

Agricultural Extension Services by Agri-Clinic and Agri Business Centres (ACABCs) Scheme in Rajasthan

T.B. Parihar¹ and Vanpal Kumar Boyal²

¹Agro Economic Research Centre, Vallabh Vidyanagar,
Anand, Gujarat, India

²Career Point University, Kota,
Rajasthan, India

Abstract

Presently, agri-clinics and agri-business centres scheme became popular and necessary for agri-graduates due to specialized training, credit facility, subsidy and handholding support for the establishment of agri-business/agri-venture, but the success rate of total agri-venture establishment is low against total trained candidates in the country. The success rate of the ACABC scheme as country level is not satisfactory i.e. only 41 percent success rate, it is somewhat good in the case of Rajasthan i.e. 35 percent that indicate that agri-clinic. Rajasthan is rank six in candidate trained and venture establishment. There are lots of scope for the scheme and should give the attention for enhancement of ACABCs scheme. Ventures like Agri-clinic & agri business and Dairy/Poultry/Piggary/Goatary are the major activities which are performing well in the state. The farmers covered under AC&ABCs acheme are 4775 and the state having eighth rank. The farmers covered under scheme are less against the venture established under the given scheme. There should be lots of scope to cover more and more farmers and provide them useful agri extension services through this scheme. The five agencies are doing very well in this scheme. They trained the candidate and helping them for established the venture. For the success of this scheme the role of bank is major factor. The capital requirements for establishment of the venture are high and to do the success venture bank help is needed very much by the trained candidate. Till a date, we can see that only 86 per cent amount has been sanctioned

Key Word: Agri-Clinics, Agri- Business, Self Employment, Agri Extension Service

1. Introduction

Agriculture plays an important role by providing livelihood opportunities to a vast majority of population. In India, the rapid agricultural growth continues to be the key to poverty alleviation and overall economic development. In year to come, the increase in agricultural production will mainly come from the growth in productivity which will invite intervention of agricultural extension activities in providing farmers information, training and support for adopting improved production technologies (Global Agri System, 2009). Further progress in poverty and hunger reduction crucially depends on the increased productivity and profitability of smallholder farmers, which in turn depend on the successful delivery of agricultural extension (Glendenning, *et al*, 2010). The changing economic scenario and the need to respond to food and nutritional security, poverty alleviation, diversifying market demand, export opportunities, and environmental concerns pose new challenges to technology dissemination system (Sharma 2002). The 59th round of National Sample Survey (NSSO) Survey 2003 highlights that 60 percent of farmers had not accessed any source of information on modern technology to assist in their farming practices in the past year. Of those who had sourced information, 16 percent received it from other progressive farmers, followed by input dealers. Of those farmers who had accessed information, the major problem of extension services was found to be the practical relevance of the advice (NSSO 2005). The 70th NSSO round conducted in 2012-14 showed that no improvement i.e. 59 percent in access to information by them.

Agricultural extension has to play a crucial role in ushering in such a transformation in agriculture to meet the future challenges (Ratan, *et al*, 2012). The basic approach to agricultural extension in 11th Five Year Plan involved focus on extension reach to small, marginal farmers, farm women and disadvantaged group; strengthening and up scaling new institutional mechanism with adequate funds for extension activities. There is need to reexamine the current agricultural extension approaches in India to understand where information gap exists and determine why farmers are not accessing information through the large, well established public sector extension system in addition to emerging private and third-sector actors (Papnai, *et al* 2013).

