

Report of The Working Group on Decentralised Planning in Agriculture for XII Plan

Prof. R S Deshpande, Director, ISEC
Chairman, Working Group

&

Prof. B Chakravarty, Head (CPME), NIRD
Member - Secretary, Working Group

Submitted to



Planning Commission, Government of India

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Submitted to



Planning Commission, Government of India



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November 13, 2011

Prof Abhijit Sen
Member
Planning Commission,
Government of India
New Delhi

Dear Sir,

Sub: Submission of the Final Report of the Working Group on "Decentralised Planning in Agriculture for XII Plan (2012-17)".

Ref: Order No-M-12043/05/2011-Agri; dated March 15th 2011.

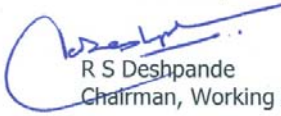
I am happy to forward herewith the Final Report of the Working Group on "Decentralised Planning in Agriculture and Allied Sectors for XII Plan" after incorporating the comments received in the Steering Group Meeting held at Chennai 18th September and at New Delhi on 3rd and 4th November 2011 at the Planning Commission, New Delhi. We received cooperation from all the members and especially I must mention the efforts by Dr V V Sadamate (Adviser, Planning Commission), Dr. B Chakravarty (Member-Secretary), Dr Siddharth Swaminathan, Dr P Rajasekharan and Dr N Sivanna.

We are also sending a soft copy of the report to DR V V Sadamate, Adviser Agri, planning Commission, Govt of India. I request that the required number of copies may please be made at the Planning Commission or kindly let us know about that.

On behalf of the Working Group, I thank the Planning Commission and specifically you as well as Dr V V Sadamate for the opportunity to work on this important issue.

Thanking You

Yours faithfully


R S Deshpande
Chairman, Working Group

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work is culmination of the efforts by the Members of the Working Group. It is well recognized now that Decentralised Agricultural Planning only can help the sector to register a good growth and development of the sector and that will also have significant impact on poverty as well as backwardness. On behalf of the Working Group we would like to express our thanks profusely to the Planning Commission, Government of India for entrusting the responsibility of working out a policy frame for effective decentralization in the formulation of 12th Five Year Plan for Agriculture & Allied Sectors keeping in view the ensuing challenges and the priorities. We express our deep sense of gratitude to Dr. Montek Singh Ahulwalia Hon'ble Dy. Chairman, Prof. Abhijit Sen, Hon'ble Member, Dr.V V Sadamate, Adviser (Agriculture), and Dr.H.S. Sur, Consultant of the Planning Commission, Govt. of India for their timely guidance and cooperation in coordinating a good number of study visits and interface/interactive meetings with the academia, subject matter specialists, corporate bodies, NGOs and Government functionaries associated directly and indirectly with the planning and implementation of projects related to Agriculture & Allied Sectors. .

This work had willing cooperation of many individuals in sharing their experience and expertise. The interface meetings held at different parts of the Country provided significant inputs and we would like to sincerely thank them all for their contributions. The Special Workshop on Agriculture Planning conducted by the Dept. of Agriculture, Govt of Kerala at IMG, Thiruvananthapuram provided deeper insights into the problems associated with devolution of powers, functions and finances to PRIs, and also the functional status of planning bodies in terms of preparation and integration of plans at different levels. The ground realities expressed in the workshop especially by the elected representatives adequately sensitised and enlightened us on the factors contributing towards gradual erosion of the spirit of democratic decentralisation in the process of overall planning in general and Agriculture in particular. The Co-ordinators of Sub-Groups and the Members of the Study Teams visited different parts of the country to understand as to what extent the region specific problems, needs and aspirations got reflected in the 11th plan and also to find out the possibilities of inclusion of appropriate methodological changes in the ensuing 12th plan and we gratefully acknowledge their significant contribution.

**Chairman
Member- Secretary
&
Members of
Working Group on “Decentralised Planning in Agriculture”**

CONTENTS

Chapter 1 : Introduction	1 - 3
Chapter 2 : Review of the Decentralized Planning	4 - 16
Chapter 3 : Process of Implementation	17 - 24
Chapter 4 : Modification of the Process	25 - 38
Chapter 5 : Decentralized Planning across the States	39 - 63
Chapter 6 : Way forward – Goals, Instruments & Recommendations	64 - 91

Acronyms

AERU : Agro-Economic Research Units

AEU : Agro-Ecological Unit

AEZ : Agro-Ecological Zone

AP : Andhra Pradesh

APC : Agriculture Production Commissioner

APU : Agriculture Planning Units

ARO : Agriculture Research Organizations

ATMA : Agricultural Technology Management Agency

BAPU : Block Agricultural Planning Unit

BRGF : Backward Regions Grant Fund

C-DAP : Comprehensive District Agriculture Plan

CSS : Centrally Sponsored Schemes

DAC : Department of Agriculture & Cooperation

DAPU : District Agriculture Planning Unit

DC : Deputy Commissioner / District Collector

DP : District Panchayat

DPC : District Planning Committee

DI : Devolution Index

DPR : Detailed Project Report

GP : Gram Panchayat

GS : Gram Sabha

GSDP : Gross State Domestic Produce

HP : Himachal Pradesh

HRD : Human Resource Development

ICAR : Indian Council of Agricultural Research

ICT : Information & Communication Technology

IMG : Institute of Management in Government

J & K : Jammu & Kashmir

JRY : Jawahar Rojgar Yojana

MANAGE : Management of Agricultural Extension (National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management)

MGNREGS : Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme

MLA : Member of Legislative Assembly

MLC : Member of Legislative Council

MoPR : Ministry of Panchayati Raj

MoRd : Ministry of Rural Development

MIS : Management Information System

MP : Madhya Pradesh/ Member of Parliament

MTA : Mid Term Appraisal

NGO : Non-Government Organization

NABARD : National Bank of Agriculture & Rural Development

NBSS & LUP : National Bureau of Soil Survey & Land Use Planning

NIC : National Informatics Centre

NCT : National Capital Territory

NDC : National Development Council

NE : North Eastern

NFSM : National Food Security Mission

NHM : National Horticulture Mission

NRAA : National Rainfed Area Authority

PC : Planning Commission

PLP : Potential Linked Plan

PRI : Panchayati Raj Institution

RIDF : Rural Infrastructure Development Fund

RKVY : Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana

RTI : Right To Information

SAP : State Agricultural Plan

SAU : State Agricultural University

SGSY : Swarnajayanti Gram Swarajgar Yojana

SLSC : State Level Sanctioning Committee

SRI : System of Rice Intensification

SRR : Seed Replacement Rate

SWOT : Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

TAPU : Taluk Agricultural Planning Unit

ToT : Training of Trainers

TSI : Technical Support Institute

UP : Uttar Pradesh

UT : Union Territory

VAPU : Village Agricultural Planning Unit

ZP : Zilla Panchayat

File No.M-12043/05/2011-Agri.
PLANNING COMMISSION
(AGRICULTURE DIVISION)
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

Yojana Bhavan, Sansad Marg,
New Delhi-1, dated : March 15, 2011-11-14

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

**Subject : Constitution of the Working Group on “Decentralized Planning in Agriculture”
for the Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012 – 2017) – Reg.**

It has been decided to set up a Working Group on « Decentralized Planning in Agriculture » in the context of formulation of Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-17), with following Composition and Term of Reference.

I. Composition

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II. Terms of Reference (Specific)

- 1) To review whether C-DAP has been able to capture the spirit of decentralized planning and its applicability. To what extent the process of decentralized planning been institutionalized. Suggest measures to hasten the process of institutionalization.
- 2) To examine a) the extent to which SAPs are a culmination of C-DAPs, b) Extent of convergence of all agriculture related programmes being run by different agencies (Governmental or non-governmental) happened, c) Synchronization of C-DAPs and programmes of other departments, and d) Status of integration of C-DAPs with total plan of the districts; and suggest measures for improvement in all these.
- 3) To assess possibilities of participation of PRIs in implementation of schemes and programmes. Give bottlenecks, constraints and their solutions.

- 4) To review steps taken for effective implementation of C-DAPs, and its linkages with panchayats, development departments and ATMA.
- 5) Analyze status of activity mapping, devolution of functions and funds and their internalization in various states.
- 6) Examine capacity building at district level and panchayats formulation and implementation of C-DAPs, capturing priorities and in posing funding proposals in DPC and SLSC. Suggest steps required to enhance the same.
- 7) To suggest modification for improvement in formulation, implementation and Operationalization of C-DAPs and SAPs.

Terms of Reference (General)

1. To review whether C-DAP has been able to capture the spirit of decentralized planning and its applicability. To what extent the process of decentralized planning been institutionalized. Suggest measures to hasten the process of institutionalization.
2. To examine a) the extent to which SAPs are a culmination of C-DAPs, b) Extent of convergence of all agriculture related programmes being run by different agencies (Governmental or non-governmental) happened c) Synchronization of C-DAPs and programmes of other departments, and d) Status of integration of C-DAPs with total plan of the districts; and suggest measures for improvement in all these.
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7. To suggest modification for improvement in formulation, implementation and Operationalisation of C-DAPs and SAPs

(G. Rajeev)

Under Secretary to the Government of India

Distribution

The Chairman and Members of the Working Group

Copy to:

1. P.S. to Deputy Chairman
2. P.S to Member (AS)
3. P.S to Member (KK)
4. Sr.PPS to Member Secretary
5. P.S to Adviser (PC)
6. Adviser (SS)/Joint Adviser (Agri/Directors(agri))
7. Account-I Section

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 2) Dr. P. Chandra Shekara
 3) Dr. P. Rajasekheran
 4) Dr. A.M Mathur
 5) Dr. N.C. Muniyappa
 6) Shri Manoj Rai
 7) Dr. Sur

2) Process of Implementation – Bottlenecks – Convergence of Schemes

Members: 1) Dr. P. Chandra Shekara, Coordinator
 2) Dr. Sanjeeta Shroff
 3) Shri Manoj Rai
 4) Shril K.V. Satyanarayana
 5) Dr. G.N. Sharma
 6) Dr. N.P. Singh
 7) Dr. A.K. Dixit

3) Modification of the Process and Setting the Goals

Members: 1) Dr. Surjeet Singh, Coordinator
 2) Dr. N. Sivanna
 3) Dr. M. Mallappa
 4) Dr. Ranganathan, Kerala
 5) Mr. Ashok Kumar Sinha
 6) Mr. D.S. Mishra
 7) Dr. K.B. Lavekar

4) Way Forward – Setting the Instruments

Members: 1) Dr. P. Rajasekheran, Coordinator
 2) Dr. K. Arulmozhi
 3) Dr. G.N. Sharma
 4) Dr. Siddharth Swaminathan
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 6) Dr. B. Chakravarthy
 7) Mr. S.C. Garg
 8) Mr. Soumen Biswas
 9) Mr. Ravi Chopra
 10) Ms. Indu Patyayak

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1: Preamble

Decentralized planning approach has been under discussion as an important instrument to achieve overall development keeping in view the local resources, needs and aspirations. The need for integrated approach to local area plans, based on specific resource endowments and needs of each area, has been the serious concern of the policy makers and planners since beginning of the First Five Year Plan. However, due to lack of political commitment and professional competence at different levels of governance, we could not reach the threshold level of decentralization in planning and development administration despite sporadic and isolated attempts made on pilot basis in a few States such as Kerala. The few successes seen in the recent past marred by their failures as most of them were not deliberated intensively. Development was mostly achieved through sectoral schemes and programmes of a straight jacket nature, resulting in limited outcomes and missing the targets. Many studies pointed out that such failure of the schemes were attributed to the inability to understand local level specificities, and a failure to incorporate the same in the planning process. All that pointed to the need for decentralized local level planning.

Decentralized planning as an approach to balanced development and reduction of regional disparities emerged well before Independence. The initial attempts towards decentralised planning however began from the Second plan onwards, and subsequently Late Dr Gadgil showed the process through Wardha Plan. Later, there were several attempts at different points of time advocating the concept and its adaptation but all that failed at the doorstep of implementation process. During the 11th Plan, decentralised planning became an accepted stake for sustainable resource management, better production and accessing opportunities of livelihood for and by the people. Decentralized approach has an inherent capacity to deal with felt needs and aspirations of the people and also motivate them to be the partners in the preparation and implementation of development plans. Participatory development plans attempted at with a bottom-up approach has yielded better results in terms of reduction of social and gender disparities, judicious distribution and use of resources, equal development opportunities to all as against the top down approach of planning. This participatory initiative helps in improving investment efficiency of developmental

programmes, transparency and accountability. Collective wisdom is another dimension of decentralized development which is important. Above all this saves time and energy by facilitating “to do what can be done at lower level and sparing higher levels for more important functions” (Principal of Subsidiarity). By sharing responsibility and gaining confidence people get empowered and become responsible citizens. A democratic polity demands this type of enabling environment for achieving self sufficiency, sustainable growth and social justice.

1.2. Decentralisation in Agricultural Planning

Decentralised planning for agriculture and allied sectors is essential, as the local level resources, climate and agro-ecological features dictate success or failure of any intervention. Local level planning therefore, helps to arrive at an integrated, participatory, and coordinated initiative for development of a sub-state geographical area. An essential step in this direction is to ensure that each *Panchayat* at any level or Municipality is treated as a planning unit and the ‘district plan’ is built up through consolidation and integration of these plans which eventually form part of the overall district development plan. Thus, it is a two-way interactive exercise that is horizontal and vertical integration of sectoral schemes and poverty alleviation schemes.

District plan for agriculture should be a comprehensive document incorporating steps towards development of agriculture and allied sectors, both in physical and financial terms with an objective to achieve sustainable growth in agriculture during the stipulated period. This document is expected to address (i) all the major issues related to agriculture and allied sectors, (ii) identification of projects and filling of resource gaps (iii) convergence of various State and Central Government programmes, (iv) involvement of all the stakeholders (v) improving the quality of life of the farmers (vi) increasing agricultural productivity and (vii) achieving food security. Therefore, district agricultural planning involves a process of preparing an integrated and comprehensive district agriculture plan taking into account the local needs and the resource (natural, human and financial) potential.

The experience of the process followed in district planning for agriculture during 11th plan suggested that the approach is certainly acceptable and could be pursued further. There were many bottlenecks on the way to decentralization. Specifically, the district and sub-district planning was a totally new process for the officials and above that the

institutionalization was not adequate enough to carry the scheme effectively forward. However, with renewed vigor and spirit we should allow the concept and process of decentralization to be spread throughout the breadth and length of the country.

1.3: Process and Methods of the Working Group

The Working Group met first at IARI, Pusa, New Delhi on 21.4.2011. the plan of work and the sub-groups for various topics were formed keeping in view the expertise of the members. During the very first meeting after sharing the experience of different states, it was decided to distribute the work according to the expertise available. Accordingly, four sub-groups were constituted. The first sub-group was given the task to take a review of the process of decentralized planning in the country and also highlight the C-DAP process followed during 11th plan. The process of implementation assumed greater importance as the failures noted during the 11th plan were largely due to implementation bottlenecks and the same was reviewed by the second sub-group. The third group deliberated the modifications of the process needed to sharpen the District level Agricultural Planning during 12th Plan. The Way Forward was provided by the fourth sub-group. The reports by the subgroups were received and these were discussed in the second meeting held at Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bangalore on 28th May 2011. The third meeting at NIRD, Hyderabad focused on the draft report as there were quite a few shortcomings and all these were plugged. This apart, four teams comprising of two-members each visited the states of Assam, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh and Punjab to study the effectiveness of the decentralized planning process. Their reports indicate the nuances of the process of C-DAP implementation in the respective states. A workshop was held in Thiruvananthapuram involving all stake holders and officials to understand the experience of C-DAP in Kerala and draw lessons from that. Similarly, a steering Committee meeting held at Chennai gave directions and critical inputs for preparation of this Working Group Report. In addition to these, informal meetings between the Member Secretary, Chairman and a few members of the working group were held at ISEC, Bangalore.

CHAPTER 2

Review of the Decentralised Planning

2.1: Development of the Concept

India being the largest democratic country in the world, decentralisation of planning and development administration becomes mandatory to ensure effective delivery systems and good governance. Panchayat Raj system prevalent prior to independence worked effectively for the community development and it was more or less based on the Gandhian ideology. The rural people used to meet their basic needs using their available resources based on the guiding principle of one for all and all for one. After independence the concept of democratic decentralization in planning and development administration was recognized as an important tool to achieve overall development. Consequently, the same was incorporated as Article 40 of the Indian Constitution which envisages that “the State shall take steps to organize village panchayats with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government”. Accordingly concerted efforts were made at different points of time to encourage decentralization of planning and development administration with a bottom up approach. However, a real breakthrough came in 1960 onwards and subsequently the bottom-up approach gained recognition among policy makers, academicians, administrators and research scholars.

The spirit of decentralization calls for preparation of plans and their implementation by involving people through a participatory bottom up approach. The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts (1993) have paved a way to evolve new system of governance in Panchayat Raj and Local self - government which has mandated local planning at the Gram Panchayat, Taluk Panchayat and District Panchayat levels as well as at urban local governments and their consolidation into a District Plan in each district. Many years have gone by since the constitutional mandate was inked and passed, and no significant progress could be achieved, till the massive initiative undertaken during the 11th plan.

The 11th plan document insisted on the 'District Plan Process' to become an integral part of the preparation of State's Plans (2007-2012). With this in view, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj constituted an Expert Group in 2005, in consultation with the Planning Commission. The Report of the Expert Group on planning at the grassroots level was presented to Government of India in March 2006. Similarly, concerned by the slow growth in the agriculture and allied sectors, the National Development Council (NDC), in its meeting held on 29 May 2007 endorsed the process of local level planning along with other steps. Almost at the same time the eleventh plan emphasized the criticality of inclusive growth and the natural derivative of all these efforts culminated to undertake local level planning.

2.2: Conspectus of Decentralized Planning Process

Decentralised planning has been in the debates for more than six decades now and we need to pick up from these debates to design a step forward. Many committees and commission have strongly advocated adoption of decentralised planning approach. Among these the committee headed by Balwant Rai Mehta (1957) took the first step. This lead was followed among others by Asoka Mehta (1978), Hanumantha Rao (1984) G.V.K Rao (1985) and Ramachandran (2006). These formed some of the important mile stones. Their recommendations invariably led to involve people in planning and development for addressing their felt needs and aspirations. All emphasized that planning should begin at the grass roots and need to culminate to a macro plan. It was felt that such process would provide a platform for rational, faster and sustainable development, bringing transparency and infusing confidence in governmental initiatives of growth and development. Working group on block planning headed by M.L. Dantwala and that of Hanumantha Rao on district planning specifically stressed on decentralized planning. Considering the problems in implementation the working group led by Hanumantha Rao's went a step further to suggest that:

- a. Formation of District and Sub-district planning bodies and establishment of planning cell at each district level.
- b. These planning bodies should act as an umbrella organization for all development agencies
- c. Devolution of functions, finance and powers to these planning bodies and PRIs.

