Chapter-2

A Critique of Poverty Alleviation Programmes in Rural India

This chapter presents a critique of rural poverty alleviation programmes starting from the Community Development Programme (CDP) which was started in 1952 to National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA). Special attention is paid to give details of programmes and schemes in Andhra Pradesh. The schemes include Subsidized Rice Scheme, Janmabhoomi, Adarana, Joint Forest Management (JFM), Andhra Pradesh Rural Livelihood Programme (APRLP), Free Power Scheme and South Asia Poverty Alleviation Program (SAPAP), Andhra Pradesh Rural Poverty Reduction Programme popularly known as Velugu and renamed as Indira Kranthi Patham under the Congress regime is also discussed.

‘Eradicating rural poverty’ as an improvement process, rural society is aspiring to move from lower economic and lower social standard to higher standard in the lives of the rural people. ‘Rural poverty’ is an extremely difficult subject to deal with because of a huge variety of socio-economic and ecological situations in which it takes place. Thus, the policies for the eradication rural poverty have to be targeted at the rural poor, which have been at the receiving end of the ill effects of poverty over the ages.

The broad strategy of rural development in India is reflected in our constitution. This strategy is based on the progressive elimination of inequalities among the different sections of the society in the country. India has strong hierarchical social system with different social and economical inequalities in rural areas. Keeping this in view, the Government of India has taken initiatives for rural poverty alleviation. The initiations have been taken from the First Five Year Plan, it is envisaged that the successive five year plans would create a better, richer and fuller life for the thousands of rural communities in India1.

Community Development Programme (CDP)

The first ever rural development programme in India was initiated by the Government of Uttar Pradesh in 1948. This was known as Etowah pilot project\(^2\). With the same basic philosophy, the National Extension Service was started in 1952 with the establishment of 55 community development projects across the states of India. By the year 1963, the community development programme was extended to cover the entire country by a network of 5,265 community development blocks\(^3\).

In the Five Year Plan seeks to a process of transformation of the social and economic life of the village is envisaged\(^4\). The Community Development Programme is the method and Rural Extension is the agency. The community development programme was the process by which the efforts of the people are to be united with those of governmental authorities to improve the economic, social and cultural conditions to integrate these communities into the life of the nation and to enable them to contribute fully to national progress\(^5\). The major focus of this programme was to induce people’s participation in rural development and is aimed at utilization of local available natural resources\(^6\).

The Government of India's poverty alleviation programmes are broadly of five categories; they are Self Employment Programmes, Wage—employment programmes, Area Development Programmes, Social Security Programmes and other programmes such as Integrated Rural Development Programme, Jawahar Rozgar Yojana, Annapurna, Antyodaya Anna Yojana and Pradhan Manthri Gram Sadak Yojana and National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme\(^7\).

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\(^3\) Chattopadhyay, B.C. Rural Development in India, 1985, p. 7.
\(^5\) Mukherji, B. 1967, Community Development in India, p. 13.
As Katar Singh pointed out the Community Development Programme proved to be one of the under achievement programmes and the failure was more deplorable in the agricultural sector. This failure is due its diffused character, as it did not give sufficient and direct emphasis on agricultural production. The financial, material and administrative resources of Community Development Programme were spread too thinly all over the countryside to provide any tangible impact on agricultural production.  

The Community Development Programme is criticized on the ground that it has not been a poor people’s programme, benefited the richer sections and it has employed a large army of untrained workers who lacked coordination among themselves. They were less a source of help to the villagers and more a source of confusion. Lack of fundamental responsibility at the block level led to a good deal of confusion and interdepartmental jealousy. It is in this regard, the Government of India has given considerable importance to rural development.

Initially, India adopted a development strategy which was based on the trickle-down concept. When that development strategy failed to meet the basic needs of millions of rural poor, the need for direct intervention in favour of the poor was recognized. Consequently, the government embarked on the preparation and implementation of comprehensive antipoverty programmes.

**Self-employment Programmes**

Self-employment programmes were introduced at the national level in the late 1970s. Initially, the programmes were designed to provide skills, subsidized credit and infrastructure support to small farmers and agricultural laborers so that they could find

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8. Ibid.

10. Ibid,
new sources of income. In the 1980s, the focus of self-employment programmes was extended to cover target groups such as Scheduled Castes and Tribes, women and rural artisans. The coverage also extended to specific areas such as animal husbandry, forestry and fishery.

**The Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP)**

As pointed out, Government of India has taken care to help the poor and empower them. And appropriate schemes are incorporated in evaluation studies found that the Five Year Plans have not been fully helpful to serve the purpose. It was also found that the needy sections of society could not enjoy the benefits of the development plans. The Government of India, especially under Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi announced the Twenty Point Programme to give a new orientation to growth by emphasizing the welfare of the common man in general and weaker sections of the society in particular. The programme stressed the core points of development like land reforms, irrigation and power. It was focused on every needy section of society like workers, land less, labourers, students, the unemployed and the middle class with an integrated approach development. Thus, the integrated poverty driven programme was initiated. The programme is popularly known as the Integrated Rural Development Programme.

The Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme which is in operation in all the blocks of the country since 1980. Under this scheme Central funds are allocated to States on the basis of the proportion of rural poor in a State to the total rural poor in the country. Subsequently, Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM), Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas

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(DWCRA), Supply of Improved Tool Kits to Rural Artisans (SITRA) and Ganga Kalyan Yojana (GKY) were introduced as sub-programmes of IRDP to take care of the specific needs of the rural population. These schemes were, however, implemented as ‘stand alone programmes’, an approach which substantially detracted from their effectiveness\(^{13}\).

The programme has been financed partly by government subsidies and partly by bank credit. The programme has been implemented by an autonomous agency, the District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) set up especially for the purpose. The management of the programme has been coordinated at the State level under the guidance of a High Power Coordination Committee. The responsibility for providing the policy frame and general guidelines for implementation has rested with the Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment at the national level.

There have been some modifications in the scheme as a result of feedback from the field as well as findings of the concurrent evaluations. There has been a shift in the programme strategy towards achieving qualitative results and investment in infrastructure. A new category of beneficiaries has been identified for assistance under the programme. This category comprises of educated unemployed rural youth living below the poverty line, who are eligible for subsidies of up to 50 per cent of project costs, subject to a ceiling of Rs 7,500. The IRDP suffered from several defects which include include sub-critical investment, unviable projects, illiterate and unskilled beneficiaries with no experience in managing an enterprise, indifferent delivery of credit by banks, overcrowding of lending in certain projects such as dairy, underemphasize on activities like trading, service and even simple processing, poor targeting and selection of non-poor\(^{14}\).

As regards the performance of Integrated Rural Development Programme in Andhra Pradesh, leakages, retention of assets, employment and income gains have been noticed\(^{15}\). The leakages of the IRDP have been assessed through three parameters viz.,

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\(^{13}\) Planning Commission (GOI), Tenth Five Year Plan 2001-2007, p.294.
\(^{14}\) Government of India, The Planning Commission, Mid-term appraisal of the Ninth Five Year Plan.
\(^{15}\) S. Mahendra Dev P. Padmanabha Rao, 2002, Poverty Alleviation Programmes in Andhra Pradesh - An Assessment, (Sponsored by Planning Commission, Government of India), Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Hyderabad, August, p. 53.
entry of non-poor, non-retention of assets by the poor and the expenditure incurred in obtaining the scheme. Entry of non-poor into the programme is found. It is obvious from the empirical observation of the study that the retention of assets was very low among Scheduled Caste households\(^\text{16}\).

The programmes has brought substantial changes in the lives of rural poor in terms of improvement of the economic conditions of the rural poor, sufficient assistance in the form of productive assets under economically viable and technically feasible schemes\(^\text{17}\) and generation of additional employment\(^\text{18}\). But, the study explored the some of problems in the programme implementation such as selection of ineligible beneficiaries in a large proportion, lack of base line survey for the selection of beneficiaries and for appropriate scheme in selected villages.

**Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment (TRYSEM)**

The Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment\(^\text{19}\) (TRYSEM) was launched in 1979, aimed at providing basic technical and managerial skills to the rural youth from families of below the poverty line to enable them to take up self-employment in the broad fields of agriculture and allied sectors, industries, services and business activities\(^\text{20}\). That objective was subsequently enlarged in 1983 to include wage employment for trained youth.

The TRYSEM programme was evaluated for the first time in a Quick Study by Planning Commission (June to August 1993) conducted through independent research institutes/organizations. The main findings of the evaluation study are area skill surveys were not carried out, of the total number of beneficiaries, who got training under TRYSEM, roughly 47.19 per cent were unemployed after the training and 32.54 per cent

\(^{16}\) Ibid.
\(^{17}\) Ibid, p.60
\(^{18}\) Ibid., p. 60
\(^{19}\) Ibid,
\(^{20}\) TRYSEM played an important role in facilitating the diversification of activities taken up under IRDP. It has been emphasized that the coverage of youth from SC and ST communities should be at least 50 per cent of the rural youth trained. Out of the total beneficiaries, at least 40 per cent should be women.
took up self-employment after training of whom 12.41 per cent took up employment in 
trades other than those in which they were trained, a majority of the beneficiaries were
faced with lack of funds as a major reason for not taking up self-employment
independently after the training, a major proportion of TRYSEM trainees did not apply
for loan under IRDP, inadequate number of assistance and most of the beneficiaries felt
no improvement in their socio-economic conditions as a result of TRYSEM training.21
The report also speaks in terms of targeted goals that TRYSEM has been a weak link in
the overall strategy for self-employment in rural areas.

