Case Studies on e-Governance in India

Monitoring Information System for Integrated Action Plan (IAPMIS) for Selected Tribal and Backward Districts

Manju Khurana and Kavitha Kunhi Kannan

OneWorld Foundation India
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About the Initiative

This publication is a part of the Capacity Building initiative under the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) by NeGD with an aim to draw out learnings from various projects implemented in various States/UTs and sharing this knowledge, in the form of case studies, with the decision makers and implementers to benefit them, by way of knowledge creation and skill building, from these experiences during planning and implementation of various projects under NeGP.

Conceptualised and overseen by the National e-Governance Division (NeGD) of Media lab Asia/DeitY these case studies are submitted by e-Governance Practitioners from Government and Industry/Research Institutions. The cases submitted by the authors are vetted by experts from outside and within the Government for learning and reference value, relevance to future project implementers, planners and to those involved in e-governance capacity Building programs before they are recommended for publication. National Institute for Smart Government (NISG), working on behalf of this NeGD provided program management support and interacted with the authors and subject matter experts in bringing out these published case studies. It is hoped that these case studies drawn from successful and failed e-Governance projects would help practitioners to understand the real-time issues involved, typical dilemmas faced by e-Governance project implementers, and possible solutions to resolve them.

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Abstract

The Monitoring Information System for Integrated Action Plan (IAPMIS) is a web-based application that ensures transparency and accountability in the implementation of development schemes and government flagship programmes in Left-Wing Extremism (LWE) affected areas of backward and tribal districts of India. It provides role-based access to relevant stakeholders at the central, state and district levels of administration. To enable public scrutiny, the portal provides open access to citizens and enables them to view and download basic information and the progress of projects undertaken.

The Integrated Action Plan (IAP) for Selected Tribal and Backward Districts in LWE affected districts is an initiative introduced by the Government of India to escalate economic, physical and human development of these regions. Currently, IAP covers 88 districts in nine states of the country. Realizing the significance of constantly monitoring the progress of development projects, particularly in sensitive areas of the country, the implementation of the IAP was complemented by the designing of a robust Monitoring Information System (MIS).

In 2010, the Planning Commission unit of National Informatics Centre was entrusted with the task of developing and implementing MIS to assess the physical and financial performance of development works undertaken. The IAP, therefore, involves planning and executing development initiatives followed by their monitoring through MIS.

Note to Practitioners

This case study gives an overview of the utilization of ICT for monitoring government schemes specifically meant for areas concerned under the Integrated Action Plan for Select Tribal and Backward Districts. It aims to explore the functioning and impact of the Monitoring Information System being employed for tracking the progress of development projects under the IAP.

- The setup and operationalization of the MIS was carried out by technical professionals at the NIC and, therefore, the state and district governments did not have to build additional capacity for handling the system. However, training was imparted for familiarising officers with the interface of the MIS when it was first introduced and a comprehensive user guide has been made available since for subsequent users. While the user guide may be sufficient for new users, periodic refresher trainings may be institutionalised for introducing new features, tools or updates that are added to the portal.

- The conflict situation in IAP’s areas of implementation has been taken into due consideration for the purpose of carrying out monitoring activities. Videoconferencing facilities are used for consultations in the process of monitoring and evaluation to resolve inordinate delays in timely decision-making.
The online portal is also being used as a platform for showcasing successful and innovative practices that have been employed in the course of the developmental works undertaken under IAP.

While GIS is being considered for inclusion in IAPMIS, this would be a very useful tool for monitoring authorities in spatially determining the progress of development works in target IAP areas and could be introduced as an integral part in other replicated models of the MIS from inception.

**Note to Instructors**

The following points of discussions may be raised:

- How should various factors that influence the development of an MIS, such as political and administrative will, enabling or risk-free environment, collection of baseline information and such others, be prioritised in its conceptualisation.

- What measures can be undertaken to ensure timely and regular submission of reports from all stakeholders. Furthermore, how does one ensure the quality standards of the data thus submitted?

- What other technological tools, if any, could be added to the MIS based on the context of the project. In this line of discussion, the advantages of a GIS interface in the case of IAPMIS may also be raised.