During 6th and 7th Five Year Plan period involvement of PRI was continued but not very seriously in a “said but not done mode”. Attempts were rather partial, ineffective and without empowering the PRIs. In 1990 first serious attempt was made through Jawahar Rojgar Yojna (JRY), where flow of funds reached village level and their use was made by involving ‘Gram Sabhas’. The Agro-climatic Regional Planning exercise of the Planning Commission during 8th and 9th plan period was another serious attempt to plan for smaller homogenous regions keeping in view the natural resources and capabilities towards achieving development. That culminated into State level agricultural plans and District Plans for selected 34 districts. The entire efforts however, failed at the process of institutionalization and the implementation did not reach the ground. In 1992 a real serious attempt was made with the Amendment of the Constitution and introduction of Article 243(A-ZG) and mandated the following:

- a. Regular elections of panchayats
- b. Democratic decentralized planning involving people in the form of District Planning Committees (DPCs)
- c. Formulation of DPCs through State Acts
- d. Formation of State Finance Commissions to guard financial powers of panchayats and
- e. Creation of Eleventh Schedule to devolve 29 subjects for PRIs to plan and implement.

A separate Ministry of Panchayati Raj was created in 2004, to give effect to the requirement of the Constitution. The Ministry, inter-alia, would ensure constitution of District Planning Committees and empower them suitably to ensure grass-root level planning to feed into State and Central level Planning effectively. The Ministry will also ensure that the State Governments/UT administrations devolve funds, functions and functionaries to the Panchayati Raj Institutions in the spirit of the Constitutional provisions. Empowerment of Gram Sabhas by holding regular meetings and social audit through Gram Sabhas so as to enable them to emerge as foundation of Panchayati Raj will be pursued vigorously with States/UT administrations. The State governments/Union Territory Administrations, at present, are at varying degrees of the implementation of Constitutional requirements under article 243 (A-ZG).

The decentralised planning process in the eleventh plan began with the meetings and explanation of the concepts to the officers of the State governments. The Planning Commissions conducted meetings in many states as also regional meetings to bring home the basics of the concept and the process.

2.3: Experience during 11th Plan

The process of decentralised planning for agriculture was taken right earnestly during the 11th plan. The agriculture component of this decentralized planning was put in place as Comprehensive District Agriculture Plan (C-DAP). C-DAP was expected to be a comprehensive agricultural plan of a district involving agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry and allied agricultural activities in a sustainable framework. This was also expected to be based on the people's needs and aspirations for development and prepared comprehensively through participatory bottom up approach with 'Gram Sabhas' as the basic unit of planning, taking into account the resources (natural, human and financial) available and by covering all the sectoral agricultural programmes and schemes operational in the district.

The spirit of decentralization and C-DAP formulation included: a) process implementation and its internalization, which entails bottom- up participatory approach involving all local bodies with Gram Sabha as the starting point, b) Convergence of all programmes/schemes, financial sources and disciplines/departments in agriculture sector, c) Operationalization of C-DAPs by formulating State Agriculture Plan (SAP) through aggregation of C-DAPs of the State, and obtaining funds from different developmental programmes and using these as per the C-DAPs. This spirit has been well brought out in the Guidelines for C-DAP formulation provided in the form of "Comprehensive District Agricultural Plan (C-DAP) -- A Manual by Planning Commission (2008)". As per these guidelines each state were to follow an institutional arrangement that consisted of: a) Planning Committees (PCs) as per article 243-ZD of constitution of India, which have the authority to prepare plans b) Agricultural planning units (APUs), which were to assist formulating good C-DAPs, c) to engage Technical Support Institute (TSI) who could effectively help the state in capacity building and handholding at all local body level, d.) prepare C-DAPs as per the guidelines, and e) constitute a State level steering

Committee (SLSC) to ensure implementation of process of decentralization and desired convergence in the state and approve projects, which emerge from C-DAPs. In addition formulate a planning schedule: A time line for preparation of C-DAP.

Important steps taken to expedite implementation of decentralized planning in agriculture sector during 11th Five Year Plan were:

1. Rashtrya Krishi Vikas Yojna (RKVY) ---a tool:

Rashtrya Krishi Vikas Yojna (RKVY) a major agriculture programme initiated in the country during 11th Five year Plan was used as tool for C-DAP formulation. Funding from RKVY to States was linked to formulation of C-DAPs in the States in addition to incentivize states to invest more in their agriculture sector.

2. Provision of funds for C-DAP formulation

The exercise of decentralized planning was supported providing states fund (Rs10 lakhs per district) for C-DAP formulation exclusively. This funding support was aimed at enabling states to arrange a capacity building mechanism most suited to them, establish a planning cell at district level and meet other expenditures essential to this planning

3. Member on State Level Sanctioning Committee (SLSC):

One member each from Department of Agriculture and Co-operation (DAC), Ministry of Agriculture, and Planning Commission, New Delhi was placed on the State Level Sanctioning Committee (SLSC) of states for monitoring the progress of implementation.

4. Software for planning:

Plan-plus software was developed by the NIC and trainings and handholding was offered by NIC through its district offices to facilitate formulation of C-DAPs. In addition states were encouraged to develop their own software for the purpose. Rajasthan took the lead in developing and using software.

5. Disincentive to increase speed of C-DAPs formulation:

Despite all support and persuasions, the progress of C-DAPs formulation was slow; Planning Commission cautioned states that a sum of Rs one crore per district, for which C-DAP is not prepared, would be deducted from their budget allocation.

Monitoring and Peer Review

Planning Commission monitored the progress directly as well as through Peer Review of C-DAPs by Agriculture Economic Research Units (AERUs) and Agriculture Economic Research Centers (AERCs) in the country. These exercises focused on following three aspects of C-DAP formulation through structured studies:

Physical progress of C-DAP formulation to know as to how many States/ districts have prepared C-DAPs and by what time they will complete the exercise of C-DAP formulation?

Progress on Constitutional requirement of C-DAP preparation indicating needed participatory bottom up approach by taking 'Gram Sabha' as basic unit was followed or not?

Quality aspect indicating comprehensiveness, convergence, synergy, technical soundness and write up quality of C-DAP.

Operationalisation of C-DAP: To see if the SAP of the states were aggregation of C-DAPs or not? Whether the projects for annual plans have been culled from the C-DAPs or SAPs?

In all the states C-DAPs were prepared and the experience varied as the practices followed were different. There were three important problems confronted here. First, quite a few states did not have the Panchayat raj institutions in place and besides some of the states which had these were not functioning effectively. Further, these were operating differently across. Second, planning as a concept was completely new at the district, taluka and village level. The concept was rather confused with the enlisting total needs in the area and at times just another method of attracting monetary resources. Third, higher level officials at the state level were not well sensitized with the bottom approach and finally it received a forced sympathy without any ground applications. This was compounded by the lack of capacity in planning at various levels. Finally, some of the major problems and bottlenecks reported in implementing decentralized planning were convergence, remoteness of planning agencies from the sight of planning and devolution of functions, funds and authority.

2.4: Emerging Issues

Eleventh plan gave a head start to the decentralised district level planning and out of 609 districts in the country 599 districts (see table 2.1) have now the district plans ready. There is no doubt that these are at varying degree of competence, but nevertheless the process of formulation of the district plans seems to have grounded in many districts. Based on the district plans 25 states have also prepared documents of the State Agricultural Plans. All these were however, finished almost by the end of the plan period leaving a little room for their implementation. Majority of these C-DAPs are now available on the web-sites of the states or that of Department of Agriculture and Co-operation (DAC), Ministry of Agriculture, and New Delhi. The usability of these plans stayed always questionable, no so much due to the quality of the contents but more due to the cold shoulder by higher level administration. Evidence shows that States handled basic requirements in formulating C-DAP quite lightly, which pertaining to the constitutional and quality aspect of C-DAPs formulation and these carry the spirit of decentralization. However, different states/districts are at different levels in adopting the guidelines for district planning. The spirit of decentralization was clearly spelt out in the manual and C-DAP formulation process. Quite strangely, this has not percolated down to the district level mainly due to the lack of capacity to understand the process and absorb the concepts. The bottlenecks need to be removed now so that the district agricultural planning can be rooted in the planning process of the country.

It is well recognized that DPC is a mandatory body for decentralized planning and formulation of district agriculture plans All States and Union Territories except Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, J&K and NCT of Delhi are required to set up District Planning Committees in accordance with the Article 243ZD of the Constitution of India. The issues concerning DPC are: a) Are DPCs in place in all the States? b) If yes. Have these been formulated as per the spirit of decentralization laid in the Constitution? And c) are these DPCs functional? Until and unless these DPCs are functional, the intended spirit of decentralization will not operate.

As per available information the DPCs are in place in all the States except Jharkhand (see Table 2.2) except exempted North Eastern States. In five states viz Chhattisgarh, H.P., M.P. Maharashtra and Orissa a minister is the chairperson. Lakshadweep district Collector cum Development commissioner is the Chairperson. This is not in line with the spirit of

decentralization. Although DPCs have been formed in most of the states but these have not been made functional in the states. This simply is slowing down the process of decentralization in the country.

As suggested in the manual of the Comprehensive District Agricultural Planning the Agriculture Planning Units viz VAPU, BAPU/TAPU and DAPU have to be established and made functional. But neither of these has been constituted nor operational. Therefore, these units did not perform the task expected of them. In most of the states it was entrusted to the TSIs limiting the time and ambit of programmes to be included in the plans. This happened due to two issues faced at ground level. It was observed that the District as well as the State authorities did not feel necessity of constituting such units separately in the presence of already existing Committees of the PRIs. Second, the capacity of the existing units at the village, taluka and district level was under the cloud of doubt.

It is essential to make Agriculture Planning Units (APUs) functional, and for that these should be formulated through executive orders from the state with clear instructions that these APUs at each LB level should prepare plans to the satisfaction of panchayat or planning committee at that level. In token of their satisfaction these documents should bear signature of authorized persons. Most important is to undertake capacity building of such units and making them aware of their powers and functions along with the basic concepts and process of planning.

State Level Sanction Committee (SLSC)was constituted as an apex level body for overseeing the process of implementation, effecting convergence and strengthening the philosophy of decentralization. But the SLSCs have not discharged their function particularly in context of implementation of the spirit of decentralization. As C-DAP formulation, without following the process of participatory bottom up approach was a mere formality completed by most of the states, SLSC meetings were mere formalities to obtain funding from RKVY. SLSC finally almost dictated the entire allocations not necessarily keeping in view the needs of the districts but giving precedence to the state priorities.

Guidelines by the Planning Commission for formulation of C-DAPs were issued and a manual was prepared to make the process understandable. The manual was disseminated and was also available on the web-site of the Planning Commission. At the same time there was also

another manual for District Planning issued by the Ministry of Rural Development and available on the website of the Planning Commission. Broadly there were no confusing issues but the two documents argued the same case at different wave lengths. This might have caused its own damage. As a result the States have invariably violated the guidelines while formulating C-DAPs provided by the Planning Commission. These violations include: The structural arrangement suggested for formulation of C-DAP, that consisted of Planning Committees, Agriculture Planning Units and Technical support Institutions. Agriculture Planning Units were to take lead in formulation of plans in consultation and to the satisfaction of Planning Committees. The TSIs were to facilitate the process by capacity building and handholding. Matters of convergence and synergy were to be made effective at this level. As planning process ends at district level and State Agriculture plan (SAP) is merely an aggregation of C-DAPs, the planning exercise should be participatory and more rigorous at the district level.

Convergence of services, integration of sectoral plans and co-ordination of Heads of Sectoral Departments are the important hallmarks of the district planning. All resources viz human, financial, and physical and even that of ideas and concepts should tend to one point. These should be optimally used to generate growth and development in the service of the society. This convergence is very important for effective planning and implementation of development programmes. But the observable trend is more towards divergence than convergence. In the past non-convergence had emerged as a major bottle neck in implementing developmental programmes effectively. Convergence envisaged in C-DAP formulation and its implementation consisted of: a) convergence of programmes /schemes, b) convergence of financial resources c) convergence of departments/disciplines and convergence of efforts of other bodies or institutions associated with the projects of Agriculture and allied sectors.

Effective implementation of decentralization and convergence require a major change in the understanding and calls for commitment, which can be achieved through capacity building, empowerment, education, persuasion and putting force behind all these in a strategic mode. Another major bottleneck in implementing decentralized planning was felt to be the absence of a clear frame-work for such a planning. This frame work was provided in the form of a document:

“Planning at the Grassroots Level : An Action Programme for the Eleventh Five Year Programme - report of the Expert Group”, MoPR (2006).

The review suggests that the decentralised planning must go forward and we have gained some ground during 11th plan. How much we failed is not so much important than what we achieved and where we failed. On the achievement front we have touched the ground in most of the districts as well could implant the concept of comprehensive district agricultural planning. Whereas on the failure side, it is noted that the process envisaged is not strictly followed due to some inadequacies and some inertia. It is the task before the 12th plan to plug the inadequacies and push out that inertia through a forceful institutional process.

Table 2.1: Status of District Agriculture Plans (DAPs) & State Agriculture Plans (SAPs)

Sl	State/UT	No. of Districts	DAP prepared	SAP prepared
1	Andhra Pradesh	23	23	Yes
2	Arunachal Pradesh	16	16	Yes
3	Assam	27	27	Yes
4	Bihar	38	38	Yes
5	Chhattisgarh	18	13	Yes
6	Goa	2	In progress	No
7	Gujarat	26	26	Yes
8	Haryana	21	21	Yes
9	Himachal Pradesh	12	12	Yes
10	Jammu & Kashmir	22	22	Yes
11	Jharkhand	24	24	Yes
12	Karnataka	29	29	Yes
13	Kerala	14	13	No
14	Madhya Pradesh	50	50	No
15	Maharashtra	33	33	Yes
16	Manipur	9	9	Yes
17	Meghalaya	7	7	Yes
18	Mizoram	8	7	Yes
19	Nagaland	8	8	Yes
20	Orissa	30	30	Yes
21	Punjab	20	20	Yes
22	Rajasthan	33	33	Yes
23	Sikkim	4	4	Yes
24	Tamil Nadu	29	29	Yes
25	Tripura	4	4	Yes
26	Uttarakhand	13	13	Yes
27	Uttar Pradesh	71	71	Yes
28	West Bengal	18	17	Yes
Total		609	599	25

Table 2.2: Status of District Planning Committees in the States

Sl No	States/Union Territories	Status of constitution of DPCs
1	Andhra Pradesh	Constituted as per Act No. 40 of 2005 Chairperson of ZP is the chairperson of DPC.
2	Arunachal Pradesh	Constituted as per DPC Bill March, 2011.
3	Assam	Constituted as per Assam Panchayat Act 1994. ZP Chairperson as the chairperson of DPC.
4	Bihar	Constituted in all 38 districts. Chairperson ZP is the Chairman of DPCs.
5	Chhattisgarh	Constituted. Minister is Chairpersons of DPC
6	Goa	Constituted. President of ZP is the Chairperson of DPC.
7	Gujarat	Constituted as per Gujarat DPC Act. Chairperson to be nominated by the State. Dist. Collector Co-Chairperson. Chairperson of ZP is the Vice Chairperson of DPC.
8	Haryana	DPCs constituted.
9	Himachal Pradesh	Constituted in 12 districts. Minister is Chairperson of DPC.
10	Karnataka	Yes. In all Districts. President, ZP is Chairman of DPC.
11	Jharkhand	DPCs not formulated
12	Kerala	Constituted. Chairman of District Panchayat (DP) is Chairman of DPC.
13	Madhyaa Pardesh	Constituted. District in-charge Ministers are Chairpersons.
14	Maharashtra	Guardian Minister for the District (Ex-Officio Chairperson)
15	Manipur	DPCs constituted in 4 districts. Adhyaksha, DP is Chairperson
16	Meghalaya	No
17	Mizoram	No
18	Nagaland	No
19	Orrissa	26 Districts. Minister is Chairperson of DPC.
20	Punjab	Constituted in July 2009.

21	Rajasthan	Yes. Chairman of DP is Chairman of DPC
22	Sikkim	DPCs constituted.
23	Tamil Nadu	Yes. Chairperson, DP is Chairperson
24	Tripura	Not yet constituted.
25	Uttar Pradesh	DPCs are not notified or constituted, even though legal provision exists.
26	Uttaranchal	DPCs are not notified or constituted, even though legal provision exists.
27	West Bengal	DPCs constituted. Chairperson, DP is Chairperson of DPC.
28	Andaman Nicobar	DPCs constituted. Chairperson of DP is Chairman of DPC
29	Chandigarh	Not yet constituted.
30	D & N Haveli	DPCs constituted. Chairman, DP is Chairman of DPC
31	Daman Diu	DPCs constituted. Chairman, DP is Chairman of DPC
32	Lakshadweep	DPCs constituted. Collector cum Dev. Commissioner is Chairperson.
33	Pondicherry	Panchayat Elections yet to be held.

CHAPTER 3

Process of Implementation

3.1 Manual of District Planning

The spirit of decentralization in preparation of C-DAPs has to be spread/disseminated to the different tiers of *Pachayati Raj* in such a way that the willing cooperation and participation of all the stakeholders is ensured on a voluntary basis. This process entails internalization of democratic spirit, sharing of responsibilities and experiences, participation, delegation of authority, devolution of functions, powers, and resources and convergence of schemes and services. The effective implementation of C-DAPs and the realization of its objectives depends upon the sectoral coordination, defined roles and responsibilities, flow of funds on time, professional competency in formulation and appraisal of innovative projects, formulation of performance indicators for measuring the outcomes and impacts of the projects, autonomous monitoring body to oversee the implementation of C-DAP, coordination between sectoral heads and the elected representatives, identification of need and resource based projects which are viable and sustainable, public-private partnerships including NGOs, and a conducive political and social environment.

The C-DAP prepared at the district level is a compilation of projects prepared by the agriculture and allied sectors such as horticulture, fisheries, animal husbandry, diary, marketing and cooperation, water and soil conservation and so forth. The realistic plans received from the sectoral departments are consolidated at the district level by the district nodal agency and the same is presented before the DPC for suggestions and comments. The revised version of the C-DAP based on the suggestions and comments is placed again before the DPC for final perusal and approval. After that, it is submitted to the State nodal agency for further approval. The state level agency after receiving the C-DAPs from all districts will consolidate and include the State level projects covering more than one district to form the State Agricultural Plan. This plan after approval by the appropriate State level authority will be sent to the Planning Commission through the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperation, Government of India for consideration and approval.

