

Chapter-1

KVK: The History and Evolution

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The global agriculture is now facing the problem of declining growth, increasing stress, and simmering ecological entropy. These one would go more serious in the face of global warming and climate change. The unabated population growth has made land man ratio a squeezing one across the world. The overall growth in world agriculture in now set to a dismal plight, just below 0.5 per cent.

Indian agriculture now is to support and sustain the physical existence of 1.25 billion of population, their economic activities, social identities and cultural integrities too. Food is the prime mover to life and livelihood, performance and perceptions, existence and entities. The contribution of agriculture to national GDP is now around 7 per cent but it has to sustain more than 64 per cent of our populations. This has become a sheer contradiction; when more and more people will keep on eking-out from less and less land. This is going to be more complex when land holdings are getting more fragmented and economical non-viable. The transformation of social basis supporting, the farming system in India is gradually turning polymorphic and kaleidoscopic.

Gone are the days, when one can think in mundane and classical way to transform the farmer only through providing some critical inputs and exotic knowledge. Now, we have to think for a total transformation taking "Change of knowledge" as the most critical inputs. All cognitive changes then must undergo a motivational transformation and all motivational transformation should be translated into the operational skills for being properly applied and dully appreciated. This whole lot of transformation needs the application of basic principles of social chemistry and social dynamics.

Indian agriculture started having both institutional reform and structural adjustment since 1960. In 1952 and with the inception of Community Development Programme (CDP), we introduced what we call, a comprehensive approach by grossly conglomerating the different rural institutions for a loosely defined rural development activities. The resources allotted were extremely scant and the number of functions attempted was extremely high; nevertheless community development programme, unleashed a huge pool of activities and humongous impact as well.

The institutional bases of market led extension are not that strong and capable of supporting to peoples demand and services to be delivered. Agriculture is one of so many responsibilities and has failed to receive due and adequate attention. The food crises kept on surging up and the Government came to an understanding that agriculture must be the special focus area of the nation and is to keep insulated of the brunt of hunger and impoverishment.

In 1960 India started Intensive Agriculture district Programme (IADP) and in 1964, we introduced intensive agriculture Area Programme (IAAP) through both intensification and integration of agriculture research and rural development efforts that took a new height in 1965-66 through the introduction of an ambitious programme, called HYVP. This was basically a functional symphony between physical input and human skills. The HYVP approach started paying out in the early part of seventies and triggered a quantum jump from a poultry 55 million tonnes of food production to 110 million tons of food production. This was branded as green revolution of India.

The vertical growth in agriculture had been counter balanced against a skewed distribution of the benefits. So, India started welfare oriented programme, like Small and Marginal Farmer Development Programme (SMFDP). Integrated Tribal Development Programme and a series of child and women welfare programme. Some strategic programme like lab to land and operational research project kept on complementing.

The first KVK in India came into being in 1974 at Pondicherry. The basic purpose was to impart need based training for capacity building of the farmers and the farmwomen around the KVK villages. This was to be done through imparting vocational training and on farm demonstration. Training is the capacity building process and demonstration is the methodology to

display of the efficacy of the know-how and do-how of the critical inputs. All these were being done at a time when Training and Visit System had been in its operation. So, it had been a clandestine synergy between World Bank approach, i.e. T and V system and lab to land experiments.

Right now, more than five hundred KVK in India are to create a huge network of technology dissemination and feedback mechanism. The socialization of KVK depends on the extension inputs it successfully imbibes, assimilates and internalizes in an isochronous manner.

An evolving KVK system in India has curves and dents, elements and elevation, direction and dictum to make a unique institution for socialization of agricultural technology.

At the beginning it was basically banking on available technology limited demonstration and few selected farming, along and across the objectives set by the KVKs. The on farm demonstration popularly known as OFD, gradually started losing its desired applicability and expected impacts. The reasons can be catalogued into:

- a) Technological e.g. non-availability of appropriate technology.
- b) Technical e.g. effective extension techniques.
- c) Tactical e.g. package approach rather than isolated technology intervention.