CHAPTER 7

OPERATIONAL PLANNING IN EXTENSION

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Planning brings rationality and order into an organization, and facilitates extension workers' concentration on activities aimed at measurable results, instead of dissipating their energies in fighting fires (Buford, *et al.*, 1995). It establishes coordinated efforts, gives direction and minimizes waste and redundancy (Robbins & Coulter, 1999). There are various types of plans. The most popular ways to describe organizational plans are by their breadth (strategic versus operational), time frame (short term versus long term), specificity (directional versus specific), and frequency of use (single-use versus standing) (Robbins & Coulter, 1999). Detailed descriptions of each type of these plans are provided in chapter two. Here the focus is on the operational planning.

An operational (tactical or administrative) plan is primarily focused on efficiency and effectiveness in achieving the overall organizational objectives, defined by strategic planning (Buford, *et al.*, 1995). Operational plans tend to cover shorter periods of time, covering one year or less, and specify details on how overall objectives are to be achieved. It is the "action" or "doing" stage, and refers to the methods, procedures, rules, or administrative practices that guide decision making, and convert strategic plans into actions (Robbins & Coulter, 1999).

A decision is defined as the selection of a course of action from two or more alternatives, while decision making is a process or methodical action considering alternative actions (Robbins & Coulter, 1999). It deals with setting out alternatives, and selecting from those after having applied criteria for effectiveness, communication and implementation. According to Stone, (1991), good managers are managers who seek a systematic approach to decision-making, either to improve performance at work or to structure the organization.

In this regard, respondents' opinions were sought concerning issues related to extension operational planning. The most important issues addressed in this study are approaches to goal setting, priority consideration, extension program development, implementation approach and the purposes of reporting.

7.2 GOAL SETTING: TOP-DOWN VERSUS BOTTOM-UP

Goal setting can influence what people think and do, thus motivating their behaviour. By focusing their behaviour in the direction of the goals, rather than elsewhere, it energizes behaviour - motivating people to put forth the effort to reach difficult goals that have been accepted, and it prompts persistence over time (Cummings & Worley, 2001:380). Goal setting describes the interaction between managers and their sub-ordinates in jointly defining, i.e. clarifying the duties and responsibilities associated with a particular job or work group member behaviours and outcomes (Cummings & Worley, 2001:380). The respondents' perceptions of various alternative ways of Oromia Bureau of Agricultural and Rural Development's (OBARD) annual production goal setting approaches are summarized in Table 7.1. They were asked to assess their appropriateness using a 10 point scale (0 = absolutely inappropriate; 10 = most appropriate).

Table 7.1 The appropriateness of different alternatives for setting regional production goals, as perceived by respondents and expressed as mean scale point percentage (N=346)

Alternative approaches for setting regional production goals	Mean**	SD
Set the goals at PA* level to be coordinated at the district and then at regional level	74.4	27.9
Set goals at district level to be coordinated at regional level	65.6	22.3
Set goals at regional level and control with zones and/or districts	52.2	24.2
Set goals at regional level	40.1	23.1

*PA =Peasant Association (the lowest- grassroots level- government's administrative structure)

**Mean level of appropriateness (0%= absolutely inappropriate; 100%= most appropriate)

The general opinion is that goal setting should be of a bottom-up nature (from PA to region) with support from and coordination at higher levels. This conclusion is based on the high mean rating of goal setting at peasant association level (74.4%) and the significantly lower assessment of goal setting at regional level (40.1%). But not all categories of respondents agree with this preference of goal setting at peasant association rather than regional level, as is evident from Table 7.2.

Table 7.2 The appropriateness of different alternatives for setting regional agricultural production goals, as perceived by respondents in different categories of locality and management, and expressed as mean percentage rank order (N=346)

Respondents' categories	Statistical indicators	Alternative approaches for setting regional production goals			
		Set the goals at PA* level to be coordinated at the district and then at regional level	Set goals at district level to be coordinated at regional level	Set goals at regional level and control with zones and/or districts	Set goals at regional level
(a) Managerial positions					
Non-managers	Mean	74.62	67.47	53.71	41.40
First level managers	Mean	73.26	63.70	53.26	41.20
Middle level managers	Mean	73.50	62.50	48.50	34.00
Top level managers	Mean	88.75	66.25	31.25	41.25
Analysis of variance (ANOVA)	*F*	*.782*	*1.052*	*2.812*	*1.682*
	Df	*3,342*	*3,342*	*3,342*	*3,342*
	p	*.50*	*.37*	*.04*	*.17*
(b) Zones					
Jimma	Mean	72.36	66.23	52.55	38.21
Arsi	Mean	73.91	65.36	51.18	39.09
South West Shewa	Mean	67.57	61.08	58.65	48.92
Borena	Mean	80.23	67.67	57.91	48.37
East Shewa	Mean	77.74	65.81	46.13	28.71
Analysis of variance (ANOVA)	*F*	*1.245*	*.486*	*1.764*	*5.110*
	df	*4,322*	*4,322*	*4,322*	*4,322*
	p	*.29*	*.75*	*.14*	*.001*

These results, shown in Table 7.2, indicate that top level managers show more support for setting production goals at the Peasant Association level by offering about 15 percent

higher ratings and correspondingly also a lower assessment (about 20 percent) for the goal setting at regional level with control by zones/ district than any other managerial category. These variations between top level managers and other manager categories are highly significant (F=2.812; p = 0.04), and could be attributed to the current administrative policy, where the authority/ power and responsibilities regarding all development matters are devolved to districts, in line with decentralization. In this context, the stand of top level managers seems understandable.

7.3 PRIORITY CONSIDERATION: VOLUNTARY VERSUS PRIORITY (OPTIMUM RETURN) EXTENSION

A priority approach is essential in extension, given, on the one hand, the overwhelming task and challenge in agricultural and rural development, and, on the other hand, the limited resources (financial, human and time), especially where the use of public funds has to be accounted for (Düvel, 2003). Accountability of public funds does not necessarily condone the addressing of only the felt needs; even the endeavours to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of extension will be reduced to insignificance if focused on a trivial and potentially unimportant problem (Düvel, 2003).

Seen in this way, the respondents' perceptions were examined with regard to the extent to which priorities are considered in extension programmes planning and implementation, using a 10 point scale (0=no priority/purely voluntary extension; 10=optimum return per unit input). The results are presented in Table 7.3.

In general, the current level of priority consideration in extension program planning and implementation is assessed as low, 47.5 percent. This implies that departmental directives or improvement potentials (unfelt needs) considered only to a lesser degree. The clear preference expressed by respondents (mean assessment of 93.6 percent) is that these mentioned criteria should be the primary if not exclusive considerations, when deciding on development projects. This represents a mean shift of 46.1 percent away from the current.

The most important differences between management categories lies in the fact that the top level managers, more than the other categories, perceive the current situation much more favourably, viz. more priority focused (65.7%) which logically leaves less scope for improvement.