- The information on IAPMIS has been made open to the public to increase confidence in government-undertaken development projects in LWE areas. In all instances where MIS information has been made public (and not only in the case of IAPMIS) what has been the efficacy level of such an objective. It may also be questioned as to whether this may be reasonably achieved and if yes, to what extent. What other features may be added to an MIS or in awareness generation mechanisms to attain such an objective?
Project Context

As per the statistics provided by the Ministry of Home Affairs, development infrastructure and mineral resources, ranging from school buildings to railways, telephone exchange or towers, power plants, mines and panchayat buildings, are the main targets of Naxal violence in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected areas. This has caused severe damage to the economy and the overall development of the region. An analysis of these states along various development parameters show that Chhattisgarh and Odisha have the worst affected districts followed by Jharkhand, Bihar, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh (Annexure III).

Table 1 shows the disparity in development parameters such as infant mortality rate and literacy rate in affected and forward districts, reflecting a significant development deficit in affected districts vis-à-vis forward districts.¹

Table 1: Comparison of LWE affected districts and forward districts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development parameter</th>
<th>Odisha</th>
<th>Jharkhand</th>
<th>Chhattisgarh</th>
<th>Bihar</th>
<th>Andhra Pradesh</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Affected</td>
<td>Forward</td>
<td>Affected</td>
<td>Forward</td>
<td>Affected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of SC/ST (%)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant Mortality rate (%)</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbanization (%)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest Coverage (%)</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy rate (%)</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Labourers (%)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per capita food grain production (%)</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural HH without specified assets (%)*</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of India 2001, Registrar General of India, Government of India; Forest Survey of India, 2003

Government of India has endorsed a number of schemes in order to manage LWE and bridge development deficits in affected areas. These include Security Related Expenditure (SRE) scheme, Special Infrastructure Scheme (SIS), Road Requirement Plan (RRP) for LWE Areas, Construction/Strengthening for Fortified Police Stations and Civic Action Plan (CAP). The implementation of all these schemes is coordinated under the Naxal Management Division of Ministry of Home Affairs operational since October 19, 2006 with an objective to address the issue in a holistic manner. There are also a number of sectoral development programmes implemented by the Government of India for facilitating health, education, livelihood opportunities, infrastructure development, sanitation, and better housing facilities for citizens in these areas.

Better governance has specially been recognized for producing effective results in development programmes under the Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007) in LWE affected districts. In 2010-11, the Finance Minister of India expressed the intention of the Government of India to introduce a special scheme for LWE affected districts. On these guidelines, Integrated Action Plan (IAP) was formulated as an additional central assistance scheme on 100 per cent grant basis in December 2010 by Multi Level Planning (MLP) Division, Planning Commission, Government of India. It has been extended to the Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-2017) period at the insistence of the Ministry of Rural Development.

The need for and inception of a monitoring system

IAP, as an overarching scheme for development projects undertaken in LWE affected areas, has been given two main supportive features to augment these schemes:

i. Additional finance from the centre in the form of block grants (now, IAP is incorporated under the Backward Regions Grant Fund), and

ii. A Monitoring Information System (MIS)

IAP is currently being implemented in 88 selected tribal and backward districts of 9 LWE affected states, namely, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. Eleven flagship schemes of the Government of India are currently being implemented and monitored under IAP. A district level committee sanctions projects in the schemes that have been flagged under IAP. Funds for IAP are released as block grants by the Ministry of Finance in consultation with the Planning Commission of state governments. Starting in 2013-14, the funds for these projects are sourced from the Backwards Region Grant Fund (BRGF).

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The design, development and implementation of a monitoring system was conceived to give a considerable push in taking development forward, especially in tribal and backward districts and LWE affected areas. The monitoring system in place – IAPMIS - has been developed as a web-based application that monitors the physical and financial performance of development works and 11 flagship programmes undertaken by the Government of India in LWE affected areas. IAPMIS is designed, developed and maintained by the National Informatics Commission (NIC) - Planning Commission Unit. Under IAPMIS, district authorities of concerned districts are required to submit monthly progress reports online for the scrutiny of central and state level monitoring authorities. These reports are regularly updated and uploaded on the IAPMIS portal (http://pcserver.nic.in/iapmis/) along with details on the financial and physical status of works.

**Project Overview**

IAPMIS was launched to tackle the development deficit in tribal and backward districts through extensive monitoring of the physical and financial performance of development works and flagship schemes implemented by the Government of India. The coverage of is determined on the basis of the district’s total population. Initially, 60 districts in LWE affected areas were integrated into IAPMIS in 2010-2011. On 7th December 2011, the project was extended to 18 additional affected districts, covering a total of 78 districts. As of March 2013, IAPMIS covers a total of 82 districts in nine states (Annexure I).

