Principles of Programme Planning

After a critical analysis of the programme planning principles available in extension literature, Sandhu (1965) identified a set of principles that may be applicable in developing countries.

I. Programme

1. Extension programme planning is based on analysis of the facts in a situation

It is important to take into account the conditions that exist at a particular time. This implies that factors such as land, crops, economic trends, social structure, economic status of the people, their habits, traditions and culture, in fact, everything about the area in which the job is to be done and its people, may be considered while planning an extension programme for an area. These factors may be viewed in terms of established long–term objectives and rural policy. The outcome of previous plans should also be reviewed and results utilized.

Brunner and Yang (1949) argue that there is no greater mistake than to assume that technical know–how alone will solve the problems of the farmers. They say that no programme or even technique can achieve the desired results when not in harmony with the culture of the people. 'Extension knows, if need be, the surer way is to effect cultural change by the slow but certain process of education'.

2. Extension programme planning selects problems based on people's interests and needs

Sound programme building selects problems based on people's needs. I t is necessary to select these problems which are most urgent and of widest concern. Choice of problems must be from among those highlighted by an analysis of the facts regarding what are felt as unfelt needs. To be effective, extension work must begin with the interests of the families. It must meet interest and use them as a spring–board for developing further interests. It is common knowledge that people join together because of mutual interests and needs.

Brunner (1945) said that an extension programme must meet the felt needs of the people. Leagans (1961) has recommended that the extension workers adopt the subject matter and teaching procedure to the educational level of the people, to their needs and interests, and to their resources.

3. Extension programme planning determines definite objectives and solutions which offer satisfaction

In order to hold interest, we must set working objectives and offer solutions which are within reach and which will give satisfaction on achievement. This is related to motivation for action. People must see how they or their communities are going to benefit from the proposed solutions. Very often the simplicity or dramatic effect of the practice recommended is the most potent factor in its wide adoption. Further, if there is to be progress and not more evolution in the development of man, the objectives must be periodically revised in view of the progress made. In other words, as changes occur, objectives need to be re determined to allow for even further progress to be realized.

4. Extension programme planning has permanence with flexibility

Any good programme must be forward looking and permanent. Permanence means anticipating years of related and well organized effort. Along with this lower process, which both follow and makes a long–term trend, experience has shown that particular items will need to be changed to meet unforeseen contingencies or emergencies. Without flexibility, the programme may not, in fact, meet the needs of the people. A programme should be prepared well in advance of its execution but not too far ahead of time. Ordinary events may subject it to change in part though not in total. It is obvious that an extension programme must be kept flexible to meet the changing needs and interests of the people.

5. Extension programme planing has balance with emphasis

A good programme should cover the majority of people's important interests. It must be comprehensive enough to embrace all groups, creeds and races at all levels and community, block, state, national and international problems. It is futile to deal with only one phase of life in a community as an end in itself. At the same time, a few of the most important or timely problems should be chosen for emphasis. To avoid scattered effort, something must stand out. Decisions must be made as to which of the needs are most urgent. The next consideration in choosing items for emphasis is to promote efficiency by permitting a good distribution of time and effort throughout the year. Too many things carried out simultaneously will divide either the worker's or the people's attention.

II. Planning process

6. Extension programme planning has a definite plan of work

No matter how well a programme is thought through, it is of no use unless carried out. This implies good organization and careful planning for action. A plan of work is an outline of procedure so arranged as to enable efficient execution of the entire programme. It is the answer to what, where, when and how the job will be done. In carrying out programme plans, different leaders and groups may work on various phases, i.e., the women in the community may work on one segment, the men on a second segment and youth–club members on a third. Organization should be used as a tool to accomplish these purposes, never as an end in itself.

7. Extension programme planning is an educational process

The people who do the planning may participate in local surveys and neighbourhood observations. This provides an opportunity for them to learn more about their own community and area and increases their interest. The extension worker has the responsibilities of providing local leaders with the knowledge, skills and attitudes they must have if they are to help in educationally serving the people. Essentially, learning takes place through the experiences the learner has and the responses he makes to the stimuli of his environment. The experience gained in finding facts, analyzing situations, recognizing problems, stating objectives and thinking of possible solutions and alternatives should make for a better and more effective learning

environment. The extension personnel should remember this fact and provide opportunities for the effective participation of local people in programme planning.