As per these guidelines each state were to follow an institutional arrangement that consisted of: a) Formulation of Planning Committees (PCs) as per article 243-ZD of constitution of India, which have the authority to prepare plans b) Constitution of Agricultural planning units (APUs), which were to assist formulating good C-DAPs, c) engaging Technical Support Institute (TSI) who could effectively help the state in capacity building and handholding at all local body level, d) prepare C-DAPs as per the C-DAP Manual, and e) constitute a State level steering Committee (SLSC) to ensure implementation of process of decentralization and desired convergence in the state and approve projects, which emerge from C-DAPs. In addition formulate a planning schedule: A time line for preparation of C-DAP was to be prepared well in time and circulated.

3.2 Divergences

In most of the States, the responsibility of providing guidance for formulation of C-DAPs was assigned to the Technical Support Institutions (TSI) by paying a nominal amount of Rs. 10 lakhs. Unfortunately the TSIs instead of providing guidance and building capabilities of the sectoral heads and PRI functionaries at the district and below, themselves prepared the C-DAPs without the participation of the stakeholders. The same C-DAPs were submitted by the State governments in a hurry without looking into the quality and relevance of the C-DAPs as to get the funding from the Planning Commission. Therefore, the quality was not upto the mark.

The primary and secondary data required to prepare the C-DAPs was not maintained properly in the sectoral departments at the district and lower levels and therefore the shelf of projects prepared by the sectoral heads has become a wish-list and it has no relationship with the needs and available resources. The feasibility, viability, and sustainability of the projects have not been examined through appropriate appraisal techniques and therefore the expected outcomes and impacts of the projects have not been achieved. The Department of Agriculture has been alleged to have a lion's share of the total funding while other allied sectors fail to get even 20% of their budgetary requirements. Therefore there is a need to accommodate the projects of the different sectors based on the resource potential and absorbing capacity.

Preparedness in terms of competence and confidence to formulate the projects was inadequate and in some cases it was completely absent, resulting unrealistic project formulation. The coordination at the district level has been found to be weak as some of the heads of the allied sectors happen to be senior to the head of the nodal agency. Even though the district collector is the chairman of the nodal agency, because of his/her preoccupation with existing responsibilities he/she is unable to find the requisite time to coordinate with the heads of the sectoral departments. Therefore to overcome this problem, the head of the nodal agency should be senior to all other heads of the sectoral departments under the overall supervision of the district collector.

Monitoring of the progress of C-DAP formulation showed that States poorly handled the basic requirements in formulating C-DAP, which pertaining to the constitutional and quality aspect of C-DAPs formulation, which carried the spirit of decentralization. States did not care to implement process of decentralized participatory bottom up approach and internalize it. Operationalization part of C-DAP has also remained unattended. States were mostly slow in putting in place the institutional arrangement suggested. These are detailed below:

3.2.1 District Planning Committee

DPC is a statutory body to shoulder the mandatory responsibilities such as:

- developing the methodologies and guidelines for preparation of plans for the district and below
- compilation and integration of block and municipal plans to form district overall development plan by incorporating district projects which cover more than one block
- Approval of C-DAPs and submission of the same to the State level nodal agency
- Allocation of resources and creation of enabling environment for PRI functionaries to participate in preparation of plans

- After approval and sanction of the budget, the blockwise allocations will be communicated to the block level administration for execution of approved projects by the respective sectoral departments.
- Monitoring the implementation and ensuring the submission of the progress reports to the Government of India through online systems.

The DPC is headed by the district collector/ Chairperson of Zilla Panchayat in most of the states, while in some states it is headed by the minister in charge of the district. Therefore there is need for uniform pattern across the States, so that the role and responsibilities can be suitably framed. In case of DPCs headed by Chairperson of Zilla Parishad, the local ministers/MPs/MLAs/MLCs have the problem of protocol when they attend the DPC meeting.

3.2.1a Formation and Functional status of DPC

All States and Union Territories except Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, J&K and NCT of Delhi are required to set up District Planning Committees in accordance with the 74Th Amendment (Article 243ZD) of the Constitution of India. The present status of DPC has been examined in the context of the following questions.

- Are DPCs in place in all the States?
- If yes. Are these being revived after each *Panchayat* election?
- Have these been formulated as per the spirit of decentralization laid in the Constitution?
And
- Are these DPCs functional?

As per available information the DPCs are in place in all the States except Jharkhand and in exempted North Eastern States. In five states via Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Orissa a minister, incharge of the respective district is the chairperson. Lakshadweep district Collector cum Development commissioner is the Chairperson. This is not in line with the spirit of decentralization. Although DPCs have been formed in most of the states but these have not been made effectively functional in the states. As a result, the

spirit of decentralization in planning has not been reflected in the planning. Until and unless these DPCs are functional intended spirit of decentralization will not operate.

3.2.2 Agriculture Planning Units

Agriculture Planning Units viz Village Level Agricultural Planning Unit (VAPU), Block Level Agricultural Planning Unit (BAPU)/ Taluk Level Agricultural Planning Unit (TAPU) and District Level Agricultural Planning Unit (DAPU) have not been constituted in most of the states, and in some states like Kerala, the planning has been attempted at three levels but the consolidation of the same with the municipal plans to form overall district development plan has not been attempted. In most of the states it was entrusted to the Technical Support Institutions (TSIs) limiting the time and ambit of programmes to be included in the plans. Most of the plans prepared by TSIs were not in tune with the guidelines and the format prescribed by Shri Ramachandran and the same was duly approved by the Planning Commission.

3.2.3 State Level Sanctioning Committee

SLSC was a high level body of implementing convergence and decentralization. But the SLSCs have not discharged their function particularly in context of implementation of spirit of decentralization. As C-DAP formulation, without following the process of participatory bottom up approach was a mere formality completed by states to get funding from the Govt. of India. Similarly SLSC meetings were also mere formalities to approve the C-DAPs and also submission of the same to the Ministry of Agriculture & Cooperation, Govt. of India for obtaining funding under RKVY.

3.2.3a Constitution of SLSC

As per the guidelines of RKVY, the SLSCs has been constituted in all the states with the Chief Secretary as the Chairman and the Principal Secretary, Agriculture/ Agricultural Production Commissioner as the Vice Chairman. While the Secretary, Agriculture acts as a Member Secretary and all the Secretaries of major departments are the members of the Committee.

3.2.4 Use of Guidelines for formulation of C-DAPs

During 11th Plan period States have invariably violated the guidelines while formulating C-DAPs provided by the Planning Commission. These violations pertain to: (a) non implementation of process of decentralization, (b) not operationalizing/internalizing the C-DAPs, (c) overlooking the need of establishing structural arrangement suggested for formulation of C-DAP, (d) misusing the TSIs for formulating C-DAPs, which were provided for capacity building and handholding.

It was expected that the process of planning will start with development of a district vision; yet hardly any state formulated this vision. C-DAPs were not comprehensive but mostly RKVY focused. In C-DAP Manual SWOT analysis was suggested to capture strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the district broadly to improve planning accordingly but it was found that this exercise was either missing or not properly attempted. Many C-DAPs did not attempt to capture R&D, entrepreneurship initiatives, emerging new challenges and innovative projects. Credit needs and how these are to be managed not given. Market and storage information mostly was missing. Gaps in development usually not worked out. Many times even important allied activities are missing or not fully addressed. Monitoring and evaluation mechanism was not given in C-DAPs.

Plan plus software prepared by NIC to facilitate C-DAP formulation is not used by any district/state, in spite of the fact that training facility in the use of plan-plus was made available by NIC offices at district head quarters.

3.2.5 C-DAP Report

The written versions of C-DAP reports as expected varied a lot from C-DAP to C-DAP. More attention required to be paid to make more comprehensive and usable. Other cares required are: Title page of C-DAPs should show ownership of the District Planning Committee and not of TSI or departments.

Significant improvements can be brought in by including an introduction with appropriate objectives. Data given is mostly inadequate, especially on resources, infrastructure & socio-

economic aspect or livelihood. Critical analysis of the data and inferences can contribute to the development of an effective plan report. However these analyses are invariably missing. The main issues relating to the C-DAP report include:

1. Methodology invariably missing or weak
2. A consolidated list of needs/problems/potentials and their prioritization usually missing
3. Large grammatical mistakes
4. Page & table numbering mostly missing
5. Sources of data not given
6. Many C-DAPs don't show table of content, list of abbreviations, figures & tables.

Therefore most of the C-DAPs require rigorous editing even rewriting.

3.3 Bottlenecks

1. Mindset change of stakeholders and those who are to implement process of decentralization and strong political support
2. Lack of Capacity building & handholding
3. Understanding the spirit of process and accordingly providing required institutional arrangements well in time and write earnestly.
4. Lack of periodic monitoring of the progress
5. Lack of encouragements and censuring mechanism as per the performance
6. Lack of authority for enforcing guidelines over PRIs
7. Coordination mechanism at centre, state and district level
8. Planning and Implementation cell
9. Lack of awareness
10. Delays in preparation and implementation of projects
11. Horizontal and vertical linkage between *panchayat* and implementing agency
12. Inter and intra sectoral coordination to ensure convergence of program based resources

13. Lack of well defined criteria for allocation of funds for annual plan preparation to the districts.
14. Ineffective conduct of SLSC
15. Delay

3.4 Convergence

All resources viz human, financial, and physical and even that of ideas and concepts should tend to move towards one point and which is technically considered as convergence. In planning, convergence of services can be possible when an integrated approach is applied. This convergence is very important for achieving intended outcomes and impacts of the projects proposed in the action plan. But unfortunately more divergence than a convergence is seen at the grassroots level due to reluctance of sharing of powers, responsibilities and resources at the sectoral level. In the past convergence has emerged as a major bottle neck in implementing developmental programmes effectively. Convergence envisaged in C-DAP formulation and its implementation consisted of: a) convergence of programmes /schemes, b) convergence of financial resources c) convergence of departments/disciplines and convergence of efforts of other bodies or institutions like SAUs, MANAGE, NABARD etc .and this can be facilitated by the DPCs and SLSCs. But till date this aspect is weak and it need to be addressed meticulously.

Effective implementation of decentralization and convergence require a major mindset change, which can be done through education, persuasion and force putting all these in a strategic mode.

CHAPTER 4

Modification of the Process

4.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses merits and demerits of the existing guidelines for the district planning in general, and C-DAP in particular. Based on the field observations of the study teams and suggestions emerged during four rounds of working group meetings, appropriate modifications have been suggested for incorporation in to the existing guidelines. The revised guidelines will facilitate conducive enabling environment for decentralisation in the district agricultural planning with an effective participation of PRIs and other stakeholders. At least during the 12th Plan period respective state governments would be in a position to enable the functionaries at district, block/taluk and the grama panchayats to prepare need and resource based perspective plans under the technical support and guidance of the functionaries of the sectoral departments/ professionals. The perspective plans duly approved by the competent authorities (DPCs) should be phased out into annual action plans for effective implementation with assured time bound allocations. Unless this is done in true vigour and spirits the objectives of the 12th Plan can not be translated into reality.

Since agriculture has been the state subject, the states are required to prepare the agriculture development plans for the districts and the state comprehensively cover resources and indicate definite action plans. The RKVY was launched during 2007-08 with an objective of achieving 4 percent growth rate in agriculture and allied sectors by providing cent percent budgetary support to the state agriculture plans. Since it seeks to encourage convergence with schemes like NREGS, SGSY and BRGF, the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Agriculture will together examine the States' overall plan proposals for agriculture and allied sectors as part of the Annual Plan approval exercise.

Presently the crucial departments of Rural Development and Panchayat Raj are headed by single ministry called Ministry of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj at the national level and the same structured also seen in many states for the fact that all the rural development programmes invariably are being implemented at the grassroots level under the active supervision of PRIs. Moreover Rural Development and Agriculture Development are interrelated and inter dependent and therefore the planning for agriculture can be a part of overall of district development plan but for the purpose of effective operationalisation, the

agriculture development plan should be a separate document like C-DAP as suggested under RKVY.

During the 11th Plan the initiatives for the preparation of comprehensive district agricultural plan (C-DAP) were attempted at the instance of Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperation, Government of India. Accordingly, the guidelines for preparation of C-DAPs were issued by the Planning Commission and the states were insisted to prepare agriculture plans invariably for getting full budgetary support for state agricultural plans. But unfortunately most of the plans were prepared by the technical support institutions (TSIs) without active participation of PRIs and sectoral departments for getting fund from the Government of India. These plans have failed to reflect the felt needs and aspirations of the farming community and the local people and thereby, the plans have become wish-list of local leaders and development functionaries. Further, the activities proposed in these plans were neither time-bound nor linked with the resources. The 'gram sabha', as a statutory body, is supposed to act as a 'mini-parliament' at the grassroots level and is expected to prepare, approve and implement all the action plans in accordance with the guidelines of various schemes/programmes of various ministries. However, the micro level studies suggest that the functioning of gram sabah has not been effective and in most of the cases meetings/proceedings have been conducted with out prescribed quorum. The decisions taken at the Gram Sabha by and large by the elite groups hardly reflect the needs and aspirations of the common people.

The '*convergence*' which was crucial and necessary element in planning for mobilising adequate resources and participation from various sectoral departments was missing in most of the C-DAPs. The important flagship programmes of Ministry of Rural Development(MGNREGA & National Waste Land Development Programme) and Planning Commission (National Rain-fed Area Authority –NRAA) are by and large linked with agricultural development, but these have not been converged with the schemes of Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperation. Keeping in view the above deficiencies in the existing methodology of planning, the extant guidelines of C-DAP should be appropriately modified. Therefore, the training modules have to be meticulously designed in accordance with the training needs of the functionaries of PRIs and sectoral departments. There is a need to develop capabilities/expertise in preparation of plans for agricultural development at the three-tiers of Panchayati Raj through appropriate and competent training institutes preferably in the first year of the tenure.

4.2. Operationalization of RKVY

The State Agriculture Department has been mainly the nodal department for the implementation of the RKVY. However, it is found that the ownership of allied departments like animal husbandry, horticulture, fisheries, cooperation etc at times is not assured down the line. For administrative convenience and ease of implementation, the state governments should create an exclusive agency for planning and implementation of the projects under RKVY. At the state level the Director/ Commissioner of Agriculture is the nodal officer to coordinate and implement the RKVY through its district level implementing units. However, there is no uniform pattern in all the states for implementation of RKVY at the district level. Therefore, there is a need to create separate implementing agency with functional autonomy headed by the Director/ Commissioner Agriculture and the state level heads of the sectoral departments should be the members of this agency on deputation for a prescribed period of five years. On similar pattern district level agency should be created at the district level also for effective sectoral coordination and convergence of services/ resources. The nodal agency/Agriculture department should be held responsible for:

- * Preparation of State Agriculture Plans (SAPs) and District Agriculture Plans (DAPs).
- * Effective coordination with various sectoral departments for active participation in planning, implementation and monitoring of various projects under RKVY. Ensuring the internal evaluation of projects by the respective sectoral departments periodically to assess the expected outputs, outcomes and impacts.
- Ensuring timely fund flow to the implementing agencies and submission of progress reports along with utilisation certificates through online system.
- Ensuring timely submission of action plans, duly approved by the state level sanctioning authority (SLSC) and also submission of the progress reports along with utilization certificates to the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation for receiving the funds on time.
- * Establishing an effective I.T. based and web enabled Management Information System (MIS) within a definite time-frame, for maintaining transparency and also enabling others to access the information at any point of time from any part of the country.

- Ensuring the conduct of SLSC on time to approve the shelf of projects proposed/ recommended in the annual district agriculture plans and communicate the decisions of the SLSC to the district level implementing agencies for necessary action by the district level sectoral heads.
- Finalisation and submission of the SAP to the State Planning Department for integrating with the overall State Plans. Thereafter the State Planning Department should present SAP to the Planning Commission as a part of its state plan exercise. Once the approvals are received, the Nodal Agency has to place the Stream-I proposals before the SLSC for consideration, discussion, finalization, and sanction.
- * Ensure finalisation and submission of the agenda along with a gist of the projects, to the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation (DAC) at least 15 days before the meeting of State Level Sanctioning Committee as to enable their representatives to come prepared for effective participation in the SLSC meeting.

4.3. Revision of guidelines for allocation for RKVY

The objective of RKVY is to incentivise the states to provide additional allocation for agriculture and allied sectors. The guidelines are designed in such a way that every year increased outlay has to be earmarked for agriculture and allied sectors.

The issue with additional outlay for agriculture and allied sectors could be the composition of the plan outlay itself. The more increase in total plan outlay may not be translated into sector wise outlay. The increase in total plan outlay could be due to the outlay of Externally Aided projects, Finance Commission Awards, RIDF of NABARD or other tied funds. The increase in **plan outlays should commensurate with the realistic project estimates and absorbing capacity of the sectors.**

The following suggestions are made in the revision of guidelines for state wise allocation.

- (a) A base minimum level of allocation for agriculture and allied sector to be maintained every year by the states may be specified for each state depending on the recent practice of outlay provision as well as the overall agricultural development of the state. This may be evolved by the Planning Commission

- (b) Incentive fund / outlay from RKVY may be linked for the amount provided by the state government over and above the minimum level of outlay fixed for the Agriculture and allied sectors for the state. This portion is the true incentive fund for providing additional allocation by the states to agriculture and allied sectors.
- (c) A new window may be opened for the states where PRIs were involved in project formulation/implementation of RKVY. Around 10% of the outlay may be set apart for this window. The state wise outlay from this 10% may be decided based on the performance of the evidence of involving PRIs in the process/implementation of RKVY projects.
- (d) A district wise outlay may also be earmarked by the Ministry of Agriculture/Planning Commission similar to the practice followed for the Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF) by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj in 250 districts. Unless this earmarking is made it may not be possible to ensure the reasonable allocation to the districts. Norms could be decided for various districts like backwardness in agriculture, food production potential, gross cropped area of the district, gross/net irrigated area etc.