IAPMIS monitors development works carried out by the government in education, health, livelihood, sanitation, roads, etc. Eleven flagship schemes of the government are specifically being reviewed under IAPMIS:

- Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS)
- Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)
- Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)
- Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)
- Indira Awas Yojana (IAY)
- National Rural Health Mission (NRHM)
- Rajiv Gandhi Gramin Vidyutikaran Yojana (RGGVY)
- Drinking Water Supply (DWS)
- Ashram Schools

- Forest Rights Act
- National Highways/State Highways

Monthly progress reports detailing the physical and financial status of development works in the concerned district are prepared and uploaded onto the IAPMIS portal by district authorities. These reports are then reviewed by authorities placed at the state and central levels from their respective locations through the IAPMIS portal and video conferencing facilities. The portal and the details therein are open to public scrutiny as well and information may be accessed along divisions of state/district/block, year/month, sectoral flagship schemes or financial/physical information.

**Objectives**

The main objective of formulating an integrated plan for development works in IAP districts and, thereby, a monitoring system is to accelerate the pace of development works in these regions. IAPMIS was devised to bring a higher degree of transparency and accountability by enabling an online system of monitoring and reporting that may be accessed and updated more frequently by relevant stakeholders. IAPMIS has also been given easy and open accessibility to citizens in order to build greater credibility and public confidence in the schemes implemented by the government.

**Key Stakeholders**

The key stakeholders in this project include the Ministry of Home Affairs and Planning Commission, NIC-Planning Commission unit, Members of Parliament and other local elected representatives, state governments and district administrations, and beneficiaries at the ground level in the nine states that have been marked for this project. The diagram below outlines details of key stakeholders (Figure 2).

The District Collector/District Magistrate/Development Commissioner or other equivalent authority in the concerned district is designated for the scrutiny and input of data on IAP development projects at the district level. The state governments monitor district-wise monthly progress reports, detailing financial and physical status in the prescribed format\(^5\).

At the macro-level, the Member-Secretary / Secretary of the Planning Commission reviews these reports and conducts video conference meetings with the district authorities and other relevant officials from their respective locations. Field visits are also undertaken by officials from the Planning Commission, including nodal officers and advisors from the concerned state. At the penultimate level, a review group headed by the Cabinet Secretary, assesses the performance of development works with the Chief Secretaries of nine IAP states through video conference meetings.

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Implementation strategy

Initiation and setup

NIC-Planning Commission Unit designed and developed the Monitoring Information System in a period of 4-6 months. The system has been continually adjusted and expanded based on the requirements in each district thereon. NIC officers, conversant with the technology and the process involved, are placed at the district level for its use and management. Technical maintenance related to IAPMIS is also handled by NIC-Planning Commission Unit.

Currently, the server is hosted at the Planning Commission and the application has been duly security audited. In early 2014, this will be moved to the NIC Data Centre server to augment firewall and proxy requirements for a more secured environment without any hassle of periodic back-ups, as a centralised server will have routine periodical and incremental back-up facility.

The minimum system requirements for accessing the IAPMIS portal are internet connectivity and Internet Explorer 5.5 or above (Table 2). It has been developed using Microsoft Visual Studio 2005 at the front end and SQL Server 2005 at the backend. The system takes periodic data backup every week and SQL data backup is taken almost daily.
Table 2: Use of technology in IAPMIS

Source: OneWorld India Foundation India, 2013

Four different types of user interfaces have been provided for admin, ministry, state, district, and scheme users wherein the user may login and enter information from their respective locations (Figure 3). All types of users are initially provided with a password by the Planning Commission to have access to backend data. The portal permits the state/district/scheme users to feed in and update the information required on various development works as undertaken in their individual state/district or on any specific sectorial development programme of the Government of India (Table 3).

Figure 3: User login page, IAP portal

Source: IAP portal, 2013
Table 3: Type of users on IAPMIS web portal

Source: OneWorld Foundation India, 2013

At the grassroots level, the portal enables citizens to have access to basic information on development in their individual districts, their monthly progress reports on physical and financial performance, and the information on files uploaded in each of the IAP districts. All the reports are available in English as well as Hindi. No password verification is needed for viewing any of these reports, particularly available for public users.

Besides IAP independent portal, all the selected 88 districts have their own website for extending citizens’ access to relevant citizen centric and development specific information with all the contact details for grievance redressal. The user may click on “selected 88 districts” on the home page to have access to district specific portals.

Change Management

Earlier the MLP Division followed a manual system of reporting wherein reports were sent to the Planning Commission on a monthly basis. The nodal Ministry would provide the requisite data collected from states and share it with the Planning Commission. With the introduction of the MIS, reporting has now become real time and is available to stakeholders at all administrative levels. The key merits of shifting to this system were – the standardisation of reporting formats along with in-built data validation checks and multiple location access to monitoring data.

Initially, when the MIS was introduced, both manual and automated systems of reporting were followed for a period of approximately two months until personnel were acclimatised.
to the shift. The interface of users with the MIS mainly involves logging in with the username and password, entry of data and/or review of data – users were given basic training at this stage for familiarising themselves with the procedure. Moreover, users were known to be familiar with such MIS interfaces already in other projects and therefore, did not face much difficulty in making the transition.

After the first two months, instructions were given via video-conferencing to all district authorities to make the automated system mandatory. Thereon, in case of any queries or difficulties, user guides were made available or technical personnel at NIC were directly contacted for clarification.

**Process Flow**

*Who does the monitoring?*

The Development Commissioner or equivalent authority is designated for scrutiny of expenditure and development projects at the district level which are then uploaded on the MIS in the prescribed format.

District level authorities, designated as ‘district users’ for the portal, will receive a link to a section referred to as ‘IAPMIS Progress’ on logging in with their respective usernames and passwords. At the end of each month, all records relating to the physical and financial progress will be entered in the proforma given. Similarly, data relating to schemes that fall under IAP are also updated on a monthly basis. If the user has admin privileges, s/he will also be able to access a ‘User List’ from the main page of the portal, giving details such as the name, designation and contact of various users who have login access to the portal.

All the IAP state governments, thereafter, monitor the progress indicated in these reports. At the central level, monitoring is carried out by the Member Secretary/Secretary of the Planning Commission through video conferences with the concerned district and state authorities from 88 IAP district locations. Since the inception of the project more than 25 such video conferences have been carried out with the state governments and district level administrations. Officials from the Planning Commission along with nodal officers and advisors of the state government conduct field visits when necessary.

Further, a review group headed by the Cabinet Secretary has assessed the performance in these districts on two different occasions and conducted video-conference meetings with the Chief Secretaries of these 9 IAP states.

For the purpose of reviewing the status of reports in a single window, an option of ‘Status of Updation at a Glance’ has been provided. This status report gives the user a clear indication of whether reports have been uploaded with a time and date stamp, thereby, strengthening monitoring processes (Figure 4).
What project components are monitored?

IAP involves two main aspects – the physical aspect including the development works and flagship schemes of the central government undertaken in given districts, and the financial aspect which includes funds issued under IAP and funds that are used in flagship schemes.

A District Level Committee, consisting of the District Collector (DC), District Forest Officer and Superintendent of Police, deliberate on the projects that will be undertaken in the district and the funds that need to be sanctioned for them. This is done in consultation with Members of Parliament, MLAs and elected representatives, including members of local panchayati raj institutions. As per the guidelines of this scheme, reports on the physical progress of each of these development projects that have been sanctioned by the District Level Committee will then be monitored through the MIS on regular updation.

Based on the rate of completion, funds from the block grants are released to relevant authorities. After the first instalment of funds, 50 percent of the work must be shown to be completed and should be accompanied with the receipt of a Utilization Certificate and an audit from the Comptroller-Auditor General (CAG) for a further release of funds. The final instalment of funds is released only after 75 percent of the work undertaken is shown to be completed. The information on the IAPMIS portal allows for an analysis in this manner as seen in the example in Figure 6. Monitoring authorities will be able to assess financial progress on the basis of the funds released, amounts for work taken up, expenditure, and...
percentage of expenditure or funds released. This may reviewed simultaneously with the physical progress made in a particular district or project as seen below (Figure 5).

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**Figure 5: Example of Monthly Progress Report of IAP Districts for Andhra Pradesh as on April, Fin. Year 2010-11**

Monitoring authorities may, therefore, access information on both these components of IAP on a regular basis from the portal and also conduct videoconference meetings when deemed necessary. The portal contains reports under the following heads:

i. Monthly progress report for IAP

ii. Monthly progress report for Sectoral Flagship Schemes

iii. Physical/financial progress report of Sectoral Schemes

iv. Updation Status

v. Monthly Monitoring Format

vi. View updated files/photos

vii. Success stories for existing IAP districts

viii. Skill Intervention in IAP District: Gumla Example – Presented by PanIIT Alumni Reach for India (on 15th February, 2013)

ix. Demi-Official (D.O.) letters

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Source: IAP portal, 2013
x. IAP Circulars
xi. Office orders/notifications and guidelines
xii. Demography/amenities profile as per census
xiii. Other Reports
xiv. Financial amount taken up in all districts
xv. Financial expenditure in all districts

**Financial model**

No cost was incurred on the development of the monitoring system for IAP as it was designed and developed in-house by the local NIC Cell at the Planning Commission. Operational costs are incurred by the NIC-Planning Commission unit while the allocation of grants is solely for the purpose of physical implementation of works under IAP. IAP has been allocated a block grant of INR 25 crore in 2010-11 and INR 30 crore per annum per district in 2011-12 and in 2012-13 respectively. In the financial year 2013-14, it has been decided to continue assistance to districts previously covered (82) under IAPs and six new districts (total 88 districts) through a scheme titled ‘ACA for LWE Affected Districts’ for the remaining years of the Twelfth Five Year Plan, upto 2016-17.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Year of grant allocation</th>
<th>Amount per district</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>INR 25 crore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>INR 30 crore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>INR 30 crore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>INR 10 crore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Development of MIS MIS</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4: Allocation of funds for IAP**

Source: Press Information Bureau and National Informatics Council, 2013

The funds are released by the Ministry of Finance based on the recommendations of the Planning Commission, and deposited with the state governments. State governments transfer the funds directly into the bank account opened for development works by the District Collector (DC) or District Magistrate (DM). Funds are released within 15 days in the

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Consolidated Fund of the state government, failing which the state government should transfer to the district penal interest at RBI rate.

The funds are, thereafter, placed at the disposal of the District Level Committee. The Committee has the flexibility to spend the amount for development works based on a need assessment in tribal and backward IAP districts. The expenditure to be incurred should be over and above that of any regular state and central level scheme with no duplication of expenditure on the same project.

**Training and Capacity Building**

The personnel at NIC-Planning Commission Unit already possess the technical capacity and skills to run and maintain the MIS efficiently. Hence, need was not found to conduct separate training programmes in this regard. For non-technical persons, such as district authorities who enter and update data on the MIS, a workshop was conducted by NIC personnel, in the initial stages through video-conference meetings to familiarise them with the process involved. The trainings lasted roughly 2 hours and involved basic familiarisation and guidance on logging in as a user and entering valid data on the portal. Short trainings have been conducted thereafter via videoconferencing facilities or telephonically on a periodic basis and as per the need of the users. The user manual prepared by NIC, describing the operational aspects of IAPMIS in detail for different users (*Annexure IV*), is also used as a guide for functioning the MIS.
Project Outcomes

Expansion in the coverage of IAPMIS

IAPMIS initially covered only 60 LWE affected districts in 2010-11. This was extended to 78 districts in 2011 and an additional 4 districts in 2013, bringing the total number to 82 districts across 9 states in 2013. IAPMIS has been implemented, improved and expanded to accommodate the 22 districts that have been added since its inception. The successful expansion of IAPMIS in 60 districts and, thereafter, 28 additional districts has remained consistent even after expansion and is an indicator of the ease in implementation.

Higher transparency and accountability

The installation of an MIS merited a higher degree of transparency and accountability in implementing development projects in the 88 selected districts. The reports have been made available on the portal on the following main parameters presently –

- Physical and financial summaries
- Scheme wise – sectorial flagship schemes, sanctioned projects, pending proposals etc.
- Administrative level – state, district and block level reports
- Timelines – year/month
- Status of updation

Monthly progress reports on targeted goals from financial and physical respects has brought about a level of accountability certainly but having this information online at the click of a mouse from the location of the monitoring authorities itself has also expedited the process of charting out the status of updation in a more frequent and timely manner. In this manner, the monitoring system allows superintending authorities to keep a track of the progress in development works carried out in designated districts.

The information is updated in the detailed formats given on the portal and has been made available to citizens and monitoring authorities alike, therefore, bringing in more transparency, and enhancing inclusiveness and participation of citizens. Thus, the MIS enables stakeholders at the policy level to strengthen the government machinery for effective development monitoring and reduces scope for corruption at the micro level.

High level of data consistency

The development data at the district level is fed into the MIS and updated by the NIC district unit placed in each of the IAP districts. The NIC-Planning Commission Unit, in its capacity, is able to ensure that consistency is maintained in the data entered and the format that is followed across nine states. Further, all the data on development projects that fall under
IAP, including eleven flagship programmes of the government, has been made conveniently available at one place for all stakeholders concerned.

In the earlier system, reports were filed on a monthly basis whereas now the time optimisation has been greatly improved by making the reports available in real time on the portal. In order to maintain data accuracy, validation checks have been installed in the MIS - for instance, entry on the number of completed projects cannot be more than the number of projects sanctioned and similar cross check of data between fund flow expenditure and physical progress of works.

Data analysis features

One of the key features of the database of reports is that multiple search parameters have been provided for the information to be parsed – year, month, location (state or district), physical/financial performance, flagship schemes, and work/project-wise information. The ‘Reports’ section on the IAPMIS portal has an added feature of showing selected data in the form of statistical charts. Eleven statistical tools such as box plot, column, pie chart and such like have been provided for the reports on flagship schemes. The availability of descriptive statistics tools for the vast amount of information on the schemes will be handy for users who are interested in deriving pictorial or comparative snapshots of the data in a click. An example of a column chart on the flagship scheme, MGNREGA, as of June 2013-14 is given below (Figure 6).

![Figure 6: Example of column chart on statewide report of expenditure on MGNREGA as of June 2013-14](image)

Source: IAPMIS portal, 2013

An atlas has also been provided for each district, for the examination of spatial data - to know the geographical layout, the road networks and other such infrastructural details in a
given area. Based on the 2001 census, approximately 40-50 such maps have been uploaded for each district. However, currently these are static in nature and have not been directly linked to monitoring data on the MIS in real time.

**Monitoring tools used for supplementary efforts**

Schemes undertaken to bring about development in LWE affected areas and backward and tribal districts fall within the purview of Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Rural Development and Ministry of Tribal Affairs as well as other Ministries/Departments. Hence, need has arisen for the Planning Commission to contact the ministries concerned in order to consult them on certain issues. The video conferencing facility afforded under IAPMIS has come in handy for facilitating such supplementary efforts and advancing development works comprehensively.

For example, promotion of the rights of tribals over forest land and facilitating participatory governance as envisioned under Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 and Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA), 1996 had come into question. The Planning Commission was able to host a video conference with the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, which was monitoring the scheme, and consult them on issues in this context.

**Challenges**

**Fear of Naxal violence and destruction of infrastructure**

There is an abject fear of Naxal violence in target IAP areas. This is known to hamper productivity in development projects and monitoring activities. Having to work under the risk of violence and conflict can be debilitating for NIC personnel posted at district levels and for state and district administrations as well. Existing infrastructure and projects implemented by the government in these violence-prone areas are the main targets of extremists – this poses a risk for adequately constructing and maintaining the basic technological infrastructure that is necessary to operate MIS. The following challenges mentioned in this section also see elements of difficulties that emanate from this problem, whether in terms of telecommunications or citizens’ participation.

**Limited access to portal due to poor web connectivity**

Although the portal gives open access to all the reports on physical and financial performance of development schemes, poor telecommunications infrastructure and/or their destruction by extremists can hinder the use of such information. The portal requires basic internet connectivity and computer access to operate. The transparency that the system extends to citizens will be of little use if they don’t have the requisite resources or are unable to connect to the internet to in the first place.
Exclusion of citizens in conceptualizing and monitoring development works

Under IAPMIS, development works are conceptualized and monitored at the district level by the District Level Committee constituting of concerned district level authorities. It has been suggested by the Planning Commission to involve representatives from panchayati raj institutions, however, this has not been made mandatory.

As far as good governance is concerned, citizen participation is crucial in efficient and effective administration and in keeping public functionaries in check. Besides, citizens’ participation will help in strengthening monitoring efforts on particular projects and achieving development goals in targeted areas. Strategies must be undertaken for awareness generation and motivating the citizens to participate in the process with their valuable inputs on development issues in their individual districts. Therefore, citizens’ inputs in a democratic set up should be taken into account so as to enhance its efficiency and strengthen their faith in the monitoring system.

Lack of alternative methods for citizens’ direct feedback

Contact details as given on the portal enable the citizens to address their grievances either through phone or sending e-mails to the concerned persons but with respect to telecommunications, networking is a limiting factor as telephone exchange or towers are the major targets of Left Wing Extremists specifically in Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Jharkhand.

Most of the IAP districts have a high proportion of population below poverty line with high rate of illiteracy, and thus, a need arises for alternative mechanisms so that citizens can give their inputs conveniently with minimal or zero cost. However, it must be noted that no grievances have been recorded from the beneficiaries thus far.

Language barrier

The coverage of IAPMIS extends to a demography that may not be conversant with either Hindi or English. The lack of information in regional languages would again impede the active participation of citizens and must be made more inclusive for the benefit of the population in LWE affected, tribal and backward areas.

Irregularity in submission of reports

The updation status tables on the IAPMIS portal indicate irregularity in the monthly submission of reports in selected districts. The difficulty in submission of reports has not been adequately tackled yet and must be given due attention in order to ensure the smooth functioning of monitoring activities and the upkeep of the system’s credibility.

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Key Lessons

The primary objective of this initiative is to monitor development in backward and tribal districts and LWE affected areas. By enabling this task on an online platform such as IAPMIS, the following advantages have come to the fore—

- Provision of an overarching plan that monitors selected government development projects in 88 districts concurrently on a single platform
- Increase in transparency and accountability owing to the rate of submission and timeliness that is required from the system
- Ease in accessibility to information, if one has basic computer and internet access
- Ease in frequently updating status of projects from given location
- Facilitation of monitoring activities from a distance through IAPMIS portal and video conferencing facilities which also absolves the need to have more feet on the ground in violence-prone LWE areas
- Data has been made available on several parameters such as state/district, year and scheme
- Data may be analysed easily with the help of online statistical tools made available on the portal
- Open public access to information, increasing credibility

In terms of development, IAP has recorded a 76 percent rate of completion in development projects upto 2012-13. Successful practices in various districts have been showcased through this online platform, such as the Gumla Skill Gurukul for Construction developed in collaboration with PanIIT. Studying innovative practices encourages replication in other states and districts, hence, taking forward the development agenda in an inclusive manner. An effective monitoring system is capable of energising efforts in advancing development initiatives and raising levels of transparency and accountability. At the initial stages, it is important to take into account the geographical extent of the system, baseline information of target areas, the presence of an enabling environment, political will and the expertise and strategy needed for successful pilot implementation.

In the subsequent stages, due consideration must be given to four main aspects of a monitoring system, viz. input (resources such as finance, infrastructure and capacity building efforts), output (services monitored and reach of stakeholders), outcome (coverage, achievement of desired goals on data collection and consistency) and impact (administrative and/or societal change).

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In the case of IAPMIS, monitoring authorities have been brought together successfully despite the challenges posed by LWE violence in selected districts. The use of videoconferencing facilities has been cited as an important feature for overcoming the risk of having officials on the ground for monitoring activities. Moreover, it has also saved a considerable amount of time and money by eliminating the need for travel. A GIS interface is also being considered for capturing and analysing monitoring data geographically.

For the purpose of replication, it is important to garner the necessary human resources and administrative will for the initiation of the project. The success of the system in affording transparency in implementation has also given a push in developing and improving the monitoring system. Tackling the development deficit in these areas, creating a monitoring system for the projects undertaken and then being successful as to expand its scope of operation in a risk-prone environment is not a small feat. The monitoring system bolsters these efforts and streamlines the process in a manner that is convenient for all stakeholders.

However, there is still a gap that needs to be bridged with the citizen beneficiaries in the system. In order to reach out to citizens, the MIS may be made multi-lingual including languages of the target population. A toll free number could also be introduced to enhance the participatory nature of the monitoring system. It is imperative that conflict-sensitive measures are factored in so that the progress made so far in LWE affected areas, in respect to development works and the monitoring system, are not laid to waste.

**Methodology**

IAPMIS is a pioneering example of a monitoring system undertaken in 88 districts of nine states in India. In order to understand the initiative in detail, thorough secondary research via web sources was carried out. The major sources referred to were the IAPMIS portal, the Ministry of Home Affairs website home page, Planning Commission documents, NIC documents, Union Budget 2011-12 and 2012-13. The research team has gone through the research papers from the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, Centre for Development and Peace Studies and media reports on the issue. The OneWorld team also had a telephonic interview with Mr. A.K. Chanana, Sr. Technical Director & HoD, NIC – Planning Commission and Ms. **Indu Patnaik, Jt. Advisor (MLA/SP), Planning Commission** to clear a few doubts about the technical part of the MIS and about the scheme.

**Conclusion**

IAPMIS is an innovative approach to accelerate the social and economic development of LWE affected, tribal and backward districts in India while bridging the existing deficit. Effective implementation and monitoring is key to obtaining true progress in any welfare scheme. Open access to the progress in development has been specifically taken into
account under this initiative in order to facilitate the faith of the citizens in state institutions. In this context, it is rightly quoted by PM Manmohan Singh,

“......to be persuasive we must be believable, to be believable we must be truthful. As administrators we must have zero tolerance towards corruption. Development programmes have to be delivered with complete honesty”

MIS for IAP has not only smoothened the administrative functions under various sectoral flagship programmes and development works in LWE affected areas and tribal and backward districts but it has also helped in advancing the development agenda that is crucial to these areas.

