

Sources of Data for Micro Level Planning from Village Level Institutions: An Overview

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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to compile the databases related to agricultural development available at the local level that could be used for micro level planning. For this purpose, the details of legacy databases in offices of the department of agriculture and local self government institutions were collected to find out the frequency of updating information and completeness of data. Further investigation was done to find out the static and dynamic nature of legacy registers and how best they could be used in building up a comprehensive database for facilitating micro level planning in agriculture.

Formalized planning for development has been a major feature of Indian economy which was perceived as a national goal in the wake of independence. It is observed that the initial approach of planning based on macro level assessment of resources has not yielded the desired results (Dutta and Singh, 2007). Considering the diversity of crops and geographical or socio- economic characteristics regarding agriculture, micro level planning has been suggested as the best way to plan agricultural development projects. Preparing micro level plan involves a series of steps which demand information on various aspects at each and every stage (Issac and Franke, 2002). Development planners at micro level include officials from the department of agriculture, people's representatives and experts from relevant development departments. Ahanene (1991) reported that the extension personnel required information in development planning and decision making. They mostly depend on legacy databases in different government offices especially krishi

bhavans and grama panchayat offices. The present study was undertaken with the specific objectives of compiling the databases in Krishi Bhavans and Grama Panchayat offices, classifying them based on purpose, and characterizing the legacy databases based on specific features.

METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted in Kerala State. Multi stage random sampling was adopted for selection of local self government institutions. From each of the five agro climatic zones as classified under NARP (northern, southern, central, high altitude and problem area) and from Onattukara region, one district was selected. Two blocks were selected at random from each district. Four Grama Panchayats and four Krishi Bhavans were selected from each block randomly. Sample consisted of (i) Offices of the local self Government institutions which includes Grama panchayat, block panchayat and

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district panchayat (66 offices) (ii) offices of department of agriculture including Krishi Bhavans, offices of Assistant Director of Agriculture, offices of Principal Agricultural Officer (66 offices) thus forming a total of 132 offices.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Classification of Registers in the Krishi Bhavan

Krishi bhavan, which is the nodal agency for formulation and implementation of micro

level development plans in Agriculture maintain 140 registers from where vital information for various subsectors and microsectors of Agriculture could be extracted (Table 1).

The registers kept in the Krishi Bhavan could be classified into six categories viz. account based, establishment based, social security service based, comprehensive development based, basic registers and project management/ scheme registers based on the purpose for which they are used. Out of the

Table 1.
Classification of Registers in the Krishi Bhavan

Sl.No.	Category or purpose	No. of types of registers in Krishi Bhavan	
		Frequency	Percentage
1	Account	19	13
2	Establishment	5	5
3	Social security service based	4	3
4	Comprehensive development	3	2
5	Basic	3	2
6	Project management/ Scheme registers	106	75
	Total	140	100

140 registers found out, account based registers (13 per cent) include all those which deal with cash transactions in the office.

The grama panchayat also has an array of registers that deal with the multiple responsibilities of local body (Table 2). While some of the registers would not seem to be important, many registers are sources of vital information that could be used in different stages of development planning and implementation.

The gram panchayat office is the basic unit

of the three tier system of Panchayati Raj institutions, which also include block panchayat and district panchayat at the higher tiers. As envisaged in the 73rd and 74th amendments of the Constitution and the Panchayati Raj Act of Kerala, gram panchayat is responsible for most of the direct transactions of the local Governments with citizens. Major registers include those recording the details of civil registrations which include birth, death and marriage. Taxation, another major mandate of local bodies accounts for registers for property tax,

Table 2.
Classification of Registers in the Grama Panchayat

Sl.No.	Category or purpose	No. of types of registers in panchayat	
		Frequency	Percentage
1	Establishment registers	8	5
2	Accounts registers	26	15
3	Finance registers	16	9
4	Panchayat meeting registers	5	3
5	Tax registers	17	10
6	Public works registers	11	6
7	License Fee (Registers)	4	2
8	Births & Deaths (Registers)	5	3
9	KBR Registers	2	1
10	Office Procedure (Registers)	12	7
11	Other Items (Registers)	10	6
12	Marriage Rules (Register)	2	2
13	Library (Registers)	7	4
14	Welfare Registers	10	7
15	Front Office	6	3
16	Scheme registers	30	17
	Total	171	100

entertainment and advertisement tax and appeals. Similarly the local bodies give licenses for enterprises, shops, hotels etc. which require registers on licence fee remitted for various licenses issued by the local body. Scheme registers amounts to 17 per cent

which deal with various schemes implemented by the panchayat through development departments under the panchayat. The registers in krishi bhavan and panchayat were further classified based on the frequency of updating information as seen in table 3.

