

**DEVELOPMENT OF MASS MEDIA AND ITS EXTENSION IN AGRICULTURE: A
FEEDBACK REVIEW OF AUDIENCE RESEARCH SURVEY IN AIR,
MURSHIDABAD, WEST BENGAL**

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Abstract:

Mass Media is an important component of strategy recognized as such in the midterm appraisal of 10th Plan for revitalization of agricultural extension system. It aims to contribute to the lives of the local community by creation of content by the people and for the people of that community. It will focus on issues relating to education, health, environment, agriculture, rural and community development. It is a powerful communication medium, particularly in India where, in the absence of regular and stable electric supply in rural and far flung areas. People have to depend on radio to meet their needs of information, education and entertainment. Community radio serves to bring small communities together, focuses on the common man's day-to-day concerns and helps in realizing local aspirations.

Introduction

Radio as a communication medium plays an important role in the nation's socio-cultural, political and economic development. It is a powerful communication medium, particularly in India where, in the absence of regular and stable electric supply in rural and far flung areas. People have to depend on radio to meet their needs of information, education and entertainment. Community radio serves to bring small communities together, focuses on the common man's day-to-day concerns and helps in realizing local aspirations. It aims to contribute to the lives of the local community by creation of content by the people and for the people of that community. It will focus on issues relating to education, health, environment, agriculture, rural and community development. Ministry of Information and Broadcasting proposes to create awareness amongst the masses about the policy for establishing and running Community Radio Stations by arranging a number of workshops and seminars in various parts of the country. In December 2006, the Government of India has liberalized the policy for Community Radio and

decided to grant permission for setting up Community Radio Stations to 'Non-profit' organizations viz.

Civil Society and Voluntary Organizations, State Agricultural Universities, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) institutions, Krishi Vigyan Kendras, Registered Societies and Autonomous Bodies and Public Trusts registered under Societies Act or any other such Act relevant for the purpose in addition to the educational institutions, subject to fulfillment of the eligibility conditions.

Mass Media has been defined as "means of communication designed to reach and influence very large numbers of people"(Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1980). Defleur and Ball – Rokeach(1996) defines mass communication as a technology which helps a message to be transmitted among a large number of people at the same time. Thus, it includes newspapers, magazines, television, radio, cinema and the now ubiquitous internet. It has also to be noted specially that the nature of any society's communication process is necessarily linked to virtually every aspect of the society's daily life. Various theories have been floated about the study of mass communications. Defleur et al (1996) says that the study of mass communications should be able to throw significant light on

- a. The impact of the society on a medium,
- b. The various processes involved in the working of mass communication systems, and
- c. The influence of medium on society.

The society has to function in the context of social reality and one of the significant tools that the society has at its command to achieve this is language. From another point of view, language is the medium used by the society to exchange or explain the understandings and standpoints of one section of the society to its other sections.

Origin of AIR in India

Radio broadcasting began in India in the early 1920's. The Radio Club of Bombay broadcast the first programme in 1923. This was followed by the setting up of a Broadcasting Service that began broadcasting on 23rd July, 1927 on an experimental basis in Bombay and Calcutta, under

an agreement between the then Government of India and a private company called the Indian Broadcasting Company Ltd. When this company went into liquidation in 1930, Indian State Broadcasting Service under the Department of “Controller of Broadcasts” was constituted. The Indian State Broadcasting Service was renamed as All India Radio in June, 1936. All India Radio also came to be known as Akashvani in 1956. When India attained independence in 1947, AIR had a network of six stations and 18 transmitters. The coverage was 2.5% of the area and just 11% of the population. AIR today has 225 radio stations and 361 transmitters and its coverage extends to 91.78 % by area and 99.14 % by population. Operating in a multi-cultural, multi-linguistic country like India, AIR broadcasts in 24 languages and 146 dialects. In External Services, it covers 27 languages including 16 foreign and 11 Indian languages. AIR operates its broadcasting services on Medium Wave, Short Wave and FM.