Table 7.3 The perceived current and recommended level of priority considerations, expressed as mean scale point percentage in OBARD by respondents from various zones and managerial positions (N=346)

Respondents' categories	Statistical indicator	Current (C)	Recommended (R)	Problem scope (R -C)
(a) Managerial positions				
Non-managers	Mean*	47.2	92.4	45.2
First level managers	Mean	46.9	95.1	48.2
Middle level managers	Mean	48.1	95.0	46.9
Top level managers	Mean	65.7	94.3	28.6
Total	Mean	47.5	93.6	46.1
Analysis of variance (ANOVA)	*F*	*2.428*	*1.338*	
	Df	*3,335*	*3,335*	
	p	*.07*	*.26*	
(b) Zones				
Jimma	Mean	45.1	92.7	47.6
Arsi	Mean	46.3	93.3	47.0
South West Shewa	Mean	48.4	89.2	40.8
Borena	Mean	51.3	95.7	44.4
East Shewa	Mean	51.4	99.2	47.4
Analysis of variance (ANOVA)	*F*	*1.295*	*3.859*	
	df	*4,320*	*4,320*	
	p	*.27*	*.01*	

*Priority consideration expressed in mean percentages (0%=no priority; 100%= priority based on optimum return per input)

As far as the zones are concerned, no clear differences of tendencies can be observed.

7.4 PROGRAM PLANNING: CENTRALIZATION VERSUS DECENTRALIZATION

Another consideration of importance in any extension approach is the centralisation versus decentralisation of decision making. Decentralization refers to the extent to which upper management delegates authority downward to divisions, departments, branches and lower level organizational units (Verma & Chunder, 1995). Decentralization thus disperses the power and decision making to lower levels of the organization. However, decentralization with no coordination and leadership from the top is highly undesirable (Verma & Chunder, 1995), as the very purpose of the organization would be defeated if there is no centralized control. Alternatives, therefore, range along a continuum from a highly centralized to a highly decentralized system.

The perceptions of the respondents concerning the degree to which the approaches of decision making in extension program planning are/ should be decentralized, is assessed using a 10 point scale (0=complete centralization (top-down); 10=complete decentralization (bottom-up). The results are presented in Table 7.4.

In general, according to the respondents' opinion, there should be more decentralization of decision making (7.3) than is currently the case (4.9). These findings indicate that the current level of decentralization of decision making power in program planning is perceived as insufficient. The respondents are of the opinion that more authority and power should be given to lower level structures in the organization (7.3) with support (i.e. technically, financially and materially) and guidance (i.e. general picture such as national/ regional goals/ strategies) coming from the top. The overall demand for change is a 2.4 scale point shift. But the respondents from different zones appeared to vary concerning the desired level of decentralization ($F = 2.947$; $p = 0.02$).

Table 7.4 The perceived current and recommended level of decentralization in extension program planning, as reflected in mean scale point in OBARD by various categories of respondents (N=346)

Respondents' categories	Statistical indicator	Current (C)	Recommended (R)	Problem scope (R -C)
(a) Managerial positions				
Non-managers	Mean	4.9	7.2	2.3
First level managers	Mean	4.5	7.4	2.9
Middle level managers	Mean	5.5	7.7	2.2
Top level managers	Mean	5.0	7.7	2.7
Total	**Mean**	**4.9**	**7.3**	**2.4**
Analysis of variance (ANOVA)	*F*	*2.085*	*1.216*	
	Df	*3,340*	*3,340*	
	p	*.10*	*.30*	
(b) Zones				
Jimma	Mean	4.6	7.6	3.0
Arsi	Mean	5.1	6.8	1.7
South West Shewa	Mean	4.9	7.5	2.6
Borena	Mean	5.4	7.7	2.3
East Shewa	Mean	4.4	7.5	3.1
Analysis of variance (ANOVA)	*F*	*1.422*	*2.947*	
	df	*4,320*	*4,320*	
	p	*.23*	*.02*	

Centralization versus decentralization (0=Complete centralization; 10 = Complete decentralization)

In particular, East Shewa and Jimma zones expressed their need for a significant shift towards a more decentralized decision making approach in program planning than the current situation. This shift represents 3.1 and 3.0 scale points for East Shewa and Jimma, respectively, but can mainly be attributed to more centralised assessment of the current situation.

As far as managerial positions are concerned, there are no significant differences between the groups.

7.5 EXTENSION SERVICE DELIVERY AND KNOWLEDGE SUPPORT: PRO-ACTIVE VERSUS REACTIVE APPROACHES

For effective and efficient extension service delivery, extension workers should work in a systematic and planned manner. The nature of the extension service delivery and knowledge support programmes of the extension organization can be reactive or pro-active or both.

According to Düvel (2003), both reactive and programmed (pro-active) extension approaches are important. The reactive approach has the advantage that it responds to felt needs, and, therefore, is likely to be effective and show quicker results. For this reason time should be reserved for it. The effectiveness of the pro-active approach lies in the purposeful pursuit of objectives, identified on the basis of a situation analysis and subsequent regular monitoring and evaluation (Düvel, 2003). The two major advantages of this approach are (a) the improvement of the effectiveness and efficiency of extension and (b) that it allows for the implementation of the "help towards self-help" principle.

Although both approaches have their own pros and cons, it is a serious concern that development is generally approached on a reactive (*ad hoc)* basis (de Beer, 2000), with little impact on development on the one hand and clear evaluation difficulties on the other. The poor performance of extension could, amongst other reasons, be attributed to a non-commitment to organized and programmed working procedures (de Beer, 2000). This implies that there is a need for an appropriate combination or balance of both reactive and pro-active extension approaches. The following section reflects the opinions of respondents in this regard, both in regard to the extension workers as well as subject matter specialists (SMSs).

7.5.1 Extension workers

The findings in Table 7.5 indicate that the extension workers are currently spending more than two-thirds of their time, in terms of number of days per week, in reactive extension work, i.e. in what Buford, *et al.,* (1995) refer to as "fighting fires". The time spent on purposeful initiations of development changes and their implementations is only about 27 percent (calculated in days per week).

The disadvantage of a strong focus on the reactive type of extension approach is that the service invests little time in planning extension programmes, with the result that new problems or unfelt needs will be identified too late. This means that the main aim of extension to initiate change will be jeopardized. With such a reactive, ad hoc, extension work approach, the workers have to divide their attention between many different problems, so they are unable to pursue any one problem in depth (van den Ban and Hawkins, 1996).

In view of this, the respondents' recommendation that the focus of pro-active extension should be increased from a current mean of 1.93 days per week to 4.49 days per week, which represents an increase of 37 percent. However, there are differences in the perceptions of the various categories of respondents.

