

AESA Template for Writing a Good Extension Practices Note

Use this template to document effective extension practices that address agricultural challenges and create a positive impact for farmers and communities.

1. Context – *what the practice tried to address and why it was used* (150 words)

Instructions: Describe the specific agricultural challenge or problem that the good extension practice aimed to address. Explain the background situation, including:

- The target beneficiaries (farmers, communities, etc.)
- Geographic location and farming system context
- Specific problems faced (low productivity, pest issues, climate challenges, market access, etc.)
- Why conventional approaches were insufficient
- The urgency or importance of addressing this challenge
- Any unique circumstances that made intervention necessary

Example opening: "Small-scale farmers in [location] were facing [specific challenge], which resulted in [consequences]. Traditional approaches were inadequate because [reasons]. This situation required innovative extension approaches to [desired outcome]."

2. Good extension practices followed – *approaches & soft skills used* (400–600 words)

List 4–6 concrete practices (each with a subheading). For each practice, provide:

1. Name of practice (1 line)
2. What was done (short description)
3. Key features / how it was implemented (steps, adaptations, local fit)
4. Relevant field extension soft skills used (e.g., facilitation, negotiation, trust-building)
5. Practical tip for replication

Suggested practices to consider (adapt to your case):

- Participatory problem diagnosis & planning (PRA/community mapping) — facilitation, listening.
- Technology adaptation & piloting at micro scale — hands-on demos, farmer trials.
- Institutional linkages & convergence (banks, Krishi Bhavan-DoA, FPOs) — networking, negotiation.
- Dedicated incubation/handholding (incubation centre, loan window, mall/display outlets) — mentoring, business development support.
- Market development & branding (farmers' mall, common brand, exhibitions) — marketing coaching, product quality control.
- Soft-skills cluster: building confidence, group formation, gender-sensitive facilitation, and conflict mediation.

Example entry:

Practice 1: Incubation + hands-on micro-unit

What we did: Groomed a 7-member SHG into a micro processing unit; used the KVK food lab for training and initial production runs.

How: 6 months incubation → production plan → MoU for revenue share; revolving fund to cover operating costs.

Extension skills: mentoring, motivational leadership, and bookkeeping training.

Note: Focus on the "how" rather than just the "what" - explain the process, methodology, and unique features that made these practices effective.

3. Challenges – deployment problems and how they were addressed (300 words)

Instructions: Honestly document the problems and constraints encountered during implementation and how they were addressed. Include:

Initial Challenges:

- *Farmer resistance or scepticism:* How initial reluctance was overcome
- *Technical difficulties:* Problems with technology, methods, or approaches
- *Resource constraints:* Funding, staffing, or material limitations
- *Institutional barriers:* Bureaucratic, policy, or organisational obstacles
- *Environmental/contextual factors:* Weather, market conditions, social issues

Problem-Solving Approaches:

- *Adaptive strategies:* How practices were modified to address challenges
- *Stakeholder engagement:* Building trust and buy-in from resistant groups
- *Resource mobilisation:* Creative solutions for funding or material constraints
- *Capacity building:* Addressing skill gaps in the team or beneficiaries
- *Partnership development:* Leveraging collaborations to overcome limitations

Learning from Failures:

- *What didn't work initially:* Failed approaches or strategies
- *Course corrections:* How the team pivoted or adjusted methods
- *Innovative solutions:* Creative problem-solving examples
- *Persistence factors:* What kept the initiative moving forward despite setbacks

Common examples to adapt:

1. Mindset & confidence of farmers addressed through demonstration units, role models, and "You Can" shop displays.
2. Finance & credit bottlenecks addressed through setting up an on-site loan window, and preparing bankable proposals.
3. Technology scale-fit related challenges were overcome through refining lab/industrial methods for micro units; test variations on-farm.
4. Policy/administrative delays (e.g., permissions) addressed through sustained advocacy + formal letters + local champions.

Key principle: Show how challenges became learning opportunities that strengthened the overall approach.