Programme Objectives

In its programming and other activities, AIR is guided by its motto ‘*Bahujana Hitaya; Bahujana Sukhaya*’ i.e. to promote the happiness and welfare of the masses through information, education and entertainment. To realize its objectives, AIR has evolved a three-tier system of broadcasting – national, regional and local. It caters to the mass communication needs of the people through its various stations spread across the country. They provide music, spoken word, news and other programmes. Local stations meet the area specific needs of the listeners.

Historical development of AIR

First Stage :1927 to 1947

The first twenty years from 1927 to 1947 were the British India days. The fact that radio had good listener ship, right from the days of its inception, is attested by the phenomenal increase in the number of radio sets – from hardly 1000 sets in 1927, the number leapt to 16200 in 1934 and to the considerably huge number of 74000 by 1937. The only source of income for the company was the fees imposed on radio sets. The then Indian Broadcasting company approached the British government for financial aid. This was denied and the company had to wind up operations. However, manufacturers of radio equipments as well as radio enthusiasts prevailed

upon the government to restart broadcasting. Their main argument was that a broadcasting facility was essential for the government – a viewpoint that was acceptable to the government also. As a result, the government took over both the Bombay and Calcutta stations, made a budgetary allocation of rupees two lakhs and handed over the administration of these stations to the industries department. Eventually transmission recommenced on April First, 1930. Later, a new department called the Indian State Broadcasting Service was created and the radio stations were turned over to the care of this service. In 1936, the broadcasting setup was renamed All India Radio. Its acronym AIR had the special quality of indicating the medium in which the service functions. It was Lionel Fielden, who took over as the new Controller of Broadcasting on August 30, 1935, who was instrumental in naming the new broadcasting set up as All India Radio.

Second Stage: 1948 to 1962

The second stage consists of the fifteen years up to 1962. During this period, the structure, composition and policies of broadcasting underwent several crucial changes. “It can be said that the second stage was heralded by Pandit Nehru’s famous tryst with destiny speech” . Several policy initiatives like the setting up of a series of small one kilowatt transmitters, programmes like Vadya vrinda, a group music programme in 1952, a national programme of talks in 1953, Radio Sangeeth Sammelan, a prestigious all India festival of classical music presented on stage at various cities and towns and later broadcast over a period of one month from all the stations of AIR in 1954 etc were the fruits of this period. The main entertainment channel of AIR, the Vividh bharti also came into existence during this phase. The service was started in 1957. The prime purpose of the new service was to cater to the increasing demand for more light and film music programmes as against classical music and developmental programmes of a more serious mode. (It is aired for more than 14 hours daily now, from 36 stations. Almost sixty percentage of the broadcast time is earmarked for Indian film music and the rest is divided between light music, devotional songs, short plays, interviews etc).

Third Stage: 1962 to 1982

The third stage from 1962 right up to 1982 was one of expansion. By the time this period came to a close the number of radio stations increased to 83 and that of transmitters rose to 137. The advent of Frequency modulated (FM) transmission also took place during this period. By 1982,

the number of radio set licenses rose to 1.22 crores and the coverage of broadcasting reached 90 percent of the population.

Fourth Stage : 1982 onwards

The fourth period, starting in 1982, is especially significant because of the effects that scientific progress India made in the arena of mass communication technology. The first Indian national Sattelite – INSAT 1A – was launched in April, 1982. The sixth and seventh plans also gave much impetus to the growth of broadcasting facilities.

