

CONVERGENCE FOR SYNERGISTIC EFFECT IN DAIRY DEVELOPMENT



Convergence of different entities working for synergistic effect in dairy development is the need of the hour. Dr. V. B. Dixit, Dr. Hema Tripathi, Ms. A Duhan and Dr. I J Singh share their thoughts in this regard.

CONTEXT

There is an increasing demand among the farmers for knowledge on improved dairy technologies. However, due to lack of convergence among the different agencies involved in dairy promotion, these needs are not sufficiently met. The public extension system has failed to respond to the demands for knowledge support as it doesn't have adequate human and financial resources. Moreover, its bureaucratic nature of functioning and the huge load of administrative responsibilities on its field level workers have rendered the public extension services supply driven rather than demand driven. Without convergence of efforts by the varied public, private and NGO agencies involved in dairy development, we would fail to reach a large number of dairy farmers with the new and improved knowledge of dairying.



WHAT IS CONVERGENCE?

The word convergence has been derived from Latin word '*convergere*' which means to incline together. According to advanced learner's dictionary, convergence suggests that when people get along with each other for long enough, their acts, thinking and even appearance will become alike. Thus, convergence is mainly sharing of ideas, resources, manpower, knowledge and experiences of different entities which have different backgrounds for a common purpose i.e. dairy development resulting into synergistic effects of their combined efforts for ultimately enhancing the income of farmers.

WHY CONVERGENCE?

Systems and institutions co-exist addressing the needs of farming community so as to derive synergistic advantages of both. There are pluralistic extension organizations working in the state. A lot of manpower is being utilized in this process. There is duplication of efforts with multiplicity of agents in extension work without convergence or coordination, resulting in loss of efficiency. In order to reduce the redundancy, repetition and better utilization of scarce resources, convergence and better linkage is required in Public Private Partnership mode.

Public organizations are strong in backward linkage. Private organizations are strong in forward linkage and NGOs are strong in social engineering and mobilization. Each and every organization has comparative advantages over the other. Single development agency may have limitations of resources. That is why convergence is needed: a clear strategy for a planned multi-stakeholder involvement with mandated activities as per the expertise, to supplement and complement the efforts and to ensure effective involvement of community partnerships (Mukherjee and Maity, 2015).

CONVERGENCE IN DAIRY SECTOR

The state department of animal husbandry (SDAH) is implementing several dairy development programmes by expending huge resources in order to enhance the income of the dairy farmers. In addition, other organisations like, the Department of Dairy Development, the National Dairy Development Board (NDDDB), dairy cooperatives, agricultural and veterinary universities, ICAR institutions, financial institutions, input companies and NGOs are also working with dairy farmers. But most of these agencies are working in isolation and the adoption of improved breeding, feeding and management by farmers is limited.

In the case of research, institutions such as CIRB, NDRI and LUVAS are converging with each other through network projects, NAIP projects and also on few occasions like animal husbandry officers' workshops and meetings for technology reviews.



Scientists of different Institutions in the meeting of Network project

In these cases, there is sharing of knowledge, manpower, resources, experiences, etc. However, there is not enough convergence between the research system with others such as field functionaries, input agencies/organisations and NGOs. Lack of such convergence is clearly visible in Haryana (Box 1).

Box 1: Low dairy productivity in Haryana

As per the livestock census 2012, in Haryana population of buffaloes and cattle was 6.08 millions and 1.8 millions respectively, while in Punjab buffaloes were 5159.33 thousand and cattle were 2427.71 thousands. In Punjab and Haryana, which are the leaders in animal husbandry, the average milk production in 2012-13 was 1500-2500 kilogram per animal in the entire lactation. Milk production in Punjab and Haryana was 9724.34 thousand tones and about 7040.2 thousand tones, respectively in 2012-13. Per capita availability of milk in Punjab is 961 grams/day (higher in comparison to Haryana's 767 grams/day). Thus, the state is lagging behind in milk production from Punjab in spite of having very good dairy husbandry conditions and breeding tracts for recognised breeds of cow and buffalo. Therefore, all the organizations related to dairy development must converge to increase milk productivity, production and income of farmers. However, mere convergence does not suffice the purpose unless all the agencies move in a synergistic manner i.e., complement and supplement efforts and energy of these agencies and simultaneously avoid duplication and conflict of interest of efforts.

ENHANCING CONVERGENCE AMONG RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS

At present, NDRI and LUVAS organize animal husbandry officers' workshop annually but separately. It would be better if these institutions jointly organize these workshops with other research institutes. They may also try to address the problems of farmers through workshops and campaigns building on the strengths of each organisation. NDRI is equipped with information on dairy farming, while LUVAS has been known to respond better to the health related queries of the animal husbandry officers and CIRB is better equipped to deal with information pertaining to buffaloes.

Similarly, all the research institutions like NDRI, CIRB and LUVAS prepare area-specific mineral mixture. The mixture should be collectively analysed through a joint working group to make pertinent recommendations to the dairy farmers. Thus, all the institutions should jointly organize technology review meetings to avoid duplication and devise best possible methods to cater to the needs of the farmers.