Table 7.5 The perceived current and recommended days per week spent on pro-active extension delivery, expressed in mean percentages (0%=completely reactive; 100%=completely pro-active) by various categories of respondents

Respondents categories	Statistical indicator	Current (C)	Recommended (R)	Problem scope in % (R - C)
(a) Managerial positions				
Non-managers	Mean	1.89	4.42	38.5
First level managers	Mean	1.91	4.59	40.4
Middle level managers	Mean	2.09	4.63	38.8
Top level managers	Mean	1.50	3.50	36.3
Total	**Mean**	**1.93**	**4.49**	**37.2**
Analysis of variance (ANOVA)	*F*	*.605*	*2.130*	
	df	*3,316*	*3,316*	
	p	*.61*	*.10*	
(b) Zones				
Jimma	Mean	2.06	4.06	32.0
Arsi	Mean	1.74	4.59	40.0
South West Shewa	Mean	1.85	4.76	40.4
Borena	Mean	1.87	4.82	37.4
East Shewa	Mean	2.52	5.20	35.9
Analysis of variance (ANOVA)	*F*	*2.789*	*4.976*	
	df	*4,303*	*4,303*	
	p	*.03*	*.00*	

Top managers are strangely enough more conservative regarding programmed extension, which could be attributed to a more limited insight regarding the conditions of effective purposeful extension. Amongst the zones it is particularly East Shewa that is most convinced about a need for a more purposeful extension approach in future.

7.5.2 Subject Matter Specialists (SMS)

Table 7.6 gives an overview of the time spent by subject matter specialists on purposeful development activities, which is currently about 42 percent (assessed in days per week). Although this is slightly better than the extension service delivery, the subject matter specialists also spend most of their time in responding to unplanned requests or routine activities. The general recommendation is that time spent on purposeful development activities should be increased to about 87 percent, which means an increase of 45 percent over the current. The insignificant differences ($p>0.05$) between the management

categories are an indication that there is general agreement regarding this required change towards a more pro-active and purposeful approach.

There are variations of perceptions between zone categories of respondents with respect to the current ($F_{4, 318} = 6.516$; $p = 0.00$) and recommended ($F_{4, 318} = 13.6$; $p = 0.00$) days per week for programmed SMS supports (Table 7.6). The greatest differences occur between respondents in Jimma, who are more conservative, and East Shewa, who are most outspoken, regarding the needed change in terms of a more purposeful and pro-active approach. However, the very big proposed change of 63 percent by respondents in East Shewa, can be largely attributed to low assessment of the current approach, which is only 28.7 percent, compared to the 39 to 47.8 percent in the other zones.

Table 7.6 The perceived current and recommended days per week spent on pro-active SMS knowledge support, as expressed in mean percentages (0% = completely reactive; 100 % = completely pro-active) by various categories of respondents (N=341)

Respondents categories	Statistical indicator	Current (C)	Recommended (R)	Problem scope (R - C)
(a) Managerial positions				
Non-managers	Mean	43.0	86.0	43.0
First level managers	Mean	42.2	87.6	45.4
Middle level managers	Mean	37.9	90.2	52.3
Top level managers	Mean	37.1	92.9	55.8
Total	**Mean**	**42.0**	**87.0**	**45.0**
Analysis of variance (ANOVA)	*F*	*1.021*	*1.082*	
	df	*3,337*	*3,337*	
	p	*.38*	*.36*	
(b) Zones				
Jimma	Mean	39.0	77.3	38.3
Arsi	Mean	46.7	91.5	45.0
South West Shewa	Mean	39.7	89.2	49.5
Borena	Mean	47.8	93.2	45.4
East Shewa	Mean	28.7	91.7	63.0
Analysis of variance (ANOVA)	*F*	*6.516*	*13.600*	
	df	*4,318*	*4,318*	
	p	*.00*	*.00*	

Reactive versus pro-active (0=completely reactive; 100= completely pro-active)

These findings leave little doubt about the large scale changes required in the approaches of both extension workers and SMSs. Currently, extension workers and SMSs spend only one third of their time in a proactive and purposeful manner, and the general suggestion is that this should be increased to two-thirds in the case of extensionists and even higher (about 80 %) in the case of SMS's. In the latter case this means that the primary role of SMSs should be the knowledge support of extension workers, rather than the direct dissemination of knowledge to farmers. It is rather surprising, that with the entire consensus in this regard, especially also among top and middle management, nothing has been done to date to implement it.

7.6 OWNERSHIP OF EXTENSION PROJECTS

According to Düvel (2003) a programmed extension approach allows for community development by guiding the community to take ownership and responsibility for the program, because successful agricultural development will only be sustainable if communities are empowered to be able and willing to accept ownership.

According to Table 7.7, the respondents are of the opinion that the current level of ownership by community is not enough; and recommend a substantial shift (3.3 scale points) towards more involvement and empowerment of the community in extension of development projects, to shift the responsibility of these extension projects from the extension department to the community.

Table 7.7 The (a) current and (b) recommended ownership* of extension projects, expressed in mean scale points by respondents in categories of management and locality (N=341)

Respondents categories	Statistical indicator	Current (C)	Recommended (R)	Problem scope (R - C)
(a) Managerial positions				
Non-managers	Mean	4.3	7.6	3.3
First level managers	Mean	4.1	7.5	3.4
Middle level managers	Mean	4.3	7.9	3.6
Top level managers	Mean	5.4	8.0	2.6
Total	**mean**	**4.3**	**7.6**	**3.3**
Analysis of variance (ANOVA)	*F*	*.959*	*.472*	
	df	*3,338*	*3,338*	
	p	*.41*	*.70*	
(b) Zones				
Jimma	Mean	3.9	7.1	3.2
Arsi	Mean	4.7	8.1	3.4
South West Shewa	Mean	4.6	8.0	3.4
Borena	Mean	4.5	7.8	3.3
East Shewa	Mean	3.4	6.9	3.5
Analysis of variance (ANOVA)	*F*	*4.134*	*5.507*	
	df	*4,320*	*4,320*	
	p	*.01*	*.00*	

Ownership* (0 = Ownership only with department; 10 = Owned only by community)

The differences between the management categories are not significant (F=.959, p=.41), the only noteworthy difference being the high assessment of the top level managers regarding the current involvement and ownership of communities. This appears to be an overrating (5.4 scale points), compared to the rest of the respondents.

The differences between the zones can also be primarily attributed to differences in the current assessment, and here it is especially the respondents in zones of Jimma (3.9) and East Shewa (3.4) who assess the current ownership of their communities very low. The proposed degree of change to a higher level of ownership is similar in all zones.

CHAPTER 8

ORGANIZING IN EXTENSION MANAGEMENT

8.1 INTRODUCTION

Having examined the nature of strategic and operational planning aspects in management of extension in the preceding two chapters, this chapter continues the investigation focusing on the organizing dimension. According to Verma & Chander (1995), organizing is extremely important because it provides the managers with the structural framework to pursue a set of goals - a mechanism for putting organizational goals and strategic plans into action, based on effective operational planning. Thorough organizing efforts help all extension managers at all organizational levels to minimize weaknesses (such as duplication of effort, slack time, and wasted resources), because people will work more effectively when they understand their own roles, and how they relate to those of others (Buford, et al., 1995).

Organizing is defined as the process of arranging an organization's structure, and coordinating its managerial practices and use of resources to achieve its goals. Four basic dimensions of organizing processes are identified, beginning with those that apply to jobs, and moving through work groups to the organization of an entire extension service (Verma & Chander, 1995). These are work specialization, departmentalization and formal structure, span of management, chain of command and authority, coordination, and organizational change and development.

