension personnel—the experts in agriculture— for solving problems relating to agriculture and ultimately increasing their production essential for improving the quality of life.
- Change is necessary for progress. Change in farmers thinking, feeling and acting in favour of new agricultural technology is a must. All changes does not necessarily mean progress. It is a specific changes in desirable direction.
- Farmers will continue to practice old methods of doing agriculture unless they are offered innovations which are financially rewarding, technically sound and socially acceptable to try.
- Farmers have courage, skill and potential to try out new agricultural technology.
- Effective learning results from choice and not by chance. Farmers will actively participate in the extension education activities launched for them in the area.

- The aim of extension is empowering farmers to control their lives through education and extension programming is an educational activity.

2.4 Characteristics of Extension Programme

Extension programmes are formulated to achieve certain predetermined and jointly agreed objectives both by the farmers and the extension workers. An extension worker needs to understand what an effective and constructive extension programme is? This is essential to make a significant contribution to the development of agriculture through the involvement of local farmers in designing sound extension programmes. Following are some of the important characteristics of an extension programme.

- It is based on the needs of the farmers. It starts from where the farmers are. They are involved in the process of needs identification. It is practical in nature and aims at fulfilling the recognized needs of the local farmers relating to agriculture.
- It is comprehensive to meet the needs of wider group of farmers.
- Extension programme development is a continuous process and Planning never ends.
- It must be flexible. It must permit to accommodate emergencies such as drought and floods, which require immediate actions if sufferings are to be minimized. Without flexibility, the programme may not meet the needs of all those involved in programme development.
- It uses latest research findings and stimulates further research. Farmers are helped to solve their farming problems by using latest agricultural technology. Moreover, extension personnel provide research scientists the

problems of farming community for finding solutions thereof. In this way, extension service serves as a vital conduit linking both farmers and research.

2.5 Principles of Extension Programme Development

There are a number of principles developed by FAO to be observed for developing an effective extension programmes. These are as under:

- Base programme upon careful analysis of the factual situation
All the relevant and available facts concerning land, farming community, agencies working in the area, etc. must be collected and taken into consideration. Involve local farmers. Let them speak freely. Listen and pay attention to them. Keep the programme development in tune with that of local need of the farmers. As a result, the programme emerged will be owned by the local farmers and they will own it and every possible effort to make it success.
- Select problems for action which concern recognized needs.
Not all problems can be checked at once. It is important that those of most urgent concern and widespread interest be given first consideration. This prioritization should be done in consultation with the local farmers.
- Extension programme is developed with farmers and not for them.
This principle again emphasizes the involvement of local farmer in the process of programme development. Farmers may reject or ignore or oppose an extension programme developed by the outsiders who tell them what are their needs and problems. But the chances of success of an extension programme are bright and farmers will support it if involved in its development stage.