



## Indian Council of Agricultural Research

*Streamlining business processes for greater transparency and more effective reporting*

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### Overview

#### The need

Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) wanted to drive more effective business transactions, kept under tight budgetary control and complemented with clear, accurate and timely reporting.

#### The solution

ICAR is transforming the way it manages processes, people and finances, working with IBM® Global Business Services® to bring its diverse operations onto integrated Oracle E-Business Suite applications.

#### The benefit

Working with a common set of processes and data will reduce duplication of cost and effort, improve transparency and provide management with accurate, timely information for decision-making.

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The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) – under the Department of Agriculture Research and Education, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India (GOI) – is responsible for coordinating research and education in agriculture. With 110 institutes and 65 agricultural universities, ICAR represents one of the largest National Agricultural Research and Education Systems (NARS) in the world.

India's agricultural sector is marked by contrasts – while farming's share of the economy is shrinking, more than half of the population still relies on agriculture to make a living. ICAR aims to generate more income and employment opportunities for these producers, and increase the competitiveness of farming in India, by promoting greater agricultural productivity and sustainability through the use of technology.

Part of the effort to reinvigorate and modernize India's agricultural sector includes the National Agricultural Innovation Project (NAIP), funded by The World Bank, which accords high priority to the generation and transfer of agricultural technologies, and innovations in the technology system. In accordance with the NAIP component 1 initiative and using an IT driven ERP platform, ICAR sought to move to next level with standardized business transactions and greater process automation.

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*“We have developed a strong partnership – IBM has been highly receptive to our input as the implementation has progressed, and we feel that the solution that we have co-developed aligns closely with our goals and objectives,” says Dr U C Sud, Director, Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute (IASRI).*

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## Solution components

### Hardware

- IBM® Power® 750
- IBM Power 740

### Software

- IBM AIX® 7.1

### Services

- IBM Global Business Services®

### Applications

- Oracle eBusiness Suite
  - Oracle Database 11g
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— Sh Devendra Kumar, Director, Finance, Indian Council of Agricultural Research

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## Managing projects more effectively

To keep pace with ever-growing operation requirements in a challenging environment, where accurate data retrieval was required for faster decision-making and effective policy-making, ICAR sought to improve processes and operational effectiveness using an IT-driven ERP initiative.

In addition, without tight control over people, processes and finances, it was challenging to keep projects on track and under tight budgetary control – something that ICAR wanted to improve upon by driving greater transparency and more effective reporting.

Sh Devendra Kumar, Director, Finance, ICAR explains, “Recognizing that more efficient information and financial management was paramount to the progress of ICAR as an organization, we sought to modernize, automate and integrate transactional and reporting processes in order to improve transparency and efficiency.

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## Choosing centralized Oracle applications

ICAR determined that the best approach was to standardize and simplify its operations on a common business platform, which would help reduce complexity, eliminate cost duplication and help staff work more efficiently in a centralized environment.

After reviewing the market, ICAR selected Oracle E-Business Suite 12 as its strategic business platform, supported by Oracle databases. The Oracle solution includes an integrated suite of modules, including Financials, Grants, Purchase & Inventory, Projects and Human Resources and Payroll.

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*“Moving to the standardized, integrated ICAR-ERP Solution gives us a strong foundation that helps staff work together more effectively.”*

— Dr. A.K. Choubey, Head, Division of  
Computer Applications, Indian Agricultural  
Statistics Research Institute (IASRI)

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### Finding the right partner

To help accelerate the configuration and deployment of the Oracle applications, ICAR sought the assistance of an experienced partner. After issuing a request for proposals and conducting a rigorous evaluation of a number of shortlisted firms, the organization selected IBM Global Business Services to help guide the project.

“Right from the start, IBM Global Business Services was very focused on ensuring close collaboration with the ICAR team. The IBM and IASRI project teams have worked very hard in bringing this solution to ICAR.” states Dr. U C Sud, Director, Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute (IASRI).

### Bringing many institutes onto a single platform

The IBM and IASRI project teams worked closely with core teams across all functional areas of ICAR to complete initial solution design, build, test and integration activities to custom the solution as per ICAR requirements. ICAR took a phased approach to the implementation and starting with a pilot stage, where this ICAR-ERP solution was rolled out at six large institutes, plus ICAR’s headquarters in New Delhi.

The core project teams coordinated data preparation and cutover work and staff training and also helped end users in initial transactions in their respective areas, during a one-month period of initial on-site support at each pilot location.

