

**Design of
A MONITORING SYSTEM
for the
Drought Prone Areas Program Central Unit**

**Department of Rural Development,
Ministry of Agriculture,
Government of India**

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SUMMARY

The present study had the objective of designing a monitoring information system for the DPAP Central Unit at Delhi. It has been carried out through field visits and discussions with DPAP officers and other people connected with DPAP, through the analysis of data on DPAP activities, through the study of published material related to DPAP and similar rural development programmes, and by reviewing the utility of appropriate use of Management Information Systems and computers in DPAP.

Felt Needs:

In the course of our study we discovered the following needs:

- i. Need to amend the situation wherein there is a very large data flow from districts to Delhi which does not provide enough information of the desired level of utility for management review and control.
- ii. Need to pinpoint which district was weak in which sector of activities.
- ii. A very important need for feedback to the districts on how they are performing.
- iii. Need for a compact presentation of the progress of the whole program for top management.

- iv. Need to measure the impact of the programme and its progress towards the ultimate goals.
- vi. Need to augment information flow on credit disbursement in DPAP areas.
- vii. Need to use non-DPAP sources of information for cross checking and confirming.
- viii. Need to have horizontal exchange of information at district management level.

Systems Design:

In our recommended monitoring system we have kept in mind the ultimate goals of DPAP namely

- (a) Restoration of ecological balance (or drought-proofing)
- (b) Economic development with equitable distribution.

We have used the concept of a **hierarchy of goals** to trace down from these goals the field activities, information about which should be monitored by the DPAP Central Unit.

We have suggested the following modifications in the present system in order to take care of the felt needs.

- We have devised a new analysis and data presentation format which concentrates on the kind of information that the DPAP top management should receive.

- Impact parameters have been identified whose measurement will indicate the fulfilment of the goals listed above.

- Functional data formats and a new scheme for data flow and analysis at the DPA HQ have been chalked out which will streamline the work and prevent any bottlenecks from forming.

- A set of analysis and reporting techniques have been compiled in the form of an "**Analytical Techniques Manual**" (Vol. II). These techniques will facilitate effective managerial decision-making; they are adaptable to state and district use too.

- Techniques and formats for providing constructive feedback to the districts have been designed.

- Several non-DPAP sources of information have been suggested which will serve the purpose of filling information 'gaps' (as in the case of credit information) or confirming and cross checking.

- We have also recommended several other measures like preprinted proforma and a DPAP Newsletter to build up the morale and increase the work efficiency within the DPAP family of projects.

It was during the course of our study that the possibility of acquiring a desk top computer for DPAP Information System was mooted and came into being. We have briefly described the role of a computer in DPAP Monitoring System.

In the final section we have outlined the steps which have to be taken in order to convert this system design into a reality.