**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BRGF</td>
<td>Backward Regions Grant Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>CII</td>
<td>Confederation of Indian Industries</td>
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<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>District Collector</td>
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<tr>
<td>DM</td>
<td>District Magistrate</td>
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<tr>
<td>DO</td>
<td>Demi-Official</td>
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<tr>
<td>DWS</td>
<td>Drinking Water Scheme</td>
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<tr>
<td>EVC</td>
<td>Executive Video Conferencing</td>
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<tr>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>Global Positioning System</td>
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<td>IAP</td>
<td>Integrated Action Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICDS</td>
<td>Integrated Child Development Scheme</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and Communication Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>LWE</td>
<td>Left Wing Extremism</td>
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<tr>
<td>MGNREGA</td>
<td>Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act</td>
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<td>MIS</td>
<td>Monitoring Information System</td>
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<tr>
<td>MLPD</td>
<td>Multi Level Planning Division</td>
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<tr>
<td>MLA</td>
<td>Member of Legislative Assembly</td>
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<tr>
<td>MoU</td>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding</td>
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<tr>
<td>NIC</td>
<td>National Informatics Council</td>
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<td>PC</td>
<td>Planning Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>PDS</td>
<td>Public Distribution System</td>
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<tr>
<td>PMGSY</td>
<td>Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMRDF</td>
<td>Pradhan Mantri Rural Development Fellowship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RGGVY</td>
<td>Rajiv Gandhi Gramin Vidyutikaran Yojana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Scheduled Caste</td>
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<tr>
<td>SIS</td>
<td>Special Infrastructure Scheme</td>
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<tr>
<td>SRE</td>
<td>Security Related Expenditure</td>
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<tr>
<td>SSA</td>
<td>Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan</td>
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<tr>
<td>ST</td>
<td>Scheduled Tribe</td>
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<tr>
<td>WDC</td>
<td>Women Development Corporation</td>
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CASE FACT SHEET

I. Demographic information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>UP</th>
<th>Bihar</th>
<th>WB</th>
<th>Jharkhand</th>
<th>Odisha</th>
<th>Chattisgarh</th>
<th>MP</th>
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<td>22.59</td>
<td>20.30</td>
<td>15.99</td>
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<td>17.64</td>
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<td>Sex ratio</td>
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<td>916</td>
<td>947</td>
<td>947</td>
<td>978</td>
<td>991</td>
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<td>992</td>
<td>940</td>
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<td>Density in population</td>
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<td>1102</td>
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<td>414</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>382</td>
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<td>Literacy rate</td>
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<td>63.82</td>
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<td>73.45</td>
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<td>70.63</td>
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<td>74.04</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Population below poverty line</td>
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<td>53.5</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>48.7</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>29.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Demographic profile of IAP States and their comparison with national level data

II. Sector to which the project belongs: ICT and monitoring development works

III. Stakeholder and beneficiaries:
   i. Stakeholders - Ministry of Home Affairs, Planning Commission, National Informatics Centre, State governments concerned of 9 States, District level administration from all the 88 selected tribal and socially backward districts of these 9 states
   ii. Beneficiaries - Left Wing Extremism affected 888 tribal and backward districts of 9 states

IV. Calendar of major events:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IAPMIS launched in 60 LWE affected districts of 9 states</td>
<td>21 December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanded to 78 districts</td>
<td>07 December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanded to 82 districts</td>
<td>14 June 2012</td>
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V. Funding sources: Formulated as an additional central assistance scheme on 100 per cent grant basis. In 2013-14, it will be incorporated into the Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF).

VI. Services offered:
Reviews the physical and financial performance of development works and flagship programmes implemented by government in LWE affected tribal and socially backward districts of 9 states periodically through video conferencing session with Planning Commission.

It involves a regular interaction of District Magistrates (DMs) / Collectors of 82 districts and Chief Secretaries with the higher level authorities.

VII. Sources of data:
   i. IAPMIS Portal
   ii. Ministry of Home Affairs
   iii. Planning Commission
   iv. National Informatics Centre
   v. Bureau of Police Research and Organization
   vi. Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, New Delhi
vii. Union Budget 2012-13 and 2013-13

viii. Media reports

ix. Owner of the project: Multi Level Planning Division, Planning Commission, Government of India

REFERENCES


Prime Minister’s Rural Development Fellowship Scheme Web: 13 March 2013 http://www.capart.nic.in/scheme/pmrdf.pdf