The programme was targeted to improve the employability skills for the youth through
trainings. But, the training imparted in several instances was not related to the capacity or
aptitude of the trainees not to demand for the respective skills. According to the study of
Ankita Gupta (2006), many TRYSEM beneficiaries viewed that the programme simply is
a means of receiving a stipend during the training period and not as a way of developing
genuine skills which would help in self employment.22 A study of D.K. Ghosh (1993) in
West Bengal noted that the programme resulted in limited success of the programme,
lack of supportive actions to make viable to combat rural unemployment and poverty is
noticed.23 In general the results have been mixed and there is large scope for
improvement.

Supply of Improved Toolkits to Rural Artisans (SITRA)

Supply of Improved Toolkits to Rural Artisans (SITRA) is launched in July 1992, as a
sub-scheme of IRDP in selected districts. The main aim of the project is to enable rural
artisans to enhance the quality of their products, increase their production and income.24
The SITRA was evaluated by an independent research organization, i.e. Development

Generation Programmes in India, from, K.K. Bagchi (Ed), 2006. p.133.
24. Under the scheme, artisans from different crafts and who were living below the poverty line were to be
given improved tools to enable them to enhance the quality/quantity/market potential of their products; the
aim was also to prevent migration to the urban areas and to enhance the living standards in rural areas of
the poor.
Alternatives, New Delhi, in two Districts of Uttar Pradesh, namely Agra and Aligarh. The finding of this study reaffirms the positive impact of SITRA. It also indicates that the income level of rural artisans have increased substantially with the use of improved tools\textsuperscript{25}. Thus, the study on SITRA reported that the scheme is well received by the beneficiaries.

**Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA)**

Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) was launched in 1982 as a third sub-programme of IRDP. Initially, it was implemented in only 50 districts as a pilot scheme. Later, it was extended to all districts of the country. The basic objective is to provide income generating skills and activities to poor women in rural areas, thereby improving their social and economic status.

The Document of Ninth Five Year Plan found several shortcomings which has hindered its successful and effective execution in some States. Several Self-Help Groups (SHGs) have become defunct over time. The reasons include improper selection of groups; lack of homogeneity among the group members; and selection of non-viable economic activities which are mostly traditional and yield low income. The linkages for supply of raw material and marketing of production are either deficient or not properly planned. The result is DWCRA groups have become vulnerable to competition\textsuperscript{26}.

In Andhra Pradesh also, the DWCRA programme is intended to improve the survival of young children and women and the quality of lives of women and children, and to achieve a significant growth in the income of poor women through appropriate interventions and to organize women in groups to create a demand pool on the existing delivery system along with creation of awareness to strengthen their bargaining capabilities. Available research found that there has been slight improvement in the levels of household income of most of the beneficiaries studied. However, in majority of cases, the improvement does not seem sufficient to enable them to cross the poverty line. Even

\textsuperscript{26} Ibid,
though a majority of the beneficiaries could not derive much income from the activities, a few of them have made marked improvement in their asset position.\(^{27}\)

**Swarnajayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY)**

The Government of India has introduced SGSY merging several self-employment programmes in 1999 to rectify the situation of lack of proper social intermediation, absence of desired linkages which were targeted earlier on self-employment programmes such as Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM), Development of Women & Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA), Supply of Improved Toolkits to Rural Artisans (SITRA), and Ganga Kalyan Yojana (GKY).

The scheme of SGSY is funded by the Center and the States in the ratio of 75:25. The SGSY is conceived as a holistic programme of micro enterprise development in rural areas with emphasis on organising the rural poor into self-help groups. Capacity-building, planning of activity clusters, infrastructure support, technology, credit and marketing linkages are also emphasized the programme to promote a network of agencies, namely, the District Rural Development Agencies (DRDAs), line departments of state governments, banks, NGOs and Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) for the implementation of the programme.

The SGSY recognizes the need to focus on key activities and the importance of activity clusters. The programme has in-built safeguards for the weaker sections. It insists that 50 per cent of the Self-Help Groups must be formed exclusively by women and that 50 per cent of the benefits should flow to SCs and STs. There is also a provision for disabled beneficiaries. The programme is credit driven and subsidy is back-ended. The key feature of the SGSY is that it does not seek to promote individual economic activities. It seeks to promote self-help groups that are trained in specific skills so that they can formulate micro enterprise proposals. Such projects are based on activities that are identified for

each block on the basis of local resources, skills and markets. The projects are supported by bank credits and government subsidies.

Under the programme, the families of Below Poverty Line (BPL) are identified through BPL census duly approved by the Grama Sabha for assistance. The objective of the programme is to bring every assisted family, especially women above the poverty line within three years, by providing them income generating assets through mix of bank credit and government subsidy. Another important objective was that the identified and assisted family should be able to earn Rs. 200 per month in a period of 2 to 3 years. The programme envisages promotion and marketing of goods produced by the SHGs through institutional arrangements, consultancy services and development of markets. Until the end of 2004, more than nine million SHGs have been formed in India28.

Evaluation studies, mainly of Karmakar (1999), Gurumurthy (2000), Ojha (2001), Vijayanthi (2002), Chatukalam (2003) and Sen (2003) highlighted the prospects, programmes and impact of the programme with focus on the formation of SHGs. They emphasized that the formation of SHGs have helped poor women to develop both economic and social strength. It’s also demonstrated that the SHGs have enhanced the status of women as participants, decision makers and beneficiaries in democratic, economic and social spheres of life. There have been problems in marketing of products. Funding pattern is not transparent and it was also obvious that the income generated by the programmes is only supplementary but not a substantial for the households’ consumption.

**National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM)**

The ongoing scheme of Swarna Jayanthi Gram Swarozgar Yojana is planned to restructure in the 2009-10 interim budget as the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) to make it universal application, focused in approach and time-bound for poverty by 2014-201529. It is also observed in restructured plan of the scheme that the

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stress also will be given on formation of women Self Help Groups, interest subsidy to poor house holds for bank loans up to Rs.1 lakh.

**Wage Employment Programmes**

Rapid increase in population and the consequent demand of food grains and the retention of productive capacity of the land and human resources have necessitated the initiation of new programmes by the Government. Programmes to provide employment opportunities during lean agricultural seasons and also in times of natural calamities have become imperative. Improvement in productivity and increase in employment in rural areas is very essential. Hence the wage employment programmes have been initiated. One of the main objectives of these programmes is to create rural infrastructure which supports further economic activity.

In 1961, the Rural Manpower Programme was initiated as a Wage Employment programme to provide seasonal employment for 100 days to the needy target groups. Another scheme of a similar nature but offering wider coverage, the Crash Scheme for Rural Employment was launched in 1971. Before the major wage employment programmes, there are some important Wage Employment Programmes such as Food for Work and National Rural Employment Programmes.

**Food for Work Programme (FWP)**

The Food for Work Programme (FWP) was introduced by the Government of India in 1977 as a non-plan scheme to augment the funds of the state governments for the maintenance of public works. The programme was aimed at to generate additional employment and building up of durable community assets such as irrigation tanks, school buildings, panchayat buildings, drinking water wells, laying of village streets, drainage with the use of surplus food grains available for part payment of wages\(^\text{30}\). Thus, the programme was designed to provide employment opportunities for the rural poor in the slack periods of the year.

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The workers were paid in food grains for the job done by them because by the time the programme was conceived, there was huge stock of food grains (over 15 million tonnes) with the government. The FWP met with success in the first three years. Certain short comings were pointed by the Project Evaluation Organization of Planning Commission like steep decline in employment generation, delay in supply of food grains, under payment of wages, supply of inferior quality of food grains. An independent study explores that most of the state governments did not create effective administrative machinery for proper implementation of the programme.

**National Rural Employment Programme (NREP)**

The Food for Work Programme, which was later renamed as the National Rural Employment Programme (NREP, 1977) aimed at to create rural infrastructure by utilizing available surplus stocks of food grains and to improve the nutritional status and living standards of the people. It became an integral part of the Sixth Five-Year Plan and remained operational until March 1989 as a centrally sponsored programme. In 1983, a new scheme called the Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) was launched. The NREP achieved results to some extent as it generated the employment in rural areas as specified in its objectives. But, the programme lacked direct focus on the target-group people for whom it was meant.

**Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP)**

Most of the objectives and stipulations under RLEGP were similar to those of NREP. But it was limited only to the landless, with guaranteed employment of 100 days in a year to at least one household member of every rural landless labourer family. Under the programme, the activities such as rural sanitary, rural roads, construction of school building, social forestry, benefiting the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes and housing under Indira Awaas Yojana were taken up. According to the Planning Commission’s

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31. Sundaram, I.S., Anti-Poverty Rural Development in India, p.121.
33. Planning Commission, 7th Five Year Plan, Government of India.
review on RLEGP, it lacked specified objectives. For instance, the target for employment generation in 1983-84 and 1984-85 was fixed at 360 million mandays against which 260.18 million mandays of employment was actually generated\(^{34}\).

**Million Wells Scheme (MWS)**

The Million Wells Scheme (MWS) was launched as a sub-scheme of the National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) and the Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) during the year of 1988-89. After the merger of the two programmes in April 1989 into the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY), the MWS continued as a sub-scheme of JRY till December 1995. The MWS was delinked from JRY and made into an independent scheme with effect from the year of 1996\(^{35}\). The objective of Million Wells Schemes (MWS) was to provide assistance free of cost to poor, small and marginal farmers belonging to Scheduled Castes/ Scheduled Tribes and freed bonded labourers for construction of irrigation sources and land development.