The practice of introducing time slots on FM channel to private parties was started at Mumbai on August 15, 1993. On September 28, 1994 four 500 KW Superpower Shortwave transmitters at Bangalore were inaugurated. With this Bangalore has become one of the biggest transmitting centres in the world. May 2, 1996 saw the launching of AIR on-line Information Services on Internet. On January 13, 1997 Audio on demand on Internet Service was started. Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) was introduced at Delhi on an experimental basis on April 1, 1997. On January 26, 1998 'Radio on Demand' service on 2nd FM Channel Transmission was commenced. AIR 'News on Telephone' and AIR 'live on Internet'. Started started broadcasting on February 25, 1998 . On Sept 1, 2001 AIR launched an Infotainment channel known as FM-II at four metros, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Delhi, in addition to the Metro Channel FM-I. On Feb 27, 2002 AIR launched its first ever digital statellite home service which will cater to Indian sub-continent and South-East Asia. In July, 2002 All India Radio celebrated 75 years of Broadcasting and in April, 2003 the Marketing Division of Prasar Bharati was inaugurated. On Jan 26, 2004 Bhasha Bharati Channel of AIR launched at Delhi and Classical Music Channel launched at Bangalore. Apr 01, 2004 Launch of Kisan Vani Programme from 12 Stations of AIR. Dec 16, 2004 DTH Service of Prasar Bharati.

AIR Channels

Primary Channels

Primary Channels, the public service broadcasting arm of AIR, put out infotainment programmes with the objective of enriching the lives of their listeners. The Primary Channels, broadcasting

largely on the Medium Wave frequency, follow a composite programming mix. They also promote art and culture with a major emphasis on Indian classical music. Around 40 percent of total broadcast on primary channels comprises music, which includes Classical music, light, folk, film and music of various other languages. News and Current Affairs programmes constitute 20 to 30 percent of the broadcast time. Radio plays and drama, health & family welfare programmes, programmes for women and children, farm and home programmes aimed at empowering rural masses are the other important segments of Primary Channels. These channels being the most accessible of all the AIR channels, strive to reach their audience in the language most understood by all in their respective areas.

Vividh Bharati

The entertainment channel of AIR, Vividh Bharati service was started in October 1957, with popular film music as its main ingredient. It started accepting commercials from November, 1967. Vividh Bharati Service provides entertainment for 15 hours a day. Nearly 85 percent of programming is based on music with film music topping the chart. Classical, folk, light and devotional music are also broadcast. Bulk of the Vividh Bharati programming originates from Mumbai, which is also relayed by other Vividh Bharati centres. Regional Vividh Bharati stations also produce and broadcast a few programmes at specified timings in their respective languages. Several programmes of Vividh Bharati are quite popular among the audience. The top ten programmes are 'Chitralok' (Morning), 'Bhule Bisre Geet', 'Chhaya Geet', 'Hawa Mahal', 'Chitralok' (Evening), 'Jaimala', 'Aap Ki Farmaish', 'Triveni', 'Sangeet Sarita' and 'Manchahe Geet'.

FM-Rainbow

All India Radio operates 14 FM Stereo channels in Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bangalore, Panaji, Lucknow, Cuttack, Jalandhar, Tiruchirapally, Kodaikanal, Vishakhapatnam, Hyderabad and Coimbatore. Beside these stations, Rainbow Programmes are relayed for a certain duration from Kasauli, Shillong, Munssorie, Aligarh, Dharamshala, Bhatinda, Kurseong, Vijayavada, Kanpur, Bhadarvah, Poonch, Rajouri, Naushera, Leh, Radio Kashmir, Srinagar Radio Kashmir, Jammu. These channels, called AIR FM Rainbow, are targeted at the urban audience with a refreshingly new style of presentation. Besides music – Hindi, English and

regional, the FM Channels also broadcast chat shows, helpline programmes, interactive phone-in programmes etc. The traffic beat and the city weather updates are of particular interest to metro dwellers.

Local Radio Stations

Local Radio is comparatively a new concept of broadcasting in India. Each of the local radio stations of AIR serving a small area provides utility services and reaches right into the heart of the community, which uses the microphone to reflect and enrich its life. What distinguishes Local Radio from the regional network is its down to earth, intimate and uninhibited approach. The programmes of the local radio stations are area specific. They are flexible and spontaneous enough to enable the station to function as the mouthpiece of the local community.