4.4. State Level Sanctioning Committee (SLSC)

The State Level Sanctioning Committee (SLSC), constituted under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary of the State Government, should be made more effective. In many cases only representatives attend meetings. In terms of composition, representation of state based Agricultural Research Organisations, reputed NGOs working in the field of Agriculture, Deputy Commissioners of important districts, and leading farmers be made mandatory. The Panchayati Raj Institutions' involvement also should be mandatory in the implementation of the Scheme as they are part at the planning stage. Here awareness building and capacity building is necessary. Local Technical Support Institutes should be involved. The meetings should be held regularly once in a quarter and the following should be taken care of;

1. Prioritisation of projects at district level.
2. Selection should be done at the State level

Release of Funds

Stream I

It is project-based. The project approach is supposed to have all the essential ingredients of a good project properly considered and included viz., feasibility studies, competencies of the implementing agencies, anticipated benefits that would flow to the farmers, definite time-lines for implementation, etc. However, **this part is weak largely due to lack of manpower and requires strengthening. Provision exists to hire consultants, but its use has not been made. Panel of experts should be created through media and other routes.** More importantly, the release of funds proportion should be hiked and evaluation studies should be made mandatory.

Inventory of assets should be maintained. Invariably it has been observed that assets created are not maintained; not used like water harvesting structures in case of drought. A proportion of funds should be made available for maintenance. The ownership should be built in. It has been found that most assets have no relation to ownership and so quality of asset created and its maintenance is neglected.

Stream II

Stream II processes are conventional; State Planning Department's proposals approved by the Planning Commission receive funds in a usual manner, though only 25% of the funds allocated to a state under the Stream II. **However, the flow is linked to agricultural seasons and captured inter-regional differences in seasons and should be timely released and utilization certificates. The conditionalities are reasonable. However, monitoring is required of use of funds beyond utilization of funds. Process need to be linked to outcome budgeting which is hardly followed. It has also been found that there is no link between the proposals approved by the Planning Commission and what the States subsequently do and the same with .**

4.5. Process of Allocation of the funds

The present system states that the outlay under the scheme would depend upon the amount provided in State Budgets for Agriculture and allied sectors over and above the base line percentage expenditure incurred by the State Government on Agriculture and allied sectors. **This in most cases is low. Allocation should be based on activity mapping as is done in states like Karnataka.**

The guidelines state that the base line has to be a moving average and the average of the previous three years in any given year, excluding the RKVY. The allocation by the Central Government under the scheme to each of the eligible states would be based on the following parameters and weights:

Parameter	Weight
The percentage share of net un-irrigated area in a state to the net unirrigated area of the eligible states. Eligible states are those states that become eligible to avail of the RKVY based on their baseline level of expenditure under the State Plan and preparation of District and State Agricultural Plans.	20%
The projected growth rates to a base year GSDP for Agriculture and allied sectors (say, 2005-06) will be applied to the GSDPs to be attained by the end of the 11th Plan by the States. The parameter will be set in terms of inter state proportion of these GSDPs projected to be reached by the state by the end of the 11 th Plan.	30%
Increase in the total Plan expenditure in Agriculture and allied sectors in the previous year over the year prior to that year.	50%

These weights need to be changed especially when large agriculture area is rainfed. Parameters like drought, floods etc need to be considered as growth rates may vary widely. The increase in plan expenditure should be linked to rate of increase. There is inability of state governments to use funds and that hinders the flow of RKVY funds. The weight of 20% should be linked to some cut off percentage share, say below 30%; 30-60% and 60% plus; (20% to 40%) and this should be linked to achievement

level(30% to 40%). Further, there is need to increase the total plan expenditure in agriculture and allied sectors of the previous year over the year prior to that year by reducing the weight from 50% to 30%.

4.6. Method and Process

The methodology of the C-DAP that focuses on understanding the latent potential for development and identifying initiatives should not be tempered with. **These potentials may be treated as goals to be achieved with the available and additional resources.**

Formation of Agriculture Planning Units

Agriculture Planning requires much of technical support from experts in agriculture and allied sectors. It was expected that Agriculture Planning Units at different levels of Local Bodies would have been set up involving a group of experts from various disciplines relevant to the needs of the area. **This has not happened because of inertia at the State level and lack of such expertise at local level. States may be asked to solicit experts (retired scientist etc) through the use of media and inventory should be prepared of resource persons who can assist in providing technical assistance. Some payment could be earmarked for this purpose.**

There is a need to re-look at the concepts of VAPU and BAPU. **Agriculture Technology Management Agency (ATMA) is established in most of the states of the country and as such ATMA were expected to support and supplement all the functions of DAPU/BAPU. This has largely not happened. It is suggested that greater role be assigned to KVKs even if they need to be strengthened with technical staff. ATMA need to be constituted and activated.**

Data base needs to be strengthened at the local level. Even today no information is available on agriculture and allied sector below the taluk level. Format of RKVY should be institutionalised as CDAP data bank and for this separate funds need to be allocated.

4.7. Technical Support Institution (TSI)

The past record shows that this has not effectively worked as funding was made available to such institutions that followed method of convenience in preparation of CDAPs rather using the technical expertise. Most did not even work in field of agriculture and understood the local conditions. Use of agencies outside the state/ region should be avoided. Most took it as any other project. Need for agencies that can facilitate the process of plan formulation from village upwards rather than prepare the plan itself. TSI should be used for awareness building and training at local levels as expressed in the guidelines. It has not been done thus far. In order to identify potential TSIs there is need to maintain the list of such institutions who have worked in the area of agriculture in particular and rural development in general and this calls for emplaning of these organisations. In carrying such responsibilities the SIRDs are under staffed and ill-equipped to prepare C-DAPs and SAPs.

The fore most issues that urgently require attentions are:

- Setting up of Planning Units and Planning Support Groups at all levels- link fund flow to their formation.
- Use NABARD farmer clubs wherever they are functional.
- Prepare an inventory of SHGs/ NGOs that have capability to participate in plan preparation.
- The NABARDs PLPs should be linked to DAPs as at present there is no link. PLP is independent of DAP requirements.
- In gram sabhas, TSI representative should participate along with agriculture department official.
- Prepare maps of available resources at local level.
- Training/ workshop schedules be prepared and approved by Nodal agency well in advance.
- There is hardly any training material available; priority should be given to it Short films/ documentaries should also be prepared to build awareness at local levels.
- Handholding is not being done as expected. This needed more for lower end farmers.
- TSI should have an ongoing role rather than one time effort.

Plan Plus Software Package prepared by NIC in consultation with Ministry of Panchayati Raj and Planning Commission should be used with the help of District Informatics Officer to facilitate planning process. This should be strengthened and all information be put in public domain free of cost.

District Planning Committees (DPCs) had no role in formulation of Vision of C-DAPs, but largely also in the plan itself. This requires strengthening. The process should start with greater interaction with DPC members.

SWOT analysis should be done at all places/ villages and documentaries should also be prepared to build awareness at local levels/gram sabhas. It should be a continuous process even after the plan has been approved. Strengths and weakness can be properly mapped only if data base is strong.

4.8. Formulation of District Agriculture Plan

DAPU is responsible for preparation of a Comprehensive District Agriculture Plan (C-DAP) with the help of TSI and plan-plus software package from NIC.

The District Planning process

Formulation of Vision statement: Not properly done; should be the task of DPC. No consultations took place.

Information Needs and Analysis: Done in a limited manner. Data base required strengthening. SWOT analysis should be done in each gram sabha and the needs and core sectors should be identified to focus on, for further development. Very little comparison is done with the state level information. Though DAPs are available on web site (not all plans), they and the indices are not shared with public in consultative meetings with the panchayats so that development strategies could be decided collectively.

Discussion on the vision:	Not done. Should be shared at all levels
Preparation of Participatory Panchayat Plans:	Not effectively done. Lack of awareness and involvement solicited and process followed.
Integration of Village Panchayat Plans into block plan- intermediate Level:	Not done. Block plans are not separately prepared. They should be prepared wherein project priorities should be built in.
Integration of block Plans into district plan:	Not done largely. All projects are simply put in the district plan. Priorities are not decided at all and even if they are done in some cases they are not as per the requirements
Approval of DPC	Only in name; only signatures are obtained. There is hardly any involvement of DPC members.
Submission of DAPs to State Government and feedback to district/panchayats:	DAPs are submitted to state government (Agriculture department), but no feed back provided to district/panchayats
Monitoring:	No set monitoring procedures adopted. Proper procedures of process monitoring are required to be laid down.
Social Audit:	No social audit conducted or built in by the states. It is being desisted even in MGNREGA. Proper procedures of process monitoring are required to be laid down.

Need to put in place Training of Trainers' (ToT) for the Block/Taluk level Plan Coordinators by agency coordinating, supervising and analysing the panchayat/village level data.

The guidelines state that it is important that all the planning units in the district appreciate the participative methodology followed so that a feeling of ownership is created. The vision details should be given to all the panchayats and they should discuss this in their meeting. If needed, TSI should provide the explanations needed by them on the document. The outcome of these discussions should be given publicity in each village. Simultaneously, the block level Agricultural Planning Units who have been trained at the district level should provide training to the village/panchayat data enumerators and planners. However, field experiences reveal that **planning units do not formally exist and even if they hardly into functioning mode. The TSIs have been playing a limited role and surprisingly, no feed back/consultation done/ no sharing of information with people at large.**

4.9. Preparation of Participatory Panchayat Plans

The functioning of gram sabha itself is in question largely. Most places quorums are not complete and signatures are obtained after the meetings. General strengthening is required for full participation of farmers, women, landless etc. PRIs are supposed to prepare MGNREGA plans and few others. All these exercises should be converged at the planning stage.

There is lot of ad-hocism in arriving at financial requirements at the district level and below. Year-wise phasing and planning is mostly lacking. Institutional mechanisms required to be put in place and strengthened. SLSC monitoring of the process is appeared to be weak. Project planning/ list are largely devoid of local natural resources and technological possibilities in each district. State resource flow to district is not built in to the DAP. In SAP state component is added. Other programmes are least built in to the plan. Convergence has to be at planning stage- commitment of resources by other departments etc. Sectoral segment is weak in the DAPs and the District segments in the State Plan. Tied and untied grants from the Central and State Finance Commissions hardly find mention.

One to one interface between SAP and District plan is lacking. This is also true of national plan and state plans. This is to do more with systems and organization of departments. There is too much of centralization. States do not like to innovate largely. If we want one to one correspondence between National, State and District levels then top down targets needs to be set and others things factored in or what comes from below is integrated into upper levels and then targets are set.

4.10. Some Suggestions

In order to make the whole exercises effective and meaningful, the following suggestions are offered

- C-DAP should be made a basic document for Agricultural Development of the district, which should include all interventions in the Agriculture and Allied Sectors. No development intervention other than the one identified and included in the C-DAP should be taken up under any scheme by any nodal department.
- The CDAP should be prepared based on resource endowments and potentials of the district and based on a detailed needs analysis, without any relation to a specific scheme or a programme.
- The entire exercise of C-DAP formulation should be in participatory mode with involvement of all stakeholders in agricultural development. Awareness programmes and workshops have to be organized at Village Panchayath Ward levels, Panchayath level, Block level and District level with facilitation by Technical Support Groups / Technical Support Institutions.
- Constitution of VAPUs, BAPU, DAPU with representation of all stakeholders should be made mandatory and appropriate Government orders issued in this regard.
- Vision document of the district should be prepared and exhibited in all the offices of the Department.

- All the 10 stages specified in the C-DAP Manual should be scrupulously monitored at all levels. An independent agency should conduct evaluation of the activities already undertaken. During the 12th Five Year Plan, there should be a system of concurrent monitoring and evaluation of the programme through posting of “observers” in a manner similar to the system adopted by Election Commission of India. The observers can be officials from Govt. of India and officials from other States.
- An exclusive mechanism for effective delivery of agricultural extension service has to be built up so that training programmes and dissemination of information and technology to the farming community gets a boost.

CHAPTER 5

Decentralization Planning in Agriculture : State Level Experiences

During the 11th plan, the experience in preparing C-DAPs was quite varied across the states in approach, methodology, process and applications. It can be seen that many states did not adhere to the guidelines provided in the manual as well as the prime requirement of building the C-DAPs using participatory bottom-up approach within the frame of decentralized planning. The process of consultation at various levels was not strictly adhered to with a few exceptions. Among the probable difficulties, the prominent ones are: decentralization/ devolution of powers, functions and finances PRIs and unusual delay in the formation of DPCs in many states while the same were not constituted in some states for various reasons. Wherever they were constituted they were not functioning to the desired competence; and there was hardly any capacity building or hand holding exercise. The prescribed planning methodology and the guidelines were not understood at various levels of the PRIs and sectoral departments. The horizontal linkage between PRIs and line departments also posed some hurdles. All these inadequacies existed even when the scheme was introduced. However a few states could overcome the problems of under-preparedness to provide good results.

Keeping the diversified experience across states, the working group decided to constitute small teams to visit and document the experiences at state level for a few states. Accordingly, teams visited some of the states such as Assam (visit), Punjab (visit), Kerala (workshop), Himachal Pradesh (visit), Bihar (visit) and Tamilnadu (visit and workshop). The major observations/ findings captured through the visits and workshops are discussed below:

5.1: Decentralization Planning in Agriculture – A Case of Assam¹

The state of Assam accounts for 2.4 percent of the total geographical area of the country and about 2.3 percent of the population of India. The state has 25 plain districts and two hill districts, 219 Development Blocks 2202 Gaon Panchayats and 25124 villages. Agriculture is the

¹ This note is based on the information given by Dr. H.S. Sur, Consultant, Planning Commission and the Team consisting of Dr. Sangeeta Shroff and Dr. Soumen Biswas, which visited Assam. The responsibility of the facts presented here is entirely of the authors.

dominant economic activity with about 53 percent of the workforce engaged in this sector. About 83 percent of farmers are small and marginal.

A field visit was conducted to the state of Assam to obtain first hand information on implementation and operationalization of decentralized planning in Agriculture. Discussion with state level officials revealed that C-DAPs were prepared for all 26 districts. In all districts District Agriculture Planning Unit (DAPU) was constituted through notification from Governor of Assam with President of Zilla Panchayat as Chairperson and Deputy Commissioner as Vice Chairperson. The District Agricultural Officer is member secretary of DAPU. Besides DAPU had 11 other members who were district level officials from various departments, representatives of Self-Help groups, etc. The DAPUs were functional in the state and CDAP was approved by Chairman of DAPU.

Besides, DAPU constituted in every district of the state, Block Agricultural Planning Units (BAPUs) were also constituted in each Block, through notification by Deputy Commissioner of respective districts. The President of the Anchalik Panchayat was Chairperson of BAPU, Block Development Officer was Convener and Agricultural Development Officer was Member Secretary. In addition there were 10 to 15 other members who were representatives of various line departments. It was further observed that Panchayat Agriculture Planning Units (PAPUs) were constituted in the Blocks, through notification by Deputy Commissioner with President of Gram Panchayat as President of PAPU and Village level Extension Worker (VLEW) as Member Secretary. Other members of PAPU were representatives of Self Help Groups, landless labourers, etc.

From the above, it can be easily observed that the state of Assam had constituted all institutions for decentralized planning in order to assist Panchayati Raj institutions. The C-DAPs were prepared taking into consideration the need based micro-plans which evolved out of detailed survey and discussions at the grass root level of each block by line departments with the aim to improve the socio-economic conditions in each district. The programmes outlined in RKVY were normally approved by PAPU and thereafter by BAPU before finally getting approval of DAPU. The Gram Sabhas were actively involved in the welfare of the villages and meetings were held at least five times in a year. The problems faced in the villages were identified and possible solutions were discussed. With the help of technical expertise, appropriate

intervention was made so that farmers could achieve maximum benefits from their lands. Schemes to be proposed in C-DAP were also discussed in Gram Sabha meetings.

Assam Agricultural University served as a Technical Support Institution (TSI) to facilitate preparation of C-DAP. Capacity building was undertaken and efforts were made to involve people at the grassroot level to participate in planning process. Workshops at the zonal level were conducted once a month and training was also imparted at village level.

After preparation of C-DAPs for all districts, the SAP was prepared which was an aggregation of all C-DAPs. Some schemes were prepared at state level such as funds for soil testing laboratories, etc. The funds received under RKVY were used for major interventions in irrigation (mainly for construction of shallow tube wells and low lift pumps), farm mechanization, installation of power lines at seed farms, strengthening of soil testing laboratories, soil health, green manuring and marketing support to farmers through auto vans. Projects were implemented in the locations from where they evolved but modifications were made in disbursement as the funds desired were more than funds actually received.

Assam has recorded improved productivity of rice which is gradually increasing over the years. The state achieved a record yield of 1969 kg per hectare of rice in 2010-11 and was awarded Krishi Karman award for best performance in producing foodgrains among group 2 states. A field visit was made in Kamrup (Rural) district, Rani Development Block to observe the scientific cultivation of winter paddy, under the programme of “Extending Green Revolution to Assam”. The demonstration plot was of 110 farms totaling 100 hectares. All inputs were provided to farmers participating in the scheme, provided they had facility for flow irrigation. The standing crop was scientifically cultivated and farmers who normally reap a yield of 3000 kg per hectare were now expecting the yield of paddy to be about 5400 kg per hectare, at the time of harvest. Such demonstration plots were selected mainly along the main road so that these plots can attract the attention of other farmers who can then come forward and participate in such schemes. This will go a long way to further increase the yield of paddy in Assam.

Besides foodgrains, Assam’s agriculture is becoming more dynamic through diversification to high value horticultural crops such as pineapple, banana, etc. A field visit to Darrang district, Bilpar block, revealed vast potential in Assam’s horticulture, mainly with

respect to banana cultivation. Government support through convergence of various schemes enabled the conversion of fallow land into banana orchards which has changed the socio-economic fabric of the farmers in the village. A cluster of farmers were advised through extension services to construct farm ponds. The soil which was lifted after construction of farm pond was used for banana cultivation. Funds under National Horticulture Mission were used to promote banana cultivation. The water harvested in the farm pond had multiple uses. Besides being a source of protective irrigation for banana cultivation, it was also used for fish breeding. The *algae* in the water are a rich source of nitrogen and served as an important micro nutrient for banana plants. An added feature of banana cultivation in Bilpar village is its *Malbhog* variety which is in great demand in local markets. Also, Banana Grower's Society is promoting cultivation of banana which is being taken up by youth who consider it to be a profitable venture rather than cultivating traditional crops such as paddy. While banana cultivation is relatively lucrative for farmers, the problem faced by them was transport to distant local markets and low share in retail price. Funds from RKVY are used for providing transport facilities to the growers. Further, the government officials also have plans to converge this horticulture venture with National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme and other schemes so that labor is available for digging farm ponds.