**Jawanar Rojgar Yojana (JRY)**

Jawahar Rozgar Yojana as a rural wage employment scheme was initiated by merging the National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) and the Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) in 1989. The main feature of the JRY was that the implementation functions were devolved to the Grama Panchayats to ensure better utilization of funds. According to a mid-term appraisal of the Ninth Plan done by the Planning Commission, the JRY suffered with providing the adequate employment, lack of resources and violation of material –labour norms and corruption\(^{36}\) and could not provide adequate employment.

The second stream of JRY was merged with Employment Assurance Scheme at the end of 1995. Under the third stream, special and innovative projects such as those aimed at

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\(^{34}\) Planning Commission, 7th Five Year Plan Document, Government of India.


the prevention of labour migration, the enhancement of women’s employment, special programmes through voluntary organizations for drought-proofing and watershed development. A review of the programme after 1992-93 revealed that the employment of the person was inadequate in terms of requirement and did not provide enough income to the poor. The programme gave preference to communities of SCs and STs and free bonded labourers in Andhra Pradesh. The types of works undertaken under JRY are building construction, laying of roads and side drains. The study found that JRY has benefited the poor sections of the society. It is also observed that there is substantial increase in the family income of the SCs beneficiaries. But, in case of STs, and BCs, there is not much increase of the family income in this study.

The Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS)

The Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) launched in 1993 was initially limited to 1,778 economically identified backward blocks situated in drought prone, desert and tribal and hill areas, and in which the revamped public distribution system was in operation. The EAS was extended to all the blocks of the country in 1997. Under the EAS assured employment for 100 days of unskilled manual work is provided to those who seek it during the lean agricultural season with an objective of the creation of rural infrastructure and community assets such as water and soil conservation works, minor irrigation works, rural roads, the construction of primary school buildings and anganwaadi centers. A comprehensive evaluation of the EAS by the Programme Evaluation Organization of the Planning Commission has discovered some of major issues in the process of implementation such as improper wage norms; genuine mustor rolls and type of assets to be created have not been followed. There has been a tendency

to prefer assets such as school buildings and buildings for anagawadi which are not in the most labour intensive\textsuperscript{41}.

A study, of Mahendra Dev and S. P. Padmanabha Rao’s in Andhra Pradesh found that there was lack of sustainable income generation employment. For instance, once the road and building works completed, the villagers were not getting any regular wage works other than agriculture works. The study explored problem of the EAS was lack of sustainable income. The programme was targeted to provide sustainable income generation activities to improve the living standards of the poor. But in practice, once these works were completed they were forced to stop any sustained income through wage components in addition to the agriculture wages\textsuperscript{42}.

Another study\textsuperscript{43} in Andhra Pradesh revealed that the rural unskilled labour, both male and female, are fast moving towards construction, transport and service sub sectors and accelerated labour-intensive development in these sectors would depend on greater public and private investment in improving infrastructure. The long-term employment and income multiplier effects of public works programmes have been often ignored\textsuperscript{44}.

**The Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY)**

The first major wage-employment programme was introduced in the 1960s to provide employment to the rural unemployed particularly during the lean agricultural season. Subsequently, several wage-employment programmes were launched by the central and state governments. The largest of these was the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY), which was redesigned in 1999 as the Jawahar Gram Samridhhi Yojana (JGSY). The main objective of the programme was to create additional employment through creation of productive assets. However, this depends upon the rural works being well designed and implemented. There is evidence of improvement as a result of these initiatives especially

\textsuperscript{41} Ibid, p.123.
\textsuperscript{44} Ibid, p.199.
in the selection of projects based on local needs and also ensuring that local workers get work\textsuperscript{45}.

Under the JGSY, the coverage of the area was extended to the entire village panchayats of the country except Delhi and Chandigarh\textsuperscript{46}. A study\textsuperscript{47} conducted to identify the impact of the schemes on social infrastructure development and wage employment generation in Jammu and Kashmir revealed that the JGSY programme played a very significant role in the creation of social infrastructure across the districts over the period\textsuperscript{48}.

**Sampoorna Grameen Rojgar Yojana (SGRY)**

The Sampoorna Grameen Rojgar Yojana (SGRY) was launched on September 25\textsuperscript{th} 2001 by merging two major employment creation programmes such as Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY) and Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS). The objective of the scheme is to provide additional wage employment along with food security and creation of durable community, social and economic assets and infrastructure development in rural areas. Beneficiaries are temporarily employed to build community assets and infrastructure. It envisaged to generate 100 crore mandays of employment.

The cost of the scheme, which includes the distribution of food grain, is shared by the central and state governments. The programme is self-targeting in nature and with special emphasis on women, Schedule Castes, Schedule Tribes and parents of children withdrawn from hazardous occupation. Some of the recent studies have revealed that the major problem afflicting the well-coordinated employment generation programmes is the leakages and administrative malfunctioning\textsuperscript{49}.

\textsuperscript{47} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid, p.637.
National Food for Work Programme

The national Food for Work programme was launched on November 14, 2004 in 150 most backward districts of the country. The main objective of the programme was to intensify the generation of supplementary wage employment. The programme aims to benefit the unskilled rural poor who are already to take up manual work. It is a 100 per cent centrally sponsored scheme with a provision of Rs. 2020 crores and 20 lakh tones of food grains for 2004-2005.

National Rural Employment Guarantee (NREG) Act

Employment guarantee scheme was experimentally started in 1965 and was subsequently expanded as part of an Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP). To implement a basic set of social and an economic objective, the Common Minimum Programmes (CMP) was announced in 2004 to address the hunger and food security in rural areas. In August 2005, the Indian Parliament passed the National Rural Employment Guarantee (NREG) Act. This is hailed as one of independent India’s most ambitious interventions to address rural poverty and empower poor people. The NREGA follows a set of legally enforceable employment norms. Its aim is to end food insecurity, empower village communities, and create useful assets in rural areas. It is based on the assumption that every adult has a right to basic employment opportunities at the statutory minimum wage. Under the scheme, one member of every rural poor family is guaranteed 100 days of work at the minimum wage of Rs 60 a day. All rural poor are eligible, not just those designated below the poverty line (BPL). One-third of the beneficiaries must be women. If five or more children accompany their mothers to any site, the implementing authority must appoint a woman to look after them on the site.

Panchayats at district, intermediate and village levels are entrusted with the work of identifying and monitoring the project, together with a programme officer. Social audits of the work are expected to be done at gram sabhas. Work will, as far as possible, is to be

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provided within a radius of 5 km. The work includes water harvesting, drought-proofing, and micro and macro irrigation works, renovation of traditional water bodies, flood control barriers and rural connectivity51.

But, The World Bank (2009) has described the National Rural Employment Guarantee (NREGA) scheme as a policy barrier hurting economic development and poverty alleviation. It is also noted that various schemes of the Indian government like NREGA, watershed programmes and schemes for development of small and medium towns are acting as "policy barriers to internal mobility". The internal mobility, the report argued, is necessary as "lifting people out of poverty requires shifting populations from villages to cities". The World Bank has also insisted that the process of migration should be encouraged52. It is clear from the Report of World Bank that the process of urbanization from rural areas is also a development. It is obvious, based on Report of World Bank 2009 that the NRGEA and other programmes of rural development and eradication of poverty are highly focusing on rural settlements.

Area Development Programmes

The target group oriented programmes introduced for the benefit of the poor, did not solve the problem of poverty and bring expected results. There are backward areas like drought prone areas, desert areas, and tribal areas which require special efforts for the development of such special areas. The government of India has taken special initiatives to tackle the problems for those areas. The area development programmes mainly are Drought Prone Area Programmes (DPAP), Desert Development Programmes (DDP), Hilly Area Development Programmes and Tribal Area Development Programmes. They were introduced in the 1970s to prevent environmental degradation and provide employment to the poor in these regions. During the year of 1990, the environmental

management aspect of the programmes was strengthened by the introduction of watershed development programmes in India.

**Intensive Agricultural District Programme (IADP)**

The performance of Community Development Programme and National Extension Service in improving the conditions of rural mass could not realize much success in the area of agricultural in relation to rural development. This led to the adoption of IADP based on the advice of Ford Foundation sponsored team on food crisis, launched an Intensive Agricultural District Programme (IADP) popularly known as "Package Programme" which went into action in 1960\(^53\). This programme was to be taken up in one district in each state, the district selected for the purpose should have assured water supply and it should be free from floods, drainage problems and soil conservation.

The immediate objective of the IADP was to achieve rapid increase in agricultural production through the concentration of financial, technical extension and administrative resources. Its aim, in the long run, was to achieve a self-generating breakthrough in productivity and raise the production potential by stimulating human and physical process of change. The programme was also intended to provide lessons for extending such intensified agricultural production programmes to other areas. One of the major drawbacks of the IADP was its neglect of the equity aspect of development. It has been criticized for having aggravated the inter district intra-district inequalities in income distribution. It was also realized that new strategy of IADP led to the concentration of wealth in the hands of rich and progressive peasants. Once again the landless and agricultural laborers were neglected.

The Report of the Expert Committee on IADP in the early 70s has brought some of implications in the programme implementation. Focusing on institutional arrangements and personnel of the programme implementation, it is found that there was lack of continuity of personnel at the district level and to an extent, even at the block level, which

inevitably implied the implementation of the programme. The report also brought the constraints of administration. The programme implementation personnel and their vehicles were frequently diverted to non-agricultural work like food procurement, dehoarding family planning and small savings. The village level workers were to look after other activities. It was also found that insufficient financial and administrative powers were delegated to officials at the lower levels. The infrastructural facilities were also inadequate.