Scientists of CIRB, NDRI, LUVAS in the workshop regarding feed blocks

For enhancing convergence, it is extremely important that all the institutions and organizations working for dairy development are aware of their respective roles and functions. For example, to prepare literature on the prevention and treatment of mastitis in buffaloes, CIRB being the exclusive institution for buffaloes can develop the technical content. The field veterinary officers of the State Department of Animal Husbandry (SDAH) can customize the text by introducing appropriate words in local language. SDAH and Milk cooperatives may be involved in printing the required number of folders/ pamphlets for distribution to dairy farmers. Milk cooperatives need to play an important role in the supply of inputs required for clean milk production. SDAH needs to step up their role in diagnosing and treating cows and buffaloes for mastitis. By collectively addressing this issue as suggested above, the cost of addressing the mastitis problem could be reduced and more cattle could be protected from this disease.

Similarly, *Kisan melas* (farmer fairs) should be jointly organized by different institutions by pooling together their resources, knowledge, expertise and experience. At present, NDRI, CIRB and LUVAS organize *melas* separately. For its publicity and funding assistance of input agencies/organisations and banks should be sought. Cooperatives at village level should be utilized to mobilize dairy farmers to visit the *melas*. In this way, such an event would have wider coverage. It would also be worthwhile to develop a joint annual training programme schedule by all the concerned institutions like CIRB, NDRI, LUVAS etc.

While developing such a training schedule, care should be taken in identifying relevant topics and matching these with appropriate institutions to impart training to the farmers. For

example, CIRB should focus on improved animal/buffalo husbandry, NDRI on dairy processing and entrepreneurship while LUVAS on health aspects so that their efforts are complemented. Areas of trainings should be determined on the basis of training needs of the farmers.

CONVERGENCE AMONG ALL STAKEHOLDERS

In Haryana, there are different stakeholders responsible for generating improved technologies through research. This new technology related to animal husbandry is passed on to the members of information dissemination system. The farmers are supposed to utilize this knowledge as suggested by animal scientists. The administrators and planners of different institutions like university, ICAR institutes and SDAH are responsible for framing the policies, guidelines etc. The dairy personnel are responsible for milk procurement through milk cooperatives and value addition. The input agencies/organisations are vital for supply of feeds, medicines etc. Thus, all the agencies/organisations of dairy sector are engaged in performing one or the other essential tasks. Hence, it is imperative for these agencies/organisations to seek each other's expertise for the betterment of farmers. Therefore, they need to understand and appreciate each other's roles and functions so that planning, implementation and evaluation of dairy development programmes can be effectively carried out.



Separate Kisan Melas organized by CIRB and NDRI in Haryana

Convergence among different stakeholders of dairy development may be enhanced initially by constituting committees at different levels (state, district and block). The details of such committees is discussed and presented in the following Box 2.

Box: 2: Committees at different levels to promote convergence

State level Apex Animal Husbandry Development Committee

An apex level animal husbandry development committee should be constituted at the state under the chairmanship of Animal Husbandry Commissioner. The Vice-Chancellors of Agricultural and Veterinary Universities, Directors of ICAR institutes, related to Animal Husbandry, Managing Directors of Dairy Development Federations, Directors of Animal Husbandry and Dairying Departments and 4-5 progressive dairy farmers, Representatives from the private inputs companies and NGOs involved in dairy development should be the members of this committee. This committee should be responsible for major policy and overall plan formulation for dairy development of the state. It should act as a technical

body to guide the government on matters related to animal husbandry and dairy development. Its meetings should be organized at least twice a year. It would, thus, ensure a regular interaction of administrators, scientists, input agencies, farmers etc.

Dairy and Animal Husbandry Research Committee

This committee is proposed to coordinate extension and research activities of various research organizations operating in Haryana. This state level committee should have Directors and some senior scientists of ICAR institutions related to animal husbandry/dairy in the state. It should have Director of Research, Director of Extension, Dean of College of Animal sciences and Veterinary Sciences as members and Vice-chancellor of the state veterinary university as its chairman. Its main objective should be to coordinate the research and extension programmes of these organizations.

District level Committee

The district level committee should be constituted under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner/Additional Deputy Commissioner. It should have members from all the related organisations at the district level like Project Director (PD), ATMA, Programme Coordinator (PC) of KVK, district dairy officials, Deputy Director Animal Husbandry, representatives of input agencies and some progressive dairy farmers of the district. Major activities for animal husbandry and dairy development in the district should be planned by this committee. Problem identification, preparation of action plans, regular appraisal of Animal Husbandry development programmes/activities in the district should also be its responsibility. The committee should define the role and responsibility of each department in formulating and implementing the dairy extension activities. It should meet quarterly for closer engagement with planning, implementation and evaluation of programmes at district level.

Block Level Committees

These should be formulated under the chairmanship of veterinarians, dairy personnel, and representative dairy farmers within the blocks. The committee should discuss and prepare the plan of action of various extension activities and programmes of dairy development in the sub-division. It should also review the progress and ensure coordination among different agencies. It should meet at least once in every two months.

CONCLUSION

In this blog, an attempt is made to identify several areas for convergence amongst different agencies/organizations working for dairy development. Lack of a common platform to discuss convergence options among these different agencies is a major challenge. We hope the proposed committees to be constituted at different levels will pave the way for better convergence in the dairy sector.

REFERENCE

A Mukherjee and Aniruddha Maity 2015. Public-private partnership for convergence of extension services in Indian agriculture. *Current Science*, 109(9):1557

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