Discussion with government officials in the department of agriculture and allied departments as well as interaction with farmers revealed several constraints facing the agricultural economy of Assam. Although there is vast potential for irrigation, major portion of gross cropped area is rainfed which leads to low productivity. The rainfall though on the higher side is not evenly spread throughout the year and there are periods of long dry spells in the rainy season. Added to this is the problem of floods and poor drainage system which badly affect the standing crop, especially winter paddy, which is the main crop in the state. All major irrigation projects fail due to technical snags and shortage of electricity. There is also a shortage of quality planting material and Assam Agricultural University is unable to meet the requirements. In case of certified seeds, even if there is an adequate supply, there is shortage of personnel to certify them. This causes a severe constraint as certified seeds are an important input to increase yield levels. Farmers are reluctant to use fertilizers and fertilizer consumption is only 67 Kg per hectare against an all India average of 129 kg per hectare. Discussion with ATMA officials

revealed that the standing crop is endangered by wild animals. Elephants also cause huge damage to the crop.

Government officials reported that fund infusion is very low compared to demand and there is also delay in release of funds by state government. In order to ensure timely agricultural operations, it would be beneficial for the funds to be released directly to the implementing agency. Despite low funds availability and their timeliness issues, the productivities of crops as well as development of “Agriculture” are exemplary! Could this be attributed to natural resources alone or C-DAP process?

Another major problem in Assam’s agricultural sector is lack of post harvest infrastructure and poor marketing and transport facilities. Government intervention in marketing also has problems. Rice is the major crop but procurement operations by Food Corporation of India (FCI) stop by the month of April every year. In Assam however, summer paddy is harvested in May and thus farmers are unable to make sales to FCI. The Minimum Support price which provides incentive to farmers and helps to minimize their risk is thus ineffective.

While fisheries can be undertaken as an important economic activity, the state faces huge shortage of fish feed and not even 20 percent of actual requirement is available. Mustard oil cake which is the main ingredient of fish feed is in shortage. Dairy activities are carried out mainly by smallholders using indigenous cattle and buffalo and hardly any cross bred cows are maintained. Further there is the problem of shortage of fodder, access to livestock services as well as marketing bottlenecks. This results in low productivity in dairy sector because of which demand for milk outstrips supply.

Overall, it was observed that all round efforts are being made to revitalize Assam’s agricultural sector and government intervention through various schemes, convergence and flagship programmes have given a boost to the agricultural sector. Some major schemes implemented were National Food Security Mission, RKVY, Horticulture Mission for North East and Himalayan states, National Mission on Medicinal Plants, etc. These schemes have substantially improved the performance of the agricultural sector in Assam during the first three years of the Eleventh Five Year Plan. The performance of the agricultural sector was very dismal during the Tenth Five Year Plan with State Domestic Product from agriculture and allied sector

being as low as 0.3 percent per annum while growth of the State Domestic Product was 4.5 percent per annum. The trend however began to reverse during the Eleventh Five Year when the agricultural sector grew at the rate of 4.1 percent per annum during the first three years of the Eleventh Plan while the overall growth rate was 6 percent. However, there exists tremendous scope to further promote growth in this sector by spreading green revolution to the east, and also trying to capitalize on allied activities which have potential but lagging behind. This will enable economic upliftment of the rural areas and facilitate rural transformation.





5.2: Decentralization Planning in Agriculture – A Case of Punjab²

Punjab occupies only a small area (1.5%) of the geographical area of the country, but it is the largest single provider of food grains to the country. This emphasizes the importance of the state to the country with regard to agriculture

The state of Punjab has geographical area of 50.562 lakh ha of which 96 % is rural area. It is divided into four administrative divisions and twenty two districts, 143 blocks and 12278 Villages. It has a population of 2.77Cr 66% of which resides in rural areas. It has a high average population density (484 persons per sqkm) with maximum (805 persons per sq km) in the district of Ludhiana.

Punjab has registered a growth rate of 6.55, 7.84 and 7.78 per cent during 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11, the GSDP was 175064, 199459 and 228754 Cr and per capita yearly income of Rs 55504, 62153 and 70072 (at current prices) in the respective years. The contribution of agriculture to the State Domestic Product as in other states in India is showing a decline over the years. Where the share of agriculture and allied activities to State Domestic product was 37 percent in 1999-2000, this share gradually declined to 25.5 percent in 2009-10.

It has Net Area Sown of 41.71 Lakh ha with area sown more than once 37.41lakh ha and Cropping Intensity of 190 %.Punjab has fertile alluvial plain with rivers and an extensive irrigation canal system. Its average elevation is 300 meters above sea level, with a range from 180 meters in the southwest to more than 500 meters around the northeast border.

Punjab is divided into three distinct regions on the basis of soil types; south-western, central, and north-eastern. Punjab's climate is characterized by extreme hot and extreme cold conditions. Annual temperatures in Punjab range from –2 to 40 °C (min/max), but can reach 47 °C (117 °F) in summer and –4 °C in winter. Average annual rainfall ranges between 960 mm in the sub-mountain region and 460 mm in the plains. Punjab has three seasons: Summer (April to June), Monsoon season (July to September), when a majority of rainfall occurs and winter (December to February), when temperatures typically fall as low as 40°F. There is a transitional

² This portion is based on the report given by Dr. H. S. Sur, Consultant, Planning Commission, who visited the State of Punjab. The responsibility of the facts presented here is entirely of the author.

period between winter and summer in March and early April, as well as a transitional season between monsoon season and winter in October and November

Wheat and Rice are main crops. Other important crops are rice, cotton, sugarcane, pearl millet, maize, barley. It also raises sugarcane, fruits and vegetables. Punjab produces 14% of India's cotton, 20% of India's wheat, and 9% of India's rice. In Punjab per hectare consumption of fertilizer is 177 kg as compared to 90 kg at national level.

The agriculture of the State mainly (90%) depends on the ground water. Rapidly falling water table and 'green revolution fatigue' worry the State. About 17.3 percent of Net Sown area is chronically flood prone and 3.4 percent is chronically drought prone. Estimates are that groundwater is falling by a meter or more per year. Major reason for green revolution fatigue are: lower public investment, which resulted in non-matching R&D and outreach programmes required to sustain achievements of green revolution and lower priority to post harvest management, storage infrastructure, and value addition interventions. The type of major industries include the manufacture of scientific instruments, electrical goods, machine tools, textiles, tourism, sewing machines, sports goods, starch, fertilizers, bicycles, and the processing of pine oil and sugar but there is hardly any industry which supports its produce. Because of wrong policy and planning interventions, youth is getting weaned from agriculture, which is the sole skill of the majority population.

Planning, which is the first step to development and growth, is receiving least priority. It is paradoxical that when a small ceremony is planned all-out efforts are made to reach out to as many as possible so that some thing vital to the ceremony is not missed. But when we come to the planning for an area for development we even over look or avoid the stakeholders. Having sufficient evidence in favour of the need of implementing decentralized planning and development, the country adopted decentralized approach. Suitable amendments in constitution of the country and desired support was provided to the states to implement decentralized bottom up approach of planning so that maximum consultations especially with the stakeholders at the lowest level of PRI are held.

A visit to the state of Punjab was undertaken to obtain first hand information on implementation and operationalization of decentralized planning in Agriculture. The focus was

to understand if the instruments of decentralized planning are in place. Has the process of planning followed the guidelines in formulating C-DAPs and SAP of the State? Are stakeholders aware of the initiatives of decentralized planning and its importance? Following observations were made.

District Planning Committee (DPC)

DPC is a mandatory body for decentralized planning in accordance with Article 243ZD of the Constitution of India for formulation of district plan. The State showed low enthusiasm to implement decentralization is clear from the fact that the State of Punjab enacted, “The Punjab District Planning Committee Act 2005” in November 2005 and delayed formulation of DPCs till August 2009. Further the DPCs are yet not fully functional /viable. The chair-persons of DPCs are to be nominated by the State Government therefore process implementation is weak in the spirit of decentralization.

Agriculture Planning Units (APUs)

Constitution of Agriculture Planning Units *viz* District Agriculture Planning Units (DAPUs) and Block Agriculture Planning Units (BAPUs), have not been formulated. The

information provided by the representative of Director Agriculture showed constitution of DAPU and BAPU (See Box) was taken to the SLSC meeting on January 23, 2009. The proceedings of this SLSC show that Agriculture Planning Units will be reconstituted after including non-official

Constitution of Block Agriculture Planning Unit (BAPU) in Punjab		
1	Sub-Divisional Magistrate	Chairperson
2	Agriculture Officer	Secretary
3	Block Development & Panchayat Officer	Member
4	Asst Director Hort/ Hort. Dev. Officer	Member
5	Assistant Soil Conservation Officer	Member

Constitution of District Agriculture Planning Unit (DAPU) in Punjab		
SNo	Officer/other	Designation in DPC
1	Deputy Commissioner	Chairperson
2	Chief Agriculture Officer	Secretary
3	District Panchayat Development Officer	Member
4	Dy. Director Horticulture	Member
5	Dy. Soil Conservation Officer	Member
6	District Mandi Officer	Member
7	District Forest Officer	Member
8	Dy. Director (An Husbandry)	Member
9	Dy. Director (Dairy)	Member
10	Dy. Director 9Fishery)	Member
11	Scientists from KVK/ Reg Res St of SAU	Member

members. No further action is available yet. However, a weak will of the state in implementation of decentralization is reflected from the constitution of APUs when one finds in place of people's representative a government official, the Deputy Commissioner and Sub-Divisional Magistrate as the Chair-persons of DAPU and BAPU respectively.

Gram Sabha (GS)

Gram Panchyat (GP) is the basic unit of planning at the grassroot level. Gram Panchyat consults Gram Sabha in identification and prioritization of problems and felt needs. By virtue of its being the first rung of the ladder of PRI, Gram Sabha assumes greater importance. At this level, a large number of people will be consulted and the real felt needs are expected to emerge. In decentralization, importance of GS has been felt and even highlighted in the constitution. Unfortunately, it was found that despite political decentralization, the power to address economic and social requirements is still very limited at this level in the State.

It was found that little efforts have been made to inform people with respect to their role in decentralized planning. My interaction with people at Village Dhamana, Block Nurpur Bedi, district Ropar Nagar & Ballawal Saunkhry, district Nawanshar showed that what to say of GS even block and district level panchayats need to impart awareness and do capacity building.

Role of consultations at lowest level or farmer level in planning and executing works is immense. It was amply demonstrated during ushering of Green Revolution in the state. No doubt technology and its dissemination played important role but more important role was played by closer interaction or farmer to farmer interaction. Farmer's confidence was won and they were made partner in the initiative. Now if there is any indication of reduced contribution from agriculture to the total economy of the state, one major reason to this is weak or loose contact between farmer and public sector support.

Comprehensive District Agriculture Plan (C-DAP) and State Agriculture Plan (SAP) and their operationalization

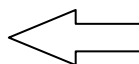
Punjab has prepared C-DAPs for all the districts. However, these were prepared in decentralized mode only partially. These C-DAPs have been aggregated into SAP. However, projects for execution are not fully addressed from the SAP/C-DAPs.

Awareness about the process of decentralization

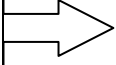
Panch and *Surpanch* gathered at the meeting were little aware about the process of decentralization and their role in this. Even member of District Planning Committee, Mrs Bhupinder Kaur Dhamana, who could be contacted at in Nurpur Bedi was not aware. It looks the exercise of C-DAP was more focused on qualifying for funds from RKVY than a sincere effort of implementing decentralization.



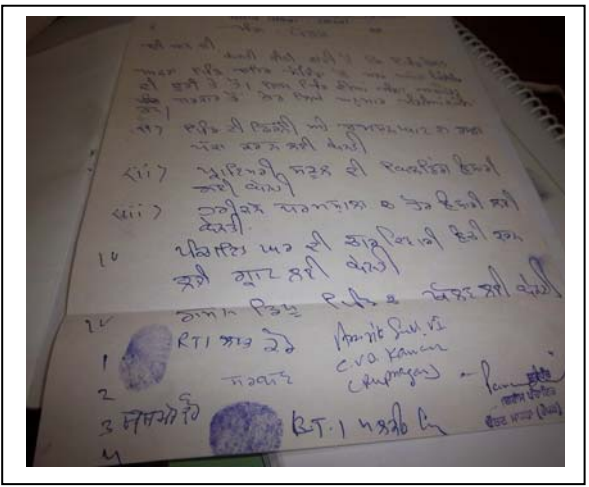
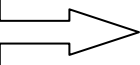
Meeting with Panch, Surpanch at office of CAO, Rupnagar



Mrs BhupinderKaur, Member DPC, CAO & JDA



A facsimile of Resolution of Panchayat





Farmers at vill
Dhamana, NurpurBedi
in the house of
member DPC

Meeting at ZRSKA, Ballawal
Saukhri, Nawanshar



ZRSKA, Ballawal
Saunkhri, Nawanshar



5.3 Decentralization Planning in Agriculture – A Case of Bihar³

A two member team visited Bihar and had discussions with Agriculture Production Commissioner, Shri A.K. Sinha on operationalization of decentralized planning in Agriculture and Allied Sectors. The team also had a series of discussions with heads of sectoral departments. When asked about the comprehensive District Agriculture Plan (C-Dap), APC has mentioned that the department got the C-DAP prepared by some Technical Support institute. In fact the C-DAP was supposed to be prepared in-house i.e. by the department and as per the guideline provided by Planning Commission. Thus it was a clear violation of the instructions of Planning Commission.

When the team members inquired as to why the plan was not prepared as per the guidelines, APC could not give any satisfactory reply. According to APC, the process as mentioned in the guidelines would have taken very long time. Had the State followed the guidelines there would not have been any agricultural plan for implementation. According to opinion of the team members, the explanation put forward by APC was an unacceptable excuse.

A meeting of all Heads of the Departments of Agriculture and Allied Sectors was convened with a view to explain the purpose of a visit of the members of working group and the importance of the C-DAP designed as per the guidelines provided by Planning Commission. Majority of the officers were in complete agreement that the Planning process initiated at village level will certainly produce a very good need based and comprehensive plan which can accommodate the programmes best suited to location specific potential and their requirements.

Shri, Arvinder Singh, Director of Agriculture, has given a detailed presentation on ongoing schemes and programmes in the State and various extension activities. The presentation was really very much impressive and informative, and adequate enough to have a cross section of the activities across the districts in the State. The only thing which came to the notice that the entire planning was done with the top-down approach, exactly opposite to the methodology provided in the guidelines of C-DAP.

³ This portion is based on the report given by Dr. A.K. Dixit and Mr. K. Raganathan, Members, Working Group, who visited the State of Bihar. The responsibility of the facts presented here is entirely of the authors.

A field visit to Gaya district was arranged and preliminary discussions were held with all district heads of line departments. The team visited the village Satgharva, where Paddy was cultivated on a large scale with SRI (System of Rice Intensification) method of planting. Local elected representatives were unaware of whether C-DAP prepared in the district. The team also contacted village Sarpanch, farmers and local extension workers to know their understanding and views on C-DAP, almost similar reaction could be seen that they were also not aware of it, but certainly when they were explained in detail, they got delighted and showed their willingness to participate in the process starting from (VAPU) Gram Sabha. This feedback was so much important for team members to believe that the methodology drafted in the guidelines was absolutely perfect and leaves no room for any type of apprehension as expressed by some of the high level officials at the State level. A visit to Jahanabad district was arranged with the meeting with District Panchayat President who was unaware of C-DAP.

Thereafter a meeting of all district heads of line departments, ATMA officials, Krishi Vigyan Kendras, NABARD and local NGOs was convened, wherein the objectives and importance of C-DAP was explained in detail. The officials gave their feedback and most of them have agreed that the C-DAP if prepared as per the said guideline, it will be very, easy for them to implement the programmes and schemes prepared out of the participatory process involving the beneficiary farmers and all stakeholders.

The District Collector, Jahanabad when learnt about the visit of the members of working group called on the team members and shared his views not only on C-DAP, but all other activities going on in the district. According to him, he was fully aware about the C-DAP guidelines issued by Planning Commission and expressed his sincere willingness to contribute in the process especially at district level planning unit (DAPU), if directions in this regard are issued by the authorities at the state level.

The wrap-up meeting was held in the office of Director of Agriculture, Bihar State with Shri Arvinder Singh, Director of Agriculture. He was briefed about two days field visit to Gaya and Jahanabad district. He was also briefed about the opinion collected from various stakeholders at different levels involved in the process of C-DAP preparation, wherein most of them liked the idea of C-DAP as per the guideline provided by Planning Commission.

Persons Contacted and discussion held with

- 1.) Agricultural Production Commissioner.
- 2.) Director of Agriculture
- 3.) Heads of Departments of all line departments
- 4.) Technical Support Institutes
- 5.) ATMA officials
- 6.) Vice-Chancellor of Agricultural University
- 7.) N.G.O. PRADAN etc.
- 8.) M.L.A.
- 9.) District Collector
- 10.) District Panchayat President
- 11.) Sarpanch
- 12.) NABARD officials
- 13.) Farmers including women farmers.

Findings in brief are as follows:

- C-DAP was not prepared in the State as per the guidelines issued by Planning Commission.
- District Agricultural Plan was prepared by some Technical Support Institute, where the methodology contained in the guidelines was not followed.
- Gram Sabhas were not held for the purpose of plan preparation at village level (VAPU).
- It could be seen that there was an apprehension among State level officials that the process as mentioned in the guidelines would have taken very long time and perhaps the State would not have any plan for implementation of various programmes.
- The apprehension was found to be totally hypothetical, since the planning process was not at all initiated even in one district as a pilot project.
- The farmers and stakeholders were totally deprived of their legitimate right to participate and contribute in the planning process which would have definitely proved much beneficial in improving their socio economic and livelihood status.

5.4: Decentralization Planning in Agriculture – A Case of Himachal Pradesh⁴

Panchayati Raj system in HP was established in a statutory form under the provision of the HP Panchayati Raj Act. At present there are 3243 Gram Panchayats, 77 Panchayat Samithies (intermediate level) and 12 zila parishads in the State. There is a separate Minister for Panchayati Raj. Gram panchayat is constituted for a village or a group of villages having population ranging from 1000 to 5000. The Chairperson of DPC is the Speaker or Minister or Deputy Speaker chosen by the State Government. The Deputy Commissioner is the Secretary of the respective DPC.

PRIs are preparing plans of two districts where BRGF is implemented, viz, Chamba and Simour districts, and DOC approves the plan. All the other panchayats are preparing plans in respect of untied funds available with them and these plans are approved by the Gram Sabha.

HP has prepared C-DAPs for all 12 districts and SAP in 2009-10. Detailed exercise were undertaken for the preparation of C-DAPs and SAP. Professional institutions were engaged for the preparation of these documents. The Budget prepared for SAP during 11th Five Year plan was Rs. 3540 crores, from RKVY and comprehensive budgetary requirement was estimated to be Rs. 6214.25 crores. The value of output from different sectors as well as growth rates was projected in the document.

