NET, IAS, State-SET (KSET, WBSET, MPSET, etc.), GATE, CUET, Olympiads etc.: General Studies Economics E-Governance

E-Governance for Improving Rural Livelihood

1. The most important promises and opportunities of E-Government are increased efficiency of government services and operations; increased quality and the number of services to be offered; increase integration of government services across different ministries, focusing on those being served; help achieve targeted outcomes and broader policy objectives; contributed to government reform, especially anti-corruption and waste; build democratic interactions between government and its citizens by increasing the ease of communication and feedback.
2. E-Governance is one of the most promising uses of ICT.In practice, it involves two distinguishable activities:
    a. First is the computerization of government functions like registrations, legal proceedings, land records, state offices, police detp. etc. And linking up the district levels with the state level.
    b. Second, e-governance many mean government-to-citizen and citizen-to-government connections whereby people obtain direct access to records, rules, and information about entitlements that they need or want in their daily lives, make payments online for availing a service etc.
3. The benefits from the rural e-Government projects are categorized into economic and social. Typically, economic benefits are achieved through employment of the rural youth, better prices for the farmers produce, reduction of produce loss. Social benefits are obtained through knowledge acquisition for farmers, advice on agriculture, health, weather forecasting, crop patterns, education, finance, and insurance, and citizen's enablement to be part of government decision making.

Success Stories

Some of the major success stories in India are as follows:

1. Akashganga: This project is being used as the Dairy Co-operative Society, Gujarat. The project uses IT to help rural milk producers by integrating all operations from procurement of milk to accounting using DISK (Dairy Information Services Kiosk) .

2. eChoupal: This was established by ITC's Agri Business Division in June 2000. It was specifically designed to tackle the challenges posed by the unique features of Indian agriculture, characterized by fragmented farms, weak infrastructure, and the involvement of intermediaries.In order to project agriculture farmers from opportunistic practices of intermediaries, it provides farmers with information relating to farming equipments, weather, crop, and the like:
3. TKS (Tata Kisan Sansars) : The TKSs, or farm centres, provide end-to-end solutions, right from what crops to grow to how to sell them for the maximum returns in Maharashtra. A unique concept in the Indian countryside, TKSs are changing the face of Indian agriculture and improving the quality of rural life. TKS provides farmers with series for optimum utilization of nutrients, plant protection, chemicals, water, and seeds. TKS tracks key parameters such as soil, ground water, and weather on a real time basis with the help of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and satellite mapping technologies.
4. Drishtee: Drishtee is a revenue-generating platform for rural networking and marketing services that enable e-governance, education, and health services. The project provides online buying and selling facilities to citizens through its e-commerce and agri-business services. It maintains the database of people as it issues ration cards. The system tries to redress the grievances raised by the public and enhances customer relationship. It enables the citizens to get government information, education, employment, etc.
5. Gyandoot: Gyandoot is an Intranet based Government to Citizen (G2C) service delivery portal commissioned in Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh in January 2000. Gyandoot aims to create a costeffective, replicable, economically self-reliant and financially viable model for taking the benefits of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to the rural masses. The goal of the project was to establish community-owned, technologically innovative and sustainable information kiosks in a povertystricken, tribal dominated rural area of Madhya Pradesh. It provides education online with user interface in local Hindi language.
6. Jagriti E-Sewa: Jagriti E-Sewa was inaugurated in March 2003. It touches the rural life with activities from agriculture, financial, travel, and e-Government to communication services. The whole system can be adopted to any language in the least possible time. Jagriti is a platform for application of Information technology for the masses, with special focus on the needs of rural areas. Its activities, named as dcommerce (desi commerce) , include both physical and electronic mode involvement. Jagriti is being addressed as ITE (R) S (IT Enabled Rural Services) to emphasize its 'rural' outlook and focus. The project involves setting up of rural information kiosks, called Jagriti e-Sewa kendras, in nodal villages and other viable locations across Punjab.
7. Lokmitra: Developed by the National Informatics Centre (NIC) in Himachal Pradesh State, in order to make people aware of government policies and programmes, and also providing an interface to interact with various government functionaries and solicit

their active and direct contribution in the process of governance. Lokmitra maintains a database with details on public, such as address, contact number, age, driver license, etc. It has a grievance redressal system, clarifies the doubts of citizens on various issues, has an e-mail facility to provide communication, and supports local language. It invites people to share their ideas and provides content. People can buy and sell products online.

8. Bellandur: Developed by COMPUSOL, it is the India's first ICT enabled Gram Panchahyat e-Government solution. Bellandur is situated about 20 km from Bangalore.
9. Janmitra: Janmitra was launched in March 2002. It is an integrated e-platform that was implemented in the Jhalawar district in Rajasthan and is replicated in the state of Uttaranchal. All sections and departments of collectorate are connected through Local Area Network (LAN) . The main objective of the Jan Mitra project is to provide a single-window facility to citizens to access government work, simplify various government procedures through computerisation and use information and communication technologies (ICT) to establish direct communication between the administration and the people to ensure transparent, accountable and responsive governance and to make the right to information an effective tool in the hands of the rural masses.
10. Lokvani: Lokvani was conceptualised by District Magistrate, Sitapur in September 2004. The project is a public-private partnership program that was implemented within the Sitapur district (88% rural population and 39% literacy rate) or Uttar Pradesh state. The objective is to connect rural citizens to the strategy makers in a seamless way. The project incorporates right to information policy and offers services, such as grievances and petitions, land records, tender services, employment services, and information related to government schemes. To ensure transparency, details of developmental works, ration allotment to fair price shop dealers, money sent to Gram Sabhas etc. are made available to people. The most popular service till date has been Online Public Grievance Redressal.

Conclusions

The success of these projects demonstrates that there are a number of ways in which ICT is enhancing productivity in rural India by enabling solution sharing between local people and communities, providing access to practical and vital information related to farming, markets etc.

Courtesy: Yojana