

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

My dear readers of Journal of Extension Education,

Wish you all a happy new year!

The common complaint we often hear is that extension services in the developing countries are predominantly production-oriented. Emphasis on food security and extension professionals' lack of knowledge on agricultural marketing are the possible reasons for this. As a result of which, marketing problems faced by farmers, smallholders in particular, often go unaddressed. Extension officers, therefore, need to provide market-oriented extension services to increase the market participation of farmers.

In their publication on market-oriented extension services, Gebremedhin et al., 2012 had listed the following five key principles of market-oriented extension:

- 1. Resource-based:** Market-oriented extension services providers will have to assess and evaluate the resource base of the target area they are providing service to *vis-à-vis* the potential for commercial agriculture.
- 2. Business principles:** The primary aim of market-oriented extension is to help farmers achieve better income from their farming activities. Hence, explicit considerations of costs and revenues and profitability of enterprises should be guiding principles of the service.
- 3. Commodity development approach:** Careful analysis needs to be done to identify the critical technological (varieties, breeds, farm machinery etc.), organizational (farmer groups, cooperatives, unions etc.) and institutional (input supply, credit service, market support etc.) constraints confronting the commodity. Extension interventions should then be based on prioritized constraints.
- 4. Based on the value chain framework:** A market-oriented extension agent will be better placed to identify the priority intervention points if he/she follows the value chains framework in the analysis and identification of constraints and interventions.
- 5. Bottom-up and participatory:** Farmers possess significant indigenous knowledge in production, storage and marketing of their produce. Market-oriented extension, therefore, needs to build on the knowledge and experience of farmers

Appropriate combination of indigenous and 'scientific' knowledge would therefore improve the success possibility of the agricultural extension services for market-oriented development. This issue of JEE contains papers on topics such as factors affecting yield gap, stress levels of students during the COVID-19 pandemic and impact of watershed development projects. I hope, you will find them useful.

Do send your feedback on these papers to editorextension@gmail.com