MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF BLOCK LEVEL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

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INTRODUCTION : THE STUDY IN BRIEF

1. The Objectives of the Study:

The important objectives which we had set for the project are: (i) to define a minimal data set required for monitoring the development of the Block, and (ii) to demonstrate how this data could be analysed meaningfully through simple but effective techniques.

The process through which we have tried to achieve them are illustrted below:

PREFACE

This Report is the outcome of a Research Project that was initiated, in early 1979 and which got underway in 1980.

The goal was to determine what data was needed to - and what could – be co1lected at the block-level so as to identify the gains of the poor and the weaker sections of the rural community. The emphasis was on the impact development programs and spending on people on the target group, rather than an economic evaluation of costs and benefits.

In the light of the new IRD programs' similar emphasis, it appears that the design of a multi-level monitoring system for that program could benefit from study of this report.

An unusual element is the design of a mobile data--collecting system, here for the first time in India.

We hope all concerned with people's welfare and this Report useful reading.

INTRODUCTION: THE STUDY IN BRIEF

1. The Objectives of the Study

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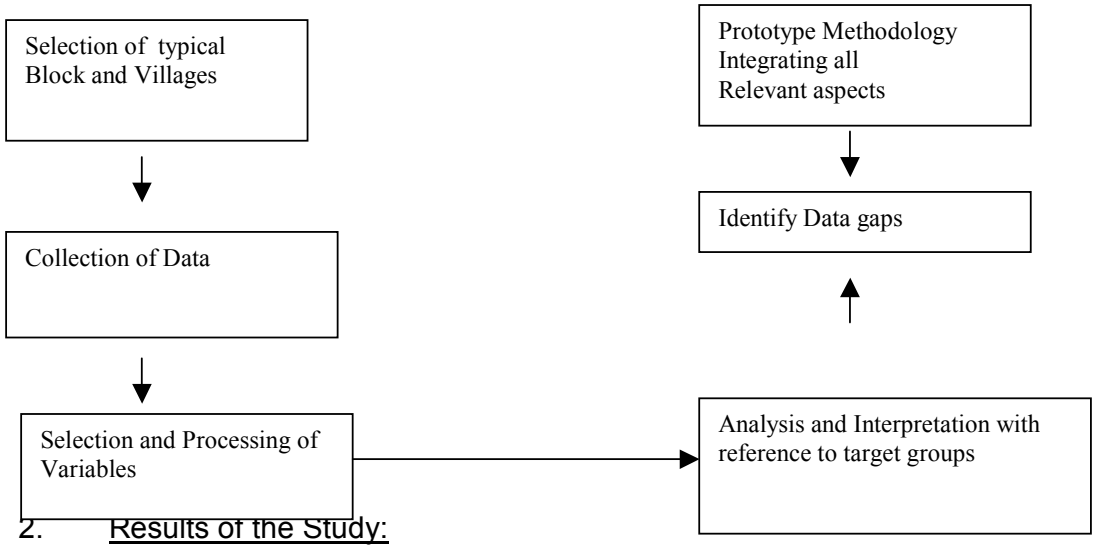
The process through which we have tried to achieve them are illustrated below:



2. Results of the Study:

The results of the study are contained in five chapters and the salient features are:

Chapter I contains a profile and a prototypical analysis of status of Sirur Block vis-a-vis selected blocks in Poona District. A brief analysis of what has gone wrong in terms of deveopmental needs and what requires to be done in the Block is also made.

Chapter II outlines the methodology followed for the study, viz. the criteria followed for sample selection, the sample size, its composition, and a description of computer programmes developed and used for analysis of the data are all covered.

Chapter III represents the analysis of data elements, summary findings and also how photographs could be effectively used for monitoring. The contents of this chapter bear ample proof to the fact that through simple techniques meaningful inferences and conclusions could be drawn.

In Chapter IV we have suggested a prototype system for Monitoring and Evaluating development programmes at the Block level. In this chapter, the task of identifying the Minimum Data Set is also accomplished.

In Chapter V we have suggested a new technique for the first time in India, vis Jeep Mounted Processor System and its appropriateness in the context of Monitoring Rural Development Programmes.

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3. Village Selection, etc.

IMPLEMENTATION AND CONCLUSION

1. INTRODUCTION

The Core Objective of our study was to identify the Minimum Data requirements which would help in evaluating the developmental efforts at the Block-level in relation to the welfare of the people. This we have done by slecting a typical Block and by demonstrating how this data can be analysed.

