

Programmes and Schemes

The schemes of Extension Division are encompassed under the broad umbrella of NMAET (National Mission on Agricultural Extension and Technology). NMAET consists of 4 Sub Missions:

- (i) Sub- Mission on Agricultural Extension (SMAE)
- (ii) Sub-Mission on Seed and Planting Material (SMSP)
- (iii) Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM)
- (iv) Sub-Mission on Plant Protection and Plant Quarantine (SMPP).

The Sub Mission on Agricultural Extension (SMAE) pertains to Extension activities. It focuses on awareness creation and enhanced use of appropriate technologies in agriculture & allied sectors. It has four main components, namely:

- i. Support to State Extension Programmes for Extension Reforms
- ii. Mass Media Support to Agricultural Extension
- iii. Establishment of Agri-Clinic and Agri-Business Centres by Agriculture Graduates (ACABC)
- iv. Extension Support to Central Institutions

The aforesaid components of Sub Mission on Agricultural Extension (SMAE) were run as separate schemes of Extension Division. These were recently subsumed under the umbrella of SMAE. Brief details about these are given in the subsequent paragraphs.

Support to State Extension Programmes for Extension Reforms

As the name suggests, this scheme supports the state governments in their Extension Activities. It aims at making extension system farmer driven by way of new institutional arrangements for technology dissemination in the form of an Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA) at district level to operationalise the extension reforms. Funds are released to State Governments in accordance with the scheme guideline which is also dependant on the State Governments releasing their share of contribution.

Mass Media Support to Agricultural Extension

This scheme aims to enable a revamping of the extension services in the country by using electronic and print media for transfer of technology and information to the farmers. Five tier publicity and information support to the farmers and extension functionaries are provided as per activities detailed below:

- First tier Information Support through Doordarshan, All India Radio and private TV channel Programmes. The aim is to make the farmers aware of modern technologies and researches related to agriculture and allied areas. Short films, advertisements, audio-video spots etc are being relayed to popularize success-stories and good farm-practices;
- Second tier Information support through Print Media viz. newspaper ads, pamphlets and leaflets magazines, compendium of Schemes/Programmes etc.
- Third tier Information support through supporting/ organizing exhibitions, fairs, Kisan melas at National/Regional level.
- Fourth tier Information support through SMS / inward voice calls in Kisan Call Centres and Internet &

- Fifth tier Information support through integrating and facilitating delivery of information at the lowest level i.e. Block Level through Common Service Centres.

To harness the reach and popularity of Social media towards the benefit of Agriculture Extension, an emphasis towards using social media platform to connect with farmers and disseminate information to them is also being made with vigour.

Establishment of Agri-Clinic and Agri-Business Centres by Agriculture Graduates (ACABC)

This programme aims to tap the expertise available in the large pool of Agriculture Graduates. They can set up their own Agri-Clinic or Agri-business Centre and offer professional extension services to farmers. Agribusiness Centres would provide free/paid services/advice for enhancement of agriculture production and income of farmers. This is beneficial in two ways – it offers opportunities of gainful self-employment opportunities to unemployed agricultural graduates and also, supplements the efforts of public extension by providing advisory and extension services including know-how to the farmers at grass root level.

Under ACABC, a 2-month free-of-cost specialized training is provided by select institutes across the country to Agricultural Graduates interested in setting up such a centre. Subsidized loans and credit-facilities are also facilitated to the Agri-clinic entrepreneurs through commercial banks.

Detailed information regarding the schemes can be seen on the portal <http://www.agriclinics.net/>

Extension Support to Central Institutions

This scheme aims towards capacity building of Extension functionaries and also, towards skill development of rural youth, farmer and farm-women. The prominent institutions involved in this effort are – Directorate of Extension (a subordinate office under Extension Division), MANAGE, Hyderabad (an autonomous institute associated with Extension Division), four Extension Education Institutes (EEIs) at the Regional level and the State Agricultural Management & Extension Training Institutes (SAMETIs) at the State level.