8. Extension programme planning is a continuous process

Since programme planning is viewed as an educational process and since education is seen as a continuous process, therefore it logically holds that extension programme planning is a continuous process. There is no question of exhausting new knowledge, either in the subject matter with which we deal or in the methods of teaching. With the constant flux of agricultural technology, extension education is faced with an increasingly more difficult job as it tries to serve the needs and interests of the people. Sutton (1961) said that extension in a changing society must adjust and plan for the future to serve the needs of people. He set forth five steps within might be useful in making necessary adjustments:

i.   Keep choice to the people
ii.   Be flexible and ready to grasp with firmness new problems as they arise.
iii.   Work with people in seeking practical solutions to their problems.
iv.   Keep abreast of technological and social change.
v.   Close the gap between research discovery and practical application.

It is obvious that tomorrow's problem will not be the same as today's. So extension must make periodic adjustments in its plans to meet the changing problems. Extension must also be alert to the change that is going on in Science and Technology. With new technology, solutions to problems change. It is therefore necessary to view extension programme planning as a continuous process though its recurrence is cyclic.

9. Extension programme planning is a co−ordinating process

Extension programme planning finds the most important problems and seeks agreement on definite objectives. It coordinates the efforts of all interested leaders, groups and agencies and considers the use of resources. It obtains the interest and co−operation of many people by showing them why things need to be done. This is important in working with people. Within the extension organization, the block staff may work together on an integrated programme, each member devoting part of his energy to appropriate phases.

10. Extension programme planning involves local people and their institutions

Involvement of local people and their institutions is very essential for the success of any programme for their development. People become interested and give better support to the programme when they are involved in the planning process. So, extension programmes should be planned with the people and not for them.

11. Extension programme planning provides for evaluation of results

Since extension programme planning involves decision−making procedures, so evaluation is important in order to make intelligent decisions aimed at achieving the stated objectives. Matthews (1962) pointed out that extension progarmme planning and evaluation go together. Kelsey and Hearne (1949) have said that all other principles of programme building are related to evaluation.

Effective evaluation will, of course, depend on clear objectives, knowing which people we are trying to teach and having records of the results in terms that reflect changes in their action. Starting a programme with the intention of engaging in a careful evaluation at the close of a specific period has a salutary effect on all the intermediate processes. However, provision has to be made both for concurrent and ex–post facto types of evaluation.

EXTENSION PROGRAMME PLANNING MODEL

Sandhu (1965) developed a model for planning extension and rural development programmes. This model has six phases with a number or steps to be followed under each phase.

Fig.30. Extension Programme Planning Model

<u>**Planning Process Involves**</u>
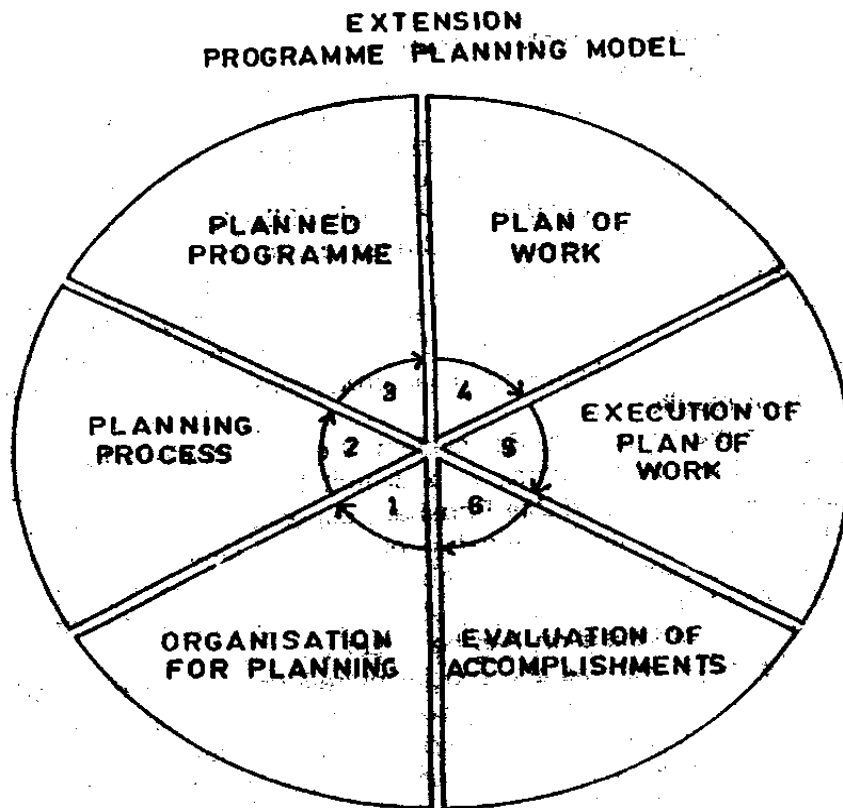
1. **Reaching, Understanding regarding principles, procedures, roles and time schedules**
2. **Analysis situation**
3. **Determining programme objective**
4. **Selection problems**
5. **Finding solution**

