



Roadmap for an Innovative Agricultural Extension System >>



National Dialogue on Innovative Extension Systems for Farmers' Empowerment and Welfare

New Delhi | 17-19 December, 2015

Background

Agriculture is a solution and not the problem for achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs). On the contrary, an inclusive agricultural growth would demand innovative, cohesive and synergistic extension mechanism. To achieve sustainable food and nutritional security, and to address effectively the adverse impact of climate change, 'agriculture research for development' (AR4D) now needs a paradigm shift to 'agricultural research and innovation for development' (ARI4D) duly supported by reinvigorated agricultural research, education, and extension system. The current multi-faceted challenges in Indian agriculture have led to gradual decline in total factor productivity (TFP) as well as farm profitability. To address these, our agricultural extension urgently needs a radical change. For this, a policy reorientation towards farmers' welfare through

innovative and efficient technology delivery system, remunerative rural based low cost value chains, and assured market linkage is required. Apparently, the complexity of these challenges cannot be overcome by routine transfer of technologies. Hence, a forward looking, innovative and participatory extension system is urgently called for. Accordingly, a demand driven multi-stakeholder extension approach towards integrated farming systems is considered a way forward.

In this context, the Trust for Advancement of Agricultural Sciences (TAAS), in close collaboration with Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), National Academy of Agricultural Sciences (NAAS), Department of Agriculture and Cooperation (DAC)/Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (MAFW), Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), Cereal Systems Initiative for South Asia



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“ Our agricultural extension urgently needs a radical change. For this, a policy reorientation towards farmers’ welfare through innovative and efficient technology delivery system, remunerative rural based low cost value chains, and assured market linkage is required. A forward-looking, innovative and participatory extension system is called for. ”

(CSISA), Bharat Krishak Samaj (BKS), and Young Professionals for Agricultural Development (YPARD) organized a **“National Dialogue on Innovative Extension Systems for Farmers’ Empowerment and Welfare”** on 17-19 December, 2015 at the National Agricultural Science Centre (NASC) Complex, New Delhi. TAAS facilitated the process by providing a common platform to 242 stakeholders to debate, discuss and come out with a Road Map for transforming Indian national agricultural extension system to be more innovative and efficient in empowering farmers with good knowledge and technological options for productive, sustainable and profitable agriculture.

The dialogue received excellent response from all stakeholders, including farmers. The Hon’ble Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers’ Welfare in his inaugural speech highlighted the recent pro-active initiatives taken by the Central Government for the farmers’ welfare and urged for in-depth deliberations and discussion over the next three days as per well thought out and nicely tailored program (Annexure I) to bring out specific recommendations defining further actions.

The participants of the dialogue broadly endorsed the concept paper (Annexure II), brought out prior to the event, and resolved unanimously that a renewed thrust is necessary to transform the current agricultural extension system to make it more meaningful, relevant and effective through a Road Map that meets the rising aspirations of farmers to make Indian agriculture globally competitive. Accordingly, the participants recommended that:



Preamble

- It is to reaffirm that effective and efficient agricultural extension and advisory services are critical to achieve higher productivity, promote agricultural trade to help raise the farmers' income, while achieving a national target of 4 per cent in agriculture;
- The scope of agricultural extension has undergone certain fundamental changes with growing number and diversity of extension service providers;
- The public extension system caters merely to 15 per cent, whereas such services provided by others like private sector, NGOs, farmers, social media etc. are yet to be optimally organized and mainstreamed;
- A real transformation in the existing agricultural extension requires demand-driven, multi-dimensional, multi-agency, market-oriented, pluralistic, and an out-of-box approach;
- Empowerment of women and youth for agricultural extension and farmers' welfare is critical for large scale adoption of highly scientific, resilient, productive and remunerative secondary and speciality agriculture by the farming communities;
- Knowledge sharing on good agricultural practices (GAP), without dissemination loss, is indeed critical to achieve better successes in agriculture sector for which role of print, social media like radio and TV, ICT (especially mobile phones) is being considered essential;
- Innovations in agricultural extension would henceforth demand 'paid extension' services; especially when there is scope to increase farmers' income, for which an enabling policy environment is now emerging for the private extension system through small scale entrepreneurs as technology agents and input providers;

