

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:288
ANSWERED ON:14.08.2006
VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS IN AGRICULTURE
Ahir Shri Hansraj Gangaram

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) the reasons for discontinuing the Agriculture Extension Scheme being run through the voluntary organizations;
- (b) whether the Government is coming out with any other scheme for orientation and guidance in the agriculture sector through the voluntary organizations; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof and the time-limit fixed by the Government therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR)

(a) to (c): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (c) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.288 DUE FOR REPLY ON 14TH AUGUST, 2006.

(a) to (c): The Central Sector Scheme 'Agriculture Extension through Voluntary Organizations (AEVO)' of the Department of Agriculture & Cooperation (DAC) was under implementation till March, 2005. Under the scheme, the DAC was providing financial assistance to selected Voluntary Organizations on the basis of their annual proposals for undertaking extension activities, such as demonstrations, information dissemination, training, exposure visit.

The AEVO scheme has since 2005-06 been subsumed under a much larger Centrally Sponsored Scheme 'Support to State Extension Programmes for Extension Reforms' based on Agriculture Technology Management Agency (ATMA) model. A total of 252 districts across all States/ UTs are to be covered under the new scheme during the X Plan. The scheme is currently under implementation.

The Extension Reforms Scheme provides significantly increased opportunities for involvement of voluntary organizations in implementation of extension activities. It is mandated under this Scheme that minimum 10% of the allocation on recurring activities, such as demonstrations, training, exposure visit, information dissemination, organizing farmers' groups, at district level is to be utilized through the non-governmental sector, which includes Voluntary Organizations. The decision concerning selection of implementing agency for different extension activities is taken by the ATMA Governing Board, which is a multi-stakeholder body at the district level.