



Policy Brief

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Footfall analysis through farmers database of 14 TNAU KVKs

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Summary

Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVK), are an integral part of the National Agricultural Research System (NARS), aims at assessment of location specific technology modules in agriculture and allied enterprises, through technology assessment and demonstrations.

At present TNAU has 15 ICAR KVKs and the study was conducted in 14 ICAR KVKs except KVK, The Nilgiris.

This policy brief presents the footfall of farmers visited KVKs, purpose of visit, their profile, locale of visit etc.,

The policy brief recommends KVKs the following to consider implementation so as to improve their service delivery:

The KVK interventions shall be planned /taken up in blocks, where ever least interventions are made especially in the blocks that are far away from KVK. Emphasis to be given in KVK programmes to target marginal & small farmers, women farmers and SC/ST farmers, so as to increase their participation.

Convergence programmes may be strengthened to improve horizontal spread of KVK interventions

Introduction

This policy brief is based on the University Research Project on "Footfall Analysis of farmers in ICAR Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) of TNAU through farmers' database for invigorating the technology delivery".

Rationale: KVKs are taking up frontline demonstration activities in their respective districts, with a need-based Action Plan ever year and reaching farmers in their respective district. Besides, through convergence, KVKs reach farmers through line departments namely Agriculture, Horticulture, Agricultural Engineering, Animal Husbandry, Rural Development, NGOs and other farmers groups. For an organization to improve and to be relevant, it is imperative to evaluate the reach, nature of activities, target audience and the impact of interventions. In this context, the study is proposed to understand the footfall of farmers to KVKs who had participated through various interventions with the help of the farmers' database of 14 KVKs of TNAU.

The project envisaged to consolidate & digitize the database of farmers being maintained at 14 ICAR KVKs of TNAU; to analyze the profile of farmers and to document the technological support availed by farmers from KVKs;

to map the horizontal reach of farmers of KVK through interventions and to provide suggestions to KVKs to improve their service delivery through their interventions. The policy brief will summarize the report and its findings.

The TNAU KVKs of Cuddalore, Vellore, Virudhunagar, Salem, Trichy, Pudukottai, Tiruvallur, Villupuram, Dharmapuri, Tiruvarur, Tiruppur, Kanyakumari, Madurai and Ramanathapuram were considered for the study.

The study was conducted by an analysis of Farmers database of 14 ICAR KVKs under the administrative control of TNAU. Also, interview and focused group discussions were conducted among select farmers so as to obtain their feedback and benefits received from KVKs.

The footfall of the farmers visiting KVKs are captured and maintained a farmers' database by KVKs. The farmers visited KVKs for participating in various awareness programmes, training programmes, exposure visits, exhibitions, and their participation in Frontline demonstrations, On Farm Testing and other interventions were recorded.

The data captured by KVKs are digitized in google sheets with the facilitation of KVK scientists, Programme Assistant (Computer). The farmers' database, are then analyzed and the results are interpreted.

The analysis of farmers databases as of December, 2021 from the 14 ICAR KVKs of TNAU revealed that a total of 1,33,722 farmers had visited 14 KVKs of TNAU. Though, majority of the KVKs were started during the year 2004, except KVKs of Salem, Sirugamani, Vriddhachalam which were started in the year 1994 and Tiruppur during 2021, the databases were created and maintained only after 2017 and 2018. Also, the KVK interventions / support with the line departments off-campus were also not recorded in the farmers database. Hence, the actual number of farmers benefitted might be higher than the results obtained. Based on the analysis, the results showed that KVKs of Tiruvarur, Tiruvallur, Villupuram, Virudhunagar and Madurai had recorded more number of farmers footfall. This might be due to the interventions of the KVKs and also active capturing of the farmers into their farmers databases.

The findings on the footfall of farmers based on gender (Male / Female) revealed that majority of the male farmers visited KVKs i.e 80.5 % of the farmers visited KVK were male, and only 19.5 % of the female farmers visited / participated in the KVK interventions. This might be due to the fact that majority of the male farmers own lands and also engage themselves in off farm visits and activities. Further the table 2 revealed that the KVKs of Kanyakumari and Ramnad had more footfall of female farmers 48.5 % and 45.0% respectively. Social participation, literacy and land ownership of women from Kanyakumari district might be the reason for more participation of women that other districts.

The overall reach of SC/ST farmers from all the 14 KVKs is 10 %. KVK-wise footfall of SC/ST reveals that 21 % of SC/ST farmers from KVK salem, and by KVK Virudhunagar (18%), KVK Pudukottai (17%), Tirucy (14%), Tiruvallur (13%), Tiruvarur and Vellore (10%). It is evident that the participation of SC/ST farmers has to be encouraged by KVKs through SCSP programme and through other strategies.

The Horizontal reach of KVK was assessed based on the analysis of block-wise footfall of farmer visited KVKs. All the 14 ICAR KVKs of TNAU had served farmers from the entire district besides visiting farmer from across the state and neighboring states through exposure visits. An analysis was made based on the no. of farmers who visited KVKs block-wise, the distance from KVK from the blocks. It could be observed that a greater number of farmers visited KVK from the neighbouring blocks than the blocks that are far off from KVK.

Salient Findings

The digitized farmers' database of 14 ICAR KVKs of TNAU had a total footfall of 1.33 lakh farmers as of December 2021 and all 14 KVKs together had reached 183 blocks in Tamil Nadu.

An analysis of the profile of farmers revealed that:

- Average age of the farmers visiting KVK is 45 years old
- Out of 1.33 lakh farmers 80.5 % were male and 19.5 % were Female
- Average SC/ST population covered by KVKs - 10%; Others - 90 %
- Average landholding of farmers - 2.24 ac.

An Analysis of footfall of farmers revealed that 4.5 % of the farmers visited KVK availed technological support through their participation in FLDs & OFTs, 56 % of them participated through various training programmes and the remaining 39.50 % of farmers participated in exhibitions/other extension programmes of KVKs. Farmers predominantly visit

Suggestions to KVKs to improve technology delivery

The KVKs may take up the following actions/activities to improve the technology delivery:

The KVK interventions shall be planned /taken up in blocks, where ever least interventions are made especially in the blocks that are far away from KVK.

Emphasis to be given in KVK programmes to target marginal and small farmers, women farmers, and SC/ST farmers, so as to increase their participation

To further increase the horizontal spread of KVK interventions, programmes may be planned in convergence with line departments

Conclusion:

Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) are effectively reaching the farmers through their mandated interventions. The study clearly depicts demography, caste, the landholding pattern, nature of benefits obtained by the farmers, number of villages and blocks covered by KVKs etc., This data and insights will help the KVKs in redefining their extension strategies for effective technology delivery.

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The Directorate of Extension Education, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore is responsible for coordinating, monitoring and facilitating the frontline extension education activities of the University besides facilitating the extension programmes of the state development departments through its ICAR Krishi Vigyan Kendras of TNAU and through other TNAU Centres. This policy brief is based on the results of the research of DoEE as part of monitoring of KVK of TNAU.

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The views expressed in the Brief remain those of the author(s).