Considering these, the following Roadmap was endorsed by the participants:



The Road Map

1 Need for A New Extension System

To overcome the multiplicity and increasing complexity of problems being faced by the farmers, we now need:

1.1 'Farmer First' approach to be promoted with twin objectives; on one hand, to better understand the critical needs of farmers, and on the other to identify options that can address these needs in a manner that would benefit all involved in agricultural value chain;

1.2 Multi-disciplinary, inter-institutional efforts towards translational research must be accelerated with required policy and financial support, especially to outscale innovations after validation and needed refinements;

1.3 Conscious deployment of rural youth, women, farmer professors, authorized / trained / certified input providers be ensured through innovative approaches, such as formation of Farmers' Self Help Groups (FSHG), Farmers Cooperatives, Farmer Producer Companies, Farmer-to-Farmer Trainings, Agri-Clinics etc., to catalyse speedy technology transfer and diffusion;

1.4 Foresight approach to ensure a paradigm shift from Top-down to Bottom-up be adopted to meet new demands for innovations, products, information and extension services such as;

- Ensure farmers' participation at the grass-root level and to have confidence-building among the farming communities to take risk and adopt more scientific and resilient farming technologies. Simultaneously, provide policy incentives for critical inputs as well as farmers' participatory activities by all stakeholders and market players;
- Encourage farming systems' extension by the inter-disciplinary, inter-institutional extension teams comprising of subject matter experts as was envisioned under earlier institution-village linkage program (IVLP) for effective agricultural extension;
- Promote knowledge sharing on good agricultural practices aimed at minimising the dissemination loss for services relating to inputs, technologies, insurance, processing, value addition, markets, etc.;
- Encourage required partnerships among key stakeholders to promote demand driven, multi-stakeholder oriented agricultural extension around integrated farming systems. This be ensured through in-built incentives to adopt innovative technologies that would optimise the use of natural resources, though requiring more adoption time to assess, refine and diffuse natural resource management (NRM) related technologies on the farmer's fields;



- Provide innovative alternate knowledge / information dissemination systems with authentic content in farmer-friendly communication mode such as; Kisan TV Channel, ICT, Smart Phones, Print Media and Radio to ensure their farthest reach and effectiveness.
- Emphasize on linking farmers to market (LFM), as a key step towards inclusive market oriented development (IMOD) for smallholder farmers. Also to design women and youth centric program for their active role in market oriented agri-food value chains with provision of right and timely incentives.
- Stimulate the national agricultural extension system beyond free extension; paid extension services through agri-clinics be encouraged with an in-built safeguard mechanism in place.

1.5 Private sector participation in the national agricultural extension system be encouraged through their corporate social responsibility (CSR), and also

through much needed public private partnership, supported well by an enabling environment.

1.6 Emphasis be laid on documentation and wider dissemination of successful extension models under diverse agro-ecologies and farming situations. Similarly, lessons learnt from failure cases be assessed to take corrective measures elsewhere.

1.7 Extension research should now go beyond production to post-production extension. As such, higher emphasis needs to be placed now on innovativeness, growth and development.

1.8 Communication Systems in rural areas (ICT, TV, Smart Phones, Print Media, News Papers, etc.) be enhanced to play more proactive role in effectively reaching the farming communities through excellent linkages with agricultural universities/colleges, ICAR institutes, NGOs, private companies, and other key R&D players.

