

Extension program planning and evaluation - steps and importance; participatory planning process

Program:

A set of related measures or activities with a particular long-term aim.

Extension Program:

According to Kelsey & Hearne (1967) an extension program is a statement of situation, objective problems and solutions. It is relatively permanent but requires constant revision.

Planning:

It is a process which involves studying the past and present in order to forecast the future and in the light of that forecast determining the goals to be achieved and what must be done to reach them.

Program Planning:

It is a decision making process involving critical analysis of the existing situation and the problems, evaluation of the various alternatives to solve these problems and the selection of the relevant ones, giving necessary priorities based upon local needs and resources by the cooperative efforts of the people both official and non-official with a view to facilitate the individual and community growth and development.

In program planning we are required to know where we are now, and where we ought to go, so that we may better judge what to do and how to do it? It prepares the basis for a course of future action.

Evaluation:

Evaluation is the process of determining the extent to which we have been able to attain our objectives. Evaluation is defined as an objective and rigorous analysis of a continuing or completed project, to determine its significance, effectiveness, impact and sustainability by comparing the result with the set of standards. In short, evaluation is a process that critically assesses, tests and measures the design, implementation and results of the project or program, in the light of objectives.

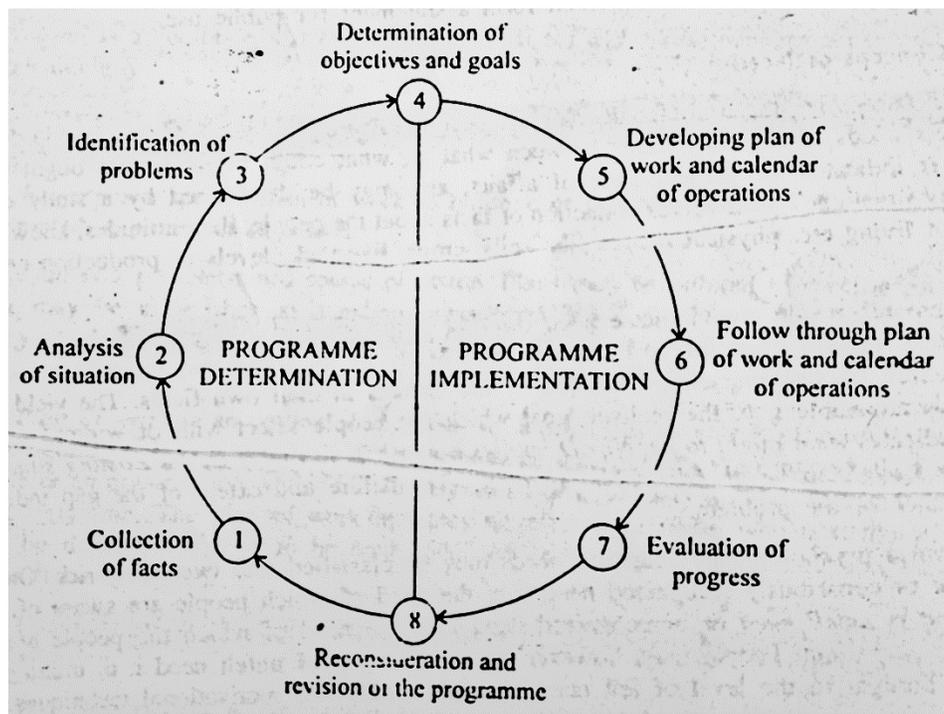
Difference between Evaluation and Monitoring:

Monitoring	Evaluation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Monitoring is the systematic and routine collection of information about the programs/project's activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Evaluation is the periodic assessment of the programs/project's activities

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is ongoing process which is done to see if things/activities are going on track or not i.e. it regularly tracks the program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is done on a periodic basis to measure the success against the objective i.e. it is an in-depth assessment of the program
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring is to be done starting from the initial stage of the projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation is to be done after certain point of time of the project, usually at the mid of the project, completion of the project or while moving from one stage to another stage of the projects/programs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring is done usually by the internal members of the team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation is mainly done by the external members. However, sometimes it may be also done by internal members of the team or by both internal and external members in a combined way
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It focuses on input, activities and output 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It focuses on outcomes, impacts and overall goal

Steps in extension programme planning:

There are eight (8) steps which form a continuous cycle of programme determination and programme implementation in extension program planning.