The main programmes under the scheme are as under:

A. Programmes for Capacity Building:

- i. Extension Education Institutes (EEIs): - Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare has established four Extension Education Institutes at Nilokheri (Haryana); Hyderabad (Telangana); Anand (Gujarat) and Jorhat (Assam). These EEIs cater to the training needs of middle-level field extension functionaries working under agriculture and allied departments of States/UTs of respective regions. The programmatic activities of EEIs include organization of on-campus/off-campus trainings, workshops, conferences etc. in the areas of communication technology, extension methodology, training management, Agriculture Knowledge Information System (AKIS) and Information Technology.
- ii. Model Training Courses(MTCs): - Directorate of Extension (DOE), DAC&FW sponsors the organization of Model Training Courses (MTCs) of 8 days duration through reputed National/ Central Institutes, ICAR Institutes and State Agricultural Universities(SAUs) in specialized areas for capacity building of middle-level extension functionaries working under agriculture & allied departments of States/ UTs. These training courses have thrust on areas like

Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, and Fisheries Extension.

Kisan Call Center (KCC): - The project aims to answer farmers' queries on a telephone call in their own dialect. Presently these call centers are working in 14 different locations covering all the States and UTs. A countrywide common eleven digit Toll Free Number 1800-180-1551 has been allotted for Kisan Call Center. This number is accessible through mobile phones and landlines of all telecom networks including private service providers. Replies to the farmers' queries are available from 6:00 am to 10:00 pm on all seven days of the week.

Kisan Call Center agents are known as Farm Tele Advisors (FTAs), who are graduate or above in agriculture or allied areas and possess excellent communication skills in respective local languages. Queries which cannot be answered by FTAs are transferred to higher level experts in call conferencing mode. These experts are subject matter specialists of State Agricultural Departments, ICAR & State Agricultural Universities.

The restructured KCC has a number of unique features viz. 100% call recording; call barging; voice mail service; customized IVRs; call conferencing through the experts; playing state-specific advisories during call wait time; SMS to caller farmers giving a gist of answers given by FTAs and also, registration of farmers for receiving SMS from experts on the subject area provided by them for receiving regular updates on selected crops.

B. Programmes for Skill Development:

- i. **Skill Training of Rural Youth (STRY) :** - The component aims at training rural youths, rural artisans (blacksmiths, carpenter etc. designing/manufacturing farm implements) including farm women across the country. The training under this component focuses on specific vocational areas in agriculture & allied sectors. Both Public and Private/Non-Governmental Institutions including Vocational Training organisations, Youth Organisations (like Nehru Yuva Kendra) are actively involved in implementation of this programme.
- ii. **Farmers Capacity Assessment & Certification (FCAC) :** - It is aimed at providing recognition to traditionally skilled farmers including farm women in various sectors of agriculture & allied disciplines through certification. The exercise of certification covers the process of "Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Skill" by testing and certification process by a designated agency. The farmers/ farm-women, after obtaining the certificate, may be recognized for getting employment in the concerned skill sector by the prospective employers in the job market.
- iii. **Diploma in Agricultural Extension Services for Input Dealers (DAESI):** Agri-Input Dealers in the country are a prime source of farm information to the farming community, besides the supply of inputs and credit. However, majority of these dealers do not have formal agricultural education. In order to build their technical competency in agriculture and to facilitate them to serve the farmers better and to act as Para-Extension professionals, a self-financed "One-year Diploma in Agricultural Extension Services for Input Dealers (DAESI) Program" has been launched during the year 2003 with a course fee of Rs.20000/- to the input dealers. National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE) is the nodal agency to run this program.

For detailed information regarding the individual programmes and schemes, you may also visit the websites of Directorate of Extension (<http://krishivistar.gov.in/>) and MANAGE (<http://www.manage.gov.in/>).