Following a successful pilot implementation, ICAR adopted a staggered approach to the next phase of the implementation. Project teams rolled out the solution in two sub-stages to 14 medium institutes and performed user training and cutover activities. The teams also extended support to end users in initial transactions in their respective areas during initial onsite support of one month at each of the 14 medium Institute locations.

Phase Two implementation started in June 2014, and will see the ICAR-ERP Solution rolled out to 90 smaller institutes. ICAR has contracted IBM to provide 3-year application management support for the new solutions following final go-live at each of the institutes.

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*“By offering faster access to data and improved reporting, the ICAR-ERP Solution will allow ICAR to ensure that key business decisions are taken in a timely manner. With better operational insight, we can drive greater control over even the most complex projects, minimizing delays and ensuring that our teams stay on track.”*

— Dr. A.K. Choubey, Head, Division of Computer Applications, Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute (IASRI)

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## **IBM hardware offers strong performance and reliability**

To provide a robust foundation for running the ICAR-ERP Solution, ICAR selected two IBM Power® 750 servers to support Oracle databases, and two Power 740 systems to act as application servers, all of which run the IBM AIX® operating system. Housed in a central datacenter at IASRI, the Power Systems® servers help ensure consistently high performance for Oracle applications and databases.

Dr Sudeep Marwaha, Senior Scientist, IASRI, comments: “As all 110 institutes would be relying on the ICAR-ERP Solution to manage their operations, ICAR knew that it was critical to guarantee top levels of performance, reliability and availability for the new application suite. Hence, high-end RISC based servers with robust architecture and an automated back-up solution have been deployed to enhance overall efficiency at ICAR.”

## **Creating a more unified organization**

This is one of the first ERP implementations in the central government in India, making ICAR a pioneer organization. Once fully rolled out, the integrated ICAR-ERP Solution will help to standardize and automate processes and workflows at ICAR, enabling more efficient day-to-day operations across the organization’s many institutes.

Dr. A.K. Choubey, Head, Division of Computer Applications, IASRI, says: “Robust solutions, expertly deployed by IBM Global Business Services, help us work more efficiently. Data retrieval will be faster and data will be maintained in a uniform and standardized manner. This initiative will allow the organization to move from manual, paper-based processes to a modern and integrated technology platform. This standardized ICAR-ERP Solution will offer a centralized way of managing processes, and provide a single source of information on finances, projects and people.”

Dr. Alka Arora, Senior Scientist, IASRI, adds: “Having a common set of processes and data will help our staff will work more effectively and improve collaboration across institutes. This will allow us to avoid wasted time and effort, and accelerate the progress of the projects we lead.”

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*“We look forward to using the improved efficiencies and effective monitoring of resources for faster policy making and decision making. By keeping pace with advanced technologies that meet future business needs, we can help create more opportunities for India’s farmers and usher in a new era of prosperity for the agricultural sector.”*

— Sh Devendra Kumar, Director, Finance, Indian Council of Agricultural Research

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### Better operational insight and control

For ICAR, the MIS and FMS systems will transform the flow of information across the organization, delivering faster access to key data and deeper insight into different operational areas. Improved information availability and more accurate reporting will help boost transparency and support faster, more informed decision-making.

Dr. A.K. Choubey comments: “By offering faster access to data and improved reporting, the ICAR-ERP Solution will allow ICAR to ensure that key business decisions are taken in a timely manner. With better operational insight, we can drive greater control over even the most complex projects, minimizing delays and ensuring that our teams stay on track.”

Sh Devendra Kumar concludes: “It is still early days in our journey with Oracle and IBM, and we have high hopes for the future. By helping drive greater transparency into our operations and bringing our processes, staff and partners closer together, this MIS and FMS system will transform the way we work at ICAR.

“We look forward to using the improved efficiencies and effective monitoring of resources for faster policy making and decision making. By keeping pace with advanced technologies that meet future business needs, we can help create more opportunities for India’s farmers and usher in a new era of prosperity for the agricultural sector.”

### For more information

For more information about ICAR, Please visit: [www.icar.org.in](http://www.icar.org.in)

To find out more about the Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute (IASRI), please visit: [www.iasri.res.in](http://www.iasri.res.in)

To learn more about the ICAR-ERP Solution implementation, please visit: [www.iasri.res.in/misfms](http://www.iasri.res.in/misfms)

To learn more about IBM and Oracle solutions, contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit the following website: [ibm.com/solutions/oracle](http://ibm.com/solutions/oracle)



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No.12, Subramanya Arcade,  
Bannerghatta Road,  
Bangalore – 560029  
India

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