



MSP for the Future Wicked Sprint

27th - 30th August 2021
Bangalore, Karnataka



Wicked Sprint on Minimum Support Price (MSP) for the Future

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Preface - MSP is a Wicked Problem

Across the globe, governments support farmers because of concern for food security. The support is provided through various mechanisms. In India, there is the Minimum Support Price (MSP) declared for 24 crops and a public procurement system that backs it as a price support mechanism. While the system has worked in some ways, there is a recognition that it's design and implementation and operations must evolve to serve the current and future needs of farmers, consumers, and the environment.

Thinking about redesigning MSP isn't just a technical challenge but it needs to consider the politics of food, food inflation, changing dynamics of the centre-state relationship, the emerging role of businesses and subsequent transitional pain of changing policies. For these reasons, the design of the MSP is a classic 'wicked problem' that requires people who hold different viewpoints to go beyond debating and engage in a deeper, respectful exercise of understanding each other to co-create ways forward.

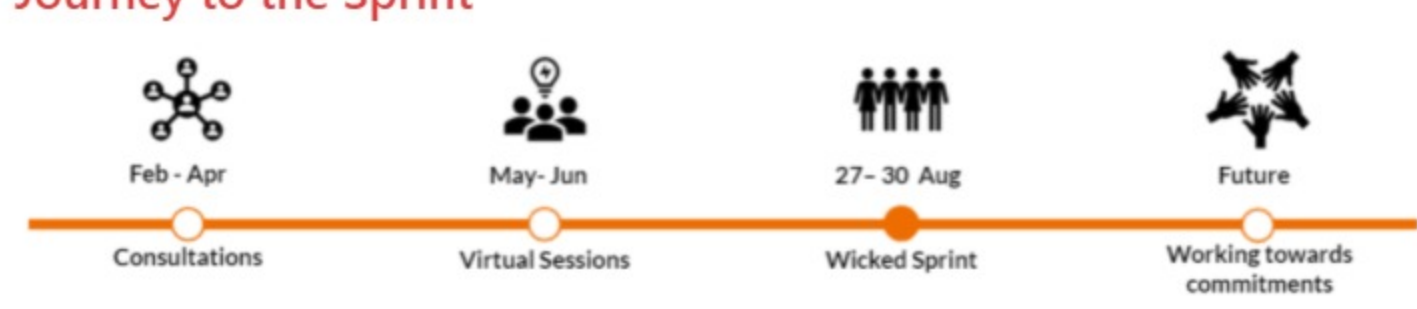
Context to MSP and its challenges

Bharat Krishak Samaj and Socratus Foundation for Collective Wisdom convened a select group of 24 influential stakeholders for a Wicked Sprint to conceive the MSP for the future. The participants have been carefully chosen to represent all viewpoints and stakeholders (Academia, Central and

Dates: 27th August- 30th August 2021

Venue: Signature Club Resort
Brigade Orchards, NH 207
Devanahalli, Bangalore - 562110

Journey to the Sprint

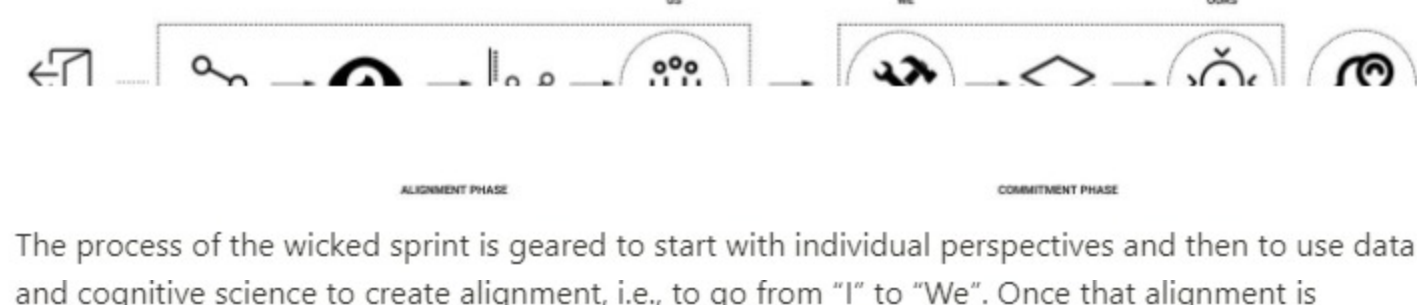


In the lead up to the Wicked Sprint, we organized several online consultations with various experts over few months. These included both one on one meetings and group meetings. Three group sessions were held in May and June with more than 31 experts providing their valuable inputs on the challenges of the current MSP regime and the possible ways forward.

The summary from the discussions so far can be accessed in the link below:

[Summary of Virtual Consultations](#)

What is a Wicked Sprint?



The process of the wicked sprint is geared to start with individual perspectives and then to use data and cognitive science to create alignment, i.e., to go from "I" to "We". Once that alignment is achieved and people understand where the others in the room are coming from, we use data and design tools to arrive at pathways for future action that are jointly held by clusters of people, i.e., they consider those pathways to be "Ours". Taking that visceral belief in 'our' pathway into a commitment for future action is the last stage of the sprint with the intent that every person in the room will make a commitment for what they will do when they leave the sprint.