National Channel

The National Channel of All India Radio, in operation since 1988 is essentially a night service, operating as a “link and information” medium to listeners at odd hours, be it factory workers, farmers, drivers, soldiers or students. During the year, the National Channel turned into a 24-hour channel with daytime broadcast on Short Wave transmission. Light and Classical music, news, sports and other spoken word programmes are broadcast in English, Hindi and Urdu. Vividh Bharati service was introduced in night transmission in August, 2004.

External Services

As an electronic ambassador, the External Services Division (ESD) of AIR has been a vital link between India and the rest of the world, especially those countries with substantial ethnic Indian population. It ranks high among the External Radio networks of the world both in reach and range covering about 100 countries in 27 languages. AIR, through its external broadcasts, aims to keep the overseas listeners in touch with the ethos of India. The languages in which AIR reaches its foreign audience are English, French, Russian, Swahili, Arabic, Persian, Pushtu, Dari, Baluchi, Sinhalese, Nepali, Tibetan, Chinese, Thai, Burmese and Bhasha Indonesia. The services in Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Gujarati are directed at overseas Indians, while those in

Urdu, Punjabi, Sindhi, Saraiki, Kannada and Bengali are meant for listeners in the Indian Sub-continent.

The three major services of External Services Division are

- (a) The General Overseas Service (GOS) in English,
- (b) AIR External Service in Hindi and
- (c) AIR External Service in Urdu.

The External Services broadcasts follow a composite pattern and generally comprise News& Current Affairs, Review of the Indian Press, Newsreel, Magazine programmes on sports and literature, documentaries and features, talks and discussions on social, cultural, economic, political and historic subjects. Music is also broadcast in good measure. The ESD also supplies recordings of music, spoken word and other programmes to about 80 foreign broadcasting organizations under the programme exchange arrangement.

DTH

On 16th December, 2004 the Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh launched the Direct-to-Home Service of Prasar Bharati – DD Direct +. With this, All India Radio entered a new era of satellite broadcasting providing 24 hours service. In the first phase, twelve channels of AIR have been made available to the listeners in India and abroad. The programmes include information and entertainment in equal measure.

Mass Media Support to Agricultural Extension

Effective use of Mass Media is an important component of strategy recognized as such in the midterm appraisal of 10th Plan for revitalization of agricultural extension system. The Department of Agriculture & Cooperation (DAC) is currently implementing a scheme titled

“Mass Media Support to Agriculture Extension”. The scheme utilizes infrastructure of Doordarshan and All India Radio to broadcast 30 minutes programme on Agriculture five/six days a week from the following Stations/Kendras:

- (a) 96 FM Stations of All India Radio
- (b) 180 High/Low power transmitters of Doordarshan
- (c) 18 Regional Kendras of Doordarshan
- (d) Programme on DD National

Objective of the Scheme

The objective of the scheme ‘Mass Media Support to Agriculture Extension’ is to provide information/knowledge to assist farmers in increasing productivity of, and income from farm operations. This objective is proposed to be achieved by undertaking, inter-alia, the following specific activities:

1. Broadcasting programmes covering a wide spectrum of topics in agriculture and allied fields to cover the entire country, with special focus on isolated areas and marginalized population.
2. Repeat broadcasts at different time slots to suit the viewer’s convenience of different segments of population.
3. Disseminate programmes in regional languages and local dialects for the specific needs of different regions.
4. Promote live programming with phone-in feature, so that the viewers may interact and participate in the ongoing broadcasts.
5. Undertake capacity building and training programmes to help upgrade the knowledge and expertise of programme executives, extension workers, field-level officials and other functionaries.

Monitoring and Support Activities:-

An outlay of Rs. 29.5 crore under the Scheme would be utilized, as needed, for action research, concurrent feedback, training, capacity building, travel cost, handholding, professional services, publicity, monitoring, impact evaluation, etc. The component for action research has been included for conducting research on an on-going basis to determine the information and

knowledge requirements of the farming community so as to provide inputs for programme production. A component has been provided for impact assessment to determine the effect of the scheme on farm level practices and farmer incomes. To meet the requirement of trained human resource, which is needed in the operation of the channels a component for training has also been provided. To spread awareness about the availability of this channel, a component for advertising in the print and electronic media has also been provided for.

