

# Evaluation of Government Schemes for Agriculture

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## **Best Practice**

### **1. Title of the Practice:** Evaluation of Government Schemes for Agriculture

### **2. Objectives of the Practice**

The purpose of such evaluation is to examine the impact of various schemes for agriculture and allied sectors in West Bengal and Sikkim along with their governance and implementation issues. More specifically, evaluation studies tries to examine the functioning of different stakeholders dealing with specific schemes; constraints faced to implement such schemes; specific progress/impacts achieved under such schemes; and recommends suitable policy suggestions for better implementation.

### **3. The Context**

Agriculture is the way of life in India and government is giving more priority for the welfare of farmers. Therefore, the government is implementing several farmers welfare schemes to re-vitalize agriculture sector and to improve the economic condition of farmers.

Even though agriculture is a state subject in India, a large number of schemes sponsored by both the Union government as well as by the State government are in operation. Under this context, since 1990s, the Centre is evaluating several such schemes for agriculture and allied activities in the state of West Bengal and Sikkim.

### **4. The Practice**

Normally evaluation of central schemes is done in the state of West Bengal and Sikkim. Every year, we evaluate 2-3 schemes identified by the Research Advisory Committee (RAC) of AER Division, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India. Schemes are normally evaluated after 3 years of their implementations. Such evaluation studies are conducted simultaneously in several states, as decided in the RAC meeting. The selection of the schemes and study designs are discussed in the RAC meeting followed by the meetings of the Directors. A common framework and study design is used for all the participating AERCs. There is an inbuilt mechanism for peer review of the study reports before final submission.

### **5. Evidence of Success**

Since 1990s, AERC, Visva-Bharati successfully evaluated a number of important schemes like Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY); Minimum Support Prices (MSP); Bringing Green Revolution to Eastern India (BGREI); National Rural Employment Gurantee Scheme (NREGA); Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY); National Food Security Mission (NFSM); Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY); Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) in Fertilizer at Retail Points; Soil Health Cards (SHC); Integrated Dairy Development Project (IDDP); Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), National Integrated Pest Management

Programme (NIPMP); Micro Watershed Development Programme for Rainfed Area (NWDPRRA); etc.

## **6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required**

Though the area under jurisdiction for AERC, Visva-Bharati is whole of West Bengal, Sikkim and Andaman & Nicobar Islands, due to manpower shortages could not undertake any study in Andaman & Nicobar Islands during last 5 years.

In most of the cases, state agricultural departments are the implementing agencies even for centrally sponsored schemes. However, due to lack of proper coordination between centre and state, evaluations of many schemes become difficult. For example, several schemes are either not being implemented in West Bengal (e.g. PMKISAN) or rechristened (e.g. PMFBY is rechristened as BFBY). Field survey in Sikkim is also a problem particularly in difficult seasons.

## **7. Notes (Optional)**

Besides schemes identified by the Research Advisory Committee (RAC) of AER Division, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India, AERC, Visva-Bharati also took up evaluation studies sponsored by other departments or organizations.