8.2 SPECIALIZATION

Specialization is important for the simple reason that neither is one person physically able to perform all the operations nor can one person acquire all the skills needed to perform the various tasks (Verma & Chander, 1995). However, if an assignment is overly specialized, an individual may lose sight of the "big picture" and become alienated (Buford, et al., 1995). Therefore, managers should be sensitive to situations in which

specialization is inappropriate. The respondents were requested to indicate the appropriate level of specialization of extension personnel, using a 10 point scale ranging from 0 to 10 (where 0=generalist, 5=specialization in one of a few general categories, 10=specialized to level of commodity or within commodity). The respondents' opinions concerning the current and required level of specialization for Development Agents (DAs), Extensionists and Subject Matter Specialists (SMS) are summarized in Table 8.1.

Table 8.1 Respondents' perception of the current and recommended level of specialization, expressed as mean scale point in a continuum ranging from 0 (no specialisation) to 10 (highly specialised in one commodity) N=340

	Current (C)		Recommended (R)		Difference (R-C)
Types of staff	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean
Development Agents (DAs)	2.1	2.3	5.8	2.0	3.70
Extensionists	3.6	1.8	7.4	1.7	3.78
Subject matter specialists (SMS)	4.3	1.6	8.0	1.6	3.68

The general feeling is that the level of specialization of extension staff across all categories needs to be increased by about 3.7 scale points (3.7) with a slightly higher demand for extensionists' (3.78) specialization. These findings (Table 8.1) suggest that the current level of specialisation of extension personnel is far too low. Even the subject matter specialists' (SMS) who are supposed to be specialised, are not rated much higher (4.3) than the extensionists, regarding their current level of specialization.

The reason for this low level of specialization could be attributed to the low level of formal education of the extension staff. About 63.2 percent of respondents were diploma holders, and those having BSc or above constitutes only 8.2 percent (Chapter 4). Consequently, the recommendation for increased specialization implies that the level of formal qualification of the extension staff would also have to be increased. Variations between different categories of respondents are indicated in Table 8.2.

Table 8.2 Current and recommended level of specialization expressed as mean scale point on a continuum ranging from 0 (no specialisation) to 10 (high specialisation in one commodity) as perceived by different categories of respondents (N=340)

		DA			Extensionist			SMS		
Categories		Current (C)	Recommended (R)	Difference (R-C)	Current (C)	Recommended (R)	Difference (R-C)	Current (C)	Recommended (R)	Difference (R-C)
(a) Managerial Positions										
Non-managers		2.2	5.8	3.6	3.8	7.4	3.6	4.5	8.0	3.5
First level managers		1.9	5.5	3.6	3.5	7.1	3.6	3.9	7.9	4.0
Middle managers		2.1	6.1	4.0	3.4	7.7	4.3	4.3	8.2	3.9
Top level managers		2.6	6.4	3.8	3.0	6.9	3.9	4.9	7.0	2.1
Analysis of variance (ANOVA)	F	.38	1.08		1.06	1.78		3.83	1.39	
	df	3	3		3	3		3	3	
	p	.77	.36		.37	.15		.01	.24	
(b) Zones										
Jimma		2.1	5.6	3.5	3.6	6.8	3.2	4.3	7.3	3.0
Arsi		2.0	5.8	3.8	3.8	7.6	3.8	4.3	8.4	4.1
South West Shewa		1.3	5.1	3.8	3.5	7.7	4.2	3.8	7.8	4.0
Borena		2.0	6.3	4.3	3.5	8.0	4.5	4.5	8.7	4.2
East Shewa		2.9	6.4	3.5	3.0	7.8	4.8	4.1	8.1	4.0
Analysis of variance (ANOVA)	F	2.03	2.65		1.11	5.62		1.41	10.56	
	df	4	4		4	4		4	4	
	p	.09	.03		.35	.00		.23	.00	

As far as managerial positions are concerned, the greatest variations in the assessment of level of specialisation occur in relation to SMS. Top level managers were significantly more satisfied with the current situation in the sense that they expected the least change from SMS, regarding more specialisation. They assessed the required increased specialisation to be 2,1 scale points as opposed to the 3.5 to 4.0 scale points of the other management categories.

Noteworthy is the general demand for higher specialisation by development agents (DAs). This could be attributed to the realization that a certain minimum level of agricultural-technical competence is essential for credibility and effective extension. This threshold value of 5.8 (see Table 8.1) is significantly higher than the current level

attributed to extensionists (3.6), and thus also questions the long term impact of DAs with their current relatively low qualifications.

The Ethiopian government has started to establish about 15000 farmer training centres (FTCs) throughout the country as part of the second 5-year agricultural development programme. In line with this, the Ministry of Agriculture has started the middle level Agricultural Technical Vocational Education and Training (ATVET) programme in 2001 using 25 former training institutions. The training, extended over a period of three years at colleges, is focused on five major agricultural fields, namely, plant science, animal science, natural resource development and conservation, animal health and cooperatives (MoA, 2004). The graduates were assigned to the newly constructed FTCs, three at each centre (one specialized in plant science, one in animal science, and one in natural resource conservation and development) (MoA,2004).

As far as SMS specialization is concerned, further investigation was conducted in terms of the eight identified functions of SMSs. The respondents' perceptions in relation to the acceptability levels of these various roles of SMSs are summarised in Table 8.3.

Table 8.3 Importance assessment by respondents of the different functions to be performed by SMS in OBARD, expressed in mean percentage scale points

Roles/ functions of subject matter specialists (SMS)	Mean	SD
1. Assistance and advice to farmers and development agents with problem cases, and when requested	61.2	28.36
2. Training of farmers where knowledge base does not exist among development agents	57.3	25.52
3. Training of development agents (courses where necessary) – reactive function	67.7	23.69
4. Continuous and purposeful knowledge upgrading and capacity building of development agents working in the respective fields (pro-active)	76.9	20.80
5. Assistance of development agents with message design (where requested)	72.1	20.26
6. Becoming specialist regarding relevant commodity/discipline in area of responsibility	75.2	34.62
7. Seeking solutions through adapted research/demonstrations	78.5	20.62
8. Remain abreast of new research, developments and knowledge in field of specialisation	75.7	23.71

Although all functions are seen as important, there are clear differences in the importance rating, which can be critical when priorities have to be set. A very significant finding is that the proactive functions focused on the continuous knowledge upgrading of development agents (rated 76.9%) is regarded to be more important than advising farmers (61.2%) or training farmers when requested (57.3%). An implementation of this principle could go a long way in minimizing the low technical competence of development agents as well as extensionists.

Variations of opinion between different categories of respondents are summarized in Table 8.4.

