

T&V AND NATP – A COMPARISON OF FEATURES

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Transfer of Technology (TOT) from researchers to farmers has been the main concern of agricultural extension system(s). But, so far this system has been subjected to lot of criticism particularly from farmers, professionals, academicians, politicians and policy makers. The main issue was that the existing system lacked a mechanism to understand the needs and problems of the farmers and to transfer practical, cost-effective, need-based technologies to them.

As envisaged, the Training and Visit (T & V) system could not facilitate effectively a two-way communication between research personnel and extension staff, as well as between extension staff and farmers. In addition to this, the system could not ensure supply of simple, low-cost technology that is relevant to farmers. Lack of participation by farmers and flexibility in the system to change the programme as and when the needs of the farmers changed with place and time were the other disadvantages of T & V system.

Considering the above constraints, under National Agricultural Technology Project (NATP), Innovations in Technology Dissemination (ITD) component has been planned and implemented in 7 states namely; Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and Orissa. This project aims at developing a TOT system that is demand-driven, well integrated and financially sustainable. The following statement gives some of the key features of T & V extension system and Innovations in Technology Dissemination (ITD) component under NATP.

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FEATURES	T & V	ITD - NATP
Goal	• Building a professional extension service to assist the farmers raise their production.	• Improve the management of TOT system by making it farmer-driven.
Target	• Small and marginal farmers	• Small and marginal farmers with emphasis on resource poor
Approach	• Top down • Centralized ❖ Decisions about what, when and how to train farmers was decided by professionals. ❖ Poor attention to farmers' needs. ❖ Working in isolation.	• Bottom up • Decentralized ❖ Creation of Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA) for day-to-day management of TOT systems, Block Technology Team (BTT) and Farmers Advisory Committee (FAC) at the block level to make it farmer-driven. ❖ Use of participatory approach for identifying location specific needs of farmers under different farming systems. ❖ Power and responsibility in the hands of farmers. ❖ Working together : integration and convergence.
Focus	• Men Farmers ❖ Marginalization of women farmers	• Both men and women with specific focus on gender issues. ❖ Main streaming women farmers into agriculture.
Agencies involved	• Department of Agriculture ❖ Single line of technical and administrative command	• Integration of extension activities of all the line departments including (KVKs, ZRS, FTCs). ❖ Involvement of private firms, credit institutions and NGOs.
Linkages	• Envisaged two-way communication between farmers, extension workers and researchers	• Strengthening linkage between farmers, extension workers and researchers.
Staffing and financial sustainability	• At field level, VEW supported by AEO and SMS ❖ High cost due to recruitment of large number of field extension staff.	• Increase the financial sustainability by strengthening the professional competencies of the existing extension staff. • Farmers contributing / making nominal payments for the services availed.

FEATURES	T & V	ITD - NATP
Communication organizations	• Poor use of communication technologies.	• Use of information technologies. networking with different right from block level to state level.
Thrust	• Professional Knowledge about crop production technology only. • Technology transfer to farmers	• Farming systems Approach/ Farming Situation Based Extension importance to Farmers' wisdom and Indigenous Technical Knowledge. • Empowerment of farmers.
Emphasis	• Training of contact farmers and a few individual farmers who inturn transfer technology to other farmers.	• Group learning and group action. • Formation of Farmers' Interest Groups (FIGs) and Farmers' Federations.
Technical Competency	• Fortnightly trainings for VEWs and AEOs. • Monthly workshops and other trainings to SMS. • Farm trials • Poor capacity of SMS and other technical staff to validate and refine production technologies.	• In-service training. • On-farm adaptive research to validate and refine the technologies.
Attitude of functionaries	• Professionals	• Facilitators

Conclusion

Considering the past experiences with different extension approaches and the present global perspective of the agriculture sector, the basic requirement for success of agricultural extension system is to improve its organization and management with the *farmer as the key stakeholder* in the TOT process.

References

- Axin H. George (1988), Guide on Alternative Extension Approaches, FAO, Rome.
- National Agricultural Technology Project (Innovations in Technology Dissemination), material prepared by MANAGE, Rajendranagar, Hyderabad-30.