Monitoring Committees:-

The success of the scheme will depend considerably on the extent the programme is relevant to the selected audience. A three-tier system has therefore, been set up for content monitoring. A high level Apex Committee at the Centre is headed by the Hon'ble Union Minister of Agriculture, the State Level Committees are headed by the concerned APCs/ State Agriculture Secretaries and the District Level Committees are headed by the concerned District Collectors/Deputy Commissioners. The State and District Level Committees are represented by the Officers of the Agriculture & allied department, Officers of Doordarshan & AIR, State Agricultural Universities, KVKs, NGOs, Banks, Farmers representatives, etc. These committees are to meet regularly to provide required guidelines, experts support and overall direction for content generation and to review schedules of the programmes telecast/broadcast through DD/AIR for bringing in further improvements, keeping the feedback received in mind. A Monitoring Committee has also been constituted in the Ministry under the Chairpersonship of the Additional Secretary (Extension) for ensuring coordination between various Departments/Agencies involved and overseeing the implementation of the schemes.

Feedback Collection:-

In order to plan for improve in the content and quality of programmes being telecast/broadcast through DD/AIR, feedback on the programme is essential. A multipronged strategy has been established for getting such feedback. The Audience Research Units of Doordarshan and All India Radio have been commissioned to collect the feedback from the audience about the narrowcasting and regional TV programmes and Kisanvani Radio Programmes respectively. These reports are being sent to the respective programme producing centres, District Level Committees, State Level Committees and DAC for necessary improvements in future contents.

Many Technical officers have been assigned the task of watching National Programme and to give feedback. The feedback is being compiled on a monthly basis in the Ministry and sent to Central Production Centre of Doordarshan for appropriate action. Doordarshan Kendras are directly getting feedback on their programmes through letters, phone calls, etc. from the audience. A suitable format has been developed to collect the details of such feedback from them including the suggestions & comments of the audience on weekly basis. The weekly reports being received in the Ministry in this regard are being compiled on a monthly basis and sent to the concerned Divisional Heads of the Ministry for information & appropriate action.

History and development of Kisanvani

The commitment of All India Radio to the rural audience dates back to more than 50 years. In fact, special programmes have been designed to cater to the day-to-day seasonal needs of the farming community. To broadcast the latest technology and information for agricultural output is a continuous process of AIR's Farm & Home programmes. These programmes not only provide information about improved agricultural practices but also create awareness about the ways and means to improve the quality of their lives. The programmes are broadcast daily in the designated morning, noon and evening slots. The average duration of Farm & Home broadcasts at an AIR station is 60 to 100 minutes per day. Farm & Home programmes also include programmes for rural women, rural children and rural youth. The Farm & Home units of All India Radio broadcast composite programmes, which include equal segments of information about various Rural Development Schemes and Hardcore Agricultural programmes. Thus, while in one segment, they talk about the hardcore agricultural subjects i.e. better farming techniques, animal husbandry, fisheries and other agriculture related subjects like dry and wasteland agriculture, the other segment talks about employment schemes, loan and training facilities, sanitation, health & hygiene and nutrition etc.

AIR has stepped up its activity of Agricultural Broadcasts with the launch of exclusive Project Mass Media Support to Agriculture extension with the title **Kisan Vani** from 15th February, 2004 in collaboration with Ministry of Agriculture to inform local farmers the daily market rates, weather reports and day-to-day activities in their area at a micro level. Presently 'Kisan Vani' is being broadcast and relayed from AIR 96 FM Stations.