The various phases and steps involved in this model are:

Organisation for Planning

I. Planning Process
      1. Reach understanding regarding principles, procedures, roles and time schedule
      2. Analyse situation
      3. Determine objectives
      4. Select problems with due regard to priorities
      5. Find solutions

II. Planned Programme
      Prepare a written statement of
      i) situation
      ii) objectives
      iii) problems and
      iv) solutions

III. Plan of work
      Prepare a plan of work containing information regarding:
      i) people to be reached
      ii) goals, dates and places
      iii) teaching procedures to be followed
      iv) duties, training and recognition of leaders
      v) roles to be played by extension personnel and
      vi) roles to be played by other agencies.

IV. Execution of plan of work
      i) Make advance arrangement for inputs and teaching aids
      ii) Interpret the approved programme to the staff and people's representatives.
      iii) Carry out the planned programme, phase by phase, in a co-ordinated manner.

V. Evaluation of accomplishments
      i) Do concurrent evaluation.
      ii) Do *ex-post facto* evaluation.

Organisation for Planning

      The concept of involving potential clientele in the planning of extension programmes has received widespread acceptance. Involvement of people in making decisions about educational objectives not only results in better decisions about educational objectives, but also speeds up the process of educational change. By participating in the analysis of the local situation, the people's representatives are better informed and are better prepared for positive action.

      The following conditions should be met in order to ensure that a good organisation has been set up

1. All social systems and special interest groups are identified.

2. Members of the planning committee represent all major interest groups, various economic and social levels of people, major vocations of the locality and other important elements in the area.

3. Each member of the planning committee clearly understands

        a) the purpose of the group;

        b) how the group should function in attaining its purpose; and

        c) his individual role as a member.

4. Members of the planning committee have been elected, nominated or co-opted by appropriate democratic procedures.

I. Planning process

1. Reaching understanding regarding principles, procedures, roles and time schedule

It is necessary that all staff and the people's representatives are familiar with the principles and procedures of programme planning for the purposes of clarity and uniformity of action.

The following conditions should be met in order in fulfil the spirit of this step:

i). A clearly defined statement of purpose and roles of each member is given by the planning committee.

ii). The block, district and state level extension workers and programme planning committee members have understood:

a) the roles of extension workers in programme planning

b) the role of programme planning committee members

c) the purpose of programme planning

d) the scope of extension's educational responsibilities

e) the procedures to be followed

f) the principles to be kept in view and

g) the time schedule to be followed.

2. Analyse situation

Situation analysis involves collection, analysis and interpretation of the existing facts. Good planning depends on the availability of adequate and reliable data and scientific elaboration and interpretation of the same.

The following criteria should be met in order to ensure that this step has been adequately followed.

    i) Facts needed to evaluate the accomplishment of the previous year's programme are collected.

    ii) Local facts needed to define correct and projected needs and interests and problems of the area are assembled

    iii) The basic facts assembled and collected about background information are analysed and interpreted.

iv)   The major needs and problems of the area, which are within the scope of extension's educational responsibility, are identified.

3. Determine objectives

It is essential in the programme planning process that before deciding on the projects to be undertaken, basic objectives of the programme are determined by the villagers in consultation with the extension staff.

The following conditions or qualities will exist when objectives have been determined adequately and properly

i)   Objectives have been determined relating to major problems, need and/or interests as determined by the programme planning committee.
ii)   Both immediate and long-term objectives have been determined.