**Intensive Agricultural Areas Programme**

The Intensive Agricultural Areas Programme (IAAP) was an extension of Intensive Agricultural District Programme (IADP). The programme was initiated in 1964 to extend its operational area to other districts of the country. The IAAP basically followed the same concept of IADP. But, there were minor changes in implementing staff for the programme. Mainly, in the case of IAAP, the strength of the staff (numerically) was reduced and the failure was also due to the lack of technicians such as soils testing personnel and laboratories.

The programme, however, has brought the technology closer to the Indian farmers. Thus, the introduction of the programme changed the image of the farmers’ community. The programme did bring substantial changes in the agriculture sector, it has also problems and challenges in the process of implementation and achievements. An Expert Committee of Planning Commission on IADP brought some of implications problems in the programme implementation. Mainly, the study focused on institutional arrangements and personnel of the programme implementation. According to the Report “there was a

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55. Ibid., p.82.
singular lack of continuity of personnel at the district level and to an extent, even at the block level, which inevitably implied the implementation of the programme\textsuperscript{57}.

\textbf{Special Area Development Programmes}

The unequal distribution of the benefits of the growth oriented programme between the prosperous and backward areas was officially acknowledged and corrective measures in the form of specific area programmes and these were introduced for the development of backward areas, which include Drought Prone Area Programme, Desert Development programme, Hill Area Development Programme, Tribal Area Development Programme etc. The major premise of these area specific programmes was that their benefits would flow to the backward areas because of the specificity of the target areas.

\textbf{Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP)}

The feedback from the rural works programme revealed its inadequacy, especially in terms of employment generation on a regular basis. This led to the realization that the programme needed to be modified. On the basis of an area development approach the Rural Works Programme was redesigned as Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP) at the time of mid-term appraisal of the fourth five year plan in 1970-71. The main thrust of the programme was to eliminate or reduce considerably the incidence of drought which may result in famine, and also help the small and marginal farmers and agricultural laborers in raising their income levels. The strategy aimed at improving the economy of drought prone areas through the optimum utilization of land, water, human and livestock resources of the area. A number of studies conducted on the functioning of DPAP reveals that the fruits of DPAP have been by and large cornered by minority big farmers and availed by better endowed areas as they easily adopted the modern agricultural practices.

Unfortunately, the fruits of DPAP assistance have been by and large minority of big farmers and availed by better endowed areas, as they easily adopt the modern agricultural practices.

practices, conversely the small and marginal farmers who are capital deficient and generally illiterate; adopt it at later stage because of demonstration effect\textsuperscript{58}. Thus, the programme’s main focus was derailed by ignoring the small and marginal farmers and agricultural laborers.

**Desert Development Programme (DDP)**

The desert areas of the country had remained backward in many respects due to difficult physiographic varying agro-climatic conditions and distinct socio cultural features. Since the people living in these areas were facing hardships owing to geo-climatic conditions, the desert development programme was introduced as a centrally sponsored scheme in 1977-78. The objective of the programme is to control the desertification and restoration of ecological balance in the desert areas for development. The programme covers both hot and cold desert areas of the country like Rajasthan, Haryana, Gujarath, Jammu & Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh. The allocation of funds in the Sixth Plan was Rs. 100 crores. The major activities under this programme were afforestation, grass-land, creation of irrigation potential, rural electrification for tub wells and pump wells and development of horticulture and animal husbandry\textsuperscript{59}. An Evaluation study on Desert Development Programme was taken up by the Programme Evaluation Organization at the instance of Planning Commission in 1988. It was observed that there was lack of visits by senior officers, weak monitoring of the programme and lack of involvement of voluntary agencies and people’s involvement. It was also obvious that the progress of integrated micro-watershed approach to area development planning in the desert areas was limited. However, there was some improvement in rainfall on account of the afforestation programme taken up under DDP, by the Spiti Desert Development Agency\textsuperscript{60}.

**Hill Area Development Programme (HADP)**

The Hill Area Development Programme was introduced in 1972-73 during Fourth Five Year Plan and it was specific area programme particularly targeting the hill areas of the


\textsuperscript{59} Bandopadhyaya, Rakesh, 1989. p. 25.

country and more specifically, the Himalayan and the Western Ghats region. The region constitutes about 21 per cent of the total area and contains 9 per cent of the total population of the country. The major objective of the programme is to reduce inter-regional differences in the distribution of the benefits from agricultural development. The programme has emphasized the partial utilization of the resources of the hill areas through the specially designed programme for the development of horticulture, plantation, agriculture, animal husbandry, forestry, soil conservation and sustainable village industries. Along with this, the Government of India has also launched a special programme for the development of tribal areas, namely Tribal Area Development Programme in 1974.

**Integrated Tribal Development Agency**

Independent India has formulated several policies and programmes and established institutions to develop the tribal areas. The Renuka Ray Report of 1959 pointedly referred to the need for an integrated approach to tribal development and the similar approach was also proposed by the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Commission under the chairmanship of Debar in 1960. Again, the S.C. Dube Commission was constituted in 1972 to advise on tribal development. These were all stimulated to make an intention of promoting the tribal areas in more integrated way. Thus, an Integrated Tribal Development Agency was launched in 1974 during the Fifth Five Year Plan period (1974-79).

The basic objectives of the programme are to narrow down the gap between the backwardness of tribal areas, with a view to improve the quality of these long depressed people. Further, elimination of exploitation in all forms, speeding up the process of socio-economic development and improving their organizational capacity are the major objectives of the agency.

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62. Ibid, p.16.
Special-Group Development Programmes

The benefits of growth oriented programmes have occurred only to the better off farming class by passing the disadvantaged sections of the rural community which comprises small and marginal farmers and agricultural laborers. Therefore, the corrective measures in the form of group specific programmers were initiated in early 70's. These include Small Farmers Development Agency (SFDA) and Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Laborers Agency (MFALA).

Small Farmers Development Agency (SFDA)

Keeping in view the role of small farmers in the economic development, the All India Rural Credit Review Committee (1969) warned that “If the fruits of development continued to be denied to the rural community while prosperity occurs to some, the resulting tensions, social and economic may not only upset the process of orderly and peaceful change in the rural economy, but even frustrate the national effort to step up agricultural production". The major objective of the programme was to create appropriate economic opportunities for small farmers, who are considered as the weaker and more vulnerable sections of the rural community.

The programme based on land and animal husbandry was included in the project. The SFDA provided subsidy to the extent of 25 per cent to the identified small farmers on capital investments and inputs. Besides, loans were also made available from cooperatives and commercial banks.

Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers Agency (MFALA)

This scheme was launched in 1970-71 following the recommendations of All India rural Credit Review Committee (1969). The main objectives of the programme is to assist the

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65. Mohinder Singh, 1988, Rural Development Administration and Anti-Poverty Programmes, Deep and Deep Publication, New Delhi, p.?
66. Report of All India Credit Review Committee, Reserve Bank of India, Bombay.
marginal farmers who owned land holdings below 2.5 acres and agriculture labourers those having only a homestead and deriving more than 50 percent of the income from agricultural wages to improve their productivity and income through a variety of activities like crop husbandry, including multiple cropping, increased use of new inputs, water harvesting techniques, miner irrigation, livestock, poultry fishery and others.

Since the inception (1971-72) of the above agencies to its end (1979-80) when it was merged with IRDP only 16.5 million persons were identified and about half of them received some assistance from the agencies. Among the beneficiaries 1.3 million belonged to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. In a study conducted by the Planning Commission, it was found that proper care was not exercised in selection of the project area and that very little attention had been paid to the identification of agricultural labourers. On the whole, slow in the most of the project areas there has been improper identification of beneficiaries.

**Crash Scheme for Rural Employment (CSRE)**

The Crash Scheme for Rural Employment (CSRE) was introduced as non-plan programme with effect from 1971-72 and it was up graded as a central plan programme in 1973. The main focus of the programme was where other special programmes such as SFDA and MFALA were not in operation; where the percentage of landless labour and the incidence of unemployment were relatively high and those which were relatively less developed. The basic objective of the CSRE was to generate employment in productive works for 1000 persons in each district on an average 2.50 lakh man days of employment should be generated in every district.\(^{67}\)

The main drawback of the programme was that it over stressed the importance of job creation and neglected the more important objective creation of appropriate assets. In implementation aspects, the administration failed to prepare a suitable work for the

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productive assets. There was undue delay in the selection and implementation of scheme\textsuperscript{68}.

**Minimum Needs Programme (MNP)**

Provision of minimum needs to the rural people forms an important part of rural development programmes. It is particularly in respect of these facilities and civic amenities that rural people are at a great disadvantage. Duly recognizing the need for provision of these facilities and services in rural areas, Government of India in Fifth Plan developed and launched the Minimum Needs Programme (MNP)\textsuperscript{69}. The programme is essentially an investment in human resource development. The provision of free or subsidized services through public agencies is expected improve the consumption level of those living below the poverty line and thus improve the productive efficiency of both the rural and urban workers. This integration of social consumption programmes with economic development programmes is necessary to ensure the achievement of plan objectives.