Kisanvani : a initiative towards Rural Development

All India Radio provides extensive information on diverse subjects such as land and water conservation, sustainable agriculture, bio-technology, integrated pest management in crops, crop insurance schemes, environment protection, disaster management, role of panchayats in rural development. These programmes are produced with the help of subject matter specialists. All India Radio maintains a very close liaison with the Ministries and Departments of Agriculture & Rural Development of central and state governments. The programmes are mounted in regional and local dialects from different stations. Local Radio stations also broadcast regular programmes on rural development. Keeping in view the importance of the subject, all the AIR Stations are broadcasting a daily programme on Environment for 5 to 7 minutes duration and a weekly programme of longer duration for more than a decade. This theme is also being discussed in several other programmes i.e. Health/Women/ Rural Women/Youth/Children programmes for propagating awareness about the environment. AIR Stations are broadcasting programmes on the subject on the basis of instructions and guidelines issued by the Directorate.

In order to inform and educate the listeners living both in urban and rural areas for creating environmental consciousness among them on preservation of environment through development of forests, afforestation, social forestry, farm forestry etc. These programmes are mounted in interesting and imaginative ways. All AIR Stations are broadcasting these programmes in their local languages in different formats like talks, discussions, features, current affairs information items, spots, serials etc. AIR Stations are advised from time to time to intensify and improve their programmes on environment. There is a regular broadcast of programmes related to information regarding environment and forest developmental schemes launched by the Central/State Governments. All India Radio has adopted a multilingual approach for its broadcasts of programmes on environment, forestry, wildlife and ecology etc. These programmes are broadcast in all major Indian languages and local dialects, including those spoken by various smaller communities also. In view of its importance, cultivating awareness about wildlife and

forest conservation is treated by AIR as a challenge and emphasis is given on developmental activities .

Women empowerment through Kisanvani

All India Radio strives, through its programmes, to seek to raise the social consciousness of the country with regard to attitude towards women. The programmes directed at women listeners cover subjects related to socio-economic development of women, health and family welfare, food and nutrition, scientific home management, women entrepreneurship, education (including adult education), gender issues etc. These programmes also aim at creating wide social awareness about rights and privileges of women through the propagation of legal literacy. Different traditional folk forms are used to communicate specially with the rural women audience. Programmes in different formats like talks, plays, short stories, features, discussions etc. based on themes such as crime against women, preference for a girl child, evils of dowry system, gender inequity and female infanticide and improvement in the status of women are constantly being broadcast in the programmes meant for the general audience too. A year long multi-media campaign focussing on atrocities against women has been launched to create an atmosphere conducive to safety and security of women both within and outside their households as also at their work places. The aim is to contribute towards a safe and secure environment for women and children. Guidelines are issued from time to time to programme heads at AIR stations to plan and produce programmes for women with the aim of their empowerment and to ensure that women's issues are projected as larger social issues rather than as issues concerning women only. AIR continued to join hands with UNICEF in disseminating the important social messages on Health, Nutrition, Sanitation, Water, Girl Education, Child Rights, Registration of Birth, Eradication of Polio, Breast-feeding, HIV/AIDS and consumption of Iodized Salt.

Audience Research Feedback : Kisanvani

At present, 96 FM stations of All India Radio are catering to the rural areas. The scheme envisages that all 96 FM transmitters will produce separate locality-specific programmes for the farming community. Under Revised Scheme w.e.f 1st April, 2005, the Kisanvani programmes

from 96 Rural Area FM Stations are being broadcast for half an hour duration daily, 6 days a week, with each station producing a separate programme, half fresh and half from the stock.

In the year 2006-07 Audience Research Unit of DG,AIR has conducted Radio Audience Survey at 60 places for Primary Channels, 40 Vividh Bharati channels, 14 FM Channels, 4 FM Gold Channels and survey on Kisan-Vani programme at 89 places.