Table 8.4 The importance assessments of SMS functions as reflected in mean scale point expressed in percentage by respondents in different categories (N=345)

Respondents categories	Statistical parameter	1. Assistance and advice to farmers and DAs with problem cases and when requested	2. Training of farmers where knowledge base does not exist among DAs	3. Training of DAs (courses where necessary) – reactive function	4. Continuous and purposeful knowledge upgrading and capacity building of DAs working in the respective fields (pro-active)	5. Assistance of DAs with message design (where requested)	6. Become specialist regarding relevant commodity/discipline in area of responsibility	7. Seeking solutions through adapted research/demonstrations	8. Remain abreast of new research, developments and knowledge in field of specialisation
(a) Managerial Positions									
Non-managers	Mean	61.8	56.4	68.1	76.4	73.2	76.7	78.4	77.4
First level managers	Mean	58.6	57.6	67.0	76.1	73.9	74.6	81.2	78.7
Middle managers	Mean	61.2	57.0	65.0	79.8	66.7	73.0	75.2	68.7
Top level managers	Mean	78.8	76.3	88.8	76.3	68.8	62.5	73.8	55.0
Analysis of variance	F	1.316	1.570	2.441	.482	1.946	.559	1.193	4.775
	df	3,341	3,341	3,341	3,341	3,341	3,341	3,341	3,341
	p	.269	.197	.064	.695	.122	.643	.312	.003
(b) Zones									
Jimma	Mean	44.5	42.7	58.0	76.0	73.9	77.5	78.8	78.6
Arsi	Mean	69.7	64.2	72.1	80.5	71.4	75.8	77.4	71.4
South West Shewa	Mean	61.6	54.1	74.1	76.2	71.9	74.1	83.5	79.5
Borena	Mean	72.1	69.5	72.1	74.9	73.3	75.1	83.3	80.2
East Shewa	Mean	64.1	62.5	67.5	72.5	70.0	71.9	72.8	74.7
Analysis of variance	F	15.46	16.12	6.76	1.30	.34	.18	1.81	1.9
	df	4,321	4,321	4,321	4,321	4,321	4,321	4,321	4,321
	p	.000	.000	.000	.269	.849	.947	.126	.111

As far as the influence of different levels of management is concerned, the outstanding finding is that the top level managers clearly differ from the other categories, in regard to many of the assessments. They are more supportive of the traditional reactive functions of helping with the provision of advice and training for farmers, but the necessity to remain abreast of all new research and development in their field of specialisation is not

regarded as being important. Fortunately they have a similar opinion or feel equally strong regarding the importance that SMSs should function proactively with their major target group, namely, development and extension agents rather than farmers. This enhances the chances of implementation of this new vision or approach.

Assessment variations in terms of locality (zones) are also most significant with regard to the perceived traditional functions of helping in advising and training farmers when requested. Respondents in the Jimma zone regard these functions as much less important (mean assessment of 44.5%) than those in Borena (with importance assessment of 72.1 percent) and Arsi (69.5 percent). The function of continuous and purposeful knowledge upgrading and capacity building finds the biggest support in the Arsi zone (80.5%), which is the most experienced in terms of implementation of various extension approach projects in Ethiopia.

8.3 DEPARTMENTALIZATION

The purpose of departmentalization is to facilitate the achievement of established objectives (Buford, et al., 1995). It is a grouping of activities into departments, which makes it possible to manage a large organization effectively. Four types of departmentalization, which are applicable to an extension services are examined, namely, functional, commodity, customer, and matrix based departmentalization (Chapter 2). The respondents' assessments of the nature of the current and recommended types of departmentalization of extension in OBARD are shown in Table 8.5.

Table 8.5 Percentage distribution of respondents according to the current and recommended type of extension organization's departmentalization in OBARD

Types of departmentalization	Current type of departmentalization (%)	Recommended type of departmentalization (%)
Commodity based (a logical grouping of organizational activities in terms of specialities)	67.9	8.5
Function based (a grouping of organizational activities based on the work to be done)	31.2	42.9
Matrix based (administrative and program lines of authority overlaid to form a grid or matrix where many staff members belong/ report to two or more superiors)	0.6	41.7
Customer based (a grouping of organizational activities to reflect different clientele)	0.3	7.0
Total	100.0	100.0

According to the majority (67.9 percent) of the respondents, the current nature of grouping of extension organizational activities are based on specialities of agricultural enterprises (commodity based), while about one third of the respondents regard the departmentalization as function based. These differential perceptions of the current situation could be attributed to the inability or the difficulty to distinguish between the commodity and the function based types of departmentalization. Other contributing factors could be the respondents' working area in terms of farming system (e.g. integrated versus single enterprise focus) and degree of exposure to or insight into government's current agricultural policy of strategies.

As far as the recommended type of departmentalization is concerned, the respondents are almost equally divided between those who support further reinforcement of function based (42.9%) and those who are in favour of the introduction of a matrix based (41.7%) type of departmentalization. An investigation into the variations between different

localities and levels of management does not reveal any significant differences or tendencies.

8.4 SPAN OF MANAGEMENT

The span of management (also called span of control) refers to the number of subordinates who report directly to a manager (Verma & Chunder, 1995). A span of management which is neither too narrow nor too wide is effective. What is, therefore, needed, is to select an appropriate span which is best suited to a given situation, compatible to the subordinates and efficiently manageable for the managers (Verma & Chunder, 1995).

The span of management (horizontal span) in this study is regarded as the number of frontline development agents (DAs) assigned at village level who report to one supervisor (Table 8.6).

Table 8.6 Percentage distribution of respondents according to the current and recommended number of Development Agents (DAs) subordinate to one supervisor in OBARD

Categories of number of DAs supervised by one supervisor	Percentage distribution of respondents per category	
	Current (%)	Recommended (%)
< 5 DAs report to a supervisor	0.0	1.0
5 DAs report to a supervisor	1.0	84.0
6-9 DAs report to a supervisor	1.0	7.0
10 DAs report to a supervisor	83.0	7.0
≥11 DAs report to a supervisor	15.0	1.0
Total *	100.0	100.0

*Mode, the most frequent, is (current = 10 DAs, Recommended = 5 DAs should report to one supervisor)

The general viewpoint, as shown in Table 8.6, is that the current number of development agents supervised by a supervisor in OBARD are too many, namely 10 and above, and

the general recommendation is that it be reduced to five DAs per supervisor, if supervision is to be effective.

Another form of span of management refers to the number of supervisory levels in the organizational structure, and is an indication of the complexity of the organisational structure. This so-called vertical span of management was tested within the context of the zone management level, by asking respondents whether they were in favour of the zone structure to be expanded, maintained as it is or disbanded.

These recommendations, in order of priority, are summarized in Table 8.7.

Table 8.7 The recommended role of the zone structure of the department of agricultural and rural development offices, as expressed in rank order nominations by respondents

The zone should be:	Nomination frequency per rank order					
	1st	2nd	3rd	Total nominations	Total* weighting	Mean rank order %
Expanded	274	39	30	343	930	85.5
Remain as it is	58	269	16	343	728	56.1
Disbanded completely	11	35	297	343	400	8.3

* Based on a weighting of 3 for 1st rank order, etc. and 1 for 3rd rank order

The clear indication (Table 8.7) is that the zone level department of agricultural and rural development offices in the organizational structure of OBARD should be expanded to coordinate and manage all issues relating to the districts. This is reflected by the mean rank order percentage of 85.5, which is far in excess of the other alternatives, namely, maintaining as it is (56.1%) and complete disbanding (8.3%).

