

# Effectiveness of Linking Agricultural Input Dealers in Main-stream Extension Delivery Mechanism in the West Bengal Perspective

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**Abstract**—Agricultural Extension system in India is formally governed by Government Institutions like SAUs, State Department of Agriculture, KVKs, ICAR institutes etc, which are literally not sufficient in volume to cater the vast farming community. Informally, farmers get their agri-related counseling, services and inputs from the local Input dealers (seed, pesticide and fertilizer retailer), who have, usually, little or no formal education in Agriculture. MANAGE started a 50 weeks long Diploma course (DAESI- Diploma in Agricultural Extension Services for Input Dealers) for the Input dealers with a view to educate them and to include them in the formal agricultural extension system. This DAESI programme has been started in the Eastern India as a pilot basis from September, 2013 in the South 24 Parganas district. Ramkrishna Ashram KVK is one of the centers to host this programme, which, so far has trained 121 number of Input dealers from the remote island blocks of Sundarbans. Our present study was to find out effectiveness of this programme towards farmers benefit and overall agricultural development. The study was conducted with such input dealers having the DAESI course at KVK-Nimpith centre. Parameters used for this study was beneficiary selection in demonstration programme, agro-advisory services and of passing of weather and disease forecasting information. It has been observed that in beneficiary selection process for agricultural demonstration programme, adoption rate of the demonstrated technology is very high (98.68%) when it is done taking help from Input Dealers as compared to beneficiary selection by conventional methods (45.83%) like Notice board, News Paper advertisement. In case of advisory for crop pest and diseases, farmers are getting satisfactory services from all the trained Input Dealers and the technology percolation time is shortest when it is passed through Input Dealers. So, it can be concluded that scientific agricultural training of Agri-Input Dealers and inclusion of them in Mainstream Agri-Extension System would be helpful in overall Agricultural development of the country.

**Keywords:** Agricultural Extension, Input Dealers, MANAGE, DAESI