Table 3.
Frequency of Updating Information

Sl.No.	Frequency of updating information	No. of registers in Krishi Bhavan	No. of registers in Panchayat
1	Daily	2 (1)	8 (5)
2	As per transaction	132 (95)	154 (90)
3	As and when required	6 (4)	9 (5)
	Total	140	171

Figures in parenthesis represent percentages

Attempts to classify registers on the basis of the frequency of updating revealed that only two registers in Krishi Bhavan are updated daily. Six registers were found to be updated on the basis of needs that emerge from time to time. In the case of panchayat, only five per cent of the registers are updated daily.

About 5 per cent of the registers are updated as and when required.

An enquiry was also made to find out how many registers in Krishi Bhavans and Panchayats are complete, with respect to data fields. This was found out by estimating whether the fields are blank are not (table 4).

Table 4.
Completeness of Registers

Sl.No.	Whether complete/ not	No. of registers in Krishi Bhavan	No. of registers in Panchayat
1	Complete	81 (58)	109 (64)
2	Incomplete	59 (42)	62 (36)
	Total	140	171

Figures in parenthesis represent percentages

The results showed that about 58 per cent of the registers in Krishi Bhavan were found to be complete whereas 42 per cent of registers in Krishi Bhavan were incomplete in some respects. Similarly while 64 per cent of registers in the Panchayat were found to be complete and 36 per cent were found to be

incomplete. Looking further, it was found that mandatory registers and registers that are transaction based are complete to a great extent. Whereas registers that deal with administration of schemes are mostly incomplete.

Table 5.
Registers Based on Static/ Dynamic Nature

Sl.No.	Static/ dynamic	No. of registers in Krishi Bhavan	No. of registers in Panchayat
1	Static	6 (4)	3 (2)
2	Dynamic	134 (96)	168 (98)
	Total	140	171

Figures in parenthesis represent percentages

An enquiry was also done to find out how many registers contain dynamic data that have to be entered on a regular basis in accordance with transactions. It is found that

in Krishi Bhavans, about 4 per cent of the registers are static in nature with respect to data entry as they do not require to be updated on a regular basis whereas 96 per cent of the

registers which were found to be dynamic, require regular updating. Moreover, these registers contain data fields that are filled mandatorily as the result of these transactions. These data are used to find out the status of various interactions with citizens. In panchayat offices, about 98 per cent of the registers were found to be dynamic in nature. Only two per cent of the registers were found to be static in nature.

CONCLUSION

The study compiled the databases available in Krishi Bhavans and Panchayats. It was found that there were 140 registers in krishi bhavans under six major categories. Panchayats keep large number of registers for smooth functioning which amount to 171, under 16 major categories. The registers in krishi bhavan and panchayats were further classified based on the frequency of updating information. It was found that two registers in krishi bhavan are updated daily and six registers were found to be updated on the basis of need. In the case of panchayat, only five per cent of the registers updated daily. About 90 per cent of the registers are updated as per the transaction. An enquiry was also made to find out how many registers in krishi bhavans and panchayats are complete, with

respect to data fields. About 58 per cent of the registers in krishi bhavan are found to be complete whereas 42 per cent of them incomplete. Similarly while 64 percentage of registers in the panchayat were found to be complete, 36 per cent were found to be incomplete. The investigation on dynamic/ static nature of registers showed that in krishi bhavans, about 4 per cent of the registers are static in nature whereas 96 per cent of them are dynamic and require regular updating. However, in panchayat it was 98 per cent and 2 per cent respectively. The status of maintenance of registers and the frequency of updating are indicators to the prospects of designing comprehensive databases and information systems for micro level planning in agriculture.

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