**National Agricultural Extension Policy in Bangladesh**

A New Agricultural Extension Policy (NAEP) has been devised and introduced in Bangladesh in 1996. The goal of the NAEP is to:

*“Encourage the various partners and agencies within National Agricultural Extension System (NAES) to provide efficient and effective services which compliment and reinforce each other; in an effort to increase the efficiency and productivity of agriculture in Bangladesh”* (MoA, 1996, 1997, DAE, 1999a, 1999b, 2000).

To achieve the goal the following 11 key components have been included in the NAEP(MoA, 1996):

1. **Extension support to all categories of farmers**

All members, male and female, of all types of rural households are entitled to extension services.

1. **Efficient extension services**

Cost-effective services, provided by well-trained, highly skilled agents, must be provided to solve farmers’ problems. Cost effectiveness will be enhanced by co-operation between extension providers.

1. **Decentralization**

As agricultural conditions and farmers information needs vary from place to place, extension programmes must be decided locally.

1. **Demand-led extension**

Farmers’ problems, needs and demands will set the extension agenda. Issues requiring attention will be identified jointly by farmers and extension staff using participatory techniques.

1. **Working with groups of all kinds**

Working with groups offers the opportunity for more cost-effective use of limited extension resources, improved sharing of information, and the opportunity for grassroots decision making and participation.

1. **Strengthening extension-research linkage**

Extension and research agencies cannot function separately. There must be free flow of information between extension and research to deliver an effective service to farmers.

1. **Training extension personnel**

All extension agents need to be confident of their ability to solve farmers’ problems, work together with all types of clients and collaborate with other agencies or individuals. Training is essential for this purpose.

1. **Appropriate extension strategies**

No single extension method is suitable for all extension activities. Extension agents can use farm visits, mass media, training, demonstrations, group meetings, farmer field schools and many other methods.

1. **Integrated extension support to farmers**

Advice and information provided to farmers must take an integrated farming systems perspective. Extension agencies with different expertise must collaborate if they are to provide whole farm advice.

**10. Coordinated extension activities**

Coordination underlines all components of the NAEP. Extension services provided by different agencies must be coordinated at all levels in order to optimise the use of resources. This can be achieved by sharing information and expertise between the agencies involved.

1. **Integrated environmental support**

The NAEP supports extension programmes seeking to encourage farmers to apply sustainable and environmentally friendly agricultural practices. Efforts should be made to support and learn from farmers as well as from the formal research system.

In order to help implement the NAEP the following committees have been formed (MoA, 1997):

1. Extension Policy Implementation Co-ordinating Committee (EPICC)
2. National Agricultural Technical Co-ordinating Committee (NATCC)
3. Agricultural Technical Committee (ATC)
4. Research Institute Co-ordination Committee (RICC)
5. District Agricultural Extension Planning Committee (DAEPC)
6. Upazila Agricultural Extension Co-ordinating Committee (UAECC)
7. DAE/ NGO Liaison Committee

**References**

DAE (1999**a**). *Agricultural Extension Manual****.*** Department of Agricultural Extension. Ministry of Agriculture. Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh.

DAE (1999b). *Strategic Plan: 1999 – 2002.* Department of Agricultural Extension. Ministry of Agriculture. Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh.

DAE (2000). *Guidelines for Upazila Partnership Initiatives Fund (revised).* Department of Agricultural Extension. Ministry of Agriculture. Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh.

MoA (1996). *New Agricultural Extension Policy (NAEP).* Ministry of Agriculturae. Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh.

MoA (1997) *A Strategy for Implementing the New Agricultural Extension Policy (NAEP).* Ministry of Agriculture. Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh.