

## **Constraint analysis of RBK services at farmers level and VAA level in Annamayya District of Andhra Pradesh, India**

### **ABSTRACT**

The present study was conducted during the year 2023-24 by following Ex-Post-Facto research design with objective of studying the constraints and suggestions of the Village Agriculture Assistants (VAAs) and farmers regarding RBK services. A total of 60 RBK staff and 60 farmers of Annamayya District from 30 mandals were interviewed with help of pre structured interview schedule. The results of the study revealed that major constraints faced by the VAAs were Daily Updating of Digital APPs consuming more time (86.66%) followed by Lack of need based training to VAAs (81.66%). The major suggestions were reducing work load followed by more capacity building programmes should be conducted. The major constraints faced by the famers towards RBK services were non availability of fertilizers on time (85.00 %) followed by Non-availability of improved varieties of seed/breeds /fertilizers (75.00%). The major suggestions were Timely supply of fertilizers followed by the availability of improved varieties of seed/breeds /fertilizers. The findings of the study will aid policy makers to formulate new interventions for improving the services of RBK.

*Keywords: RBKs, constraints, VAAs, farmers*

### **Introduction**

“Agriculture is the main source of livelihood for most of the population in India. But, the farmers encounter numerous issues while buying inputs, selling their products and determining market prices etc. There are limited testing facilities for agricultural inputs like seeds, fertilizers and pesticides in the State. All these lead to supply of low-quality inputs to farmers leading to huge losses. Availability of extension functionaries to farmers is very less”. [9] In 2020, the Government of Andhra Pradesh (GoAP, 2020) established “RythuBharosaKendras (RBKs) (Farmer Assurance Centres) in all the panchayat villages”. “RBKs are termed as one-stop shops that provide solutions to farmers from seed to sale. Pre and post green revolution extension systems in India had played a commendable role in the dissemination of transfer of technologies” (Anuhya et.al 2022). “On the other hand, farmers encounter numerous issues while buying inputs, selling their products and determining market prices etc. There are limited testing facilities for agricultural inputs like seeds, fertilizers and pesticides in the State. All these lead to supply of low-quality inputs to farmers leading to huge losses” (Anuhya et.al. 2022). “Availability of extension functionaries to farmers is very less. The present extension worker to farmer ratio is 1:1162. Andhra Pradesh is being an agrarian State, Government of Andhra

Pradesh focusing more for the welfare of the farming community by providing hassle free services at village level” (Reddy, 2020). “As a result of that in 2020, the Government of Andhra Pradesh (GoAP) established RythuBharosaKendras (RBKs) (Farmer Assurance Centres) in all the panchayat villages (10,778, covering 70 lakh farmers) of the state to address all the problems, except that of credit, of farmers at one place. Similarly, the Department of Agriculture has recruited 6,758 village agriculture Assistants to manage these RBKs at gross root level” (Babu et al.,2021). RBKs are termed as one-stop shops that provide solutions to farmers from seed to sale. The services of RBKs include soil testing and advisories, seed certification and supply, quality input supplies (chemical as well as organic) at fair prices; crop and climate advisories, e-crop registration, promotion of modern technologies and crop practices, supply of farm machinery, livestock and fishery services, and procurement of produce at the minimum support price (MSP). Most of the RBKs operate from their own buildings, though some of them also operate from village panchayat buildings.RBKs have found a place in the list of best practices compiled by the NITI Aayog in 2023.

These RBKs are monitored jointly by theDepartment of Agriculture, Horticulture, APSeeds, Sericulture, Fisheries, and Animalhusbandry. The newly formed RBKs have digital kiosks and apps to assist the farmers inbuying the Agri inputs like seeds, fertilizers,pesticides, livestock feeds, and veterinarymedicine and the staff will deliver the productat an accurate time for the market price. Thesuccess of RBKs depends upon the knowledgeof farmers on services provided through RBKs and the attitude of farmers toward thefunctioning of RBKs(Raju 2022).Scanty studies have noticed on constraints faced by the VAAs anf Farmers regarding RBK services.

Keeping in view, present study was conducted with the objective of

1. To analyse the constraints faced by the VAAs in delivering services of RBK
2. To analyse the constraints faced by the farmers in accessing services of RBK
3. To notedown suggestions offered by farmers and VAAs to overcome constraints for effective functioning of RBK.

## **Methodology**

The present study was conducted during the year 2023-24 by following Ex-post facto research design. Annamayya district comprised of total of 400 functioning

RythuBharosaKendras (RBK). District comprises of 30mandals and 07 Agriculture divisions. 02 RBK staff and 2 farmers from each mandal of Annamayya district were selected as sample by following Simple Random Sampling making 60 RBK staff and 60 farmers as sample for the study. To find out the constraints experienced by VAAs and farmers regarding RBK services, a list of possible constraints was prepared separately for VAAs and farmers. Their responses regarding each constraint were recorded and presented with the help of frequency, percentage.

