

Farmers Amenity Centre for Tribal (FACT): A New Approach to Agricultural Extension

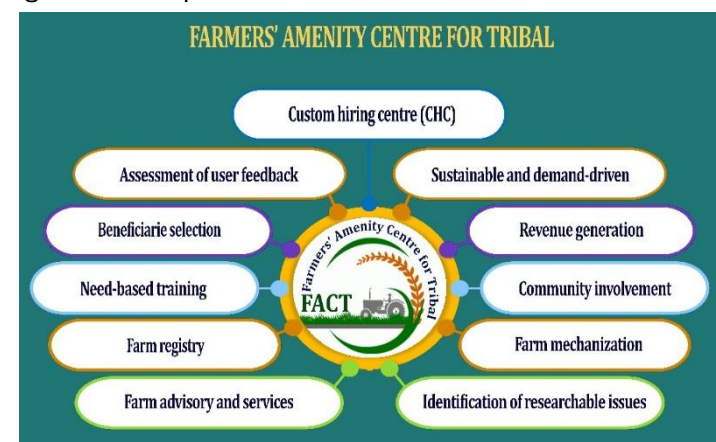
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Introduction

Agricultural extension is a vital process that helps farmers adopt new technologies, improve productivity, and enhance their livelihoods. Traditional extension models, primarily based on government services and private agro-dealers, often fail to meet the specific needs of farmers, especially in remote and challenging agroecological zones. To bridge this gap, the Farmers Amenity Centre for Tribal (FACT) concept was developed by the ICAR Research Complex for NEH Region, Umiam, Meghalaya. FACT aims to act as a single-window system at the village level for technology dissemination, livelihood improvement, and agricultural input facilitation.



The Need for FACT

Modern agricultural challenges, including climate change, declining soil fertility, and resource limitations, necessitate innovative approaches to extension services. FACT follows a community-based model to ensure sustainable technology transfer, empowering local farmers with tools, knowledge, and financial support.

Key Features of FACT

- **Community Ownership:** Managed by Self Help Groups (SHGs) and local farmers.
- **Integration with Research Institutions:** Direct coordination with ICAR for technology transfer.
- **Support for Farmers:** Includes advisory services, mechanization support, and access to subsidized inputs.

- **Sustainable Revenue Model:** Generates funds for maintenance without external dependence.

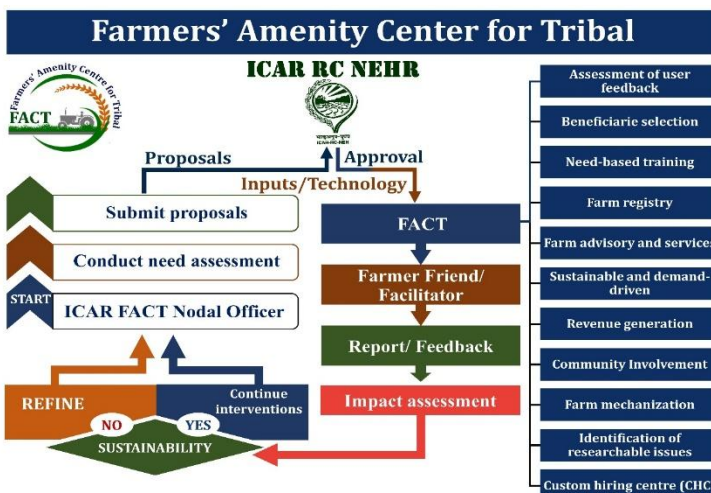
FACT vs Traditional Custom Hiring Centers

Feature	FACT	Traditional Custom Hiring Centers
Management	Community-managed (SHGs)	Privately owned
Research Integration	Direct link with ICAR	No formal research linkage
Services Provided	Inputs, training, advisory, mechanization	Equipment rental only
Revenue Model	Cost-sharing, reinvestment in services	Profit-driven
Community Involvement	High (collective decision-making)	Low (transaction-based)

Administrative Structure of FACT

FACT follows a **two-tier governance model**:

1. **Institute Level:** A **Nodal Officer** coordinates and monitors various programs.
2. **Village Level:** A **FACT Facilitator (FaC)**, nominated from local youth or educated farmers, oversees daily operations.



The FACT Management Committee (FMC) comprises ten members, including representatives from SHGs and village authorities, ensuring democratic decision-making.

Case Study: FACT Implementation in Meghalaya

FACT Centre at Umrynjah Village, East Khasi Hills, Meghalaya was established in October 2023. The initiative has seen significant participation. Till now the total members are 118 plus 1 Producer group (PG): 118+1

Farmers from each village;

- 1) Umrynjah: 31
- 2) Madan Mawkhar: 47
- 3) Umphrew: 40

The society have been receiving assistant supports from

ICAR RC NEH, Umiam

- 1) A share of Rs.34,800 for 58 members during the creation of the society.
- 2) Supplies of vegetable seeds and poultry and to be sold to the farmers at 30% subsidy
- 3) Creation of a Custom Hiring Centre with the hand overing of machineries: Power tiller (1 no.), Power weeder (2 No.), Turmeric Washer (1 No.), Knapsack Sprayer (2 No.)

Meghalaya Basin Development Authority

- 1) The society receive an amount of Rs.250000 as a corpus fund and has been deposited as a fixed amount to the society bank account.
- 2) The society also receive Office tables, Chairs, Money Locker, Cupboard and computer system with a total cost of Rs.53000
- 3) The Society also received Rs.1000000 under CMC for the supply Ginger seeds material and dry ration to fellow farmers.

Budget

- Share Capital (118 members): Rs. 59000
- Admission (118members): Rs. 11800
- Saving account (29 members): Rs. 36650
- Profit generated from the Centre: Rs. 39200

Available: Rs. 1,46,650

Expenditure

- 1) Pan card creation: Rs. 500
- 2) Seal creation: Rs. 1000

- 3) Xerox and printing: Rs. 840
- 4) Vehicle charges for attending meeting: Rs. 6500
- 5) Creation of share certificate: Rs. 800
- 6) File purchase: Rs. 250
- 7) Purchase of Puncher & file: Rs. 210
- 8) Vehicle charges to transport office materials: Rs. 3000
- 9) Cleaning charges: Rs. 2000
- 10) Farmers friend payout: Rs. 3000
- 11) Centre Rental charges: Rs. 4500
- 12) Opening ceremony of new centre expense: Rs. 5580

Total Expenditure: Rs. 28,180

Total Available budget: Rs. 1,18,470

Closing Balance

- In Bank account: Rs. 60090
- Balance in hand: Rs. 18380
- Loan to society members: Rs. 40000

Over all amount: Rs. 1,18,470

The budget under CMC is deposited in the society account, that is a sum of Rs.10,00,000

CMC (Collection & Marketing Centre): It is a sub-group under the society. The CMC is handling all business type activities of the society. The fund for this sub-group is send to the society bank account and it is hand over to the CMC members. Its members are member of the society itself.

Key Achievements

- **Awareness and Training Programs:** Increased farmer participation.
- **Sale of Subsidized Inputs:** Ensured fair distribution of agricultural resources.
- **Livelihood Enhancement:** Strengthened rural income through collective farming initiatives.

Conclusion

FACT represents a paradigm shift in agricultural extension, emphasizing community participation, research integration, and sustainable service delivery. Unlike traditional custom hiring centers, FACT ensures that farmers receive not just machinery but also technical support, training, and advisory services. The model is scalable and can be replicated across India, fostering a self-reliant, resilient, and progressive agricultural sector.

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