In this Chapter, we shall suggest a system which would provide for an annual assessment of the developmental efforts. The results would basically serve as 'signale' for the implementing agencies for timely action.

There are certain properties such a system must possess if it is to be useful. It should be outside the influence of implmenting agencies; The basis for its data should be the people for who much programes are meant; Its results should be timely and acted upon. The official team entrusted with the task of data gathering would not take up questions relating to 'financial audit' of the programes but would be concerned exclusively with their impact on people.

Within this broad framework, the ensuing write-up is classical into two (I) the Data Requirements and (II) the system for data gathering.

PART - I : **DATA REQUIREMENTS**

From our experience in Sirur Block, the data needed for impact-measurement can be grouped into:

1. Elements on which we found it easy to collect adequate information.
2. Elements on which additional different data would be required.
3. Elements on which at present no data is available but which should be collected.

1. Under the first category fall such particulars as the total landholding, the demographic details, housing conditions, consumption expenditure on food and non-food items, and accessibility and utilisation of various services by the target group.

It will be observed that information on almost all the above aspects was collected, processed and analysed by us and the inferences drawn without much difficulty.

2. Elements under the second category are:
   a) Employment
   b) Income
   c) Indebtedness

On all three of these we had difficulty in getting the needed data.

a) Employment

The additional details that would be required are:

i) How many Adults in the family have employment and for what time period during the year?
ii) Does the head of the household have any subsidiary occupation?
iii) Does any member of the household have any an employment, different from the rest of the household?
iv) Are the children in the family also working out of necessity, or tradition? and
v) During what period in the year does the household find it difficult to get productive employment?

An analysis of the above data would help greatly in establishing the degree of neediness in a household and also would provide data to give guidance for solving the problem.

b) Income:

This has been very difficult to collect. Most organisations do not try to collect this data directly. Unless it is done very carefully, the resulting information may not

be of much use. However, in the case of the 'panel of households suggested by us, the ability to compare over time may make it worthwhile.

Wage Income: Under wage income, basically we have wages received by the family through any type of employment. Whatever has been received in terms of kind should be converted into monetary terms. Wage income receivee can be checked for consistency with the employment data.

Monthly Income: under non-wage income, we have income from agricultural produce and income from livestock. It is necessary to work out the approximate production under each crop and multiply it by the prices prevailing at that particular point of time. It is also necessary to impute the value in monetary terms of the qantity used for home-consumption, all the agricultural expenses, including interest on borrowings, should be substracted of course. In assessing the income from livestock also, the value of home-consumption should be imputed, the expenditure deducted and the net income taken into consideration.

This is a tiresome and time consuming computation. We suggest it only because doing it for the same panel of households every year makes it easier and provides a good picture of the changes taking place.

c) Indebtedness:

The particulars should ideally relate to three aspects (i) the nature, (ii) the magnitude and (iii) the purpose of the loans. Since many, in fact, most rural households are always indebted, it is well to have a reasonable estimate of this.

The use of the loan-money is important. For instance, it could be to acquire livestock or agricultural implements - "development" in nature, or it could be to meet bulk expenditure on marriage/other functions or to meet day-to-day consumption expenditure on account of non-availability of employment. It should also be possible to find out to what extent credit is misutilised.

Among these three data elements, Employment data is the most important. Besides providig an idea about the occupatonal profile, it would help in assessing the extent of unemployment prevailing in the Block. Further it may contain the clue for diagnosing ills elsewhere. For instance, if the dropout rates in the school are high then one can check to see whether it is due to the existence of child labour. Above all, it would help in planning for an designing of appropriate employment schemes.

3. Unfortunately, certain vital data on the welfare of the population simply is not available. Health and Population data elements are completely unavailable at the block level. Whatever is available is not useful for assessing the improvement(?) in people's welfare. For instance, the information furnished through registration scheme on births and deaths is not only inadequate and out-dated but also grossly under-reported. In both of these areas we can get some picture through household information, but by the very nature of things, health information, demographic information (and educational data) must be aggregates of large numbers of observations. This is why the Census is held. Unfortunately, no detailed (age-wise) Census information is available at the block-level. For purposes of planning and

locating facilities for health or education we require an age-wise break-up. This gap can only be met when the census is properly computerised and results are available for micro regions.

Let us now consider Health. No reliable information even on overall birth and death rates are available. One such indicators as infant and maternal mortality rates or morbidity rates, no information is available. The solution here clearly is for PHC's to be asked to maintain vital statistics at least for one group of 4-5 nearby villages (a population of nearly 5000 persons).