## Results and Discussion

### Constraints faced by the VAAs in delivering services of RBK

It is evident from Table 1 that major constraints expressed by the VAAS were Daily Updating of Digital APPs consuming more time (86.66%, Rank I), Lack of need based training to VAAs (81.66%, Rank II), Inability to maintain sufficient fertilizers, pesticides and other stocks as required by farmers (70.00%, Rank III), Too much official work in addition to field work (63.33%, Rank IV), Lack of Educational or Work related tours (51.66%, Rank V). Similar types of findings identified by Saikia et al. 2021 and Chowdary et al.2022

It indicates that Daily Updating of Digital APPs consuming more time and heavy work load was the most prioritized problem by the VAAs. This might be due to lack of sufficient staff in RBKs as there is only one Village Agriculture Assistant (VAA) is there in each RBK. So, it is difficult for them to do all tasks. In addition to that, most of the VAAs required need based trainings to update their knowledge and skills.

**Table 1: Constraints faced by the VAAs**

S.No	Constraints	Frequency	Percent
1.	Daily Updating of Digital APPs consuming more time	52	86.66
2.	Too much official work in addition to field work	38	63.33
3.	Lack of need based training to VAAs	49	81.66
4.	Less number of diagnostic field visits	30	50.00
5.	Less number of RBK staff	28	46.66
6.	Lack of Educational or Work related tours	31	51.66
7.	Inability to maintain sufficient fertilizers, pesticides and other stocks as required by farmers	42	70.00

8.	Lack of awareness on recent and high yielding varieties	19	31.66
9.	VAs other than agri background are unable to diagnose the problem and provide suggestions to the farmers.	13	21.66
10.	No clear instructions from the higher authorities leads to conflict in the work	24	40.00
11.	Lack of knowledge and skill on online marketing/marketing information, weather information	15	25.00

### Constraints faced by the farmers in accessing services of RBK

It is evident from Table 2 that major constraints expressed by the farmers were Non availability of fertilizer on time ( 85.00%, Rank I), Non-availability of improved varieties of seed/breeds /fertilizers (75.00%, Rank II), Non availability of organic inputs and IPM Kits (66.66%, Rank III), Dearth of timely sourcing of quality inputs and services (61.66%, Rank IV), Lack of infrastructure facilities at RBK premises i.e., warehouses and cold storages (56.66%, Rank V). The present findings were in line with the findings of Reddy *et al.* (2023)

These findings indicate that Non availability of fertilizer on time was the major constraint faced by the farmers because except urea other fertilizers were not available at RBKs during cropping season.

**Table 2: Constraints faced by the farmers**

S.No	Constraints	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Non availability of fertilizer on time	51	85.00
2	Non availability of organic inputs and IPM Kits	40	66.66
3	Lack of infrastructure facilities at RBK premises i.e., warehouses and cold storages	34	56.66
4	Non-functioning of Digital Kiosk for ordering Agri Inputs	22	36.66
5	Non-availability of veterinary services	32	53.33
6	Dearth of timely sourcing of quality inputs and services	37	61.66
7	Non-availability of improved varieties of seed/breeds /fertilizers	45	75.00
8	Weather forecasting and market information not	27	45.00

	available at RBK		
9	Delay in receiving the payment for the marketed Produce	17	28.33

### **Suggestions offered by farmers and VAAs to overcome constraints for effective functioning of RBK**

From Table 3 it is revealed that the major suggestions given by the VAAs regarding constraints faced by them were Reducing work load, More capacity building programmes should be conducted, Conduct exposure visits or study tours, Rewards / incentives should be provided, Joint Diagnostic field visit of RBK staff with Scientists.

From Table 4 it is revealed that the major suggestions given by the VAAs regarding constraints faced by them were Timely supply of fertilizers, Availability of improved varieties of seed/breeds /fertilizers, Provision of sufficient quantities of IPM kits to the farmers. These findings were in line with [Rao et al. 2024](#)

**Table 3: Suggestions offered by VAAs**

S.No	Suggestions	Frequency	Percent
1	Conduct exposure visits or study tours	39	65.00
2	More capacity building programmes should be conducted	43	71.66
3	Joint Diagnostic field visit of RBK staff with Scientists	29	48.33
4	Rewards / incentives should be provided	34	56.66
5	Reducing work load	49	81.66

**Table 4: Suggestions given by farmers**

S.No	Suggestions	Frequency	Percentage
1	Timely supply of fertilizers	49	81.66
2	Provision of sufficient quantities of IPM kits to the farmers	39	65.00
3	Availability of veterinary services	26	43.33
4	On time disbursement of payment for the marketed produce	20	33.33
5	Availability of improved varieties of seed/breeds /fertilizers	44	73.33
6	Weather forecasting and market information made available at RBK	17	28.33
7	Storage facilities should be provided	34	56.66

**Conclusion:**

**Regarding the constraints** faced by the VAAs, it suggested that state department of agriculture should provide the, adequate facilities & other necessary resources in abundant manner for further good work. Extension personnel should involve in different developmental activities for better cooperation & performing good work.

**Farmers experienced** substantial constraints while purchasing products from RBKs such as the non availability of need-based inputs, the non-availability of Agri inputs on time and the limited supply of inputs. It is recommended that each RBK develop a crop-specific pre-monsoon order plan, taking into consideration cropping patterns from the previous two years, cropping area and major pests and diseases. In order to identify the specific inputs that are needed in the region, it is advisable to place orders well in advance and maintain stocks at a minimum of 80 percent of the previous year's average annual usage. To accommodate for seasonal fluctuations in demand, it is recommended to review and adjust the order quantities after the monsoon season.

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