

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

My dear readers of Journal of Extension Education,

By the turn of this century, the Ministry of Agriculture, Govt. of India developed a Policy Framework for Agricultural Extension, which aimed for a major reform and reorientation of India's entire agricultural extension system while highlighting the limitations of the predominant public-sector extension in the country. The state governments with whom the responsibility of agricultural extension rest, should take this policy framework and the emerging issues in the field in the development of extension policies. Absence of a current day adjusted extension policy has been flagged as a serious challenge in India's public extension system according the Committee on Doubling Farmers' Income, Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, during 2017.

In a GFRAS (Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services) publication (Mueller,2016), the following emerging issues have been considered extremely valuable while formulating such extension policies.

Participatory, farmer-led decision-making: When best practices are made available to regions that are struggling to address poverty and food security through extension services, decisions on how to implement such services should be participatory, involving field-based extension staff, leaders of rural communities, and local farmer organizations.

Privately-led extension and public-private partnerships : Once the production and postharvest capabilities are improved, inclusion of private sector partners often leads to the development of value chain markets and Public-private partnerships (PPPs) may enhance the participation of smallholders in such markets

Gender equality and nutrition awareness: Promoting agricultural innovations - especially among women farmers - and increasing their awareness of nutrition implications for their children and families may also lead to increased food security and support the development of gender equality as an extension policy.

ICT and mass extension: ICT and mass extension hold out exciting possibilities for innovating the transfer of best practices and capacity development to smallholders and extensionists. The potential to teach and learn, record experiences, and develop e-learning tools is growing exponentially as new technologies emerge and countries invest in their IT infrastructures.

Value chain marketing: A key element of the emerging issues and opportunities for smallholders is their access and capacity to participate in the growing number of value chain markets that focus on smallholders and small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

Building partnerships: One of the keys to the success of the next stage of international development is a greater emphasis on partnerships and coordination among the stakeholders.

This issue of JEE contains articles on emerging topics including participatory evaluation of technologies, performance of vocational education agricultural teachers and emotional intelligence of agricultural officers.

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