There are many interconnected paths to achieve resilient and equitable food systems and MSP is likely to remain one of them. The Wicked Sprint will take a systems approach to conceive the institutional architecture of a future MSP that addresses the goals & challenges described above.

- We will start by taking stock of the current system's objectives and performance (and unintended consequences).
- We will then discuss the evolving objectives to collectively align on the future goals of MSP. The discussions will go beyond the crops in the current MSP system.
- Thereafter we will conceive and design policy and implementation options that are mindful of the challenges.

Boundary Conditions

No matter how well-designed, MSP alone will not address all the challenges facing our Food Systems and will need to work in conjunction with other forms of support. For the purpose of a focused discussion, we will exclude distribution and other forms of support like income support, input subsidies etc.

Process of the Sprint

Participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the opinion of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed.

Four-day flow

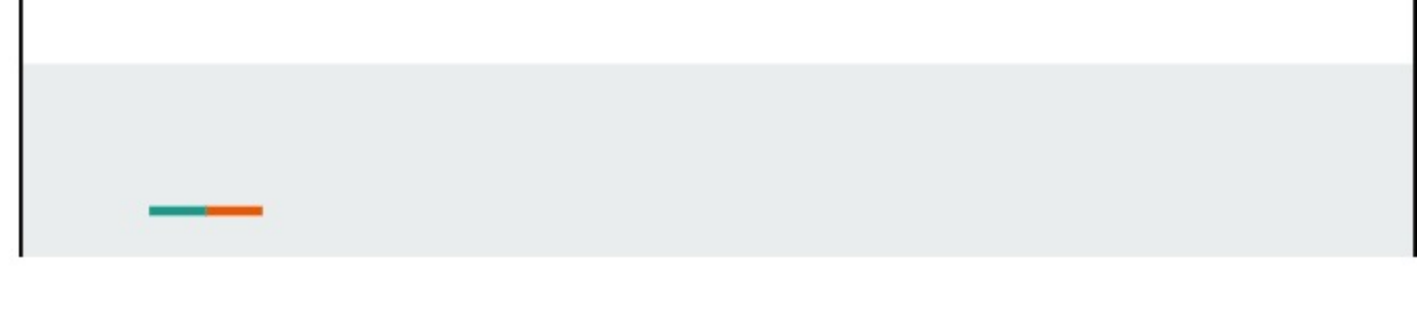
Day 1: The afternoon started off with participants sharing their expectations from the sprint and articulating the problem (not the solution) that they want to solve. They were introduced to the metaphor of 'seeing-the-whole-elephant' through a short game, followed by a quick fun session on using data for estimations. Read more here: <https://brilliant.org/wiki/fermi-estimate/>. The day concluded with participants opening up to each other through specially designed session meant to identify speed dating and empathy walks in the venue.



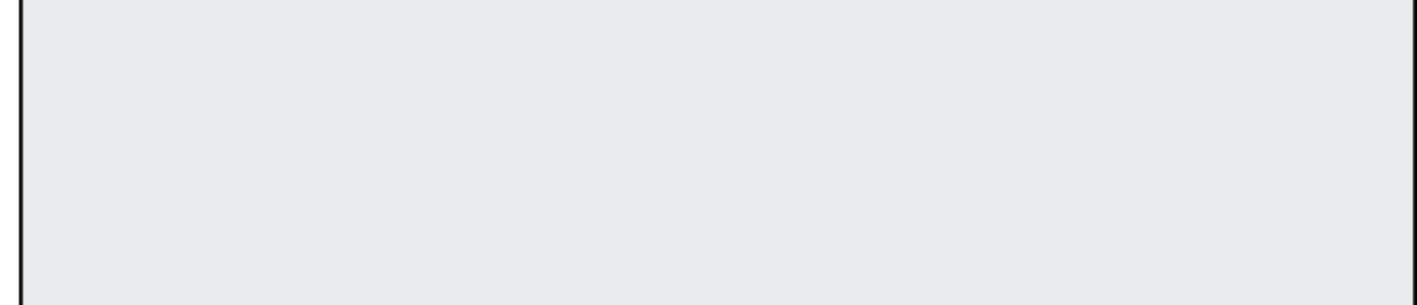
Day 2: The day started with participants putting their feelings on a range of media headlines related to MSP. Then, the organizing team presented some important data points on food systems.



Data can act as an 'honest broker of truth'. It is a trusted starting point from which participants from diverse perspectives can start a journey together.



To present a big picture story of Food Systems in India that we all are aware of. These are basic facts as a tool for thought, not just as facts.



Day 3: The participants spent the day working in 4 groups with each group working on one problem statement and building change proposals. There were 3 rounds of creation and feedback with all participants contributing to all the proposals. The idea was that the change proposals will consider all the three major institutions - Samaaj, Bazaar and Sarkaar

Day 4: All the proposals were synthesized and presented to the larger group. In the commitment session, the participants articulated specific activities that they would work on individually and with other participants. In this session, multiple partnerships and coalitions were initiated. The sprint ended with a vote of thanks.

