

DISNIC-PLAN : A NICNET Based Distributed Database for Micro-level Planning in India

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Micro-level Planning is gaining momentum in developing countries. The Planning steps, the data needs, the institutional requirements, the macro-micro linkages and the information flows are necessary to make the planning process effective. Indian planning and development process is aheading for a change from the centralised to more of decentralised approach in order to give due recognition to the micro-level needs and potentials in decision making. The committee on Study Group on Information Gap, constituted by the Planning Commission, Government of India, in 1989 has recommended for the creation of data bases on (i) Plan Information, (ii) Plan Monitoring, and (iii) Plan Evaluation, in districts. This committee has also recommended to develop databases with respect to (i) Socio-economic, (ii) Agro-economic, (iii) Infrastructure, (iv) Demographic, and (v) Natural resources.

A "village" or a "cluster of villages" is considered as a "suitable and manageable" geographic unit for planned development within the framework of district planning. Since India has its varied spatial peculiarities over different types of terrain, natural resources, climate, socio-economic conditions, political ideologies, etc., the micro-level planning and modeling requires a comprehensive village level spatial and non-spatial information system.

With the establishment of NICNET nodes in all 500 districts of India, which are the basic administrative spatial units at the sub-state level and also consistent with the decentralised planning concepts of the Government of India, National Informatics Centre(NIC) has launched "DISNIC - a NICNET based district government informatics programme" for strengthening planning and development, covering 28 sectors such as agriculture, animal husbandry, irrigation, industry, education, environment, energy, rural development, etc., at the local levels. An integrated approach for database development across different sectors has been adopted, as it is essential for planning and development.

The National Informatics Centre, through its DISNIC-PLAN Programme, has created a distributed database on village level information for about 6 lakhs villages, in the country, using its NICNET facilities at 500 district nodes. Project activities have been taken-up to link these databases with the spatial database in the form of maps to provide an effective spatial analysis under Geographical Information System(GIS) environment. Further, development of INTRANET site over NICNET National Info-Highway, on DISNIC-PLAN Programme has also been undertaken.

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