In order to strengthen the extension services provided to the farmers and at the same time tap the potential of unemployed agricultural graduates to provide them with employment opportunities by making them agripreneurs, the union finance minister had announced (in the budget speech on February 28, 2002) the Agri-Clinic and Agribusiness Centres scheme for setting up Agri Clinic and Agri Business Centres (ACABCs) by agriculture graduates with the support of National Bank for Agriculture and rural development (NABARD). The scheme was launched by Government of India on 9th April, 2002 to supplement the effort of extension services in the country (Chandra Sekhar, *et al*, 2014). The objectives of the scheme are (i) to supplement efforts of public extension by necessarily providing extension and the services to the farmers on payment basis or free of cost as per business model of agripreneur, local needs and affordability of target group of farmers; (ii) to support agricultural development; and (iii) to create gainful self-employment opportunities to unemployed agricultural graduates, agricultural diploma holders, intermediate in agriculture and biological science graduates with PG in agri related courses (GOI, MoA, DAC 2010). Visible improvement has come about through adoption of management practices through on farm and off farm operation in this sector; agri-business has evolved out of the new input output matrix (Basil Hans 2008). With increased opportunities and consequent competitive scenario in this open economy, agriculture sector has the power and potential of not only ensuring livelihood security to per countrymen; but also to provide employment opportunities to millions of people and thereby improve their standard of living in general (Thakkar, 2013). The role of an agri-clinic is to provide expert services and advice to farmers while agribusiness centre provide input and farm equipment on hire basis; this services aims to fill the gap in the public-sector extension system where currently the input dealer plays a major role in providing advice to guide

input use (Ujjwal, *et al*, 2012). Evaluation study of Global Agri System revealed that as per agripreneurs response, major benefit to the farmers availing the services of agri-clinics centres was the increased awareness among farmers on scientific ways of farming (Global Agri System, 2009).

Table 1: Present status of ACABC scheme as on 31.10.2017

S.No.	Name of the State	Candidates Trained		Agri- Ventures Established	
		No	(%)	No	(%)
1	Maharashtra	12930	23.54	6195	26.36
2	Uttar Pradesh	11605	21.13	5754	24.48
3	Tamil Nadu	6349	11.56	3361	14.30
4	Bihar	3729	6.79	1315	5.59
5	Karnataka	3462	6.30	1418	6.03
6	Rajasthan	3011	5.48	1119	4.76
7	Madhya Pradesh	2139	3.89	774	3.29
8	Gujarat	1531	2.79	629	2.68
9	Jammu and Kashmir	1388	2.53	180	0.77
10	Telangana	1136	2.07	363	1.54
11	West Bengal	993	1.81	292	1.24
12	Andhra Pradesh	856	1.56	321	1.37
13	Assam	700	1.27	218	0.93
14	Jharkand	698	1.27	168	0.71
15	Haryana	646	1.18	225	0.96
16	Chattisgarh	612	1.11	289	1.23
17	Punjab	601	1.09	212	0.90
18	Orissa	542	0.99	106	0.45
19	Uttaranchal	461	0.84	155	0.66
20	Manipur	438	0.80	128	0.54
21	Himachal Pradesh	418	0.76	108	0.46
22	Kerala	199	0.36	51	0.22
23	Nagaland	184	0.34	21	0.09
24	Pondicherry	132	0.24	84	0.36
25	Meghalaya	35	0.06	3	0.01
26	Arunachal Pradesh	35	0.06	3	0.01
27	Mizoram	34	0.06	0	0.00
28	Delhi	31	0.06	5	0.02
29	Goa	11	0.02	5	0.02
30	Sikkim	9	0.02	1	0.00
31	Tripura	4	0.01	1	0.00
32	Chandigarh	3	0.01	1	0.00
		54922	100.00	23505	100.00

Source: www.manage.gov.in

The ACABC is an innovative scheme implementing in the India which tries to transform unemployed

agriculture graduate as a agri-preneurs through entrepreneurship development training and appropriate financial support in order to extend broad-based extension services to the peasant communities (Venkattakumar, *et al*, 2016). Effectiveness of training institute programmes and handholding support provided by nodal training institute (NTIs) is one of the factors that decide extent of establishment of agribusiness venture (Venkattakumar *et al*, 2012). Agri clinic and Agri Business Scheme now become popular among agri graduates due to specialized training, credit facility, subsidy and handholding support for the establishment of agribusiness/agri-venture, but the success rate of total agri-venture establishment is low against total trained candidate in India (Bairwa, *et al*, 2014).

