



**IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF DIGITAL INDIA
LAND RECORDS MODERNIZATION PROGRAMME
(DILRMP) OF**

WEST BENGAL

**B. N. Yugandhar Centre for Rural Studies
Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration
Mussoorie – 248 179**

IMPACT ASSESSMENT STUDY OF DIGITAL INDIA LAND RECORDS MODERNISATION PROGRAMME IN WEST BENGAL

**BNY CENTRE FOR RURAL STUDIES
LBSNAA-MUSSOORIE**

In Collaboration with;



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The present study assessed the impact of implementation of DILRMP in the state of West Bengal. The study objectives were: (a) to evaluate the performance of various activities taken up under the erstwhile NLRMP and present DILRMP; (b) to identify constraints in the implementation of the various components of the programme; (c) to identify good practices and gaps in achieving objectives of the programme; and (d) to suggest appropriate changes in guidelines or other-wise to improve the effectiveness of DILRMP.

To assess state-wide progress, the research team collected data from 1000 households in four tehsils of two districts, Birbhum and Alipurduar, as well as qualitative data through male and female focus groups, and separate discussions with local land administration officers. Secondary sources of information were collected from State agencies.

West Bengal has made very strong progress in implementing DILRMP. Presently the records of rights (RORs) are completely digitized in all 346 tehsils of the State, with the exception of 28 revenue villages located in Purulia and North Dinajpur districts, where updation is in progress. RORs are computerized and available online for 89.88% of tehsils. Application for mutation can be made through online in 100% of tehsils. Cadastral maps have been digitized and integrated with all village RORs in the state except the first 100 wards of the city of Kolkata. All 346 BLLRO offices are connected with 257 Sub-Registrar offices covering all blocks in the state and are fully computerized. During 2019, an auto-mutation system was introduced statewide, allowing revenue officers to execute instant mutation compliance in case the details of the seller's land parcel match the digitized record.

All four tehsils where survey was undertaken have 100% web-enabled land records and the average time required for completion of mutation procedures is less than 17 days. A ROR was available for 81% of plots and a registration deed was available for 51% of plots, and 72% of plot holders approached an informal "deed writer" for help while submitting mutual application.

All 257 Sub-Registrar Offices (SROs) in the state (covering all 346 tehsils) perform 100% computerized registration. Encumbrance data has been digitalized in all SROs, capturing information related to *bargadar* (sharecropper) and possession with or without permission. SROs are integrated with tehsil offices only, and not with civil courts, banks, land acquisition offices, or other institutions. Thus, SROs do not capture encumbrance data pertaining to mortgages, court cases, legacy registration records, etc. Under normal circumstances, registration procedures for admission of execution happen the same day of filing the application.

There are total 42,157 *mouzas* (revenue villages) in the state out of which maps of 99.93% have been digitized, and the link between textual and spatial data has been established for 92.77%. However, in West Bengal, on-ground updation of spatial records is not integrated into computerized platform and thus creates a gap between textual and spatial data in terms of record updation.

Application for registration and mutation can be submitted online in all 346 tehsils and citizen can access spatial data in terms of parcel map only (certified copy) from any CSC, but cannot

update this through CSCs. Spatial record updation along with textual record is still not done in the state.

All positions of BLLROs are filled in the state, whereas 83.28% positions of Revenue Officers are filled. There are a large number of vacant positions for Revenue Inspectors in the state – only 28.53% of positions are filled. A total of 69.42% of surveyor (*Amin*) positions are filled.

All 73 tehsils covering urban or peri-urban areas have digitalized urban land records and a computerized mutation process. But in all cases, RORs do not indicate municipality jurisdiction or development authority jurisdiction. There is no institutional data linkage between revenue records and records of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) and others.

For land parcels updated within last two years, the most common trigger for updation was to avail the benefit of government scheme such as Krishak Bandhu (Farmer's Friend). Two-thirds of respondents were satisfied with the process of record updation.

One troubling finding from the qualitative interviews is that families are paying arbitrary and sometimes exorbitant amounts to middlemen for assistance in applying for record updation.

Although less than 40% of survey respondents were aware of the services offered through the banglurbhumi website, two-thirds of those who used the website were satisfied with the services provided.

The same data collection tool was used for both male and female-headed household, although the women respondents visibly required more support and explanation before responding. In common, they expressed desire to know more about land records and its management – an observation made by the senior members of research team. The survey qualitative data analysis provided a distinct sense that women need to be given greater space for making the service delivery more gender-friendly as also help improve its quality in terms of accessing. To make services more accessible to women, survey respondents suggested employing more women officers at CSCs, and 79% recommended training SHG women to help families' access services.

Based on the study findings, the research team suggest the following policy recommendations:

- Complete the resurvey work for remaining 28 mouzas to achieve 100% computerization of all villages in the State;
- Fill all Revenue Inspector vacancies;
- Speed up geo-referencing of cadastral maps of mouzas;
- Implement software to enable spatial record updation on a real time basis;
- Establish a help-desk in each tehsil office to provide hand-holding support to citizens seeking help in accessing and updating land records;
- Re-survey urban and peri-urban areas to enable RORs to capture details of municipality jurisdiction, including restrictions in built-up areas;
- ***Train local members of women's self-help groups (SHGs) to create a layer of knowledgeable community members to act as an interface between community and land administration officers;***

- *Implement tehsil wise crash programme for reducing pendency of mutation cases;*
- *Institutionalize a system of periodical review of situation and agree on gaps in registration and mutation between the tehsildar and sub-registrar; and*
- *Implement software for sending SMS to phone number of the seller when hearing on mutation cases disposal is fixed.*

ABOUT THE B. N. YUGANDHAR CENTRE FOR RURAL STUDIES

The B. N. Yugandhar Centre for Rural Studies (BNYCRS) is a Research Centre of the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration, Mussoorie. It was set up in the year 1989 by the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, with a multifaceted agenda that includes the contemporaneous evaluation of the ever-unfolding ground realities pertaining to the Land Administration and Poverty Alleviation Programmes in India. Sensitization of the officer trainees of the Indian Administrative Service in the process of evaluating the land administration/management and poverty alleviation programmes through exposing them to ground realities; setting up a forum for regular exchange of views on land reforms, socio-economic development and poverty alleviation amid academicians, administrators, activists, planners, stakeholders and concerned citizens and creating awareness amongst the public about the various programmes initiated by the Government of India through non-governmental organizations are also important objectives of the B. N. Yugandhar Centre for Rural Studies. A large number of books, reports related to land reforms, poverty alleviation programmes, rural socio-economic problems etc. published both externally and internally bear testimony to the excellent quality of the Centre. Over the years, the Centre has widened its activities involving conducting research studies, training programmes and workshops/ seminars and provide policy suggestions.

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