4. Select problems with due regard to priorities

Selection of problems to be tackled will involve identification, classification and selection with due regard to priorities. Identification of problems will be done on the basis of situation analysis. Once the problems have been identified, it is desirable that they be properly classified into the following categories:

a)   Problems which can be solved by the people themselves with no outside financial aid.
b)   Problems which can be solved by the people with the aid of the Panchayat Samiti
c)   Problems which can only be solved with the help of Government funds

The following conditions will exist when the requirements of this step have been adequately met:

i)   Of the identified problems, the most felt and of widest concern are selected by the extension agents and people's representatives.
ii)   Selected problems are related to the family, community block and situation.
iii)   For tackling the selected problems, the time is scheduled on greatest priority basis

5. Find solutions to problems

The Village Level Workers at the village level and the concerned Extension Officer at the block level are two most important functionaries who advise the village families and the village institutions regarding solutions to their problems. The other Extension officials at various levels may join with the team in finding solutions to problems. Experiences of the farmers and suggestions of the specialists will help in arriving at a joint decision.

The following conditions will exist when this step has been properly carried out

i)   All the available research findings in the State are collected and projected.
ii)   Block level and district level specialists make suitable solution to the problems according to the research findings.

II. Planned Programme

As Leagans (1961) pointed out, it is of utmost importance that the staff and the people in each area not only develop an extension programme, but also prepare the programme in a written form that is readily understood and is suitable for obtaining approval and use as a guide for officials and non-officials.

The problems should be stated from the viewpoint of the farm, the home and the community. They should not be stated in terms of solutions. The objectives should also be stated at a lower level in specific and measurable terms. They should include details about the learners to be reached subject matter to be taught and the behavioral changes to be effected. The objectives may also be stated from the point of view of the extension organisations and the extension public.

The following conditions will be met in order to have a good programme statement:

i)   The written programme should be suitable for use by the staff, planning groups and other individuals or groups concerned with the programme.
ii)   It should clearly state the important problems or needs identified by the staff and the people in the programming process.
iii) It should specify the subject matter related to each objective that is highly significant to the people, socially or economically or both.
iv)   It should be used as the basis for developing annual plans of work.

III. Plan of Work

Preparing a plan of activities directed towards solving selected problems is an important step. A plan of work is the listing of activities by which the objectives already decided upon are to be achieved.

The following conditions should exist in a good plan

i)   The plan of work is in written form.
ii)   It has been developed co-operatively by the extension workers and people's representatives.
iii) It identifies the specific educational job to be done.
iv)   The plan indicates for each educational job.
      a) How it will be done
      b) When it will be done
      c) Where it will be done
      d) Who will do it
      e) What people are to be reached
v)   The subject matter is appropriate considering the people's level of interests, knowledge, attitude and available time and technology.
vi)   The plan provides for the needed training of extension workers and leaders.
vii) Specific changes to be achieved or evidence of accomplishment are indicated clearly.

IV. Implementation Phase

1. Make advance arrangement for inputs and teaching aids

The conditions to meet the requirements of this step are

i) Realistic needs of inputs such as fertilizer, seeds, credit facilities etc. have been worked out jointly by the areas extension staff and the Panchayat Raj institutions.

ii) Needed inputs have been procured well in time and stocked at proper places.

iii) Teaching aids to be used by the extension workers have been prepared and/or procured in sufficient quantity, well in time.

2. Interpret the approved programme to the staff and the people's representatives.

The following criteria will be met to ensure that this step has been adequately undertaken

i) The approved programme has been explained adequately.

ii) The plan of work has also been explained adequately.

i) They have been explained to all the block staff, all the people's representatives and other important leaders.

3. Carry out the plan of work

The approved programme should be carried out, step by step, according to the plan of work and in a co-ordinated manner. The success of a programme depends on the methods used to implement it.

It should be ensured that -

i) the plans for coordination including calendar of activities within and outside extension agency system

ii) the techniques, methods and materials vary appropriate to the situation and clientele

iii) the subject matter used was appropriate considering the people and their objectives

iv) the plans for shared responsibilities were followed.

V. Evaluation of Accomplishments

Concurrent and *ex-post facto* review of progress towards the objectives is an essential phase of extension programme planning. This keeps the extension agency on the right track and helps in differentiating means from ends. Evaluation of the activities should be undertaken jointly by the extension staff and the people's representative organisations at different levels.

Conditions that will exist when this guideline is met are as under

i) Evaluation plans were developed for each of the phases of the programme to be evaluated as indicated in the annual plan of work.

ii) A report of accomplishments and implications was made to the extension governing group. The governing group in projecting their plans for extension activities gave the findings from the report of accomplishments and implications.