

Chapter-4

KVK: The Genesis

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The first KVK, on a pilot basis, was established in 1974 at Pondicherry under the administrative control of the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore. In 1976-77, the Planning Commission approved the proposal of the ICAR to establish 18 KVKs during the Fifth Five Year Plan. By the end of the Fifth Plan, thus 19 KVKs (including one established on pilot basis at Pondicherry) were established in the country. With the growing demand for more such Kendras, 12 more KVKs were approved by the Governing Body (GB) of the Council in 1979 and they were established in the same year from Agricultural Produce Cess Fund (AP Cess). Pending clearance of the Sixth Five Year Plan scheme on KVK by the Planning Commission, 14 additional KVKs were again approved by the GB of the Council in 1981, which were established during 1982-83 from AP Cess Fund.

On the advice of the Department of Finance, Government of India, a High Level Evaluation Committee on KVK was constituted by the ICAR in 1984, who after thorough review of the programme, strongly recommended for the establishment of more KVKs in the country. The Planning Commission, keeping in view the demand of people from various corner to establish more KVKs in the country and recommendations of the High Level Evaluation Committee on KVK (1984), approved scheme of ICAR to establish 44 new KVKs during the sixth Plan. Thus by the end of the Sixth Plan, 89 KVKs had started functioning in the country.

During the VIIth Five Year Plan, 20 new KVKs were established. The success of KVKs at many locations created a great demand for establishment of more KVKs in the remaining districts of the country. Accordingly, the Planning Commission further approved 74 new KVKs to be established during the period 1992-93. Again in the VIIIth Five Year Plan

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19

(1992-97), 78 new KVKs were approved and the same were established in the country, making total number of functional KVKs by the end of the VIIIth Plan to 261. Government of India decided for establishing at least one KVK in each district of country by the end of 10th Five Year Plan. As on today, there are 584 KVKs in the country, of which 30 KVKs have been established under state Orissa.

Conceptual changes over a period of time

- The Mohan Singh Mehta Committee (1974) enunciated the following three basic concepts of Krishi Vigyan Kendra :
- The Kendra will impart learning through work-experience and hence will be concerned with technical literacy, the acquisition of which does not necessarily requires as a precondition for the ability to read and write.
- The Kendra will impart training to only those extension workers who are already employed or to the practicing farmers and fishermen. In other words, the Kendra will cater to the needs of those who are already employed or those who wish to be self-employed.
- There will be no uniform syllabus for a Kendra. The syllabus and programme of each Kendra will be tailored to the felt needs, natural resources and the potential for agricultural growth in that particular area.
- The Committee further suggested that the success of kendras will depend upon adherence to the following three basic principles:
- Accelerating agricultural and allied productions in the operational area of the Kendra should be the prime goal.
- Experiential learning i.e., "teaching by doing" and "learning by doing" should be the principal methods of imparting skill training; and
- Training efforts should not be made to make economically good people better but the poor ones good so as to raise the living conditions of the poorest of the poor.

The main idea was to influence the production system with social justice by creating a favourable condition for the have-nots.

During the course of implementation of the scheme of Krishi Vigyan Kendra, it was realised that the vocational training only would not be useful unless it is followed up with frontline demonstrations in the farmers' fields in order to demonstrate the production potentialities of agricultural technologies. Accordingly, the frontline demonstration on important crops of the district was added to the mandate of the KVK. Later on during the VIIIth Five Year Plan, the mandate of the KVK was further reviewed and revised. Thus, the revised mandate of the KVK is:

- 1) Conducting "on-farm testing" for identifying technologies in terms of location specific sustainable land use systems.
- 2) Organize training to update the extension personnel with emerging advances in agricultural research on regular basis.
- 3) Organize short and long-term vocational training courses in agriculture and allied vocations for the farmers and rural youths with emphasis on "learning by doing" for higher production on farms and generating self-employment.
- 4) Organize frontline demonstrations on various crops to generate production data and feedback information.

In order to achieve the above mandate, the following broad objectives would help the KVKs to develop their specific objectives.

- To promptly demonstrate the latest agricultural technologies to the farmers as well as extension workers of State Departments of Agriculture/ Horticulture/ Fisheries/ Animal Science/ Non Government Organizations with a view to reduce the time lag between the technology generation and its adoption.
- To test and verify the technologies in the socio-economic conditions of the farmers with a view to study the production constraints and to modify the technologies to make them appropriate.
- To impart training to the practicing farmers/ farm women, rural youth and field level extension functionaries by following the method of "teaching by doing" and "learning by doing".
- To back-up with training and communication support to the district level development departments, viz., Agriculture/ Horticulture/

Fisheries/ Animal Science and Non Government Organizations in their extension programmes.

Keeping above broad objectives in view, each KVK should develop its specific objectives geared to the immediate as well as long term demands of the operational area. The objectives well thought out and clearly stated should form a basis for its monitoring and internal as well as external performance evaluation. It should be kept in mind that the development is a dynamic process and therefore KVKs should tune its programmes to maintain its dynamism. Efforts need to be made to realize its basic ideals by developing tailor-made programmes.