2 Enabling Institutional Mechanisms

2.1 A National Mission on Agricultural Extension be established on priority by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare (MAFW) to plan, undertake and promote collaborative extension interventions by public, private, NGO and progressive farmers, and to give modern extension thrust across the board, optimise effective coordination, and evolve efficient convergence mechanisms. The new National Mission may also oversee

coordination and convergence of various state and district level extension activities by the KVKs, ATMA, Private Sector, NGOs and the progressive / innovative farmers. Initially, a budgetary provision of around Rs. 1,500 crore annually would be necessary for the much needed Mission Mode approach in agricultural extension to accomplish inter-alia the following:



- Establish Agri-Clinics, by encouraging well trained group of individuals as small scale private entrepreneurs, or by a group / club / association of progressive farmers. At least one agri-clinic per 10,000 farm families be got established under the National Mission, with funding provision of around Rs. 50 lakh each (preferably on 50:50 basis). Accordingly, in order to cover the existing 14 crore farm families, 14 thousand Agri-Clinics would be needed for which a budgetary requirement of around Rs.3500 crore to be met from the overall budget of proposed National Mission on Agricultural Extension. Moreover, all agri-clinics may not be established in one go and hence could be taken up in a phased manner over next 5 years (needing around 700 crore each year) based on well defined accreditation / recognition process.
- Induct Farmer Professors to facilitate farmer-to-farmer knowledge extension and skill transfer without dissemination loss, provide vocational trainings for rural youth and farm women for 'Skill up India' and 'Stand up India' initiatives, build capability of Panchayats, and ensure better support of existing institutions for technology/input delivery, credit, subsidy, insurance, value addition, marketing, etc. To begin with, around 5-10 Farmer Professors could be inducted in each district, for which budgetary provision of approximately Rs. 50-100 crore may be kept in the Mission's overall budget.
- Establish a National Farmers' Innovation Fund of about 100 crore with support of both Government and Private Sector to encourage and involve progressive and innovative farmers to promote farmer to farmer extension and to support needed

initiatives to build farmer scientists linkages for out scaling innovations through testing, refinement and adoption on large scale. It should also provide incentives and rewards in different forms to the innovative farmers.

2.2 A Cabinet Committee on Farmers' Welfare needs to be constituted to meet the aspirations of Indian farmers as well as those who are contributing to the sustainable development and growth of agriculture. In particular, this Committee has to ensure much needed coordination and convergence for the cohesive implementation of agriculture and rural development related programs being implemented by different Union Ministries and Government Departments.

2.3 Without further delay, concerted efforts be made to implement the recommendations of the High Power Committee on the Management of Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs), headed by Dr. R.S. Paroda, to ensure improved efficiency, effective monitoring and required relevance of farmer-science connect.

- To emphasize on strengthening, coordination and modernization of KVKs rather than their further multiplication. For sector-wise strengthening of much needed site specific programs/activities, there is need to revisit the enhanced cadre strength of ten scientists per KVK and to redeploy some subject matter specialists to take care of diversified / relevant areas such as: horticulture, agroforestry, animal science, fisheries, post-harvest processing, social science etc.
- To establish Agricultural Technology Information Centres (ATICs) in all KVKs so as to promote 'Land-Lab' linkages and to reap the benefits of research through promoting new innovations.



- To revisit existing ATMA-KVK convergence model and to bring in needed reforms concerning allocation of resources to meet the contingent and exigency needs for training and knowledge/information sharing related to agriculture and other line departments with local farmers through KVKs, and to shed redundancy and improve efficiency in all district / local level agricultural extension matters.

2.4 To ensure expansion of scope of the proposed 'National Agricultural Education Project (NAEP)', to be funded by the World Bank and implemented by ICAR, to address much needed reforms in the public extension system and to strengthen capacity development activities, through informal training of private entrepreneurs so as to act more effectively as technology agents, the proposed project should thus be revised and implemented as 'National Agricultural Education and Extension Project (NAEEP)'. This would trigger innovations by creative and skilled young minds for serving the society and agriculture sector with human face.

2.5 'Kisan Aayog' (Farmers' Commission), on the pattern of Punjab and Haryana, be established across the country in each State to facilitate required transformation in agricultural extension, promote both the national and local sustainable agricultural development agenda, and to assist/advise the States in promoting relevant farmers' welfare related policies and programs based on well defined and formally adopted State Agriculture Policies.