According to Radio Audience Survey-2006-07 the listenership of different channels are given below:

- (i) Primary Channel : 53.2%
- (ii) CBS Channel : 57.1%
- (iii) FM Rainbow : 49.2%
- (iv) FM Gold :26.4%
- (v) LRS :65.2%

State wise trends

The following tables indicate the state-wise trends of various items of study:

Table-1

Item listened under Kisanvani Programme

Sl.N	Most listened topics	Name of the State/UT	% Listeners
1	IPM (Integrated pest management)	Andhra Pradesh	40.9
2	IPM (Integrated pest management)	Tamilnadu	36.1
3	Cultivation of export oriented crops, cash crops etc.	Karnataka	22.2
4	Cultivation of export oriented crops, cash crops etc.	Maharashtra	30.4
5	Cultivation of export oriented crops, cash crops etc.	North-East	13.5
6	Cultivation of export oriented crops, cash crops etc.	Haryana	82.8
7	Cultivation of export oriented crops, cash crops etc.	Orissa	51.3
8	Cultivation of export oriented crops,	Jammu & Kashmir	40.6

	cash crops etc.		
9	Cultivation of export oriented crops, cash crops etc.	Jharkhand	46.5
10	Cultivation of export oriented crops, cash crops etc.	Gujrat	41.9
11	Cultivation of export oriented crops, cash crops etc.	West Bengal	78.3
12	Modern and latest agriculture implements	Rajasthan	22.9
13	Modern and latest agriculture implements	Bihar	28.4
14	Marketing of agriculture products	Kerala	9.2
15	Farm seeds and seed production of day-to-day use.	Himachal Pradesh	58.3
16	Farm seeds and seed production of day-to-day use.	Madhya Pradesh	20.5
17	Cultivation of Aromatic & Medicinal plants.	Chhatisgarh	30.0
18	Specific topic on Animal husbandry.	Uttar Pradesh	17.3
19	Specific topic on Animal husbandry.	Pondicherry	25.5
20	‘Cultivation of export oriented crops, cash crops etc.’ and ‘New method of irrigation, rain harvest etc.’	Daman	10.0 (Each)
21	‘New method of irrigation, rain harvest etc’ and ‘Specific topic on Animal husbandry’	Punjab	10.0 (Each)

Sources: Audience Research Feedback Report 2007, AIR

Table-2

Topics liked to be covered under Kisanvani Programme

S/No.	Name of the State/UT	Most liked topics	Respondents (%)
1	Uttar Pradesh	New methods of irrigation, rain harvest, etc	15.3
2	Andhra Pradesh	Loan and subsidy schemes of the government	14.9
3	Karnataka	Modern & latest agriculture implements	41.8
4	Maharashtra	New methods of irrigation, rain harvest	9.2
5	. North-East	Loans and subsidy schemes of the government	29.8
6	Haryana	Farm seeds and seed production of day to day use	41.7
7	Orissa	Loans and subsidy schemes of the government	20.5
8	Rajasthan	Farm seeds and seed production of day to day use	33.5
9	Jammu & Kashmir	Loans and subsidy schemes of the government.	37.8
10	Punjab	Loans and subsidy schemes of the government.	28.3

11.	Daman	Specific topics on Animal Husbandry.	17.0
12.	Pondicherry	Cultivation of export oriented crops, cash crops etc.	59.1
13	Himachal Pradesh	Farm seeds and seed production of day to day use.	75.6
14	Kerala	IPM (Integrated Pest Management).	13.0
15	Bihar	i) Specific topics on Animal Husbandry. ii) Self-employment schemes.	58.4
16	Jharkhand	Loans and subsidy schemes of the government	30.9
17	Chhatisgarh	Cultivation of export oriented crops, cash crops etc.	22.3
18	Tamilnadu	IPM (Integrated Pest Management)	82.8
19	Gujarat	Self-employment schemes	33.1
20	Madhya Pradesh	Farm seeds and seed production of day to day use	18.0
21	West Bengal	Cultivation of export oriented crops, cash crops etc.	32.9

Sources: Audience Research Feedback Report 2007, AIR

Audience Research feedback from AIR, Mursidabad, West-Bengal

AIR, Kolkata has setup regional radio station in Asansol, Chinsura, Kurseung, Mursidabad, and Siliguri. I was the part of Feedback Survey on Kisanvani Programme under the scheme 'MassMedia Support to Agriculture Extension, 01st November, 2006 to 21st January, 2007 (32nd to 42nd week of study). Research Tools were Pre-coded Structured Questionnaire. Data Collection done from 2 villages per week per FM Station and 10 farmers per village. I collected

data's from Murshidabad AIR, West-Bengal. Bahrapur, Khagra, krisnakanthnagar and Lalbagh were the areas where I had done fieldwork.