8.5 CHAIN OF COMMAND

While specialization, departmentalization, and span of management are the "building blocks" of an organizational structure, authority is the "glue" that holds these structures together (Buford, et al., 1995). For these structures to fit together and facilitate the

accomplishment of plans, authority and its derivatives (such as responsibility, accountability, and the chain of command) are needed. Applied to a managerial job, authority is the right to issue orders, or to act in a manner that furthers the organization's purpose (Buford, et al., 1995).

The degree of managerial authority is highest at the top and is scaled downward through an organization. This line of authority is known as the chain of command; a concept that is closely related to two other well-known management principles: the scalar principle and unity of command (Buford, et al., 1995). The scalar principle states that a clear line of authority from the top manager to every subordinate position leads to more effective communication and decision making. The principle of unity of command states that, in order to minimize conflict and maximize responsibility for results, an individual should report to a single superior (Buford, et al., 1995).

The basic tenet of unity of command is that no man can serve two masters. However, in today's complex organizations the story seems to be altogether different. Most employees receive instructions from many managers. This is referred to as "dual control", (Verma & Chunder, 1995).

In this study, the unity of command is investigated at the district level and district heads' accountability. The respondents' perception in terms of the current situation and the recommended situation is presented in Table 8.8.

Table 8.8 Perceived appropriateness of accountability alternatives at district level, expressed in mean rank order percentages

	Current			Recommended		
Accountability alternatives	Mean	SD	Rank	Mean	SD	Rank
Only to the District Administration	60.7	26.6	1st	46.7	29.4	3rd
Both to the District Administration and Bureau of Agriculture	52.1	24.7	2nd	71.9	26.2	1st
Only to the Bureau of Agriculture	42.5	24.1	3rd	57.4	28.4	2nd

When comparing the current with the recommended assessments, there is a clear tendency towards an increased accountability towards the Bureau of Agriculture, but in general, the results (Table 8.8) suggest that the district agricultural and rural development office heads should be dually accountable both to the district administration council and the department bureau of agricultural and rural development. This should be an acceptable compromise for the two camps that either support accountability to only the district administration (60.7%) or only to the bureau of agriculture (42.5%).This implies that their selection as well as promotion should, as far as possible, be based on agreement or consensus between the districts administrative councils and the department or its representatives. This does not mean that extension personnel falls under both the bureau and the district administration from a disciplinary point of view. The bureau of agriculture still has the final responsibility of and authority over its personnel. Table 8.9 has summarized views of various categories of respondents.

Table 8.9 Perceived appropriateness of accountability alternatives at district level, expressed in mean rank order percentages by various groups of respondents

		Currently the district heads are accountable to:			The district heads are recommended to be accountable to:		
Respondent categories		only the District Administration	only the Bureau of Agriculture	both*	only the District Administration	only the Bureau of Agriculture	both*
(a) Job position							
Non-managers		61.4	48.3	54.2	46.9	59.9	71.5
First level managers		57.3	36.6	49.0	46.5	54.6	73.7
Middle level managers		64.8	35.2	51.9	46.6	52.2	72.5
Top level managers		48.0	22.0	35.0	44.0	76.0	40.0
Analysis of variance (ANOVA)	F	1.382	8.794	1.538	.020	2.149	2.180
	df	3,332	3,332	3,332	3,332	3,332	3,332
	p	.248	.000	.204	.996	.094	.090
(b) Zones							
Jimma		62.4	43.5	49.7	50.1	57.8	66.9
Arsi		59.4	43.5	53.9	44.3	56.5	74.6
South West Shewa		66.2	44.0	58.4	48.6	50.3	77.0
Borena		54.2	37.2	48.8	47.8	51.2	73.1
East Shewa		64.7	42.3	47.7	38.3	69.0	75.0
Analysis of variance (ANOVA)	F	1.325	.591	1.415	1.172	2.298	1.797
	df	4,314	4,314	4,314	4,314	4,314	4,319
	p	.260	.669	.229	.323	.059	.129

Both* to the district Administration and Bureau of agriculture

All categories of respondents (both locality and management) are in favour of an increased accountability to the bureau of agriculture and significantly less to the district administration. Especially the top level managers, with an assessment of 76%, are most outspoken in this regard, with a similar tendency in the East Shewa zone. A safe and appropriate compromise is accountability to both district administration and bureau of agriculture, but the former should never replace the latter.

8.6 COOPERATION AND COORDINATION

The terms "coordination" and "cooperation" do not have fixed meanings in the antitrust enforcement context (Finch & Delrahim, 2004). Although there is a degree of interchangeability between the two concepts, the term "cooperation" to refer to situations where one agency assists another in an enforcement action and *also* to refer to policy discussions and efforts to clarify, and perhaps reach consensus on, legal theories (Finch & Delrahim, 2004). According to Robert (2006), cooperation is the process of working or acting together, which can be accomplished by both intentional and non-intentional agents (Robert, 2006). In its simplest form cooperation involves things working in harmony, side by side, while in its more complicated forms, it can involve something as complex as the inner workings of a human being or even the social patterns of a nation. It is the alternative to working separately in competition (Robert, 2006).

In contrast, the term "coordination" to refer to interaction where two or three agencies work together on specific enforcement actions, where each agency is operating under its own laws (Finch & Delrahim, 2004). Managers divide work into specialized functions and departments to increase efficiency. Each unit or department must be informed about the activities of other units or departments, so that all of them work together smoothly (Verma & Chunder, 1995). According to Verma & Chunder (1995), endeavour towards common goals can only be achieved through effective coordination, which is defined as the synchronization of the efforts of the individuals, of various departments, at each level of the hierarchy of the organization and horizontally with other supporting institutions.

In this view, the respondents were provided with these alternatives to choose: (a) extension organizations, agents and/or departments assist each other and work together to be more effective and efficient (cooperation), (b) extension organizations and/or agents work in such a way that they don't do the same work but complement each other by either focussing on different areas, different communities, different commodities or different functions (coordination). The respondents' preferences most appropriate to their area are presented in Table 8.10.

Table 8.10 Percentage distribution of respondents according to their priority regarding collaboration and coordination choice between different alternative types of coordination practices

Respondents categories	Extension organizations assist each other and work together (cooperation)	Extension organizations do not do same work but complement each other (coordination)	Total
(a) Job position			
Non-managers	63.2	36.8	100
First level managers	59.1	40.9	100
Middle level managers	65.0	35.0	100
Top level managers	37.5	62.5	100
Total	61.8	38.2	100
	Chi-Square (X^2) Value	**df**	**Sig.**
	2.704	3	.440
(b) Zones			
Jimma	62.3	37.7	100
Arsi	59.1	40.9	100
South West Shewa	73.0	27.0	100
Borena	58.1	41.9	100
East Shewa	77.4	22.6	100
	Chi-Square (X^2) Value	**df**	**Sig.**
	5.531	4	.237

The majority (61.8 percent) of the respondents favour cooperation in which departments or institutions work together to accomplish specific goal instead of integration type of coordination (Table 8.10). Cooperation allows members to maintain their independence and allow them more freedom. But the top level managers are not of this view. About 63 percent of them favour coordination between extension departments and/ or service providers' institutions that extension organizations do not do same work but complement each other. However, no significant variations of opinions are observed between various groups of respondents, both in terms of managerial positions ($x^2 = 2.704$; df = 3; p=0.44) and zones ($x^2 = 5.531$; df=4; p=0.24).