2.6 Revamp agricultural extension related education by initiating new courses on Rural Entrepreneurship, Agricultural Journalism, Agri-business Management etc. to bring innovative concepts and new economic options for rural youth. Also there is an urgent need to teach agriculture as a subject for science students in the High Schools to generate much needed awareness on the role of agriculture towards household/national food and nutritional security.



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ANNEXURE I

Program

Day 1: Thursday 17 December, 2015

08.30–09.30	Registration	
09.30–11.00	Opening Session	
	Welcome	AK Singh, DDG (Agri. Extn.), ICAR
	Special Address	S Ayyappan, Secretary, DARE and DG, ICAR
	Chairman's Address	RS Paroda, Chairman, TAAS
	Inaugural Address by Chief Guest	Hon'ble Radha Mohan Singh, Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare
	Vote of Thanks	NN Singh, Secretary, TAAS
11.00–11.20	Group Photograph and Tea Break	
11.20–13.15	Plenary Session I: Current Status, Challenges and Opportunities	
	Co-Chairs	Rita Sharma, Former Secretary, Rural Development, Former Secretary, NAC and Trustee, TAAS Gurbachan Singh, Chairman, ASRB
	Convener	P Adhiguru, PS, ICAR
	Speakers	AK Singh, DDG (Agri. Extn.), ICAR N Bhushan, Joint Secretary(Ext.), DAC, Govt. of India JNL Srivastava, Former Secretary, Agriculture and Managing Trustee, IFFCO Foundation T Sudhakar, Head (IT & Business Development), IFFCO NG Hegde, Senior Advisor, BAIF
	General Discussion and Concluding Remarks	
13.15–14.00	Lunch Break	
14.00–15.15	Panel Discussion I : Farmers' Perception and Needs	
	Co-Chairs	Purvi Mehta, Senior Advisor and Head- Agriculture, (South Asia) BMGF SL Mehta, Former DDG (Edu), ICAR and Former VC



Convener	P Adhiguru, PS, ICAR
Introduction of Subject	Ajay Vir Jakhar, Chairman, BKS
Panelists	Agriculture: Manmohan Singh, Progressive Farmer, Amritsar Horticulture: Subhash Deswal, Progressive Farmer, Bulandshahar Animal Husbandry: Jagdish Sandhu, Chairman, Haryana Dairy Farmers Association Fisheries: Sultan Singh Progressive Farmer Jaganetha Raju, Head, KVK-West Godavari represented Vishwanath Raju, Progressive Farmer Sustainable Agriculture: Ramenjaneulu, Centre for Sustainable Agriculture, Secunderabad
Intervention from Audience and Concluding remarks	

15.15-15.45

Tea Break

15.45-17.00

Panel Discussion II: Revisiting Extension Systems

Co-Chairs	JNL Srivastava, Former Secretary, Agriculture and Managing Trustee, IFFCO Foundation P Das, Former DDG(Agril Extn), ICAR
Convener	AK Singh, ICAR-ATARI
Introduction of Subject	VV Sadamate, Former Advisor (Agri.), Planning Commission
Panelists	JP Sharma, Joint Director (Extn.), IARI AK Singh, MD, National Horticulture Board RK Malik, Senior Agronomist, CSISA-CIMMYT Nilendu Jyoti Maitra, Scientist, KVK-Nimpith
Intervention from Audience and Concluding Remarks	



09.30-11.00 Panel Discussion III: Role of Media and Communication Systems

Co-Chairs	HP Singh, Former DDG (Hort.), ICAR PN Mathur, Former DDG (Agri Extn), ICAR
Convener	US Gautam, ICAR-ATARI
Introduction of Subject	Introduction of Subject : VP Sharma, DG, MANAGE
Panelists	Rameshwar Singh, Project Director, DKMA, ICAR Rikin Gandhi, Digital Green RK Tripathi, Farmers Portal DAC Manoj Kumar Patairiya, Kisan Channel. Deepali Kamatkar and Bhushana, Digitization of Farmers' Status Initiative
Intervention from Audience and Concluding Remarks	