The MNP emphasizes the urgency for providing social services according to nationally accepted norms within a time bound programme. Its allocations are earmarked and it seeks to ensure the necessary provision of the resources. However, the implementation of the programme has also posed some of constraints such as lack of coordination between the centre and the states and between the district authorities and the block agencies. It has also been hampered by the scarcity of funds\textsuperscript{70}.

**Watershed Development Programme**

The environmental based land up gradation programmes are intended to strengthen by the introduction of watershed development programmes during the 1990s. Currently, several

\textsuperscript{68} Ibid., p.183.
\textsuperscript{69} Vasant Desai, 1988, Rural Development Programmes and Strategies, (Vo1.2.), Bombay, Himalayan Publishing House, p.23.
\textsuperscript{70} Ibid.
central government, state government and non-government watershed development programmes are being implemented by the Government of India’s support. The Government of India has mooted a "single national initiative" under the National Watershed Development Projects for Rain fed Areas (NWDGRA)\textsuperscript{71} programme. A new Department of Land Resources has been created by merging all area development programmes with the Department of Wasteland Development.

The study\textsuperscript{72} attempted to assess the impact of watershed development programme in Andhra Pradesh. The study revealed that the impact of watershed development has clearly shown an improvement of rural livelihoods, employment, agricultural income and households’ income, drinking water situation and ground water for irrigation.

**Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP)**

The Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP) introduced in 1989-90 throughout the country so as to improve the productivity of these lands and there by improve the living standards of the rural poor who own these lands. But preference will be given to the areas which are not covered by DDP and DPAP. The development of wastelands is taken up on watershed\textsuperscript{73} basis. The greater importance has also been given to Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and user-groups particularly the landless belonging to the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in watershed programmes.

Thus, wastelands are sought to be developed through the area development programmes in an integrated manner based on village micro watershed plans. These plans are prepared after taking into consideration the land capability and site conditions and in consultation with the local people in regard to their needs. The watershed projects are executed by the local people using low cost technologies locally available. One study\textsuperscript{74} was made an
attempt to examine the impact of watershed promoted under Integrated Wasteland Development Programme (IWDP) on cropping pattern and its intensity, food security and level of deprivation in Kashipur block in Orissa. The study was based on primary data collected from 200 households selected from villages of Rayagad district. Some positive changes on cropping pattern by means of crop shifting from traditional crops to more valuable cash crops are found. But, much of the impact is not seen on reducing poverty and food security. Thus, the planners and public policy makers of the state have to face challenge of reducing poverty.

Another evaluation study was conducted on the role of project implementing agency in participatory watershed development. The study has explored some positive changes in irrigation. It is observed that the proportion of area under irrigation increased marginally in all the selected sample villages. It has also brought about shift in cropping pattern, land productivity and improvement in ground water sources. But, people’s participation, awareness on the watershed associations and implementing agency are weak. These all are hindering the sustainability of the programme.

Other Social Security Programmes for Rural Poor

Article 43 of the Constitution speaks of state's responsibility to provide social security to the citizens of this country. In India, there are different types of social security schemes available as preventive, promotional and protective schemes for the poor.

Public Distribution System (PDS)

The Public Distribution System as welfare programme is also a social security intervention. The Public Distribution System (PDS) is a major instrument of government’s economic policy for ensuring availability of food grains to the poor at an affordable price as well as for ensuring food security of the poor. Initially, the programme was introduced during the Second World War to address food security and check the

75 Ibid.
dishonest practices in private trade. PDS is an important constituent of the strategy for poverty eradication and is intended to serve as safety net for the poor who are nutritionally at risk.\textsuperscript{77} The PDS is operated under the joint responsibility of the Government of India and state governments. The responsibility of the GOI relates to procurement, storage, transportation and the bulk allocation of food grains to state governments. It is the responsibility of state government to sub-allocate the food grains within a state, and deliver commodities to fair price shops for issue to consumers holding family cards. However, the PDS is involving in some 450000 retail outlets nation wide.\textsuperscript{78} Some micro level observations pointed out that the programme is adversely affected by the electoral politics and has not benefited the poor. The food grains were diverted, and misappropriated and more so hijacked and used as hammock by unscrupulous elements.\textsuperscript{79} Benefits to non-poor are clearly seen.

**Rural Housing (Indira Awaas Yojana)**

The IAY programme, initiated in 1985-86, is the core programme for providing free housing to BPL families in rural areas and targets SC/ST households and freed bonded labourers. It was first merged with the JRY in 1989 and then spun off into a separate housing scheme for the rural poor in 1996. The Ninth Plan Housing Programme under IAY was framed in the light of the National Housing and Habitat Policy 1998, which set an ambitious target of providing shelter for all in the rural areas by the end of the Plan period. The allocations by the central and state governments for the programme during the Ninth Plan were substantially higher than that of the Eighth Plan.\textsuperscript{80} Since the launch of the programme till February 2003, over 9 million houses were constructed at a cost of over Rs 16,000 crore. However, in any given village/block/district a large number of eligible families have not yet been covered by the IAY. According to the mid-term

\textsuperscript{78} Gopinath Rao, P. Rural Development – Sustainable Livelihood and Security, New Delhi, Authors Press, p. 143.
appraisal of the Ninth Plan by the Planning Commission, "This is dividing the poor instead of helping them to organize into groups".

A study conducted in some selected villages of Andhra Pradesh found that under this programmes, the facilities relating to the housing viz., side drains, individual sanitation, electricity and protected water supply have been provided. The study revealed that the SC households have received protected water supply system and toilets. It is discovered that a substantial number of SCs, STs, and BC’s are using the open space for toilet even after the implementation of the scheme. Because of the scheme, households belonging to all caste categories have got electricity. Under this programme, a three fold strategy was designed to strengthen supply lines for technologies, materials, awareness creation among the rural populace and improvement in skills of rural sector professionals was its centerpiece. However, it failed in achieving the targeted goals i.e. in number of construction of houses.

National Social Assistance Programmes (NSAP)

Social protection forms an important component of a comprehensive social security policy in a welfare state. The Government of India has taken initiatives for vulnerable social sections of the society. Thus, India’s national social pension schemes were aimed to alleviate chronic poverty through regular cash transfers to destitute elderly, widows and disabled people who have no regular means of subsistence from their own sources of income or through financial support from family members or other sources.

The National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) came into effect from 15th August, 1995. The programme represents a significant step towards the fulfillment of the Directive Principles in Articles 41 and 42 of the Constitution through the enunciation of a National Policy for social assistance benefits to poor households in the case of old age, death of the primary breadwinner and maternity. It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme with

82 Ibid.
83 Ibid.
100 per cent Central assistance provided to States and Union Territories (UTs)\textsuperscript{85}. Thus, the NSAPs have come into existence to support the poor families. Under the NSAP, there are three different schemes, which are implemented as special components such as National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS); National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS); and National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBS) which are targeted at people living below the poverty line. Moreover, the NSAP provides opportunities for linking social assistance package to schemes for poverty alleviation and provision of basic minimum services

**National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS)**

Under the National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS), old age pension of Rs.75 per month is provided to persons of 65 years and above who are destitute. Very recently, The National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS) has been modified and renamed as Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme. The modification is mainly intended to expand the coverage of beneficiaries. According to the modified scheme, pension under NOAPS will be granted to a person who is 65 years or higher and belonging to a household below poverty line as per the criteria prescribed by the government of India. It may be noted that under the existing criteria, pension under NOAPS is granted to persons aged 65 years or above and to destitute.

**The National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS)**

The National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS) provides a lump sum family benefit of Rs. 10,000 to the bereaved household in case of the death of the primary bread winner irrespective of the cause of death. This scheme is applicable to all the eligible persons in the age group 18 to 64.

**The National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBS)**

Under the National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBS) there is a provision for payment of Rs. 500 per pregnancy to women belonging to poor households for pre-natal and post-

natal maternity care up to the first two live births. This benefit is provided to eligible women of 19 years and above. Rural Group Insurance Scheme, which provides a maximum life insurance of Rs 5,000 covering the main earning members of families living below the poverty line on a group insurance basis; the government pays half the premium of Rs 50-Rs 70.

There is no doubt that the schemes are well received among the poor. It was also obvious from empirical study that the schemes have provided some succour in the form of social protection to the old, disabled and the widowed poor and it has enhanced the self esteem and economic status. But some of the academic and individual researches found the problems in the policy implementation.

Dutta, Puja and Vasudeva’s (2008) study evaluated the functioning of the social assistance schemes of national government and the study focused specifically in the state of Gujarat. The study found that the programme has shown positive indications and satisfaction levels with the social pension scheme are high – with both beneficiaries and officials rating social pensions as better or at least as good as other anti-poverty programs on various aspects including regularity and level of benefits, targeting and transfers in cash rather than food. Though there is high transaction costs associated with the application process, the majority of pensioners reported no problems once the pension is sanctioned. Disbursements are largely as per schedule and leakages in the form of shortfalls in the pension amount are low\textsuperscript{86}. It also obvious from a comparable study of social pensions in Karnataka and other independent studies in Himachal Pradesh suggest that this is well performing scheme that could be scaled up effectively\textsuperscript{87}.

Another study (Mahendra Dev, S., P.Padmanabha Rao, 2002) evaluated the efficiency of the social security schemes in the Nalgonda, Anantapur, Vizianagaram and West Godavari districts of Andhra Pradesh. The main social security schemes are the old age pensions, widow pensions and maternity benefits. The study was explored that the

\textsuperscript{87} Ibid, p. 48.
substantial proportion of beneficiaries were received mainly by agricultural labourers in rural areas. It is also found by an empirical study that in the process of selection or the beneficiaries of these programmes the malpractices were involved in terms of bribe and involvement of middlemen to get their applications processed or to get their names included in the schemes. The evidences also show that in some rural areas, the charitable organizations like the Lions Club had helped in securing disability pension and equipment to some villagers.