Table 2: Activity wise status of ACABC scheme as on 31.10.2017 in Rajasthan

Sr. No.	Agri-Ventures	Total	Percent of total
1	Agri-Clinics	147	13.14
2	Agri-Clinics and Agribusiness Centres	163	14.57
3	Bio-fertilizer production and Marketing	9	0.80
4	Cultivation of Medicinal Plants	31	2.77
5	Direct Mkt.	5	0.45
6	Farm Machinery Unit	14	1.25
7	Fisheries Development	2	0.18
8	Floriculture	3	0.27
9	Horticulture Clinic	1	0.09
10	Landscaping + Nursery	1	0.09
11	Nursery	15	1.34
12	Organic Production/ Food Chain	8	0.71
13	Pesticides Production and Marketing	3	0.27
14	Value Addition	10	0.89
15	Seed Processing and Marketing	14	1.25
16	Vegetable Production and Marketing	6	0.54
17	Vermicomposting / Organic manure	72	6.43
18	Veterinary Clinics	83	7.42
19	Crop Production	49	4.38
20	Dairy/Poultry/Piggary/Goatary	478	42.72
21	Rural Godown	1	0.09
22	Agriculture Journalism	1	0.09
23	Mashroom Cultivation	1	0.09
24	Apiary	2	0.18
		1119	100.00

Source:www.manage.gov.in

Indian agribusiness covering wide spectrum of activities is driving towards boom and is in its growth stage attracting investment primary in production, processing and distribution areas (Nisha, 2014).

A shift from agriculture to agri business is an essential pathway to revitalize Indian agriculture and to make more attractive and profitable venture, agri-preneurship have the potential to contribute to a range of social and economic development such as employment generation, income generation, poverty reduction and improvement in nutrition, health and overall food security in the national economy (Bairwa, *et al*, 2014).

Agriclinics and agribusiness centres scheme implementing in the 32 states of the country including union tertiary. From table 1 the Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu are the leading share and remarkable achievement and other state like Karnataka, Bihar, Rajasthan have also exhibited faire degree of progress. However, many of the progressive States like Gujarat, Haryana etc. have not been able to show a progress matching with their agricultural development initiatives. Except Assam, Nagaland and Manipur, other North-East states have poor progress. Rajasthan hold the sixth rank, the success rate of agri-clinic & agri business scheme is 37 per cent which is lower than the average of India 43 per cent

Table 3: Farmers Covered under scheme

State	Total Number of Farmers Covered
Maharashtra	58975
Gujarat	22400
Bihar	13870
Karnataka	12792
Uttar Pradesh	8435
Andra Pradesh	8370
Madya Pradesh	8000
Rajasthan	4775
Tamil Nadu	4380
Orissa	915
Assam	300
Manipur	220

Source: Evaluation Study of Global Agri System 2009.

The statistics about activity wise performance of agri-clinic and agri business scheme in Rajasthan are given table 2. It is observed that Dairy/Poultry/Piggary/Goatary is the major activity with 42.73 per cent share of total activity followed by Agri-Clinics and Agribusiness Centres (14.57 %)

and Agri-Clinic (13.14 %) having major position of venture established under this scheme.

This scheme is intended to supplement public extension system efforts in providing broad-based extension services to the farmers in agribusiness activities at rural India. From table 3 shows that 58975 farmers covered in Maharashtra followed by Gujarat , Bihar, Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh 22400,13870,12792 and 8435 farmers covered respectively,. The Rajasthan is rank sixth in India. It has indicated that the scheme is increasing the agriculture extension towards the farmer and getting lots of benefit of this scheme.