11.00-11.30 Tea Break

11.30-13.00 Panel Discussion IV: Empowerment of Women and Youth

Co-Chairs	Krishna Srinath, Former Director, DRWA Malvika Dadlani, Former JD (R), IARI
Convener	Anupam Mishra, ICAR-ATARI
Introduction of Subject	Yashpal Saharawat, ICARDA
Panelists	Premlata Singh, Head, Division of Extension, IARI Umadevi Swaminathan, SEWA Nandita Pathak, DRI Satendra Singh Arya, ASCI Monika Wason, Division of Extension, IARI
Intervention from Audience and Concluding Remarks	

13.00-14.00 Lunch Break

14.00-15.30 Panel Discussion V: Private Sector and NGO Extension

Co-Chairs	SA Patil, Former Director, IARI NG Hegde, BAIF
Convener	V Lenin, IARI
Introduction of Subject	Arvind Kapoor, Rasi Seeds
Panelists	Anil B. Jain, Jain Irrigation BB Singh, Tata Kisan Sansar Ashis Mondal, Director and Managing Trustee, ASA Basavaraj Giriyanavar, MD Sudarshan and Gaurav, Indian Society of Agriculture Professionals (ISAP)
Intervention from Audience and Concluding Remarks	

15.30-16.00 **Tea Break**

16.00- 17.30 **Panel Discussion VI: Coordination and Convergence**

Co-Chair	SL Mehta, Former DDG (Edu), ICAR and Former VC
Convener	Rajbir Singh, ICAR-ATARI
Introduction of Subject	Rita Sharma, Former Secretary, Rural Development, Former Secretary, NAC and Trustee, TAAS
Panelists	JS Sandhu, DDG (CS), ICAR BS Sidhu, Agriculture Commissioner, Punjab JC Katyal, Former DDG (Education), ICAR VV Sadamate

Intervention from Audience and Concluding Remarks

Day 3: Saturday 19 December, 2015

9.30 - 11.00 **Plenary Session II: Policy Interventions and Institutional Changes**

Co-Chair	AK Srivastava, VC & Director, NDRI
Convener	Srinath Dixit, ICAR
Introduction of Subject	Suresh Pal, Head, Division of Economics, IARI
Speakers	AK Singh, DDG (Agri. Extn.), ICAR Harsh Kumar, Chairman, NABARD Gopal Ji Trivedi, Former VC, RAU PS Birthal, Director, NCAP

Intervention from Audience and Concluding Remarks

11.00 - 11.30 **Tea break**

11.30-13.30 **Concluding Session**

Co-Chairs	RS Paroda, Chairman, TAAS AK Singh, DDG (Agri Extension), ICAR
Convener	NN Singh, Secretary, TAAS

Recommendations of Technical Sessions and Adoption of Delhi Action Plan
Remarks on behalf of Co-Organizers :
Concluding remarks by Co-Chairs :
Vote of Thanks NN Singh, Secretary, TAAS

13.30.14.30 **Lunch**



ANNEXURE II

Agriculture must liberate India from twin scourge of hunger and poverty while ensuring sustainability of our natural resources. It must also address effectively the concern of malnutrition among children and empowerment of women; being important sustainable development goals (SDGs). To ensure these, the needs and aspirations of resource-poor smallholder farmers must be addressed in the first place through innovation-led accelerated and sustainable agricultural growth. Historically, the adoption of high yielding dwarf varieties of wheat and rice under the 'Green Revolution' era addressed both; hunger and poverty. However, of late, the yield gaps in agriculture and the income divide in farm and non-farm sectors have been widening; primarily due to the gaps in the required knowledge, skills and timely access to improved technologies. Out scaling of appropriate technologies to timely reach the farmers has emerged as a complex issue. Why farmers are unable to access or adopt the new technologies are the issues that haunt the development officials and scientists alike. Further, the growing challenges of natural resource degradation, escalating input costs, market volatility and above all the effects of global climate change too contribute to the decline in yield as well as farm income, thus making agriculture both non-profitable and unattractive. Therefore, it is paramount to ensure an inclusive growth in agriculture through innovative and synergistic