Major issues raised in the discussion with Director of Agriculture and Senior Officers are as follows -

- Change of formula for allocation – HP is providing about 12.5 percent of plan allocation to Agriculture from State Plan. Since higher amount is already budgeted, incremental increase is not possible from State plan, which is hindering the eligibility from RKV for the state. The suggestion is to revisit the formula of allocation which is reasonable. Modification of the norm may be considered in 12th plan.
- Another suggestion is about incentives for states which are already providing higher allocation to agriculture.

⁴ This portion is based on the report given by the Member of the Working Group who visited the State of Himachal Pradesh. The responsibility of the facts presented here is entirely of Dr . P.Rajasekharan who visited the State..

- C-DAP and SAP linkage are ensured in project selection. Even though a higher amount was projected in CDAPs and SAP, the project selections are stated to be linked to these documents.
- Convergence with schemes of other departments like Animal husbandry and Fisheries are ensured.
- Very poor linkage/involvement of Panchayati Raj institution in formulation as well as implementation of RKVY.
- Reduction of number of schemes is required for improving delivery.
- There is a perception that the RKVY is over monitored.

The team visited Shimla and Solan districts and interacted with farmers and women groups who have been practicing protected cultivation, vegetable cultivation, livestock and marketing etc. RKVY could result in impact on the livelihood for farmers in the areas visited. Funds were invested in asset creation as well as improvement of livelihood.

Observations based on field visit are as follows -

- More linkage with PRIs has to be established. Whenever PRIs are having functionaries more funds may be earmarked for implementation through PRIs. Project formulation also, more discussion could be held with PRIs.
- Change of allocation norm is needed for the States providing higher share in agriculture from State plan. Incentive mechanism may be developed for such states and the norm may be revised.
- More focus on infrastructure is needed.
- Thin spreading could be avoided and focus on larger projects.

5.5 Decentralization Planning in Agriculture – A Case of Tamil Nadu⁵

Field visit was organized in close coordination with Department of Agriculture, Govt. of Tamilnadu. It was found that Department of Agriculture had effectively utilized the resources allocated by the Central Government under various schemes in general and RKVY in particular. The initiatives taken up by the State Government for strengthening the decentralization of planning process created desired impact at various levels of development administration. Most of the farmers during the field visit shared their experiences and expressed satisfaction over the new initiatives under RKVY such as seed multiplication process, farm mechanization, promotion of system of rice intensification (SRI) and seed multiplication. It was felt that Agri. clinic support programme through cooperative structure was already functional in several places. ‘SRI’ method of paddy cultivation was found to be quite prevalent with effective demonstration approach under RKVY. Study team had also interacted with the resource persons who help in preparation of C-DAPs and ascertained the methodology and approach adopted.

It was found that decentralisation of district planning process in agriculture sector has already been in operation in terms of policy awareness at the district level. However the guidelines thereof have not yet percolated down the line due to lack of media advocacy from the state headquarter and active participation of village, block and district level committees. The functionaries of PRIs and Rural Development Department need to be sensitized on adherence to the guidelines of various schemes through periodic refresher training programmes. The Department of Rural Development and Department of Panchayati Raj should work in close collaboration to ensure convergence of services and coordination in planning and implementation of various rural development programmes in general and agriculture in particular.

The preparation of C-DAP needed accurate data at various levels of PRIs and sectoral departments and it should be updated periodically to find out the changes in the profile of the district due to the impact of various schemes implemented over a period of time.

⁵ This portion is based on the report given by the Member of the Working Group who visited the State of Tamil Nadu. The responsibility of the facts presented here is entirely of Dr Nagendra P. Singh and Dr M. Mallappa who visited the State

Participation of stakeholders at Gram Sabha was found crucial and important to identify and prioritize the needs and also to find out the workable solutions. The need for convergence with the ongoing schemes was realized as to get more funds for the Panchayat. Accordingly, at the time of plan preparation the shelf of projects should be identified meticulously based on the need and resource potential and also availability of financial resources from various schemes.

C-DAPs were prepared for all the districts except for the Nilgiri district and the Chennai and the projects approved by the SLSC were implemented in true spirit with effective participation of the farmers and other stakeholders.

The State Agriculture Plan (SAP) was also prepared by consolidation of all C-DAPs duly approved by the SLSC and the same was implemented as per the guidelines of RKVY.

Modification of the Process

Various committees at the grass root level have to be strengthened and they should maintain the base line particulars at the grass root level and regularly update the information so as to facilitate the preparation of development plan. Besides, the village development plans should be wholistic in nature covering all the sectors of development instead of confining to agriculture sector alone.

Convergence of Inter and Intra department programmes have to be attempted in its proper perspective. Besides, the attainment of convergence among the schemes should be stated explicitly by identifying all potential options for convergence. Further, convergent approach within the sector and outside sector should also be attempted. This is possible by constituting different committees at three tiers of Panchayati Raj that would draw up on the linkage with other rural development functionaries. It would help in facilitating a closer dialogue with the all stakeholders and optimizing the use of resources.

Way Forward

The district level plan has been able to capture the spirit of decentralized planning and its applicability. However, before launching the plan, sufficient time frame and institutional arrangements have to be provided for the preparation and implementation.

- A dynamic and well knitted working relationship between Technical Support Institutions, Government line Departments and local bodies have to be established before the preparation of the plan.
- Difficulties in the allotment of funds on time and proper empowerment / devolution of powers should be taken care of.
- Implementation must be closely monitored by the Village Committees comprising of beneficiaries and other crucial stakeholders.
- Linkages between panchayat and the other development departments have to be streamlined, strengthened and institutionalized.
- Effective capacity building and information sharing among the stake holders including local bodies should be given adequate importance
- Monitoring and evaluation cell has to be strengthened at district and State Level for systematic observation of events, analysis and correction of actions wherever needed.
- Monitoring and evaluation cell should facilitate mid-term evaluation at the end of First Year and by the external agency at the end of Fifth Year and also social audit to facilitate publicity and maintenance of transparency.

The spirit of coordination at the ground level might not be different from other states ,in general. However, the process for preparation of Comprehensive District Agriculture Plan (C-DAP), has been a difficult task. The Agricultural University which acted as a TSI for preparation of C-DAP had facilitated conducive environment for effective participation of PRIs, Heads of Sectoral Departments and other stakeholders. Field visit revealed that multiple agencies have stepped up their operation with greater community participation to make best use of RKVY resources in a given time frame. Of course, the

spirit of decentralization has not adequately been spread throughout the breadth and length of the State and therefore, efforts should be made to ensure regular capacity building programmes, transparency, accountability, effective inter / intra-sectoral co-ordination and convergence of services / schemes. .

5.6: Outcome of the Workshop on Decentralised Planning in Agriculture – Kerala

A workshop was organized to discuss the issues related to decentralised planning in agriculture with various stakeholders including PRIs at Institute of Management in Government (IMG). The workshop was inaugurated by Sri. K. Jayakumar IAS, Additional Chief Secretary and Agriculture Production Commissioner (APC). All the 14 District Panchayat Presidents, three representatives of Block Panchayats and three representatives of Grama Panchayats participated in the meeting apart from the line department officials and other key experts. In the inaugural address, APC had mentioned about the positive side of RKVY in allowing flexibility for the states and some of the key achievements. He stressed the need for improvement in the quality of projects, regular capacity building programmes and formulation of integrated projects benefiting more than one Gram Panchayats.

Additional Chief Secretary and Director, IMG Sri. S.M. Vijayanand IAS reiterated the need for linkage between State plan and Plans of Local Self Government Institution.. He further highlighted the shortage of innovative ideas in Agriculture, absence of linkage and co-ordination between ATMA and DPC, overburdening of administrative works and also absence of useful data at panchayat level for planning purpose. He suggested to have one plan for Local Self Government (LSG), State, NREGS and CSS in 12th plan. at panchayat level. The need for effective convergence between LSGIs and NREGS was also recognized to mobilize adequate resources and also avoid the duplication of projects. He also recognized the need for designing participatory methodology / module for multilevel planning within the decentralized frame, effective mechanism for measuring the performance of various projects. He quoted some of the successful model of Wadakkancherry block panchayat in convergence.

The following suggestions were discussed.

- There is a need to set up District Level Implementation Committee (DLIC) chaired by the District Panchayat President. Such a DLIC was established in Wayanad district for the implementation of BRGF. RKVY schemes are also discussed in the DLIC. This set up could be expanded.
- Suggested to change the Chairmanship of ATMA district level committee from district collector to District panchayat president for more convergence.
- The mechanism for issuing Technical Sanction for infrastructure projects to be improved, at the district level.
- RKVY is not integrated with district plan. It should be integrated with district plan.
- More discussion of the projects at district level is needed in some districts.
- KVK linkage to be improved.
- Mechanism to be established for developing coordinated projects. The suggestion is to involve block panchayats for coordinating the integrated projects.
- More time and planning is required for project preparation.
- Building of technical expertise for innovative and integrated projects.
- More monitoring is required for projects.
- Rationalisation of subsidy norms across schemes of state plan and CSS including RKVY and LSGIs.
- Prepare more integrated projects for more delivery of outputs.
- More awareness about RKVY and convergence of projects under RKVY with other schemes is necessary.

The success stories under RKVY and the procedures followed in decentralised planning were also presented by the Chairpersons of District Panchayats in the workshop.

CHAPTER 6

Way Forward – Goals, Instruments, and Recommendations

Decentralised planning in the agricultural sector not only provides opportunity to understand and manage the local level resources but also help in enhancing the efficiency of different interventions. We have seen the progress of decentralised planning during 11th Plan period and even though the success is not full it is quite encouraging. It is necessary to plug the problems and make the system effective and functioning.

6.1 Goals:

- 4 % growth rate in Agriculture and Allied Sectors (as envisaged in plan document) segregated across states according to the state level resource endowments.
- Strengthening and Operationalization of Decentralization process of planning at different levels for *Faster, Inclusive and Sustainable Growth* in Agriculture
- Empowering the Elected Representatives and Functionaries of *Panchayati Raj* institutions for effective participation in planning at ground level
- Enabling and Empowering People to identify local needs for appropriate inclusion with adequate budgetary support in the C-DAPs.
- Identifying Resource and Potential based Projects/Activities in C-DAPs keeping in view geo-climatic conditions

6.2 Eleventh Plan Instruments:

The instruments envisaged under RKVY for realizing the above goals with a major focus on the targeted growth rate of 4% in agriculture and allied sectors are shown below:

- C-DAP (Perspective/Five Year Plan /Annual Plans)
- State Agriculture Plan (Perspective/Five Year Plan /Annual Plans)
- Human Resource Development (State and District Level)
- Agro-Climatic Approach in a Decentralized Planning Framework

6.2.1 C-DAP

C-DAP is envisaged ideally as an agricultural plan of the district based on the people's needs and aspirations for development prepared comprehensively through participatory bottom up approach with *Gram Panchayat* as the basic unit of planning ,taking in to account the resources (natural, human and financial) available and by covering all the sectoral agricultural programmes and schemes operational in the district including those schemes implemented by the local self governments/*Panchayati Raj* institutions for the Five Year Plan period. The plan process will go through VAPU/TAPU-BAPU/DAPU.

6.2.2 State Agriculture Plan

The State Agricultural Plan (SAP) is compiled from the C-DAPs.

6.2.3 Annual Agriculture Plan: State and District Agriculture Plans

In the manual on C-DAP it is suggested to prepare a district plan for five years coinciding with the five year plan of the state. Nothing is mentioned explicitly about the preparation of annual state and district agriculture plan. However in the guidelines it was stipulated that the finalized State Agriculture Plan should be placed before the Department of Agriculture (DAC) and the Planning Commission as part of the state plan exercise for claiming additional central assistance by the State Planning Department. The DAC and the Planning Commission will approve the SAP after the state plan discussion at the Planning Commission. But this has not been implemented. Similarly, the bottom up approach envisaged in the manual of CDAP is also not seriously implemented in letter and spirit in many states. This part of the guidelines indirectly stresses the need for annual plan.

Present procedure requires that once the plan is approved as part of the annual plan discussion, then the SLSC need to approve detailed projects similar to the practice followed for the state plan schemes based on the CDAP. In the absence of this, the state plan targets may not reflect the ground realities as well and there are chances of duplication of state plan schemes.

The Annual Plan is the more meaningful document at state/district level planning exercise. This document lists out the activities to be carried out to achieve the specific objectives within the coming financial year. In this format as envisaged in the 11th plan document, not only CDAP but also the work plan of existing scheme of macro management, extension and NHM as well as the state plan schemes could be integrated. This will reduce duplication of schemes.

On the basis of these, the State Agriculture Plan (SAP based on aggregation of CDAPs) could be the basis for early discussion between the state, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Planning Commission so that resource envelopes could be communicated to the districts as envisaged. At the state level, the Annual plan need to be more realistic than five year plans since resource availability may change on an annual basis as well as the sectoral priorities and fund flow may change every year depending on the overall resource position, availability of new CSS as well as other state level considerations. In the middle of five year plan, Finance Commission Award also will be announced (13th Finance Commission- 2010-2015) which will be reflected in the Annual plan. Hence it is suggested to have mandatory Annual Agriculture Plans with in the overall framework of the plan.

In the guidelines also it was suggested that the Nodal agency will finalize the SAP and submit to the State Planning department for integrating with the overall state plan. This has not been enforced in any state. Strict compliance of this aspect is required, otherwise the entire agricultural planning process has stayed independent of the aggregate state and the Central plan. The need for the preparation of the Annual Agriculture Plan may be mentioned in the guidelines issued for the preparation of state plans from the State Plan division of the Planning Commission. The State Governments follow the guidelines issued by the State Plan division of the Planning Commission for the preparation of the State Plan. During resource discussion and approval, the provision of RKVY is also accounted in arriving at the size of the annual plan of the state. Subsequently the RKVY provision is included in the State plan. But the schematic components flowing out of CDAP are usually not included in the State Annual Plan document. The implementing departments used to submit a set of proposals to the Planning department and another set at a later date to the Nodal department for approval. There is possibility of duplication in the process followed. Hence it may be re-emphasized to prepare the State Agricultural Plan every year along with the preparation of State Annual plan document.

It is having the time dimension also. The annual plan preparation starts with the communication from the State Plan division of the Planning Commission usually in October of every year and the document may be completed after elaborate discussions by about December. The CDAP process seems to be starting in March – April after completing the plan document by the nodal department. The details of Annual plan will not be available with the Nodal department during the preparation of the CDAP since the details are available only after the presentation of the budget in March. This process of non synchronization may introduce a number of duplications in schemes.

The integrated approach is essential to track fund flow for various schemes at state level. Otherwise the state plan document exercise will become a bunch of duplicated schemes. Moreover, a distinction is required about the plan and projects for approval of SLSC, on an annual basis.

In the Annual Plan, the convergence of major CSS and important State Plan schemes need to be considered. Out of 16 broad areas suggested itself there are separate Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) operating with particular guidelines. These CSS are National Horticulture Mission Schemes, Micro-irrigation, Macro-management, Extension Reforms, National Food Security Mission (NFSM), Fodder Development, Development of small ruminants etc. The available budget for these schemes during 2011-12 under DAC are shown below

Table 6.1: Budget of Department of Agriculture and Cooperation (Rs.crores)

Sl.No	Name of scheme	2010- 11	2011-12
1	NHM	986	1200
2	State extension services	193.75	448.75
3	Macro-management of Agriculture	722	650
4	RKVY(state plan including CDAP)	6714.50	7802.37
5	Micro irrigation	970	1130
6	National Food Security Mission	1157.63	1250
Total		10743.88	12481.12

Source: Budget document for 2011-12

The following broad activities have been identified for focused attention in the guidelines for preparation of CDAP.

- Integrated development of food crops including coarse cereals, minor millets and pulses
- Agricultural mechanization
- Activities related to soil health and productivity
- Development of rain fed farming system
- Support to state seed farms
- Integrated pest management
- Encouraging non-farm activities
- Strengthening market infrastructure and marketing development
- Strengthening infrastructure to promote extension services
- Activities relating to enhancement of horticultural production and popularization of micro irrigation
- Animal husbandry and Fisheries development activities (fodder development. Genetic upgradation, poultry development, development of small ruminants etc)
- Special schemes for the beneficiaries of land reforms
- Undertaking concept to complete projects
- Grant support to the state Government institutions that promote agriculture/horticulture
- Study tour of farmers
- Organic and bio-fertilizers
- Innovative schemes- (schemes important for agriculture and horticulture other than those mentioned above could be included)

The convergence will help to identify a realistic resource envelope at the district level. In CDAP, it was envisaged to prepare the district Agriculture plan based on an initial resource envelope available from existing schemes – state or centre including resources at district level from central schemes such as these of Rural Development, Ministry of *Panchayati Raj*. Apart from Agriculture, livestock, fisheries are to be included and integrated with minor irrigation, rural development works etc. SAP should be based on these initial district plans aimed at achieving the state’s agricultural growth strategy keeping in view of the management of natural resources and technological possibilities in each agro-climatic region. This plan should determine each district’s final resource envelope, their production plan and associated input plan. Annual targets are also to be fixed at the start of the year. On the basis of these, the state plan can be the basis for early discussion between the state, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Planning Commission, so that resource envelop can accordingly be communicated to the districts (plan document). The excellent approach was highlighted about CDAP in the Five year plan document of the country. However some improvements are required to move towards the approach.

For example, the proposed allocation for SAP for five years in Andhra Pradesh is Rs. 7110.00 crore. But there is nearly 90 percent mismatch between the proposed and approved funds, while in Tamil Nadu this mismatch is reported as 98 percent while in UP around 90 percent and in Maharashtra it is reported as 82 percent. These findings are reported in the evaluation reports. Unless a realistic budget envelope is communicated to the districts, it will not lead to meaningful plan document and the resultant outputs. It is suggested to prepare a realistic budget envelope by the State Planning Department and Nodal department for RKVY for arriving at a realistic plan.

6.2.4 Data Problems

In districts there is no single point of data sources on available budget and the district level database is quite weak. It is a difficult task in getting the available financial resources from various schemes flowing to a district owing to delay in communication of details from the head quarters of the line departments, lag in approval of schemes at state level and subsequent communication at the district level etc. Over and above few new schemes will also be introduced in state plan every year for which approval from state will take more time and sometimes approval may be issued towards the fag end of the year.