**Rural Group Life Insurance Scheme (RGLI)**

Government of India has introduced RGLIs in 1995 to insure one main earning member of Below Poverty Line families. The scheme is meant for people between 20 and 50 years. The premium of Rs. 50-70 is shared by the government (50 per cent). The maximum amount of insurance is Rs. 5000. The main objective of the social security schemes is to protect the unorganized workers. The coverage and content (amount) of the schemes are too small to make impact at the macro level. These schemes have a long way to go to provide any meaningful social security to the poor. There are two types of policies available under this scheme such General and Subsidized Schemes. Under the general scheme, it’s available to all people in rural areas. The premium for the general scheme is fully payable by the applicant and in Subsidized Scheme. It’s applicable only to households below poverty line and is restricted to only one policy per household. Premium is subsidized by 50% to be shared equally by state and central government.

**Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana**

Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana, launched in 2000-01, was targeted to provide additional funds to states so that they can provide basic minimum services such as

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89. Ravi, S. Srivastava, Anti-Poverty Programmes in Uttar Pradesh – An Evaluation, New Delhi, Institute of Human Development (Supported by the Planning Commission of India), p.117.
91. Rural Group Life Insurance Scheme (RGLI)[http://www.shimoga.nic.in/zpshimoga/rglis.htm](http://www.shimoga.nic.in/zpshimoga/rglis.htm), access date: 10/2/2009.
primary health, primary education, drinking water, housing and roads. There are at present five major schemes under the Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana namely Gramin Awas for rural shelter, Gram Sadak and the Rural Drinking Water Project for water conservation in DPAP and DDP programme areas.

Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana

Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana was launched in December 2000, to provide road connectivity to 1.6 lakh remote habitations with a population of over 500 by the end of the Tenth Plan period. Till December 2002, connectivity was provided to over 12,000 habitations at the cost of around Rs 3,300 crore. The Hindu’s editorial notes that ‘the PMGSY which is part of the Bharat Nirman programme aimed at improving rural infrastructure between 2005 and 2009. It initially proposed to give road connections to 66,802 eligible habitations and subsequently scaled down the target to 59,536 habitations. The achievement, however, has fallen short of the target, with the coverage limited to 35 per cent (up to 2008)”92. Again, it is also noted in the editorial of The Hindu that ‘A study by the World Bank makes the point that retail prices of low value/bulk commodities are generally 10 per cent higher in unconnected villages than in those with road access. The most important benefit, however, relates to poverty reduction and a 2007 – study by the International Food Policy Research Institute found that investing in roads had the greatest impact on reducing rural poverty, performing research and development, and education’93.

Antyodaya Anna Yojana

Antyodaya Anna Yojana was launched in December 2001, to provide 25 kg of food grain at highly subsidised rates to 100 million of India's poorest families living below the poverty line. In 2002, around 24 lakh tonnes of food grain were provided by the central government under this scheme. Some of the individual research works has examined the functioning of the Antyodaya Anna Yojana. Of these, the paper is critically examined the functioning of the scheme based on the People's Union of Civil Liberties’ (PUCL)

93. Ibid.
observations and its findings at grass root levels in 2001. The paper points out that the scheme, in fact, has to be provided 25 kg of grain to each identified family at the rate of Rs.2 a kg for wheat and Rs.3 a kg for rice. States such as Manipur and Sikkim have not even begun the work. Assam, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal and the Union Territory of Chandigarh are yet to complete the identification process. The paper points out that the scheme, in fact, has to be provided 25 kg of grain to each identified family at the rate of Rs.2 a kg for wheat and Rs.3 a kg for rice. States such as Manipur and Sikkim have not even begun the work. Assam, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal and the Union Territory of Chandigarh are yet to complete the identification process.94.

The Annapurna

Under this scheme helpless aged people above 65 years who have no one to support them and are eligible for National Old Age Pension but should not receive any scheme except NOAPS. The programme has separate administrative wing at every district head quarters and distinct Ration Card has been provided to the beneficiaries free of cost. The distributed rice under this scheme is provided directly from the Government Food grain Godowns to avoid any mal practices.

The study of the People's Union of Civil Liberties (PUCL) on the Annapurna Scheme explored flaws that the guidelines of the programme are not following in the process of the programme implementation. In fact, the programme aims to help destitute persons over 65 years of age. Under the scheme, such persons without an assured pension or a regular source of income or those with a family that earns less than Rs.24,200 a year are entitled to a free monthly ration of 10 kg of food grains. The study of PUCL commented that the Indian states are nowhere near implementing it.

Farmers' Debt Relief Scheme

Debt relief was intended to contribute to poverty reduction. The World Bank has also suggested that the debt relief is essential in 21 poor countries especially in Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC). But, in India, the debts were highly in the agriculture sector. Thus, The Government of India has recently (i.e, in February 2008) announced the debt relief was intended to contribute to poverty reduction. The World Bank has also suggested that the debt relief is essential in 21 poor countries especially in Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC). But, in India, the debts were highly in the agriculture sector. Thus, The Government of India has recently (i.e, in February 2008) announced the


95. Ibid.

scheme of Debt Relief for the small and marginal farmers. The scheme is targeted to benefit nearly 3 crores of small and marginal farmers and 1 crore 'other farmers'. The cost of the scheme of the Government of India is about Rs. 60,000 crore. Under the scheme, credit facilitated are provided by banks to the farmers for their operational cost of agriculture. The banks of credit facilitated are commercial banks, the regional rural banks and the cooperative credit societies. Marginal farmer is defined as one cultivating agricultural land up to 1 hectare or 2.5 acres. Small farmer is defined as cultivating between 1 hectare and 2 hectares i.e. less than 5 acres will get full debt waiver of their short term crop loans as well as all the overdue installments on the investment credit. The other farmers, i.e. owning more than 5 acres or more than 2.5 acres or more than 2 hectares, will get OTS relief. In the state of Andhra Pradesh, the worth of debt relief is Rs. 12000 crores.

**Pradhan Manthri Adarsh Gram Yojana**

The Government of India has also announced launching of new scheme in the 2009-10 interim Budget called the Pradhan Manthri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY) for “integrated development of 1,000 villages in which the population of Scheduled Castes is above 50 per cent. There are 44,000 such villages in India. The scheme is being launched on a pilot basis with an allocation of Rs. 100 crore. Under the scheme, each village would be able to avail gap funding of Rs. 10 lakh over and above the allocations under Rural Development and poverty alleviation schemes”.

There are also other developmental programmes for the poor such as Land Reforms and other community oriented programmes in India. Therefore, poverty alleviation strategy constitutes an important dimension of the welfare state of India under the constitutional norms. Apart from the centrally sponsored schemes, there are also state and central share of the programmes in India. But, in the recent phenomena of the economic reforms, the state governments are also implementing the developmental programmes from the assistance of international developmental organizations. It is also inevitable to remember

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that the state owned programmes have started during the 1970s for the political manipulations of the regional politics. Maharashtra and Tamila Nadu were the first states to have such types of programmes in India. Andhra Pradesh is the first state to implement number of welfare and developmental programmes. The following section focuses on the state’s owned programmes of the poverty alleviation and development in Andhra Pradesh.

**Andhra Pradesh - State Run Poverty Alleviation Programmes**

The Government of Andhra Pradesh has adopted a multifold strategy to eradicate poverty, which is multi dimensional. The state has been implementing the poverty alleviation programmes which is supported and financed by the center since India’s independence. Andhra Pradesh has also been implementing its own projects to eradicate poverty and develop infrastructure through creating employment in rural areas. The state is also one of the main advocates of the Indian reform process which is a part of global politics along with the developmental programmes. The previous government under the Telugu Desam Party regime (1994-2004), economic reforms process was tried to induct in all the sectors. And also TDP government encouraged the Public Private Partnership (PPP) in all the sectors including welfare sector. For instance, part of the economic reforms in Andhra Pradesh, the State Electricity Department was divided into two separate wings such as AP GENCO and AP TRANSCO.

The process of reforms in Andhra Pradesh has attracted the international developmental agencies like World Bank, DFID and UNDP and they came forward to provide loans, credits for development. The welfare sector is also dragged in to borrowed funds from international developmental agencies in Andhra Pradesh. Thus, Community Forest Management Programme, South Asia Poverty Alleviation Programme, Velugu are implementing in the state with the help of development agencies under the borrowing terminology. In this back drop, Eradication of poverty is aimed at overall economic and

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100. Document of the World Bank report no: 24771-in Project Appraisal Document on a Proposed Credit in the amount of SDR 114 million (us$150 million equivalent) to India for the Andhra Pradesh rural poverty reduction project January 3, 2003
social development by ensuring equitable access in resources and skills, as well as by widening the opportunities for gainful employment to the deprived sections of the society, is enunciated as the principal objectives of all the rural development programmes initiated by the government 101.

The government of Andhra Pradesh has its own developmental programmes along with the central assisted programmes such as IRDP, JRY, DWCRA, SGSY, SJRY, RLEGp, NREP, TRYSEM, EAS and NREGA. The state of Andhra Pradesh has started its own welfare schemes in 1980s under the N.T.Rama Rao headship. He came into power with the political agenda of Subsidized Rice Scheme to attract the masses in rural as well as urban areas. This was the dare step in Indian political system to frame out state’s owned scheme along with central scheme. Since then, the state has followed its own projects especially to gain the political power in the state.