4. Benefits and Impact – what beneficiaries received (150 words)

Instructions: Quantify and qualify the positive outcomes achieved through the good extension practices:

Quantitative Benefits:

- *Production improvements:* Yield increases, quality improvements
- *Economic gains:* Income increases, cost reductions, market access
- *Adoption rates:* Number of farmers adopting practices, area coverage
- *Capacity indicators:* People trained, skills developed, knowledge gained

Qualitative Benefits:

- *Social outcomes:* Community organisation, women empowerment, social cohesion

- *Environmental benefits*: Sustainability improvements, resource conservation
- *Institutional changes*: Strengthened organisations, improved service delivery
- *Behavioural changes*: Attitude shifts, increased confidence, innovation adoption

Immediate vs. Long-term Impact:

- *Short-term gains*: Quick wins that built momentum
- *Sustainable changes*: Long-lasting improvements in livelihoods or practices
- *Spillover effects*: Benefits beyond direct beneficiaries
- *System-level changes*: Broader impacts on agricultural systems or policies

Example phrasing:

Over 3 years, the 12 supported micro-enterprises processed 275 t of produce, generated sales of INR 2.24 million and net profit of INR 0.51 million (B: C = 1.3). Women's share in family income rose from 10% to 36%.

5. Sustainability and Scaling Up – will impact last? can it be scaled? (150 words)

Instructions: Analyse the potential for continuation and replication:

Sustainability Factors:

- *Financial sustainability*: Revenue models, cost-effectiveness, funding continuation
- *Institutional sustainability*: Local ownership, capacity of implementing organisations
- *Technical sustainability*: Appropriateness of technology, maintenance requirements
- *Social sustainability*: Community acceptance, cultural compatibility
- *Environmental sustainability*: Long-term viability of practices

Scaling Potential:

- *Replicability*: Can practices be adapted to other locations/contexts?
- *Prerequisites*: What conditions are necessary for successful replication?
- *Scaling strategies*: Horizontal (geographic) vs. vertical (institutional) scaling
- *Policy implications*: Need for supportive policies or institutional changes
- *Partnership opportunities*: Potential collaborators for scaling efforts

Evidence of Continuation:

- *Current status*: What is happening post-project?
- *Farmer-led adoption*: Evidence of independent continuation
- *Institutional embedding*: Integration into regular programs/services

Example phrasing:

"Sustainable if: (1) local supply is ensured, (2) post-establishment handholding continues for quality/marketing, (3) entrepreneur networks reduce dependence on the lead agency."

"For scaling: conduct raw-material mapping, set up shared processing and packaging facilities, and mobilise financial institutions for credit windows."

6. Lessons Learned – what the team learned and advice for others (150 words)

Instructions: Extract key insights that can guide future extension efforts:

What Worked Well:

- *Critical success factors*: Essential elements that made practices effective
- *Innovation insights*: What made approaches unique or particularly successful
- *Stakeholder engagement lessons*: Effective strategies for building partnerships
- *Methodological insights*: Particularly effective extension methods or tools

What Could Be Improved:

- *Areas for enhancement:* Aspects that could be strengthened in future
- *Missed opportunities:* Things that could have been done differently
- *Resource optimisation:* More efficient use of time, money, or personnel
- *Timing considerations:* Optimal timing for different interventions

Broader Implications:

- *Extension principles:* Universal principles demonstrated through this experience
- *Policy recommendations:* Suggestions for a supportive policy environment
- *Capacity building needs:* Skills or knowledge gaps that need attention
- *Research priorities:* Questions that emerged requiring further investigation

Advice for Others:

- *Practical recommendations:* Specific guidance for practitioners
- *Common pitfalls to avoid:* Mistakes that others should not repeat
- *Key success tips:* Most important factors for replication success

Example phrasing:

1. “Handhold trainees through pre- and post-establishment phases — training alone is insufficient.”
2. “Foster functional linkages with finance and certification bodies early.”
3. “Use demonstration/role model units to shift mindset (‘You Can’ displays).”
4. “Adapt technology to micro scale before promotion.”

General Writing Tips:

- Use clear, concise language accessible to extension practitioners
- Include specific examples and case studies where possible
- Balance technical detail with readability
- Ensure cultural sensitivity and context appropriateness
- Focus on practical, actionable insights
- Use data and evidence to support claims
- Maintain objectivity while highlighting innovations