

# **Data Need for Micro Planning**

By

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Planning is usually undertaken at various level from the national to down to provisional/district and village level. National level planning commonly adopts a macro/Sectoral approach while lower level planning features varying degrees of community participation. In recent years, due to various reasons, there has been trend towards the devolution of power to local Governments. In the changed environment there is need to enhance the capacity of lower level functionaries/local people for micro planning. Micro planning will also create environment for better involvement of target group from the stage of initiation for the project/programme which would facilitate their smooth implementation.

As far as data for micro-planning is concerned, no amount of pre-planning research/efforts are going to reveal all the information and knowledge needed for micro-planning and implementation thereof. In the process of carrying out micro plan, new data and insight will emerge hence the process should be flexible enough to accommodate them. Presently, the way in which information is sought and assessed can itself be exceedingly “top down” and non participatory, and the value of information is likely to be reduced accordingly. It is proved that the quality of data is comparatively better when participatory method is adopted. Data collected through survey method need to be verified/checked out with community being surveyed.

## **STATUS OF MACRO DATA**

There are many instances when same data generated by two agencies independently do not give some information. Sometimes, generation of data does not fit to logic and seem to be irrelevant. In Bihar, about 1.07 lakh tubewells were installed in 2003-04 (NABARD) but tubewell irrigated area declined to 28.55 lakh hectares in 2003-04 from 29.65 lakh hectares in 2002-03 (Table I), Govt. of Bihar.

**Table I**  
**Gross Irrigated area in Bihar (in lakh ha.)**

Sl. No.	Sources	1999-00	2002-03	2003-04
1	Canal	1267	1259	13.68
2	Tubewells MST Numbers of Tubewells installed **	24.12	29.65 (47714)	28.55 (1,07,338)
3	Others	819	347	344
	Total	44.98	45.71	45.67

Source: Department of Statistics and Evaluation, Govt. of Bihar, Patna

\*\* NABARD, Patna, Bihar

The phenomenon of declining area after installing more than lakh tubewell is quite disturbing. It shows that a large number of earlier installed tubewell turned to be non-functional which may not be positive within a period of one year.

It is very difficult to make precise and reliable conclusion, particularly with respect to agricultural development on macro data. However, it is more dangerous to plan for agricultural development on macro data. As we are all aware that the net irrigated area of Bihar (34.62 lakh hectares) is much higher than West Bengal (29.00 lakh hectares) and our per hectare fertilizer consumption (125 Kg) is also comparable to West Bengal (128 Kg. per hectare). It is not easy to explain the situation without analyzing the micro information. Our intensity of irrigation (132) is much less than West Bengal (166) which may be one reason (Table II) but analysis of micro level data would be able to reveal facts for our poor performance of agriculture.

**Table II**  
**Irrigation Intensity In Bihar vrs Other Major States of India**

Sl. No	State	Irrigation Intensity
1	Punjab	189
2	West Bengal	166
3	Orissa	161
4	UP	146
5	Bihar	132
	India	138

## WHY MICRO DATA

There are various reports indicating biasness of new agricultural technology to larger size of farmers. Hence, we have to find ways and means to involve small land holders in the process of agricultural development. In Bihar, about 1 lakh farm holdings belong to small and marginal holdings (59<sup>th</sup> NSS report) who are not able to take benefit of agricultural development programmes, particularly residual/second hand receivers of modern agricultural technology. There is need to involve these people starting from generation of data to finalization of micro level planning. Because, plans projects prepared at national level do not fit appropriately to small land holders of Bihar. Programme of different types of demonstration, projects of Horticulture Mission and even subsidy available for farm mechanization are not targeted to small land holders (<1 ha.), who constitute 87 per cent of farm households. The majority of these house holds belong to weaker section of the society and toiling below poverty line. It may be one of the important reasons for low turnout of farmers for taking benefits of various agricultural development programmes because the majority of our farm households are not eligible to participate in these programmes due to their small holdings.

Micro plan may throw some light on this sensitive issue hence there is need to consider this point in the process of generation of micro data through participatory approach.

### **PRECAUTION IN GENERATION IN MICRO DATA**

Before starting real work for data generation efforts should be made to build up good rapport with the farmers. Farmers should be well aware of our purpose and programme. While rapport building process, knowledgeable and experienced farmers should be identified. Identification of farmers should be done from all class and social groups of village.

Farmers should be allowed to participate in data generation. They should not be forced to generate information as per our pre conceived idea and Govt. programme. Government may have some priority for a particular crop but we should not impose our idea to them. If economics, cultural practices, and marketing are not favourable, farmers would not grow a particular crop. If we include the crop/enterprise in micro plan that may not be adopted at field level. One should use wealth ranking technique in selection of crop for cultivation or adoption of technology/enterprises.

However, farmers should be given all relevant information including government policies/development plan but farmers should be free in selection of crop/technology/enterprise. Discussion with farmers should be on equal footing. One should appreciate their feelings and concern however, noting down their observation on process of agricultural development would be more helpful in increasing their cooperation in generation of data.

Appreciation of their knowledge/experience and giving them feeling that they are indispensable for this work would improve the quality of information and increase participation.

Data required for micro-level planning may be categorized as follows:

1. Soil Type, Fertility level, rainfall, dry spell, temperature and physiological data.
2. Profile of farming communities and main non farm activities.
3. Cultural and Behavioural Pattern
4. Asset Ownership – size of holdings, fragmentation of holdings, size of plot, irrigation (types and ownership).
5. Access to various factors of production including human, animal and machine labour.
6. Agricultural Practices/skill – crop, animal, fisheries.
7. Resource availability and problems – water, market, fertilizer and seeds availability.
8. Local consumption Pattern
9. Cash inflow from outside village
10. Availability of Institutional Credit related problems
11. Major constraints in production as marketing of crops/agril.allied products.
12. Institutional and Organisational capacity – (Co-op, SHGs, Farmers club, marketing Infrastructure, etc.
13. Introduction of new crop, failure of crop/enterprises.
14. Allied activities – honey bee, mushroom, etc.
15. Access to information/sources.
16. Coverage of various programmes for agricultural development and related constraints.
17. Farmers perception about different crops/enterprises.
18. Prevalent risk in crop/agril allied activities alongwith coping mechanization and proposed strategies.

19. Preferred crops/enterprises alongwith reasons for preference.

20. Dominant social group and their interest.

These are the main areas/topics which may be taken to consideration for generating data base for micro planning.