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Extension Policy at the National Level in Asia

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Abstract: Extension is clearly facing challenging times in Asia. This paper draws together experiences from across Asia to explore extension policy and the extension policy process. The paper argues that extension policy needs to tackle two major sets of issues. The first concerns the content in view of the broader role extension needs to play in the present context of agriculture systems. The second issue concerns the nature of the policy process itself. Instead of prescribing reforms, the policy process should ideally facilitate continuous incremental change through experimentation, reflection and learning. Four cases are presented to illustrate the challenges involved in developing and implementing extension policy. The experiences indicate that reform processes only informed by prescriptions generated centrally or from outside are bound to fail. The message for extension policy in Asia is that the process of reform must be lead from within. The paper stresses the need for undertaking an institutional analysis of historical and current approaches of implementing different extension approaches and developing capacity within the country on experimenting with different approaches and evaluating them. These learning based approaches should inform policy development. However the existing culture of extension organisations may prevent the emergence of learning based approaches to invigorate extension. Changing these cultures may yet be the biggest challenge of all for reforming extension.

Keywords: [Capacity development](#), [Extension policy process](#), [Extension reforms](#), [Innovation Systems](#), [Institutional analysis](#), [Learning based approaches](#)



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