Poverty alleviation programmes are generally designed and supported by the centre and implemented by the central government guidelines by the state governments. The State Government of Andhra Pradesh has been formulating its own programmes and also availing assistance from External Donor Agencies along with the central governments assistance since last two decades for the developmental projects. In course of time such assistance has become an important in developmental and political aspects. The World Bank, UNDP and DFID are some of the major Donor Agencies who have been extending financial assistance to the State through Government of India.

The state’s own poverty alleviation and development programmes are Subsidized Rice Scheme, Jmnabhoomi, Aadarana, Chaitanyam, Cheyutha, Mundadugu, Roshini (Girl Child Protection), Deepam, Chief Minister Employment Yojana (CMEY), Harithandra Pradesh, Rajeev Abhyudaya Yojana, Indiramma Programme, Swayasidha, Indiramma and Free Power Scheme. The externally aided projects are South Asia Poverty Alleviation Project (SAPAP), Andhra Pradesh Rural Livelihoods Project (APRLP), Community Forest Management, Andhra Pradesh District Poverty Initiative Project (ADPIP), Andhra Pradesh Rural Poverty Reduction Project (APRPRP) and Indira

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Kranthi Patham. These programmes are broadly grouped as (a) Consumption support; (b) Wage employment; (c) Credit for self-employment; (d) Asset provision; (e) Land reforms; and (f) Natural Resource Management Programmes.\textsuperscript{102} For the welfare of farmers, the State of Andhra Pradesh has created Rythu Bazaars under the Telugu Desam Party Regime to ensure remunerative price to farm products. The state was constructed of one Rythu Bazaar complex for very one lakh population. The state also developed the Cold Storage Plants to ensure milk production and utilization in the state.

The state is also encouraging to motivate young, utility based service associations like Self-Help Groups popularly known as DWCRA, youth associations to under take innovative developmental activities in rural as well as urban areas. Moreover, there are associations including ‘\textit{Vana Samrakshana Samitis}’ (VSS) to find sustainable solutions for managing forests, Water User’s Associations (WUA), Watershed Development Committees, Village Education Committees, etc. In substance, the Naidu regime was able to gather diverse segments of society such as women, youth, and farmers to organize their interests with active support from the state. While promoting diverse developmental objectives the Naidu regime took care to keep people of Andhra Pradesh well informed about its major achievements. The government of Andhra Pradesh under the Congress ruling is trying to promote holistic development approach to strengthen the rural areas through the programmes like Indiramma, Indira Prabha, and Indira Kranthi Patham and so on.

\textbf{Subsidized Rice Scheme}\textsuperscript{103}

In Andhra Pradesh, the PDS is providing subsidized food grain and other essential commodities to the poor people in both rural and urban areas. At present, the PDS schemes have been devising for poor people living at different levels of poverty. Hence

\textsuperscript{102} Joseph L. Plakkoottam, M. P. Madhusoodhanan Priti Ranjan Dash, Priorities of the Poor and Appropriateness of Poverty Alleviation Programmes, Sponsored by Planning Commission of India (Socio-Economic Research Unit) Government of India, October 2003, p.1.

\textsuperscript{103} Initially, the Subsidized Rice Scheme was politicized in the general elections of the state of the Tamilnadu in 1967. The Dravida Munnetra Kazagham (DMK) promised in its election manifesto to supply three measures of rice per rupee (one measure of rice is roughly equivalent to 1.5 kg). For more details, Vikram K. Chand (ed), 2006, Re-inventing Public Service Delivery in India – Selected Case Studies, New Delhi: Sage Publications, p. 272.
the origin of (a) BPL ration scheme for people below poverty line; (b) Antyodaya Anna Yojana for the extremely poor; and (c) the provision of free rice to the few poorest of the poor.

The Government of Andhra Pradesh has introduced the scheme in 1980s to improve the consumption levels of the weaker sections of the society. The scheme was introduced by N.T. Rama Rao and he projected himself as the elder brother who gives rice and sarees to women – a benefactor doing well to ‘his people’. The most important one was the so-called ‘Rs. 2 per kg’ rice scheme, which involved the distribution of 25kg of rice at a subsidized rate to about 70–80% of households. These populist schemes have remained important in AP’s political history. Again, the Congress government under the chief minister ship of Dr. Y.S. Rajasekhar Reddy, the scheme was reintroduced in April 2008. The TDP government reduced the price of rice at fair price shops from Rs 3.25 to Rs 2 per kg in 1983 and the scheme was later modified by the government of Chandrababu Naidu in the mid-1990s. The Congress government had increased the price to Rs 5.25 per kg after it came to power, and the same is being set to be offered now for Rs 2 per kg.

This discourse can be characterized as ‘donative’, since it stresses hand-outs, charity and welfare provided by a benevolent ruler. The scheme succeeded in bringing and brought power to Chandrababu Naidu as a great welfarist along with his political career. A micro level study conducted at village level revealed that the scheme has provided access to food to most of the poor. But large percentages of beneficiaries are non-poor households. Moreover, large sizes of the poor house holds were excluded from the scheme in the backward areas of villages. Some of the explored observations are that the scheme has enabled food availability at the local level at affordable rates; it has contributed to a large extent in ensuring food security to the poor and there are a substantial number of non-poor people benefiting from the PDS. Out of the total PDS beneficiaries nearly 60% are reported to be ‘non-poor’ according to the poverty line criteria. However, since the

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poverty line has been defined at a bare minimum subsistence level, many of these non-poor could also be safely treated as poor. At the same time, a major part of these non-poor is not eligible for subsidized food schemes. Any kind of misappropriation of programmes meant for the poor people, by the non-poor/non-eligible must be eliminated. This can be achieved only by inculcating elements of transparency in the selection process. The Panchayati Raj institutions at the local level are suitably placed to check whether there is any malpractice in this process. The selection and review of the beneficiaries under PDS must be done in a Gram Sabha where everybody in the village is present. And more importantly, the decision of the Gram Sabha must be legally binding\(^\text{107}\).

**Janmabhoomi**

*Janmabhoomi* (literally, land of one’s birth) is one of the Telugu Desam Party regime’s flagship programmes and initiated by the former Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. It is based on a South Korean concept and was launched in January 1997. It was primarily relates to *Shramadan* (Gift of Labour) on the part of the people and changed as significant movement with economic, social, cultural and psychological ingredients educating, appealing, inviting and encouraging people to plan, organize and develop in order to accomplish community needs and infrastructure on their own.

The above is a rural development programme that a) aims to bring government to the people, b) is based on voluntary labour contributions, and c) involves micro planning at grassroots level. It is implemented in rounds; initially there were four rounds every year; later this was brought down to two. Each round has a particular theme, such as health, women, water conservation, etc. During each round, officials go to the villages and conduct *Janmabhoomi* meetings, in which local people can come forward with their complaints and/or demands and in which necessary community works are identified. Some problems are sorted out on the spot. Public works are carried out later. The programme was also meant to take the administration nearer to the people.

(Prajalavaddaku Palana) and evolve micro-plans by identifying their needs, assessing the availability and requirements of resources\textsuperscript{108}.

*Janmabhoomi* is linked to a great many other government schemes, since the official distribution of funds or sanctioning of groups (e.g. DWCRA groups) happens at the time of the *Janmabhoomi* meetings. For instance, pensions are distributed, revolving DWCRA funds are sanctioned, gas connections and house sites are distributed at the time of *Janmabhoomi*. Community works, coming under schemes like the Employment Assurance Scheme, rural road maintenance, rural water supply, education and others also come to the village as part of *Janmabhoomi*\textsuperscript{109}. In effect, *Janmabhoomi* has dominated on the functioning of Gram Panchayats which are guaranteed by the constitution and highly enforced by the 73rd Amendment of the Constitution, which lays down procedures for the decentralization of governance to village-level bodies. According to a World Bank Report, the panchayat institutions are ignored, marginalised and starved of funds due to the effectiveness of Janmabhumi Programme.\textsuperscript{110}

### Aadarana (Rajiv Abhyudaya Yojana)

The *Adarana* scheme aimed at to supply improved tool-kits to the rural artisans to improve the performance of the poor people engaged in traditional occupations. This was a highly popular programme that helped many poor people in enhancing their livelihood. *Adarana* is a loan-cum-grant scheme. However, there has not been any report of people repaying this loan. All of them thought it to be a grant from the government. The major criticism against this scheme is about the poor quality of equipment purchased on a large scale by the government for the beneficiaries, as well as the relevance of that equipment for the work of the concerned artisan. This scheme was highly target oriented and hence these important considerations were not taken care of. *Adarana* also seems to have been wrongly inspired by the IRDP experiment. The scheme, however, has been discontinued recently.


\textsuperscript{109} World Bank Report of 2000, p.29.

\textsuperscript{110} Ibid.
According to the Audit Report of Andhra Pradesh “the scheme suffered from inadequate and inefficient utilization of funds and complex categorization of beneficiaries coupled with equally complex funding pattern. The procurement procedure lacked transparency. There were large-scale irregularities in selection of beneficiaries, supply of tools, prices paid and distribution of tools”. The report also criticized that the scheme was failed to cover all the identified artisans in December 1998, even the guidelines recommended to provide the benefits to all identified artisans in the state.