Table 4 Agency wise trained candidate and venture established

Sr. No.	Name of nodal agency in UP	Trained Candidate	Venture Established
1	Jaipur School of Business & Finance Management , Jaipur	1260	508
2	Rajasthan Institute of Co-operative Education & Management Jaipur	510	183
3	Shashwat Sheti Vikas Pratishthan (SSVP) - Udaipur Sub Center	314	174
4	Indian Society of Agribusiness Professional, Jaipur	279	83
5	M.R.Moraraka GDC Rural Research Foundation , Jaipur	261	70
6	Maharana Pratap University of Agriculture & Technology ,Udaipur	151	50
7	State Institute of Agriculture of Management ,Durgapur	108	37
8	Mitcon Consultancy Services Ltd.(MCSL), Udaipur	68	7
9	Institute of Agri Business Management, Bikaner	33	0
		2984	1112

Source:www.manage.gov.in

From table 4, In Rajasthan about nine nodal agencies are trained the agriculture graduate and till date they

had trained about 2984 agri-graduate and out of that 1112 has established their venture and benefitted from this scheme. Out of 9 Nodal Agencies Jaipur School of Business & Finance Management , Jaipur and Rajasthan Institute of Co-operative Education & Management Jaipur are leading agency which are highest trained candidate and venture established

Table 5 Status of sanctioned and pending project by bank

S.No.	Name of the State	No. of Projects Sanctioned	Project Sanctioned (%)	No. of pending project	Pending project (%)
1	Uttar Pradesh	670	27.86	4090	24.30
2	Maharashtra	477	19.83	6669	39.63
3	Karnataka	297	12.35	939	5.58
4	Tamil Nadu	280	11.64	1567	9.31
5	Bihar	102	4.24	345	2.05
6	Assam	93	3.87	25	0.15
7	Madhya Pradesh	73	3.04	1023	6.08
8	Rajasthan	68	2.83	650	3.86
9	Gujarat	51	2.12	341	2.03
10	Himachal Pradesh	42	1.75	1	0.01
11	Telangana	38	1.58	320	1.90
12	Haryana	38	1.58	8	0.05
13	Andhra Pradesh	31	1.29	382	2.27
14	Chattisgarh	20	0.83	190	1.13
15	Manipur	20	0.83	21	0.12
16	Punjab	18	0.75	0	0.00
17	Kerala	18	0.75	0	0.00
18	Uttaranchal	16	0.67	20	0.12
19	Pondicherry	14	0.58	9	0.05
20	West Bengal	12	0.50	157	0.93
21	Jammu and Kashmir	7	0.29	0	0.00
22	Orissa	7	0.29	47	0.28
23	Jharkand	6	0.25	1	0.01
24	Goa	2	0.08	2	0.01
25	Arunachal Pradesh	2	0.08	0	0.00
26	Meghalaya	1	0.04	0	0.00
27	Nagaland	1	0.04	18	0.11
28	Tripura	1	0.04	0	0.00
29	Delhi	0	0.00	4	0.02
		2405	100.00	16829	100.00

Source: www.manage.gov.in

and through the established venture they helping the farmers to provided them the agri input etc and enhance the production and income of the farmers.

Table 5 showing that the status of bank sanctioned the loan to trained candidate. It indicate that 68 project has been sanctioned by the various bank to established the ventures, but still 650 number of project were pending to be sanctioned and they were unable to start the ventures in Rajasthan

Conclusion

The success rate of the ACABC scheme as country level is not satisfactory i.e. only 43 percent success rate in India, it is also unsatisfactory in the case of Rajasthan i.e 37 per cent indicate that ACABC scheme is not performing well in Rajasthan. Rajasthan is rank sixth in candidate trained and venture establishment. There are lots of scope for the scheme and should give the attention for enhancement of ACABCs scheme. Ventures like Agri-clinic & agri business and Dairy/Poultry/Piggary/Goatary are the major activities which are performing well in the state. The farmers covered under AC&ABC scheme are 4775 and the state having Eight rank. We can see that farmers covered under scheme are less against the venture established under the given scheme. There should be lots of scope to cover more and more farmers and provide them useful agri extension services through this scheme. The fourteen agencies are doing very well in this scheme. They trained the candidate and helping them for established the venture. For the success of this scheme the role of bank is major factor. The capital requirements for establishment of the venture are high and to do the success venture bank help is needed very much by the trained candidate. Till a date, we can see that only 68 projects has been sanctioned and about 650 project still waiting for sanction in Rajasthan.

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