approaches for achieving sustainable food and nutrition security. Thus, 'agriculture research for development' (AR4D) requires a paradigm shift to 'agricultural research and innovation for development' (ARI4D).

Agricultural extension in India and elsewhere requires constant transformation. The current transitional phase also needs a 'renewed interest' and 'policy attention'. Public extension system played a vital role during the Green Revolution era, but it was mainly confined to the irrigated areas. This past success was also due to a holy alliance among researchers, extension specialists, farmers and policy makers. At the same time, the technology dissemination approach remained 'top-down' focusing on individual farmers. The current scenario of Indian agriculture is confronted with multi-faceted challenges arising due to inefficient management of natural resources such as: water, soils, agro biodiversity, etc. All these have led to decline in factor productivity and farm profitability. Apparently, this complexity of problem cannot be overcome by routine transfer of technologies. Rather, efforts would be needed towards translational research; requiring out scaling of innovations through 'Out of Box' extension systems. Also, conscious deployment of rural youth, women and progressive farmers could help in a speedy transfer of technology and the needed impact on livelihood of smallholder

farmers. Farmers' welfare needs to be ensured through, for example, 'Farmer First' approach to equally benefit both; the producers and the consumers. Further, in view of diverse demand of new innovations, new products, new information and new extension services, we now need to shift from "Top-down" to "Bottom-up" approach, involving farmers' participation at the grass-root level, while ensuring confidence building among the farming communities to take risk and adopt more scientific and resilient agriculture. In the process, knowledge sharing on good agricultural practices, without dissemination loss, and incentives for critical inputs become highly critical to achieve future development successes in agriculture sector. At the same time, partnership among key stakeholders becomes vital for promoting further growth in agriculture. In the process, care is also needed to overcome complacency that has crept in the public extension system. Hence, this necessitates greater vibrancy in National Agricultural Research and Extension System (NARES) requiring active involvement of stakeholders (farmers, NGOs, private sector, scientists and policy makers) and a shift in the extension approach towards out scaling of innovations for greater impact on smallholder farmers through higher productivity and income.

In this context, extension approach now has to be focus around the farming communities rather than the past individual farming households approach. With the increasing challenges of addressing land degradation, soil quality and water use efficiency needs, the Natural Resource Management (NRM) related innovations, unlike the adoption of high

yielding varieties showing immediate impact on crop productivity, are likely to need more lead time to translate and assess the impact on farmer's fields. This obviously throws a new institutional challenge for needed reforms in existing extension system, which is mostly dependent on public organizations. Thus, in the present situation role of private sector becomes highly relevant and critical, especially for involving the rural youth and women in agricultural extension. Empowering youth (both men and women) through vocational training and building a cadre of 'Technology Agents' to provide technical backstopping as well as custom hire services to the smallholder farmers would go a long way in linking research with extension and thereby accelerating agricultural growth. We also need to link now the 'land with lab', the 'village with institute' and the 'scientists with society' to ensure faster adoption of efficient resource utilization technologies that would benefit both the producers and consumers. In the transformation process, the Agriculture Technology Agents need to become "job creators" and not "job seekers" and provide the best technologies as well as quality inputs on farmers' door steps. Another strategy could be to create 'Agri-clinics', where technology agents are able to join hands to ensure single window system of advisory services, so that farmers need not run from pillar to post.

Lately, in the changing socio-economic environment, there has been steady improvement in the use of information and communication technology, rural infrastructure and literacy standards in the rural communities. Public sector institutions such as Central and State Government

line departments of Agriculture, Horticulture, Livestock including Fisheries, Central and State Agricultural Universities, network of Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) and Agricultural Technology Management Agencies (ATMAs) are empowering farmers. But efficient agro-advisory in the wake of increasing demand for quality agricultural knowledge together with input support may be best delivered through pluralistic agricultural extension, i.e., a mix of public-private sector participation. Emergence of private sector institutions such as corporate organizations, community based organizations, farmer associations, farmer cooperatives, self-help groups, watershed and water user associations, producer companies, NGOs, farmer producers, input providers for seeds, nutrients, pesticides, etc., service providers for small tools and implements etc., para professionals (Kisan Mitras etc.), input producers, private corporate sector, fertilizer companies, marketing firms, processing Enterprises etc., should be encouraged to bring in the much needed complementarities in providing agro-knowledge advisory to the farmers.

Empowering progressive farmers is also necessary. Their farm-led innovations can be recognized and promoted for further up scaling and out scaling being often efficient, cost effective and well adapted to local situations. Also the information acquisition by smallholders from other progressive farmers is invariably more effective. At the same time, information demand by the farmers is often changing as they intend to diversify and make farming more resilient. Thus, demand driven extension approach around integrated farming systems should henceforth be addressed. Also, there is need for convergence among different government sponsored programs. Accordingly, concerns for collaboration, convergence and synergy need to be addressed along with issues of optimizing institutional arrangements of prevailing pluralistic agricultural extension and farm advisory.

In view of above considerations, it has been decided to organize a three days national dialogue on innovative agricultural extension systems aimed at farmers' empowerment and welfare.



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Objectives

1. To provide a platform for sharing experiences among researchers, extensionists, farmers and input industry to engage in the dialogue on agricultural extension systems, farmers' empowerment and welfare to ensure inclusive growth and development of agriculture in the country.
2. To develop a Roadmap for innovative agricultural extension systems for farmers' empowerment and welfare and make appropriate recommendations to the Government on agro-promotional policy.

Program Outline

The National Dialogue will have nine sessions. Apart from Inaugural and Plenary Sessions, there will be seven technical sessions, each focusing on a particular theme. The following **Major Themes** are identified for the Dialogue:

- (i) Current Status and Challenges
- (ii) Farmers' Perception and Need
- (iii) Revisiting and Strengthening Extension System
- (iv) Role of Media and Communication System
- (v) Involvement of Women and Youth
- (vi) Private-Sector Extension
- (vii) Coordination and Convergence
- (viii) Policy Interventions and Institutional Changes

Expected Outcomes

1. Prioritized needs for reorienting agricultural extension in India identified.
2. Framework on Innovative Extension Systems for Farmers' empowerment and welfare outlined.
3. Proceedings and Recommendations for wider circulation among stakeholders and necessary follow up.

Venue and Dates

The Dialogue will be held at the National Agricultural Science Center (NASC), New Delhi from 17-19 December, 2015.

Organizers

1. Trust for Advancement of Agricultural Sciences (TAAS)
2. Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)
3. Department of Agriculture & Cooperation (DAC)
4. National Academy of Agricultural Sciences (NAAS)
5. Bharat Krishak Samaj (BSK)
6. Cereal Systems Initiative For South Asia (CSISA)
7. Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF)
8. Young Professionals for Agricultural Development (YPARD)

National Advisory Committee

Co-Chairs

Dr S Ayyappan
Secretary, DARE & DG, ICAR

Dr R S Paroda
Former Secretary, DARE &
DG, ICAR and Chairman, TAAS

Members

Shri Siraj Hussain
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Agriculture and Cooperation, Ministry
of Agriculture, Government of India

Dr A K Singh
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Dr Rita Sharma
Trustee, TAAS

Dr. J.N.L. Srivastava
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Dr. P.K. Joshi, IFPRI

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Deputy Director General
(Agril Extn) Member Secretary

Dr N N Singh
Former VC, BAU, Ranchi and
Secretary, TAAS

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