- 1. Collection of facts:** It is the starting point of programme planning process. Pertinent data may be collected from the available records and by survey of the area. Information relating to the people,

their enterprises, levels of technology, facilities and constraints, values etc. relevant to programme building may be collected. Information may also be collected from Panchayats, Cooperatives and other governmental and non-governmental organizations in the area.

For example, there is a village where the farmers are poor and something is to be done to **improve their economic condition**. We conduct a survey of the village and collect information on the number of farm families, their occupations, land-use pattern, utilization of water resources, facilities for marketing, availability of inputs and credit, their attitude towards various enterprises, the strength of extension service in the area etc. We also collect relevant information from the panchayats and other organizations.

2. **Analysis of situation:** The data and information collected are then analysed. This shall help in understanding the situation in its proper perspective.
3. **Identification of problems:** A correct analysis and interpretation of the data shall help in correctly identifying the problems. There may be many problems, but only the urgent and significant ones which may be solved with the available resources and within the limits of time, should be selected. Selection of a large number of problems which cannot be properly managed may lead to a failure of the programme and generate frustration among the people.

In the present example, after analysis of the data and relevant information with the local people, three most important problems are identified, which need immediate solution. These are, for example, low levels of income, employment and nutrition in the farm families.

4. **Determination of objectives and goals:** The objectives are then set forth on the basis of the significant needs identified. The objectives should be direct and stated in clear terms. In the present example, the objectives then become to increase the levels of income, employment and nutrition of the farm families in the village.

In the example, it is found that the village has a number of ponds with ample water throughout the year. These were used mainly for domestic purposes and not for irrigation as the fields were away. There appeared to be a good scope of introducing the technology of composite fish farming like duck or pig-cum-fish farming in the village. The goals were then finalized after checking up cultural compatibility with the farmers; technical compatibility with the scientists and financial compatibility with the banks and Govt. departments. The goals were then set up as follows-

- a. to raise the yield of fish to 4000 Kg per hectare per year by resorting to composite fish culture in about one-third of the ponds in the first year and covering all the ponds in a period of three years.
- b. to introduce Khaki Campbell duck rearing in about one-fourth of the ponds in the 1st year and covering all the ponds in a period of four years, to obtain 250 eggs per female bird per year.

The generation of additional income and employment, and the availability of additional protein food for participating farm families per year were calculated and found to be satisfactory both by the farmers and the extension agent.

- 5. Developing plan of work and calendar of operations:** The plan of work should be in written form and shall indicate who shall do what job i. e. what the change agent system and the client system shall do, which institutions, organizations, service departments shall be involved; what will be the financial requirement and how it shall be met; what arrangements shall be made for marketing of the produce, training of the farmers and so on. The plan should have all the essential details and no important point should be left out.

The calendar of operations shall be prepared on the basis of the plan of work and shall specify when a particular work shall be done, preferably mentioning date and time; how much quantity of different inputs, including credit shall be required and when these must be made available, when, where and for how many days the farmers and farm women shall be trained, who are the specialists to be involved in training and preparing the handouts, when the publications shall be ready for distribution etc. That is, the calendar of operations shall specifically state how and when all the significant activities shall be performed. This should be at least for one season or for a period of one year. In that case, they may be termed as “seasonal plan” or “annual plan”.