For realistic plan preparation there is need for accurate and consistent estimates at the district level. The database available at the district level is very weak in most of the states. In a number of datasets there are inconsistencies at the state level and district level databases. The state level nodal department in each state like the Department of Economics and Statistics could be involved in compiling the consistent district and state level database. Some of the State Agricultural plans are specifying the growth rates at the district level. The estimation of District level Domestic Products (DDPs) are having problems and the involvement of state level statistical authorities are essential to provide a set of consistent and reliable databases.

6.2.5 Human Resource Development and Capacity Building

The development of adequate skills and capacities are required among personnel and *panchayat* institutions in order to arrive at realistic plan proposals in line with the needs of the district or local levels. Apart from this elected representatives also have to be adequately trained regarding the functions, funds, and accountability of decentralized planning. Moreover technical expertise is to be developed at local levels for planning and project preparation. A series of trainers training programs (TOT), equipping specialized institutions for capacity building at state and regional levels, exposure visits to successful model districts/*panchayats* etc. have to be incorporated at appropriate levels for strengthening the process as well as the implementation of the strategies envisaged under CDAP through *Panchayati Raj* institutions.

6.2.6 Agro-Climatic Approach in a Decentralized Planning Framework

The regionally differentiated strategy based on agro climatic conditions and natural resources envisaged for the 9th plan for increasing the pace of growth in every region of the country was followed in 10th and 11th plan.

A recent study conducted by the Planning Commission (2010) for the period 2003-06, have identified 94 low productivity districts, 93 mid productivity districts and 93 high productivity districts, out of 281 districts concerned. Out of 94 low productivity districts, 67 were located in the central, 15 in the eastern, 5 in the north western and 7 in the southern region. 33 mid productivity districts were located in central region, 27 in the north western region, and 17 in the eastern region and 16 in the southern region. Among the high productivity districts, 36 belonged to North western region, 15 to the eastern region and 12 to central region. High yield districts are those exceeding Rs. 10200/ha, medium yield between Rs. 6250 – 10,200/ha and low yield district less than Rs. 6250/ha. Significant departure from the conventional approach of agriculture planning at state and district level is required to reverse the performance of agriculture.

The Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) was launched in 2007-08 to rejuvenate agriculture to achieve 4 per cent annual growth during 11th Plan. The 11th Plan growth target for the agriculture and allied sectors and the achievement during the first two years are shown in Table 6.2. A declining trend in growth rate is evident in most of the States.

Table: 6.2
Economic Performance of the States in Agriculture and allied sectors
using three year moving averages (%)

State	11 th plan growth target	2007-08	2008-09
Andhra Pradesh	4.0	6.7	3.8
Assam	2.0	2.0	3.2
Bihar	7.0	11.1	-3.1
Chhattisgarh	1.7	0.3	-0.8
Goa	7.7	-9.3	NA
Gujarat	5.5	4.5	NA
Haryana	5.3	5.9	2.5
Himachal Pradesh	3.0	1.5	2.9
Jammu & Kashmir	4.3	1.5	NA
Jharkhand	6.3	4.6	2.0
Karnataka	5.4	2.2	2.8
Kerala	0.3	-2.5	-1.4
Madhya Pradesh	4.4	0.0	NA
Maharashtra	4.4	6.6	NA
Orissa	3.0	2.6	1.3
Punjab	2.4	3.4	3.7
Rajasthan	3.5	6.6	-3.4
Tamil Nadu	4.7	0.8	-3.2
Uttar Pradesh	3.0	4.4	2.7
Uttarakhand	3.0	1.2	-0.1
West Bengal	4.0	2.4	1.5
All India	4.0	3.3	2.0

Source : Mid Term Appraisal of 11th plan, GoI

In order to further revive the agricultural growth in the States, agro ecological planning/ agro climatic planning could be adopted in a decentralized planning framework to utilize the zonal potential in crop and livestock production.

During 7th plan period, Planning Commission (1985-90) divided the country into 15 broad agro climatic zones based on physiography and climate. The approach emphasized development of resources and their optimum utilization in a sustainable manner within the framework of resource constraints and potentials of each region.

There are several region specific gaps which limit the opportunity of realizing full yield potential of the crops/livestock/fish potential. The most critical region specific gaps, which are responsible for deceleration in the productivity of agriculture and horticulture sector in particular and allied sectors in general, are presented in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3
Region Specific Factors for deceleration in Productivity

Agro-Climatic Region	States / Parts of States	Region Specific Constraints
Western Himalayan Region-I	J & K, H.P.,Uttaranchal	Severe soil erosion, degradation due to heavy rainfall/floods and deforestation, low SRRs, poor road, poor input delivery and inadequate communication infrastructure and marketing
Eastern Himalayan Region-II	Assam, N.E. States,Sikkim	Al. toxicity and soil acidity, Soil erosion and floods, shifting cultivation, low SRRs, non availability of electricity, poor road, poor input delivery system and communication infrastructure.
Lower and Middle Gangetic Plains Regions-III & IV	West Bengal, Bihar, Eastern UP	Flood/ water logging, improper drainage, Salinity /alkalinity, Arsenic contamination, low SRRs, non availability of electricity, high population growth, poor road and communication infrastructure.
Upper and Trans-gangetic plains Region-V & VI	Western U.P., Punjab, Haryana	Groundwater depletion, decreasing total factor productivity, micronutrient deficiency, non-availability of electricity and high population density.
Eastern Plateau & Hills Region-VII	Orissa, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh	Moisture stress, drought and soil acidity, iron toxicity, low SRRs, non availability of electricity, high population growth, poor road, poor Input delivery and communication infrastructure.
Central, Western and Southern Plateau and Hills Regions-VIII, IX & X.	Bundelkhand (in U.P & MP), parts of Rajasthan, Maharashtra, AP, Karnataka & Tamil Nadu	Drought, moisture stress, soil crusting & cracking, soil salinity / alkalinity, low SRRs
East & West Coast Plains & Ghats Region-XI & XII.	Pondicherry, Coastal area of Orissa, AP, TN and Kerala, Goa, parts of Karnataka & Maharashtra	Poor water management, Poor nutritional status of soil, saline lands
Gujarat Plains & Hills & Western Dry Region Regions-XIII &XIV.	Gujarat, D&N Haveli, Daman & Diu, North, W. Rajasthan	Aridity, Frequent drought, moisture stress poor soil, habitation of desert
The Islands Region-XV	Andaman & Nicobar, Lakshadweep	Soil salinity & acidity, frequent cyclones, low SRRs, poor road and communication infrastructure.

Source: Planning Commission

Future crop yields and food security may hinge on the ability of farmers to narrow the gap between the current yields and Yield Potential Ceilings. Improving crop yields at a pace commensurate with growth in food demand will require significant reduction in current yield gaps. A wide range of yield gaps are observed ranging from roughly 20% to 80% of the potential yield. Many rain-fed cropping systems appear to have relatively large yield gaps that could be closed with existing technologies, but persist largely for economic reasons.

The existing yield gaps of major cereals, oilseeds and cotton crops are shown in Table 6.4

Table 6.4
Existing yield gaps of major cereals, oilseeds and cotton crops

Crop	Percent yield gap	
	Between Improved Practices v. Farmer Practices	Improved Practices v. State average yield
Wheat	5-39	6-652
Rice	6-134	35-286
Barley	13-35	30-149
Jowar	23-213	13-219
Mustard	10-207	5-155
Soybean	16-32	7-185
Sugarcane	10-51	16-167

Source: Planning Commission

These gaps have basically emanated due to ecological distortions i.e., soil & water, climate, availability of inputs particularly certified/quality seeds of improved varieties and imbalanced use of fertilizers across the regions.

6.3 Recommendations:

The procedure followed for preparing CDAPs during the Eleventh Plan largely did not adhere to the manual prepared for the purpose both due to shortage of time and capacity of the manpower available at the lower level functionaries. It is essential to correct this major drawback by taking quicker steps in capacity building at lower level of PRIs and strengthening the understanding of the planning process at VAPU/TAPU-BAPU/DAPU. It

will be the most important to attend to this major hurdles if CDAPs have to be successful instrument of planning in the country.

6.3.1 Plan preparation

The eight recommendations are presented in this section

6.3.1a Capacity Building for CDAP Preparation

Planning is a subject discipline of economics involving many other social science disciplines. It needs to be understood as a methodology in optimizing the use of available resources for meeting the local level needs and aspirations. These needs have to be ascertained from the stakeholders through a bottom up approach. That requires capacity building from lower level PRIs to the State level. A state and district level nodal institutions should be involved in designing training modules and the same may be organized through the existing institutions specialized in local level agricultural planning, extension network and research institutions. It will be beneficial if a non-state institution is involved in capacity building for the preparation of CDAPs. However, CDAPs should be exclusively prepared by three levels of PRIs with least interference, but full participation of line departments. RKVY is going to have a separate budgetary allocation with effect from the 12th Five Year Plan, and therefore, CDAP may be treated independently. State Agriculture Management and Extension Training Institute (SAMETI) along with other non-governmental institutions could be roped in for capacity building especially in designing planning modules and finalizing the methodology. Separate funds could be earmarked in the work plan of extension schemes for this capacity building programmes. Specialised institutions available in Kerala, Karnataka, West Bengal etc for decentralized planning could be entrusted for this purpose. The State Planning Boards/Planning Departments/State Planning Commissions can play a significant role in capacity building programmes.

6.3.1b C-DAP Preparation/Revision: Need for a differential approach

- i. A differential approach could be adopted in the preparation/revision of CDAPs in states where the decentralized planning is in advanced stage of implementation. In these states, documents like annual plan/five year plan etc may be available on local body wise reflecting the suggestion of *gram sabha*/panchayats representatives for further processing. In such states a discussion in 3-4 regions of the district may be sufficient to get the aspiration of the people. This approach will save time as well as minimize duplication of efforts. Matrix of potential, issues, constraints, researchable issues, ongoing schemes, likely interventions required may be compiled after the discussion. Quick focus group discussion/Key informant surveys may be conducted in the identified 3-4 regions. *Gram sabha* discussion may be minimized due to administrative and practical issues.
- ii. C-DAP Preparation/Revision in States without Decentralized Planning

In states where documents emerged out of *gram sabha* level consultations are not available and decentralized planning is in the initial stage of implementation or decentralized planning is not implemented, a detailed process as envisaged in the C-DAP manual may be followed in the preparation/revision of C-DAPs.

iii. Operationalisation of C-DAPs

The process of operationalisation of Five year plan of the State could be adopted for the CDAPs also. The annual plans are prepared under the frame work of Five year plan of the state. There is separate section for continuing schemes, new schemes as well as dropped schemes in every annual plan of the state. These formats are circulated by the Planning Commission to the States. The annexure specified for the Annual plan of the state could be insisted for operationalising the CDAPs also with the appropriate modifications required. It is desirable to cap a percentage for the introduction of new schemes every year. The physical targets proposed during the five year plan period as well as for the annual plan period also to be insisted in the document.

6.3.1c Emphasis on Annual State Agriculture Plan and District Agriculture Plan

The Annual Plan is the more meaningful document at state/district level planning exercise. This document lists out the activities to be carried out to achieve the specific objectives within the coming financial year. In the middle of five year plan, Finance Commission Award also will be announced (13th Finance Commission- 2010-2015) which will be reflected in the Annual plan. Hence it is suggested to have mandatory Annual Agriculture Plans with in the overall framework of the Five Year Plan

It may be re-emphasized to prepare the State Agricultural Plan every year along with the preparation of State Annual plan document.

The integrated approach is essential to track flow of funds for various schemes at state level, otherwise the state plan document exercise will become a bunch of duplicated schemes with RKVY schemes. Moreover a distinction is required about the CDAP and projects for approval of SLSC, on an annual basis.

- i. Preparation of Annual Agriculture plan may be insisted upon with a relatively simple procedure within the overall CDAP and SAP.
- ii. The preparation of Annual plan of the State and Annual Agriculture plan may be initiated simultaneously as a collaborative exercise of the Nodal department and Planning Department for minimizing duplication and rational allocation of resources after the finalization of resources under RKVY by the Planning and Finance departments of the state in about October –November for the next year possibly after resource discussion for the entire annual plan with Planning Commission.
- iii. The circular issued every year in about October from the state plan division of the Planning Commission regarding the preparation of Annual Plan of the States may mention about the need for the preparation of Annual Agriculture plan along with Annual plan and insist to submit along with annual plan document of the state to the Planning Commission.
- iv. After the approval of the Annual plan document by the Planning Commission the DPR preparation under RKVY could be initiated in February for the next year. If there is delay in approval by the Planning Commission, the approved plan document

by the State cabinet for sending to Planning Commission could be taken as a base for initiating the DPR preparation for RKVY.

- v. Annual district Agriculture plan may be prepared from the overall CDAP prepared in about February-March in a simple method covering discussion of the progress of implementation with district level implementing agencies and the district level new issues reported.
- vi. SLSC may approve the DPR as originally envisaged after discussing the annual plan and annual agriculture plan with Planning Commission.
- vii. Thus there could be two documents every year for RKVY viz,
 - Annual Agricultural Plan- A summary document
 - Detailed Project Proposals for sanction of SLSC.

Once Annual Agricultural plan is approved during annual plan discussion by the Planning Commission , SLSC may approve the detailed projects. SLSC may not involve/approve new projects for inclusion under annual plan. When there is additional allocation that also may be asked to bring under annual plan for approval.

6.3.1d Convergence of Existing CSS and State Schemes

Out of 16 broad areas suggested under RKVY in the guidelines there are separate Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) operating with particular guidelines. These CSS are National Horticulture Mission schemes, Micro irrigation, Macro-management, Extension reforms, National Food security Mission, Fodder development, Development of small ruminants etc. At the state level also these are separate mechanisms and approval systems for these schemes. It is essential to insist on mandatory convergence of work plan related centrally sponsored schemes and major state plan schemes. The following recommendations for convergence are:

1. Separate window may be shown under RKVY for the above schemes (NHM, Extension Reforms, Micro irrigation, Macro-management, Food Security Mission etc) at the same time retain the mechanism at the National level to monitor the schemes separately. These are the five schemes identified for **mandatory convergence** with

Annual Plan under CDAP. Similar way some of the major state plan schemes may also be identified by the states for mandatory convergence.

2. The state level mechanisms for separate CSS could be integrated with SLSC wherever possible except the procedure requirement for the registered societies for SHM and Extension Reforms (ATMA, SAMETI).
3. Direction may be issued to these scheme components for integration with Annual Agriculture Plan. These schemes also follow a district level work plan. The state plan resources for these schemes are routed through budget and the central sector funds are released through demand drafts other than RKVY over and above the state budgets. Hence it is highly essential and mandatory to bring these schemes under the state Agriculture plan to reflect the total fund flow and outputs.

6.3.1e Identification of Realistic Resource Envelope

A complete and meaningful planning exercise cannot take place without each planning unit being given its budget envelope. In the absence of this critical element every plan prepared will remain a wish list.

- i. The available funds for the districts from CSS and State Plan schemes implemented by the Department of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Dairy Development, Soil conservation and Fisheries department may be communicated after the presentation of state budget in February-March of every year for the next financial year. The joint efforts of the line departments and Planning departments are required for this small but relatively difficult exercise. For other departments attempts could be made at the district level to identify the resources.
- ii. The allocation for the ongoing schemes for the next year available to each district could be prepared in December-January itself for the next year by the line departments for consideration of the District plan.
- iii. The crucial question is whether it is possible to develop a normative approach for district level devolution of RKVY funds.
- iv. The possibility of providing district wise allocation for RKVY by the Ministry of Agriculture based on a transparent and normative approach may be considered. This method could be adopted with the required modification for

RKVY. A district wise outlay may also be earmarked by the Ministry of Agriculture/Planning Commission similar to the practice followed for the Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF) by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj in 250 districts. Unless this earmarking is made it may not be possible to ensure the reasonable allocation to the districts. Norms could be decided for various districts like backwardness in agriculture, food production potential, gross cropped area of the district, gross/net irrigated area etc. This will help identify a realistic resource envelope for the preparation of District Agriculture Plan.

6.3.1f Development of District level Database for the preparation of DAP

The state level nodal department in each state like the Department of Economics and Statistics could be involved in compiling the consistent district and state level database.

A deliberate attempt to earmark a small share of funds for database development if required may be examined while approving the projects under RKVY. There is a World Bank supported ongoing CSS implemented by the Ministry of statistics and programmed implementation for the comprehensive development of the statistical system in the country (India statistical system strengthening project, ISSP). There is a State High level committee for the project chaired by the Chief Secretary for this project. The development of district level database could be included in the work plan of the project also provided there is a direction for this purpose. ICT application is also given thrust for the project. A district level dataset has to be prepared and handed over to the district level departments.

6.3.1g Experience sharing of district level ongoing projects related to Planning and Utilization of district Level background reports

At the district level the availability of documents are scanty in most of the states. In order to improve the quality of the CDAPs the available documents prepared for other projects could be made available to states. These documents will provide a good background material for the CDAPs. There will be a section on agriculture in all the DHDRs and other plan documents. This document will be a good source material for the preparation of DAPs. The copies could be communicated to the nodal departments for the preparation of DAPs.

6.3.1h Identification of model districts for decentralized planning and implementation

The CDAP preparation has been completed in almost all districts with the drastic limitations and gaps. This requires revision in most of the districts. Along with revision at least one district in each State may be identified as a model district for the CDAP preparation as well as implementation with the involvement of Panchayati Raj institutions to begin with. Considerable efforts from Rural Development/Panchayati Raj/Planning Departments are also required for the preparation of good CDAPs in a realistic resource envelope. In order to prepare effective SAP and CDAP, it is necessary to have horizontal integration between Department of Planning, Department of Rural Development (PR), Department of Agriculture and other allied departments. This is an essential pre-requisite for preparation of an implementable CDAP. The most essential element is the earmarking of a particular amount for implementation in the particular district under RKVY before the preparation of CDAPs at least for one year of the plan. The state may identify the model district based on the local conditions and commitments and also based on the database availability and functioning of good PRIs.

6.4: Involvement of PRIs

The following four suggestions are made for effective involvement of PRIs in the process of planning and implementation of C-DAPs:

6.4.1 PRIs in Plan Implementation: Need of Incentive Fund and Good Training

The involvement of PRIs and Grama Sabha are essential for the identification of issues, constraints, potential etc. But it need not be **too much ambitious**. Unless there is a separate budget for a particular Panchayat it is not desirable to involve Grama Sabha for a detailed discussion. Moreover it is not easy to have discussion with all the Grama Sabhas in a district and in most of the states Local Self Government institutions are under the Panchayati Raj Ministry/Rural Development Ministry of the State. The Agriculture department may not be involved directly in the governance of PRIs. The preparation of Village /Panchayat plan/*Taluk*/Block plan/Zilla level plan and integration of district plan is a very difficult task.