Further, the current efficiency situation of OBARD organizational coordination status is assessed. The results in Table 8.11 indicate that coordination within the organization and between extension service providers seems unsatisfactory. This finds its expression in the perceived internal and external coordination which is 4.63 and 4.14 scale points and thus below the level of reasonable. It is similarly reflected in a comparison of the current level and what respondents regard to be desired and thus recommended level. In general the difference and thus the possible scope of improvement is about five scale points. But there are significant variations, especially between zones, in terms of efficiency assessments (Table 8.11).

Table 8.11 The perceived current and recommended level of coordination expressed as mean scale points by various categories of respondents

		Kinds of coordination					
		Internal coordination			External coordination		
Respondents categories		Current (C)	Recommended (R)	Difference (R-C)	Current (C)	Recommended (R)	Difference (R-C)
(a) Job position							
Non-managers		4.61	9.68	5.07	4.31	9.67	5.36
First level managers		4.53	9.87	5.34	4.14	9.73	5.59
Middle level managers		4.82	9.42	4.60	3.68	9.67	5.99
Top level managers		4.63	9.25	4.62	3.63	9.25	5.62
Analysis of variance	F	.284	4.107		1.559	.692	
(ANOVA)	df	3,343	3,343		3,343	3,343	
	p	.837	.007		.199	.558	
(b) Zones							
Jimma		4.44	9.89	5.45	4.08	9.86	5.78
Arsi		5.00	9.70	4.70	4.53	9.69	5.16
South West Shewa		4.95	9.46	4.51	4.62	9.46	4.84
Borena		4.63	9.49	4.86	4.02	9.30	5.28
East Shewa		3.74	9.58	5.84	2.87	9.94	7.07
Analysis of variance	F	3.354	2.992		4.539	4.322	
(ANOVA)	df	4,323	4,323		4,323	4,323	
	p	.010	.019		.001	.002	
Total		**4.63**	**9.67**	**5.04**	**4.14**	**9.68**	**5.54**

For example, Arsi and South West Shewa zones assessed the organization's internal coordination as mediocre. But the opinion of East Shewa zone is different in the sense that the coordination of the organization is assessed to be far below average, both in terms of internal and external coordination.

As far as managerial positions are concerned there is a tendency for higher level managers to rate the current level of internal coordination higher and the external

coordination lower than the lower level management categories, which however has no significant bearing on the perceived cope of improvement.

Respondents are also asked to indicate how serious coordination is as a problem in their work area, using a 10 point scale. Table 8.12 summarizes these results.

Table 8.12 The perceived seriousness of coordination as a problem, assessed on a 10-point scale* by respondents in different categories (N=343)

Respondents categories	Statistical parameter	Level of coordination as a serious problem
(a) Job position		
Non-managers	Mean	7.3925
First level managers	Mean	7.5699
Middle level managers	Mean	7.5833
Top level managers	Mean	8.7500
Total	Mean	7.5043
Analysis of variance (ANOVA)	F	.973
	df	3,343
	p	.406
(b) Zones		
Jimma	Mean	7.4906
Arsi	Mean	7.7727
South West Shewa	Mean	6.7568
Borena	Mean	7.2326
East Shewa	Mean	7.5000
Analysis of variance (ANOVA)	F	1.483
	df	4,323
	p	.207

* 1=no problem whatsoever; 10=very serious problem

The results show that the coordination problem is perceived to be very severe, (7.5 scale points, especially for top managers (8.75). This concern is shared by most categories (Table 8.13), with the exception of South West Shewa, who are somewhat less concerned (6.75 scale points).

Considering the importance of coordination and its influences on overall success of the organization with respect to achieving its stipulated goals, the respondents were probed regarding the severity of coordination problem in comparison with other organizational

related problems. The respondents' perceptions, in terms of rankings are indicated in Table 8.13.

Table 8.13 Rank order coordination problem in comparison with other organizational problems

Organizational issues	Rankings							Total nominations	Weighted average nominations	Rank order
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th			
Political intervention	147	63	30	22	24	23	37	346	1800	1
Frequent restructuring	56	101	36	38	32	43	40	346	1552	2
Lack of coordination	39	38	90	55	44	37	43	346	1420	3
Inappropriate extension approach	38	50	52	28	100	32	46	346	1348	4
Lack of commitment of extension personnel	15	26	32	49	65	93	66	346	1064	5
Poor competence of DA	19	30	32	51	51	67	96	346	1060	6

The findings indicate that coordination is one of the three most important organizational issues that need to be addressed and resolved if Oromia Bureau of Agriculture and Rural Development is to be effective in its extension service provision; the other being political intervention and frequent organizational restructuring (Table 8.13).

8.7 ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT

Every organization must be highly adaptive to changes. Forces for change can be external or internal or both. External forces, for example, include changes in society, technology, and the global economy, while changes that are caused by revision of organizational objectives, new program initiatives, replacement of top management, and shifting attitudes concerning jobs and work, count among the internal pressures (Buford, et al.,

1995; Jayaratne, 2003). The extension organization should be responsive to these changes.

Although change is inevitable, it rarely occurs smoothly and in a balanced fashion, and the level of success varies from organization to organization. It hinges on three key factors: (1) thorough redistribution of power in decision making, (2) the occurrence of a developmental change process – such as pressure and arousal, intervention and reorientation, diagnosis and recognition, intervention and commitment, experimentation and reinforcement, and (3) allowance of adequate time to enable the change interventions to bear fruit (Boyed, 1992; Buford, et al., 1995; Cummings & Worley, 2001).

8.7.1 The use of feasibility studies

It is assumed that any major restructuring of an organisation should be preceded by a proper feasibility study, to ensure that the envisaged change is worth direct and indirect costs. Using a 10 point scale, the respondents were asked to assess the degree to which politicians, top managers and feasibility studies had been the source or incentive for organisational changes. These findings are summarised in Table 8.14.

