

Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare



EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE OF AGRICULTURE INFRASTRUCTURE FUND

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Launched in 2020-21, the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF) aims to bridge gaps in post-harvest management by supporting farm gate storage, logistics, and processing infrastructure. Facilities like warehouses, cold stores, grading and processing units enhance direct market access, increasing farmers' income. AIF facilitates an aggregate loan worth ₹1 lakh crore from various lending institutions with a 9% interest cap, operational until 2032-33. Loans up to ₹2 crore receive a 3% annual interest subvention for seven years. Credit guarantee coverage under CGTMSE is available for loans up to ₹2 crore, with the government bearing the fee.

The Government employs a multi-tiered monitoring mechanism to assess the impact of Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF)-funded projects on agricultural productivity. These mechanisms ensure real-time tracking, transparency, and effective evaluation of project outcomes. The key monitoring strategies include:

(i) AIF Online Management Information System (MIS) Portal

The AIF portal provides real-time tracking of projects, from sanction to implementation. It captures data on project approvals, disbursements, and geo-tagging of infrastructure to assess on-ground impact. The portal integrates with various banks and financial institutions for automated loan tracking.

(ii) Geo-tagging of AIF Projects

Geotagging of AIF projects enables monitoring of physical progress and regional distribution of projects, ensuring proper implementation.

(iii) Third-party Evaluations & Field Surveys

Independent agencies conduct field evaluations to assess project utilization, efficiency, and impact on farm productivity. These surveys help in identifying bottlenecks and suggesting course corrections for better fund utilization. During 2023 **Agro-Economic Research Centre (AERC) Pune** had undertaken an impact assessment study to analyse the impact of the Scheme in various parameters like employment generation, reduction in post-harvest losses, better farm mechanisation, lesser dependency on middlemen and so on.

(iv) Stakeholder Consultations & Feedback Mechanism

Regular meetings with Banks, and State Governments ensure real-time feedback on project effectiveness. Issues faced in implementation are addressed through policy interventions and fund reallocation strategies.

(v) Integration with Agri-Tech and AI-based Analytics

The Government is leveraging AI and data analytics to analyze the impact of AIF-funded projects on yield improvements, reduction in post-harvest losses, and price realization for farmers. Smart analytics provide insights into how cold storage, warehouses, and processing units are improving supply chain efficiency.

(vi) District and State-Level Monitoring Committees

State and District-level Nodal Agencies oversee project implementation and ensure alignment with regional agricultural needs. Periodic performance reviews help in revising strategies for better fund utilization.

Through these mechanisms, AIF's performance is continuously evaluated, ensuring transparency, efficiency, and impact-driven infrastructure development in agriculture.

As per the findings of the impact assessment study conducted for the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF), the scheme has significantly contributed to the creation of Post-Harvest Management Infrastructure and viable Farm Assets by improving access to affordable credit and incentivizing investment in critical agri-infrastructure. The study highlighted that AIF-supported projects have led to increased availability of modern storage, cold chain facilities, and processing units, reducing post-harvest losses and enhancing value addition for farmers. Additionally, the establishment of viable farming assets like custom hiring centres and agro-processing facilities has enabled farmers to access shared resources, improving farm mechanization with modern technologies resulting in improved efficiency while reducing dependency on middlemen, ultimately enhancing their income and market competitiveness.

Impact assessment study of AIF was conducted using AI based application which is one a kind study conducted in MoA&FW. The study revealed that due to infrastructure created there is reduction in post-harvest loses, better price realization for agri produce by farmer, increased farm mechanization, employment generation at farm level etc.

Impact assessment study by Agro-Economic Research Centre(AERC), Pune was done using conventional survey methodology collecting data from 500 beneficiaries spread across 8 states, namely Punjab, West Bengal, Assam, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan.

Positive Impacts are given hereunder :

- a. Increased storage capacity (Avg. 7 TMT / storage project)
- b. Employment Generation (Avg. of 11 opportunities / project)
- c. Attracting investments (Avg. 1.5 times the loan amount)
- d. Creation of New Agri-infra (70% of total projects)
- e. Easy access to funds at affordable rate of interest (capped at 9%)
- f. Creation of decentralised Agri-infra in Rural areas (97%)
- g. Overall it was felt that the farmers have benefitted due to the AIF facilities in the region and that there has been satisfactory demand for products / services of AIF units and

satisfactory income from these units.

- h. Majority of respondents felt the application process easy and revealed high and satisfactory level of awareness about the AIF Scheme in the lending Banks with reported full cooperation from the Banks.
- a. Significantly, it was revealed that the main reason behind setting up most of the units was the availability of AIF loans.

There is no specific allocation under the AIF Scheme for remote and difficult areas of the North Eastern States. This target of one lac crore rupees has been tentatively allocated to all the States and UTs and such allocation of funds has been determined based on the ratio of the total value of output from the Agriculture and Allied sectors in each State/UT. The allocation under AIF Scheme is only minimum and states can exceed the allocation. The tentative allocation for North Eastern States may be seen on **ANNEXURE-I**.

S.N	State/UT	Allocation in Rs Crore
1	Assam	2050
2	Tripura	360
3	Arunachal Pradesh	290
4	Nagaland	230
5	Manipur	200
6	Mizoram	196
7	Meghalaya	190
	Grand Total	3516

This information was given by Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Shri Ramnath Thakur a written reply in Rajya Sabha today.

MG/KSR/RN

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