In the same way, class-wise drop out rates are hard to get and not systematically collected. More the problem is more intractable because it concerns the vested interests of teachers. If only we could get enrolment data twice a year instead of once a year, drop-out rates could be realistically computed and educational planning could be more factual.

At present the VLW's are expected to bring the Birth and Death data to HQ every month when they collect their salary. However, no check is made and consequently this data soon departs from actuality. If PHCs were to maintain the same data for the 4-5 nearest villages, it would provide a check on the VLW's reports for these villages (as well as for others, since the resulting rates could be computed.

PART II : **SYSTEM FOR DATA GATHERING**

1. Panel of Household:

Considering the fact that the overall objective of evaluation is to study to what extent the economically poor and socially vulnerable groups have access to productive opportunities and socially provided services, we suggest the creation of a Panel of Households classified according to landholding. We feel that classification accordign to landholding is a satisfactory criteria due to (i) this is still the single most important productive asset in rural areas out of which a major source of income is derived, (ii) the land records are comparatively available and reliable, based on which choice of selection can be done, and (iii) the poorer groups will be definitely included in the sample, and therefore their condition will automatically appear in the data.

Constituting a Panel of households is different from the procedure adopted (e.g. by NSS) where they select the respondents afresh each year. Their purpose is different - they want a statisticaly accurate way of representing very large populations (whole states). On the other hand we are more concerned with gathering impact information on a small region - a block - with a view to providing guidance to planners. Statistical accuracy is not necessary if the objective is met. The advantage here is that it makes very much easier the monitoring at frequent intervals of the living conditions of people falling in different strata. The composition of the Panel is such that it would also enable us to identify which sections of the population have benefitted most from the programmes.

The Panel idea has certain limitations, the most notable being that over the eyars the character of the panel itself might change. In fact, one reason why panels are rarely used is that they cease to be the same panel for statistical purposes, once one or more households have had to be replaced in it. It is also possible that when they know who the panel households are, the implementing agencies might concentrate on them! (The solution is to have a fairly large panel). The advantages clearly outweigh the disadvantages. For instance, if the character of the panel changes because a marginal farmer has become landless, in all probability it can be concluded that he has not benefitted from any of the programmes. In fact this is the type of developemnt the monitoring team will be looking for.

2. Selection of Panel of Household:

The Panel of households will consist, the each village, of

3 Landless Households
4 Marginal Farmer Households
3 Sall Farmer Households, and
2 Medium Farmer Households.

There is no representation of the large farmers and the rural elite, since it is not the purpose of the Panel to be representative. Instead, our goal is to monitor the impact of programe on the poorer and weaker societies of the population.

3. Village Selection, etc.:

The number of villages in which such a panel should be created would depend upon the size of the block, the variety of ecological conditions there, and other considerations. We sugget that about one in four villages in each Block should have such a panel. The villages themselves should be choosen in such a way that a fairly uniform geographical coverage is achieved. In a block like Sirur, this would give us about 23 villages and a total Panel of 276 households, not a very large number.

Having a Panel means that only 'change' information is needed each year after the first, and that one has last year's record as a check for this year's data. Each block should be visited at least once a year.

A team of 4 investigators led by two Analysts should be able to collect and process the data and to bring out results within a period of three months without detailed income estimates, or four months with. This assumes approximately 20-25 days residence in the block. Thus the same team can cover three blocks every year, allowing for some leave time. If the JMMPS System (See Chapter V) is adopted, the productivity of these teams will rise to at least and possibly 4 1/2 blocks per year. The staff required to cover one revenue division (4 districts) will be approximately 10 teams with JMMPS or 1 teams without.

III : **IMPLEMENTATION AND CONCLUSION**

We have not discussed the organisation structure to which the teams would belong except that it should be outside the influence of the implementing agencies. The 10 teams of 6 persons would be attached to the Divisional office. However, until

the JMMPS scheme is implemented, it may be equally useful to have the 14 teams at the District Collector's office. (Later, 4 teams can be left with the Collectors office when the reamining 10 are shifted to the Commisionerate).

In Chapter V we have described how a Jeep-mounted Micro Processor System based at the Divisional Commissioners office can successfully introduce modern technology into monitoring of Rural Development and how it can be effectively used for planning and monitoring of block-level development programmes.

CHAPTER - V : **INTRODUCING MODERN TECHNOLOG INTO MONITORING OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT - A JEEP MOUNTED MICRO-PROCESSOR SYSTEM (JMMPS)**

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