District Planning Committees (DPCs) are not functional in several states and they lack the required training as well as understanding in plan preparation. In some states DPCs are not constituted. States such as Chattisgarh, Gujarat, MP, Orissa, Maharashtra and Himachal Pradesh have Ministers as Chairperson's of DPCs. DPCs are functioning effectively in Kerala, Karnataka and Rajasthan. In most of the states only constitutional formality is performed. DPCs do not have the capacity to consolidate the district development plan. In selected districts it is only a BRGF plan (Planning Commission 2008). In a number of states State Finance Commission grant and Twelfth Finance Commission award alone have been given to the Panchayats. In a number of states a district sector/ panchayat window is absent in its budget documents. Untied funds are provided in Kerala, Karnataka and Rajasthan. In Kerala, Panchayat wise untied grant is provided in the budget as a separate document. In the absence of uniformity in the functioning/structure of Panchayati Raj institutions, it is not desirable to enforce District Agricultural Planning uniformly. An incentive structure could be considered to involve the PRIs proactively.

It is desirable to build an incentive structure to involve and motivate states to involve PRIs in plan formulation as well as in implementation. The incentive fund suggested is shown below.

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj in association with the Indian Institute of Public Administration has prepared the Devolution Index (DI) of PRIs in 23 states. It is suggested to group the 23 states in the following four categories according to the devolution index. The suggested four categories of the devolution index are above 50, 40-50, 30-40 and less than 40.

The suggested DIs and the States are shown below.

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| (a) DI above 50 | – Kerala, Karnataka, TN, WB, Maharashtra, MP, Gujarat, AP (DI ranges has 50.10 to 74.73) |
| (b) DI between 40-50 | – Sikkim, Haryana, Orissa, UP, Bihar (DI ranges from 41.20 to 47.43) |
| (c) DI between 30-40 | – Lakshadweep, Rajasthan, Goa, Chhattisgarh, Punjab (DI ranges from 31.54 to 39.62) |
| (d) DI less than 30 | – Uttarakhand, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Chandigarh (DI ranges from 17.19 to 28.92) |

The minimum incentive fund is suggested at the rate of 3%, 2%, 1% and 0.5% of the total allocation to be used for the implementation of innovative projects through PRIs for the above four categories of the states. For other states based on available information and feedback could be included in any of the group depending on the level of decentralization.

6.4.2 Restricting RKVY to Zilla Parishad/District Panchayat

Considering the uphill task of involving all tiers of the PRIs by the Nodal department in a time bound manner as well as the difficulty in implementation of such a plan it is suggested to restrict the involvement of District Panchayat/Zilla Parishad alone in plan preparation as well as selective implementation of some projects under RKVY. This approach even though is a dilution of true district planning considering the varying levels of decentralization in different states as well as issues in coordination of multiple institutions by the Department of Agriculture, it could be more practical. Once this system is stabilized further extension downwards could be considered.

6.5. Governance

The objectives of schemes/projects proposed in the C-DAP can be translated into reality with expected outcomes and impacts when such schemes are implemented by the professionally committed functionaries. Therefore the accountability and transparency are extremely crucial in implementation of the schemes. Recent tools such as social audit and RTI are the keys to ensuring transparency and accountability at various levels of development administration/governance. The following interventions are required at the national and state level for achieving the objectives of C-DAPs.

6.5.1 Interventions at National Level

The following two initiatives are suggested for further action at government of India level.

- Identification of some institutions for concurrent monitoring. It is desirable to entrust to some institutions located in the states for independent monitoring and reporting directly to the Ministry of Agriculture. The monitoring format should cover outcomes and outputs also. One institution could be entrusted with 3-4 districts.
- Quick evaluation of major projects.

6.5.2 Interventions at State Level

The following initiatives at the state level are suggested:

- Quarterly review reports of state level monitoring committees with representatives from Planning and Finance departments.
- Development of state level portal for RKVY for transparency.
- Separate review of infrastructure projects with engineers.
- Setting up of decentralized technical sanction mechanisms at district level for infrastructure projects.
- Development of an implementation manual for RKVY.
- Visual documentation of pre, mid and final project outputs.
- Devolution of norm based district wise allocation of RKVY funds.
- Project implementation coordination unit at district level from the administrative cost (10% maximum).
- Social audit at district level.
- Benchmarking of projects.
- The monitoring should take care of outputs and outcomes along with financial flows.

6.5.3 Preparation of flagship projects

Thin spreading of resources is one of the problems noticed in RKVY. In order to achieve tangible outputs/outcomes it is suggested to identify two to three flagship projects with substantial outlays in consultations with State Governments. The replication of the same based on the success of the flagship projects can be explored for gradual upscaling.

6.6 Agro-Climatic Approach in a Decentralized Planning Framework

The suggested change in approach for realising the outputs and outcome of plans is explained below especially for bridging yield gaps and local level issues. The regionally differentiated strategy based on agro climatic conditions and natural resources envisaged for

the 9th plan for increasing the pace of growth in every region of the country was followed in 10th and 11th plan.

In order to further revive the agricultural growth in the States, agro ecological planning/ agro climatic planning could be adopted in a decentralised planning framework to optimally utilize the zonal potential/resources in crop and livestock production. However, it should be noted to delineate agro-climatic zones on administrative boundary basis considering the district boundary and *Panchayat* boundary so as to work out the district potential as well as *Panchayat* potential in a decentralized planning framework.

Future crop yields and food security may hinge on the ability of farmers to narrow the gap between the current yields and Yield Potential Ceilings. Improving crop yields at a pace commensurate with growth in food demand will require significant reduction in current yield gaps.

These gaps have basically emanated due to ecological distortions i.e., soil & water, climate, availability of inputs particularly certified/quality seeds of improved varieties and imbalanced use of fertilizers across the regions.

6.6.1 Methodology for Agro-climatic Planning

The approach of agro climatic/ agro ecological planning should go further down to state and districts. The growth targets for plan periods are set at national and state levels. Over several plan periods the wide gap in targets and achievements are reported in growth, production and yield levels.

There is no concerted effort to divide the targets across agro climate/agro ecological units of the state.

A comprehensive exercise has to be initiated at state level to delineate the state into various agro ecological/agro climate zones and further the district into further sub units. In each agro ecological unit resource based plan including the yield gap could be addressed.

During 12th plan, it is proposed to divide the state level targets of crop production to different Agroecological units based on the potential and other issues and possibilities. The

technical and socioeconomic dimensions will be presented before the Panchayats also for adopting proper projects according to the technical possibilities and socioeconomic considerations. The state level priority projects will be decided at state level based on the AEU wise potential to achieve the results.

The success of the approach depends on

- (a) Scientific delineation of AEZ and report preparation
- (b) Ownership of the approach at State level.

6.6.2 Agro-Climatic Planning in C-DAP

In order to achieve the 4% growth rate the location/district specific potentials have to be tapped for which agro-climatic planning approach on an **administrative boundary basis** have to be incorporated in the C-DAPs. The yield gaps, the strategies for reducing the yield gaps in the districts, investment required for realizing the potential in each agro-climatic/ecological zone/unit of the district, researchable issue, etc. have to be factored in the C-DAPs. A separate budget may also be earmarked for addressing the issues in each zone/unit of the district.

6.7 Proposed Allocation for C-DAP under 12th Five Year Plan

6.7.1 Fund for preparation of C-DAP

An amount of Rs.12.00 lakhs for each district may be considered towards the consultancy fee for Technical Support Institutions (TSI) for preparation of C-DAP for each district which should be appropriately integrated with the overall district development plan during XII Plan period. Technical Support Institutions are expected to play a pivotal role in helping prepare C-DAPs as well as critically evaluate the plan and its feasibility.

The breakup of the expenditure for various components of the plan preparation per district is as follows:

1.	Two day workshop for orientation of the district level heads of the sectoral departments, elected representations of the PRIs, MLAs, MLCs, MPs, NGOs, Academicians, subject experts and identification of the potential / priority areas	Rs. 3.00 lakhs (25%)
2.	Designing training modules and organizing training programmes at district, block and GP level, PRI and RD functionaries. Orientation of PRIs on the projects identified/ prepared and collect feed back	Rs.3.00 lakhs (25%)
3.	Orientation programme on preparation of the sectoral plans and convergence of schemes/ services	
4.	Collection and computerization of data for identification of the need based projects at GP, Block and District level	Rs.6.00 lakhs (50%)
5.	Presentation before the DPC and submission of final report incorporating the suggestions of the DPC	

6.7.2 Funding District Project Coordination and Monitoring Cell (DPCMC)

An amount of Rs. 10 lakhs for each district toward district coordination may be considered. Project Coordination and Monitoring Cell may be created for each district in order to have overall supervision of preparation and implementation of C-DAPs.

6.7.3 Funding State Project Coordination and Monitoring Cell (SPCMC)

An amount of Rs. 250 lakhs per State may be allocated for the creation of an independent authority for monitoring the preparation and implementation of C-DAPs of all districts within the State. The State may use this allocation to aggregate all the CDAPs and organize meetings to discuss various components of CDAP across districts with PRI functionaries.

6.7.4 Incentives for Successful Implementation of C-DAPs

An incentive scheme for the successful implementation of C-DAPs may be considered under the 12th Plan. There is a need for award of performance based incentive to the best performing districts/States. Similarly there should be a disincentive for poor performing districts/States to encourage the implementation of C-DAPs successfully in true vigor and spirit. The five best districts in each State should be considered for cash awards according to the following scale:

- 1st Best District: Rs. 2.5 crore
- 2nd Rank District: Rs. 2.0 crore
- 3rd Rank District: Rs. 1.5 crore
- 4th Rank District: Rs. 1.0 crore
- 5nd Rank District: Rs. 0.5 crore

The five best performing districts will be chosen by the independent authority appointed specifically for this purpose within each State. This authority should be authorized to develop selection criteria preferably based on an objective performance in terms of the suggested framework and processes followed in preparation and implementation of the C-DAPs. A total of Rs. 7.5 crore may be allotted for each State for this purpose.

Table 6.5 Indicated allocation on various components of SAP and CDAP preparation and implementation

State Name	District	TSI (12 lakh/District)	District Coordination Cell (10 lakh/District)	State Coordination Cell (250 Lakhs/ State)	Incentive Scheme Grant (750 lakhs/State)	TOTAL/State
Jammu & Kashmir	22	264	220	250	750	1484
Himachal Pradesh	12	144	120	250	750	1264
Punjab	20	240	200	250	750	1440
Uttarakhand	13	156	130	250	750	1286
Haryana	21	252	210	250	750	1462
Rajasthan	33	396	330	250	750	1726
Uttar Pradesh	71	852	710	250	750	2562
Bihar	38	456	380	250	750	1836
Sikkim	4	48	40	250	750	1088
Arunachal Pradesh	16	192	160	250	750	1352
Nagaland	11	132	110	250	750	1242
Manipur	9	108	90	250	750	1198
Mizoram	8	96	80	250	750	1176
Tripura	4	48	40	250	750	1088
Meghalaya	7	84	70	250	750	1154
Assam	27	324	270	250	750	1594
West Bengal	19	228	190	250	750	1418
Jharkhand	24	288	240	250	750	1528
Orissa	30	360	300	250	750	1660
Chattisgarh	18	216	180	250	750	1396
Madhya Pradesh	50	600	500	250	750	2100
Gujarat	26	312	260	250	750	1572
Maharashtra	35	420	350	250	750	1770
Andhra Pradesh	23	276	230	250	750	1506
Karnataka	30	360	300	250	750	1660
Goa	2	24	20	250	750	1044
Kerala	14	168	140	250	750	1308
Tamil Nadu	32	384	320	250	750	1704
Total	619	7428	6190	7000	21000	41618
TOTAL: Rs.41618 Lakhs or 416.18 Crores						

APPENDIX 1

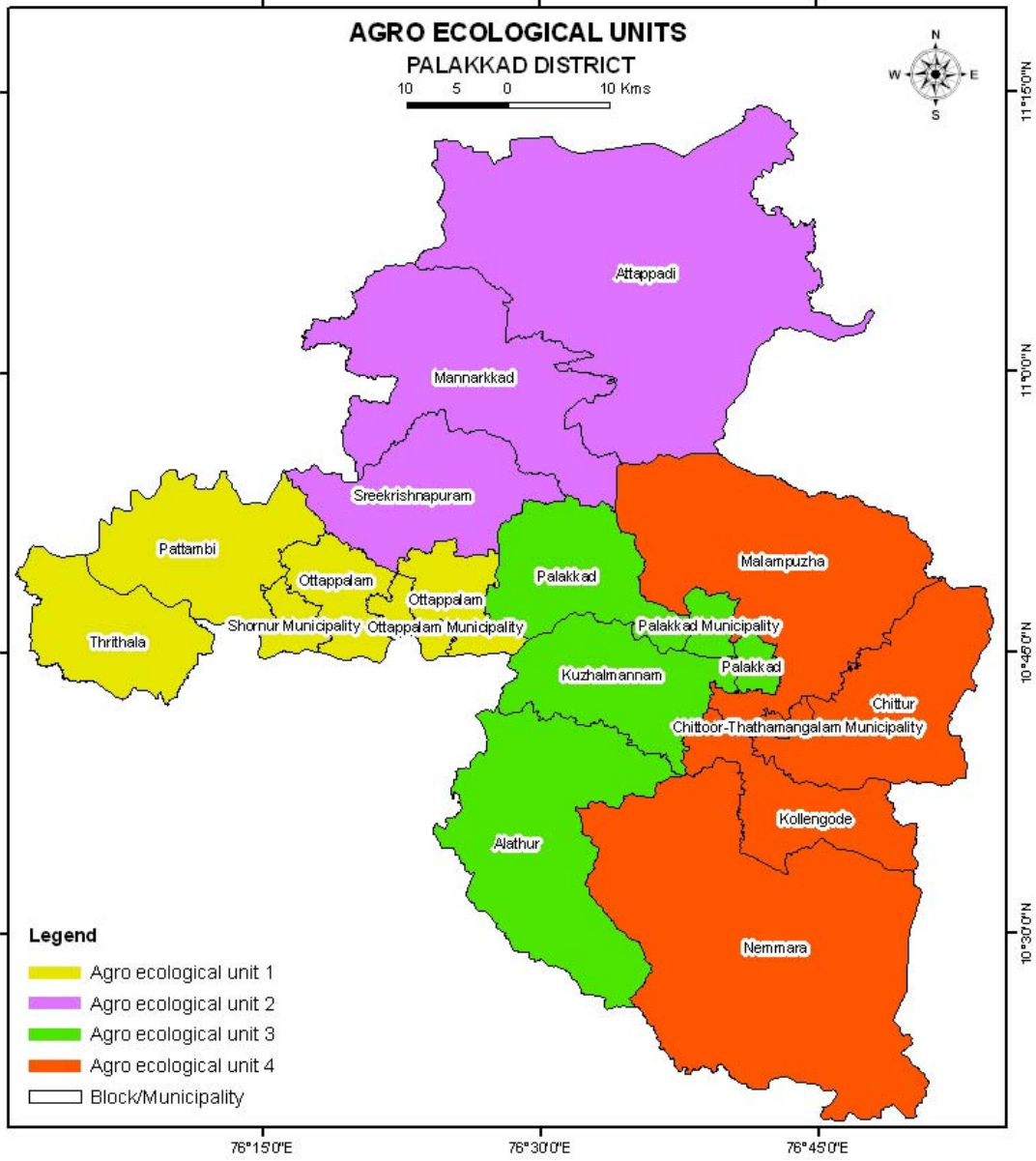
Decentralized Planning in Agriculture: A Case of Kerala

The model developed for Kerala is briefly shown below.

The state has been divided into 5 Agro Ecological Zones (AEZ) and 23 Agro Ecological Units (AEU) with the help of the NBSS & LUP during 2010. The districts have been divided into separate Agro Ecological Units on *Panchayat* wise. Each Agro Ecological Unit is a homogenous agricultural region in the district.

The agro ecological units of Palakkad district is shown in map. There are four Agro Ecological Units in the district. A slight modification in the boundaries was effected for effective implementation. The Panchayats in each AEU are shown below.

AEU 1	-	3 block-	22 Panchayats, 2 Municipalities
AEU 2	-	3 block-	20 Panchayats
AEU 3	-	3 block-	24 Panchayats, 1 Municipality
AEU 4	-	4 block-	25 Panchayats, 1 Municipality



The potential yield and some basic technical aspects of each AEU are shown in table A1

Table A1:
The Selected salient features of the Agro ecological units

AEU	Cropping pattern	Yield gap	Technology adoption index	% occurrence of diseases
AEU 1	Rice based (23%) Coconut based (28%)	Rice-3.13t/ha Coconut-105nuts	RF-80 CF-41	RBlast-44 Brot-63
AEU2	Rice based (1.80%) Coconut based (12%)	Coct-168 nuts	CF-69	Brot-22
AEU3	Rice based (41%) Coconut based (23%)	Rice-2.36t/ha Coct-139 nuts	RF-85 CF-74	RBlast-34 Brot-45
AEU4	Rice based (41%) Coconut based (15%)	Rice-1.80t/ha Cont-57 nuts	RF-88 CF-69	RBlast-53 Brot-41

(RF- Rice fertilizer, CF-coconut fertilizer, Blast-Rice blast, Brot- coconut budrot)

Yield gap analysis of all crops in each unit was done by comparing best farmer yield with the representative (average) yield in the same region. Factors responsible for yield gap were identified through focus group discussion, feed back, key informant surveys and interaction with scientists from the SAU. Quick Diagnostic Surveys were conducted to identify the constraints. SWOT analysis, researchable issues as well as potential and constraints were identified followed by planning for crop production strategies animal / fish production. The projects have to be prepared in consultation with local government institution in the AEU.

The Agro-ecological unit wise and consolidated district level yield gaps for various crops, technology adoption index for various practices, occurrence of pests and diseases, soil fertility, constraints like labour availability, marketing, mechanization, irrigation, potential, researchable issues, fund flow for various schemes, suggestions of farmers and representatives of panchayats are taken in to account in preparing the report. Draft report was presented before the DPC for comments.

The delineation was completed in all districts. The background report preparation is progressing in various districts. The ICAR institution – National Bureau of Soil Survey and Land Use Planning was involved in delineation, and 3 state level institutions are involved in analyzing agriculture, animal husbandry and fisheries, irrigation and socio economic aspects.

The issues to be taken up for participatory research as well as through zonal research stations need to be identified separately.