In the example, the plan of work and calendar of operations shall be developed for composite fish culture and duck rearing on the basis of scientific recommendations. In view of the integrated operation of two different technologies, belonging to two different disciplines of fishery and livestock, some special care needs to be taken in developing the plan of work and calendar of operations. Some advance planning and action are also needed for critical inputs like mahua oilcake, desired number and species of fish fries and day-old female ducklings, as these are most probably to be procured from outside.

- 6. Follow through plan of work and calendar of operations:** This is not a routine type of work as many people may think. Training of participants, communication of information, conducting method demonstration, making regular visits and monitoring are some of the important functions the extension agent shall perform at this stage. The work shall include solving unforeseen problems and taking corrective steps where needed. The performance of the extension agent and the organizational support received at this stage may make the difference between success or failure of a programme. Obtaining feedback information as to what is happening to the farmers after introduction of new technology is extremely important at this stage.

In the present context, composite fish culture and rearing of Khaki Campbell ducks are new items of technology, and the extension agent shall ensure that all the recommendations are known and precisely applied under expert supervision. It is important at this stage to know how the farmers are responding to the new technologies, what are their reactions, and what problems they are facing in putting the recommendations into practice.

- 7. Evaluation of progress:** Evaluation is the process of determining the extent to which we have been able to attain our objectives. All programmes must have an in-built system of evaluation to know how well the work is done. It should be a continuous process not only to measure the end result but also to ensure that all the steps are correctly followed.
- 8. Reconsideration and revision of the programme:** On the basis of the results of evaluation, the programme should be reconsidered, and revised if needed. This reconsideration should be done not only with the participants, but also with the scientists, administrators in extension organization and local bodies like panchayats etc.

Reconsideration shall help in making necessary corrections and modifications in the programme. In reconsideration, emphasis should be on the removal of technical defects if any, and how to obtain more cooperation and involvement of the participants and various organizations.

People's Participation

People's participation is of crucial importance for the success of an extension programme. Nothing can be imposed on the people, voluntary participation of the peoples have to be encouraged and obtained. Participation in the planning and implementation of programmes is importance, because through this process people learn to change their behaviour for their own development.

Levels of Participation

There may be several levels of participation by the people. Following Pretty (1994), these are-

1. **Passive participation:** People participate by being told what is going to happen or has already happened. It is a unilateral announcement by an administration or project management without listening to people's responses.
2. **Participation in information giving:** People participate by answering questions posed by extractive researches using questionnaire survey or similar approaches. People do not have the opportunity to influence proceedings, as the findings of the researches are neither shared nor checked for accuracy.
3. **Participation by consultation:** People participate by being consulted, and external agents listen to views. These external agents define both problems and solutions and may modify these in the light of people's responses. Such a consultative process does not concede any share in decision making, and professionals are under no obligation to accept people's views.
4. **Participation for material incentive:** People participate by providing some on-farm facilities like land, labour, irrigation etc. in lieu of certain external inputs like seeds, fertilizer, pesticides and even cash incentives etc. If these are for on-farm trials there is less involvement and sharing of knowledge by the people. The people may not prolong the activities when the incentives end.
5. **Interactive participation:** People participate in joint analysis, which leads to action plans and the formation of new local institutions or strengthening of existing ones.
6. **Self-mobilization:** People participate by taking initiative independent of external institution to change systems. They develop contact with external institutions for resources, and technical advice they need, but retain control over how resources are used. Example, three-tier Panchayati Raj system (Local Self-Government) in India.

Importance of programme planning

1. Program planning is an educational process and involves both teaching and learning, it teaches skills to the people in finding, analysing and focusing problems. It changes the attitude of the people towards the planning process.

2. Program planning is a unifying and integrating process. through the process of identifying problems, fixing priorities, establishing objectives and goals and providing continuity and evaluation, people get a total picture of where they are, what they shall do and where they are likely to reach.
3. Program planning is a coordinating process. it required coordination of the efforts and activities between official and non-official, between Institutions and Organisation, between people and materials etc.