Proposals that have emerged

addressed holistically. Each of the solutions requires various actors (under samaaj, sarkaar and bazaar) to identify and solve different aspects of the problems. The proposals listed below have been developed under the major categories of crops currently receiving MSP or not receiving MSP and categories not directly dependent on MSP.

Some key points that have emerged in the solutions are:

- Solutions are not constrained to provide MSP for the crop in the future in many cases.
- The important role of the state - not left to the markets alone. However, the intervention needs to be specific and nuanced.
- The need for the state to move to better price support methods - that are not just based on procurement but on new means of managing prices.
- Importance of the financial sector.
- Demand management - promoting healthier choices is also a key part of moving the food systems forward. Example creating consumer awareness on health benefits on millet consumption and designating one day for millet consumption.

Group 1: Rice, Wheat, Sugarcane & Cotton

The future of MSP supported crops has been envisaged to support farmers for diversification from rice and wheat (in Punjab, Haryana, Western UP) and to decentralize procurement and distribution. Specific solutions for sugarcane includes deriving the value of cane prices from product mix rather than sugar alone and higher charges for F&B/ sugar processing industries. Mid-season intervention for cotton crops to provide MSP support to farmers and focus on seed research to develop climate-resilient cotton seeds.

Group 2: Pulses and Oilseeds

The proposal tries to address the neglect of millets, pulses and oilseeds in government policies and make them constitutional/normative. It envisions the government provide financial assistance to

increase awareness by distributing millets through welfare schemes and designating one day for millet consumption. Improve edible oil production in a phased manner through cultivation incentives and price support (letting prices rise).

Group 3: Perishables

Despite horticulture being an attractive option for increasing farm incomes of small and marginal farmers, they face large amounts of risks and vulnerability. This proposal identifies pathways to improve control of the value chain, investment in infrastructure, addressing information asymmetry, pricing, and so on. The role of the bazaar has been identified in improving market intelligence by creating data platforms; creating rural-appropriate technologies for processing, storage and transport; and pushing for investments from NBFCs and private banks among others. Removing trade obstacles, introducing fruits and vegetables in midday meal schemes and investing in open source data platforms can be lead by the sarkaar.

Group 4: Animal Protein

The proposal lists solutions, implementation pathways and the actors for improving the nutritional availability and affordability through animal protein while ensuring income and equity for marginal and landless farmers, optimizing the ecological footprint, ensuring animal health support and mitigating risks for the owners of livestock. The solutions are not driven by MSP but rather by improving the animal protein ecosystem and the components in it. Comprehensive asset ownership records, unbroken cold chain from producer up to the customer, no-interference policy on the trade front by the government and encouraging localized production and consumption cycle are some highlights of the proposal.

Participants in the Wicked Sprint

And Water (CEEW)

- Mr. Anil Ghanwat, President, Shetkari Sanghatana
- Mr. Alok Sinha, ex-Chairman, Food Corporation of India (FCI)
- Mr. Amith Agarwal, CEO, AgriBazaar

- Dr. Avinash Kishore, Research Fellow, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)
- Mr. Biraj Patnaik, Executive Director, National Foundation for India (NFI)
- Dr. C.S.C. Sekhar, Professor, Institute of Economic Growth
- Mr. Deepak Gupta, Former Commodities Asia Head, Cargill
- Mr. Dinesh Kulkarni, All India Organizing Secretary, Bhartiya Kisan Sangh
- Dr. Dipa Sinha, Asst. Professor, Ambedkar University Delhi
- Mr. Harvir Singh Panwar, Editor-in-Chief, RuralVoice
- Prof. Himanshu, Jawaharlal Nehru University
- Mr. Jayant Chatterjee, COO, StarAgri Ltd.

- Ms. Kavitha Kuruganti, Co-Convenor, Alliance for Sustainable & Holistic Agriculture (ASHA)
- Mr. Kannan Gopinathan, ex- Bureaucrat, Social Activist
- Mr. Puneet Singh Thind, Northern Farmers Mega FPO
- Mr. Ravneet Brar, Spokesperson, Bhartiya Kisan Union (Kadian)
- Ms. Rajatha. V. Dy, Director, Department of Agriculture, Govt. of Kerala
- Mr. Sayantan Bera, National Writer, Mint & Hindustan Times, Delhi
- Dr. Shambu Prasad, Professor, Institute of Rural Management, Anand

- Mr. Surendra Prasad Singh, Journalist, Uanik Jagran
- Mr. T. Nanda Kumar, former sect Ministry of Agriculture, ret'd. IAS
- Mr. Unupom Kausik, President, National Collateral Management

Commitments by Participants

Annexure

[Sketch Notes of the Wicked Sprint](#)

[Glimpses from the Wicked Sprint](#)

[Participants in the virtual sessions](#)

wicked माईड्स
Solve
wicked प्रॉब्लम्स