Table 8.14 Respondents' assessments of the degree to which politicians, top managers and feasibility studies (a) were and (b) should be the main source of motivation for organisational change (N=346)

Categories of respondents		Assessments of Source of Change								
		Politicians			top managers			feasibility study		
		Current (a)	Recom-mended (b)	Difference (b)-(a)	Current (a)	Recom-mended (b)	Difference (b)-(a)	Current (a)	Recom-mended (b)	Difference (b)-(a)
(a) Positions										
Non-managers		65.82	21.24	-44.58	22.24	26.95	4.71	13.03	50.52	37.49
First level managers		69.03	20.86	-48.17	21.05	24.84	3.79	10.45	53.87	43.42
Middle level managers		68.15	21.17	-46.98	20.93	22.28	1.35	12.25	55.75	43.50
Top level managers		80.00	10.00	-70.00	12.50	17.50	5.00	7.50	72.50	65.00
ANOVA*	F	1.771	1.879		1.848	3.048		1.446	3.706	
	p	.152	.133		.138	.029		.229	.012	
(b) Zones										
Jimma		71.54	27.29	-44.25	20.28	25.57	5.29	9.90	45.14	35.24
Arsi		61.95	19.86	-42.09	23.75	26.12	2.37	15.35	52.96	37.61
SW Shewa		67.43	14.81	-52.62	22.68	26.59	3.91	9.89	58.59	48.70
Borena		69.74	21.77	-47.97	20.49	23.53	3.04	10.47	54.70	44.23
East Shewa		69.00	14.84	-54.16	19.06	27.61	8.55	11.94	57.55	45.61
ANOVA	F	3.742	10.907		1.704	.518		4.171	4.889	
	p	.005	.000		.149	.722		.003	.001	
Total		**67**	**21**	**-46.0**	**21**	**26**	**5.0**	**12**	**53**	**41.0**

ANOVA* Analysis of variance

The findings in Table 8.14 present a very clear picture, namely, that politicians are the main cause of structural changes with 67 scale point percent, compared to the 21 and 12 percent for top managers and feasibility studies, respectively, but that the justification for structural or organisational changes should stem from proper feasibility studies. Particularly outspoken in this regard are the top managers – probably because they observe the current intervention of politicians more closely.

The findings reveal that the motivation and the justifiable basis for structural changes come from the politicians, without adequate support of feasibility studies. The respondents would like a reduction of political influence by about 46 percent, and increased influence of feasibility studies by 41 percent.

8.7.2 Stakeholders' influence in organisational change

The ultimate success of an organization depends less on organizational structure, than on the capacity of participants to communicate, and on their willingness to serve and strive towards common goals (Adams, 1990; Cummings & Worley, 2001). Using a 10 point scale, the respondents were asked the extent of the influences of different stakeholders in decision-making, regarding the structural changes and adaptations of OBARD. Responses of the respondents are summarized in Table 8.15.

Table 8.15 The current and recommended level of influence of various stakeholders on organizational change and development, as perceived by respondents of various categories (N=346)

Categories of respondents		Level of influence by various organizational stakeholders:								
		Politicians			Top managers			Senior experts		
		current	Recommended	Difference	current	Recommended	Difference	current	Recommended	Difference
(a) positions										
Non-managers		66.25	23.35	-42.90	22.32	30.55	8.23	12.75	45.48	32.73
First level managers		67.96	21.33	-46.63	21.87	29.44	7.57	10.55	48.37	37.82
Middle level managers		67.52	24.70	-42.82	22.03	29.25	7.22	11.62	46.22	34.60
Top level managers		74.38	21.88	-52.50	19.13	39.37	20.24	6.50	42.50	36.00
ANOVA*	F	.720	.671		.210	1.386		1.499	.603	
	p	.540	.570		.890	.247		.215	.613	
(b) zones										
Jimma		68.43	25.58	-42.85	22.32	28.80	6.48	11.06	43.67	32.61
Arsi		64.04	23.55	-40.49	24.00	31.45	7.45	13.30	44.81	31.51
SW Shewa		64.73	18.59	-46.14	23.38	29.22	5.84	11.89	53.81	41.92
Borena		69.58	24.88	44.70	18.53	24.07	5.54	11.88	50.58	38.70
East Shewa		69.16	17.26	-51.90	19.06	36.77	17.71	12.10	45.97	33.87
ANOVA	F	1.531	2.899		2.427	4.585		.565	2.760	
	p	.193	.022		.048	.001		.688	.028	
Total		**67.00**	**23.00**	**-44.00**	**22.00**	**30.00**	**8.00**	**11.00**	**47.00**	**36.00**

ANOVA* Analysis of variance

The findings (Table 8.15) indicate that currently the power distributions with regard to the motivation and decision-making in organizational change and development practices are concentrated in the hands of politicians (about 67 percent) and other key stakeholders share the remaining one third (top managers 22 percent and the senior experts 11

percent). Change based on this type of influence is unlikely to meet with enthusiasm and dedication needed from employees to enhance their performance and that of the organisation. This type of change can allow little contribution and/ or dedication from employees towards improved organizational performance. For this reason, the general opinion expressed by respondents should be taken seriously, namely, that political influence be reduced by about 44 scale point percentages, and that of senior experts increased by almost the same degree (36 scale point percentages). Evidence of the consensus that prevails in this regard is the fact that there are very few significant differences between the various categories of respondents.

8.7.3 Frequency of organizational changes/ restructuring

The respondents were requested to give an indication of: frequency of structural changes, using a 10 point scale (0= far too infrequent; 5= acceptable frequency; 10= far too frequent). The responses are summarized in Table 8.16.

Table 8.16 Perceived current and recommended frequency of organizational structural changes, expressed in mean scale point (0-10) by various categories of respondents (N=346)

Categories of respondents	Statistical parameter	Current	Recommended	Difference
(a) positions				
Non-managers	Mean	9.41	4.86	-4.55
First level managers	Mean	8.99	4.60	-4.39
Middle level managers	Mean	9.07	4.68	-4.39
Top level managers	Mean	9.00	4.29	-4.71
Analysis of variance ANOVA	F	2.256	1.420	
	p	.082	.237	
(b) zones				
Jimma	Mean	9.63	4.73	-4.90
Arsi	Mean	9.05	5.01	-4.04
SW Shewa	Mean	9.30	4.65	-4.65
Borena	Mean	8.98	4.53	-4.41
East Shewa	Mean	8.71	4.55	-4.16
Analysis of variance ANOVA	F	4.203	1.854	
	p	.002	.118	
Total	**Mean**	**9.23**	**4.75**	**-4.48**

In reference to the assumed acceptable frequency of organizational changes (5 scale point), the overall assessment of respondents is 9.23, which is very far in excess of what is regarded as acceptable. These frequent restructurings are perceived as uprooting, with

much time and energy required for adaptation and re-orientation, and before it is possible to learn from experience, the next restructuring is announced.

In short, the overall organizational change and development practice is characterized by extremely frequent changes; the changes have been inadequately supported by feasibility studies and a diagnosis of the root cause of the problems, and lack of involvement of key stakeholders in decision-making. Furthermore, the organizational changes have been highly influenced by political forces.

Consequently, it is recommended that the current direct influence of politicians should be reduced from 67 to 23 percent, while the role of senior experts and feasibility studies should be increased to 47 and 53 percent, respectively. This does not imply that politicians and top level managers are less important than senior experts, rather it means that, since ultimately they are the ones to approve the proposed changes, they should make use of the senior experts, and get the work done through them.