Feedback from Mursidabad, AIR

Since the target audiences of the Kisanvani programme are farmers, the occupation of majority of the respondents selected for the interview was farming. Small farmers and marginal farmers were maximum. They reported that the information given was easy to understand. When asked to give the opinion on the information given under the programme and the reasons for not understanding revealed that highest number of respondents were 'unable to remember the information as too many messages/technologies were given in a single broadcast'. Some common technologies/practices adopted by most of the farmers having listened to Kisanvani programme are as follows: - Rainwater harvesting, Hybrid seeds & seed treatment and Organic farming. To find out whether Kisanvani Programmes include adequate subject matters for the woman farmers, a separate question was asked to woman farmers regarding woman related activities. In reply, woman farmer stated that they were getting adequate information on 'Cattle feed, Bio-gas, vermi-compost etc. The information provided on the topics Women specific items manufactured at home like Papad, Pickles, speces, Basket etc and Women and child care was adequate.

Their feedback regarding Kisanvani programme are as follows:

1. More and more field-based programmes should be broadcast.
2. Technical terms should be explained in easy language.
3. Weather bulletin should be broadcast regularly in the Kisanvani programme.
4. Toll free phone-in-facilities should be made available for Kisanvani programme.
5. Programme on marketing of agricultural products should be broadcast.
6. Give detail about various types of govt. loan & subsidy schemes.
7. Information should be given about 'Kisan Credit Card'.
8. Self-employment schemes should be provided.

9. Organic farming, Rainwater harvesting, certified seeds & Soil testing should be broadcast under Kisanvani programme.

Conclusion

West Bengal inherited very complex production relations, including absentee landlordism, sub-infeudation and the widespread prevalence of sharecropping cultivators without rights. These were widely acknowledged to be the obstacles to the development of agriculture. Mass Media Support to Agriculture Extension has been launched during the Xth Plan Period with a view to contribute to revamping the extension services in the country by using electronic media for transfer of technology/information to the farmers. The existing infrastructure is being utilized to produce and transmit programmes covering a wide spectrum of topics in agriculture and allied field for bringing the latest information and knowledge to the farming community.

Rural employment has suffered more than urban employment in the 1990s. In the rural areas, population growth has been more than double the rate of growth in the number of main workers, while the number of marginal workers has increased at a rapid rate. In urban areas, the employment picture looks slightly better: while marginal work is clearly the most dynamic with a very high annual rate of growth, main workers grew faster than total population growth. Within the overall stagnation of aggregate employment in the West Bengal countryside in the recent past, one very significant shift has been the diversification into non-agricultural activities. By 2001, cultivators constituted only one-fourth of the rural workforce in rural West Bengal. The state currently shows one of the highest rates of employment diversification out of agriculture, in the whole of rural India.

Not only have the panchayats assisted in better identification of beneficiaries, and contributed to the efficiency of the subsequent support programme to beneficiaries in terms of credit, and mini kits, but they have also coordinated programmes such as IRDP, FW, NREP and helped to augment rural incomes. Similarly, the land reform in turn enabled the panchayats to have a more democratic character, as the economic and social composition of those elected as panchayat

members revealed the growing significance of small and marginal peasants along with landless workers.

A lot of petty food processing activities, small-scale trading, and basic production of consumer goods for local markets would have contributed to this. In addition, of course, there has been consciously designed and policy-assisted diversification into a range of activities such as fisheries, poultry and livestock raising and sericulture. There is micro evidence that more women are entering into various types of economic activities that are related to the expansion of local networks such as panchayat-based groups and Self-Help Groups. Most of this work is in non-agricultural activities, although it may be in related activities such as dairy, livestock rearing and food processing.

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