The Rajiv Abhyudaya Yojana is replaced with Adarana, the scheme was implemented by the Telugu Desam government. Rajiv Abhyudaya Yojana is a programme for improving the living conditions of the weaker sections, particularly the Backward Classes. This scheme is aimed at to empower the artisans. The new programme is outlined with an annual outlay of Rs.1, 300 crores. The scheme is expected to transform the lives of artisans who come under below the poverty line. The goal was to benefit 10 lakh families in the next four years.

Mundadugu

The Government of Andhra Pradesh has been implemented the programme called Mundadugu, for the development and upliftment of the Scheduled Castes. The programme was initially launched in the year 1999-2000 by then the government. Under this programme, various schemes have been taken up including infrastructure development in the SC localities and economic development schemes for S.C. beneficiaries.


**Chaitanyam**

The programme of *Chaitanyam* was designed to target exclusively Scheduled Tribes and launched during the year 1999-2000. Since the beginning of the programme, 25,484 house sites have been distributed, 29,415 houses have been constructed, 2,667 persons trained in Human Resource Development, 5,736 DWCRA groups have been formed, 8,438 Community Health Workers have been engaged and 9, 667 Village Tribal Development Associations have been formed. During the year 1999-2000, Government has embarked upon a programme for development of Scheduled Tribes known as “CHAITANYAM”. Since the beginning of the programme, 25,484 house sites have been distributed, 29,415 houses have been constructed, 2,667 persons trained in Human Resource Development, 5,736 DWCRA groups have been formed, 8,438 Community Health Workers have been engaged and 9, 667 Village Tribal Development Associations have been formed.

**Cheyutha**

The programme of Cheyutha is designed to give special economic package for the physically handicapped in the state of Andhra Pradesh under Janmabhumi programme and started in eleventh round in 2000. It was considered as a unique programme in Andhra Pradesh and succeeded in benefiting the disabled persons to an extent. But the politically targeted programme was terminated after defeating the TDP ruling government in 2004 assembly elections.

**Roshini**

The scheme was implemented under the TDP regime to empower the community of Muslims in terms of economically and socially. Most of the programmes were aimed

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at the vote bank from different caste and class communities in the state. The programme was put off from the mainstream development policies after the power change in the state.

**CMEY Programme**

The Government of Andhra Pradesh has implemented the scheme for the youth in the name of CMEY programme. This programme has been aimed at generating self-employment for the youth who were expected, in turn, to secure sustainable livelihoods and acquire some noble human values. The programme was designed to be a group activity by a team of five young men or women in the village. The group was expected to be highly co-ordinated and cohesive in nature so that they would be able to run the enterprise successfully.

The programme resources consisted of grants as well as subsidies. The implementation of the programme showed that hardly any lessons were learnt from the experience of the erstwhile IRDP, which was a huge failure. Many assumptions of the programme proved to be wrong and the government ultimately suffered huge financial losses. The beneficiaries who had chipped in their resources also incurred financial losses. The programme was also used as an instrument of political patronage and many groups were formed just to swindle the programme resources. The rate of recovery of the loans given under the programme was extremely low in most of the cases. The programme is also changed into other programmes.

**Deepam Scheme**

Energy for cooking gas a basic for living as one has to cook to eat, and one has to eat to live. In the context of global environmental governance with issues like forest shrinking, population exploding and degration of environment, the government in Andhra Pradesh has implemented the *Deepam* scheme to supply LPG connections through the SHGs. The objective of the scheme is to reduce the dependency on the forest for cooking fuel in rural areas. But, in practice, it became popular programme for the vote bank politics to catch women from rural Andhra Pradesh under the TDP rule. This scheme aimed at providing
subsidized LPG connections to the members of the SHGs. This is expected to reduce the drudgery of women in collecting firewood and also to reduce the toxic gases that women are exposed to, from kitchen smoke.

The DWCRA groups and DWCUA groups in rural and urban areas respectively are the poor controlled institutions through which the scheme is implemented at the cutting edge level. The rural development Department, the oil companies, and AP state civil supplies corporation/Girijan Cooperative Corporations are the agencies involved in the implementation of scheme\textsuperscript{117}. The process of beneficiary identification is at the group meetings of SHGs. The DWCRA in rural and DWCUA in urban areas of the groups themselves select the eligible households from each group through their group meetings. The poor, white ration cardholders are eligible for the scheme. Though the Government have waived off the LPG connection fee, the upfront costs have to be born by the beneficiary themselves\textsuperscript{118}.

In principle, it is felt that this would also lead to environmental regeneration by reducing the cutting of trees for firewood purposes. Many rural women who are members of the SHGs have received LPG connections through this scheme. The report of AP Audit (Civic, 2003) stated that “the poor families hardly use the LPG as it is very costly to refill the gas cylinder. They would rather use the traditional chulah that uses firewood. Firewood is available in the village or at a distance free of cost”. Further, most of the LPG connections were sold due to inability refill and some were with lack of awareness that the refill is need to do for their continuation\textsuperscript{119}. The scheme is mixed with the Indira Kranthi Patham under the Congress regime since 2004.

A study\textsuperscript{120} reveals that most of the DWCRA members were aware of Deepam Scheme. As regards the utilization of the gas connection, both evidences were drawn by the empirical investigation such as using gas connections and using firewood for cooking and

\textsuperscript{119} This is field based observation from Adilabad and Nizamabad districts in Andhra Pradesh during my field visit in February, 2005.
\textsuperscript{120} S. Mahendra Dev P.Padmanabha Rao, 2002.p.93-94.
other purposes. ‘High price for refilling’ and lack of the transportation for the supply of gas have been the reasons for this. It is also drawn the observation regarding the utilization of firewood is that the fear of fire accident. The study is also stated for further study on the impact of provision of gas connection, on income generation, health, education, environmental aspects.

**Community Forest Management**

The state of Andhra Pradesh has a remarkable forest area with 6.38 million hectares in the state and 23 percent of its geographical area. A large section the rural society depends (directly or indirectly) on forests for their livelihoods. However, due to increasing pressures, forests are already a depleted resource. The Community Forest Management as a participatory people’s management scheme is aimed at to reduce rural poverty through improved forest management with community participation.

At present nearly 5,000 villages are covered under the project in 14 districts of the state such as Adilabad, Nizamabad, Mahbubnagar, Medak, Khammam, Warangal, Karimnagar, East Godavari, Visakhapatnam, Vizianagaram, Srikakulam, Chittoor, Cuddapah and Nellore. All the 5,000 villages under the Project have active Forest Protection Committees or Vana Samaraksana Samithi (VSS). These VSS’ have been given greater autonomy and financial powers to manage Project funds and 4,247 VSS have begun implementing their micro-plans for treatment of forest lands.

A research study indicates that the policy provisions regarding JFM should be clear and the procedures are to be simplified, so that the user groups could benefit the maximum. It also found that the village institutions need greater autonomy because there was more dominant role of forest department in JFM. Field research suggests that in the JFM model, social reorientation and training are necessary. The forest department and

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allied departments should direct attention on more the challenging issues of human values, perceptions, cooperation, mutual respect, trust, behaviour etc. rather than on traditional emphasis on technical skills and methods of upgradation. Similarly, documentation of field learning concerning social and ecological issues not only need to be carefully documented, but also, be shared as well as utilized in evolving programme planning and management. The study insisted that, in the long term perspective of JFM programme, the JFM philosophy must be underpinned to generate faith in the capability/skill of the local people to manage local forest resources very effectively on sustainable and equitable basis, the study concludes124.

Swayam Sidha

The programme was launched in 1996. The main objectives of the program are establishment of Self-Reliant Women’s Self Help Groups (which are full swing in the state), creation of confidence and awareness among members of SHGs regarding women's status, health, nutrition, education, sanction and hygiene, legal rights, economic upliftment and other social, economic and political issues, strengthening and institutionalizing the savings habit in rural women and their control economic resources, improving access of women to micro credit, involvement of women in local level planning and convergence of services of DWCW and other Departments.

Indira Prabha Programme

The State government has launched Indira Prabha scheme. This programme popularly known as Samagra Bhu Abhiyuddhi Karyakramam, aims to facilitate immediate and effective cultivation 3.23 lakhs of acres assigned to the poor. The beneficiaries will get financial assistance from Indira Prabha to make their land cultivable. The programme is implemented at grass root level by the land unit of Indira Kranthi Patham and Revenue Department in convergence with NREGS-AP.

**Pavala Vaddi Scheme**

The Government of Andhra Pradesh has introduced a scheme called Pavala Vaddi (loan with subsidized interest rate at 0.25 %) in 2005. Under the scheme, bank would provide loans especially for the SHGs women. The main objective of the scheme is to reduce the financial burden for the SHGs women. The scheme is being implemented under SHG Bank Linkage Programme.

Self Help movement of women with thrift as entry point has grown as a mass movement in Andhra Pradesh. There are about 6.99 lakh women Self Help Groups covering nearly 89 lakh rural poor women. The Government adopted micro credit as a tool to attain the economic empowerment of women and facilitated SHG bank linkage programme in a big way since 1998-99 onwards in the State. The SHG women have taken up various income generating activities by availing themselves of the facility under the SHG - Bank Linkage programme and created a path for their economic empowerment. The Nationalized banks, Regional Rural Banks & Co-operative Banks are coming forward to issue loans to Self Help Groups.

**Andhra Pradesh Rural Livelihoods Project (APRLP)**

The Andhra Pradesh Rural Livelihoods Project (APRLP) was an external funded project and assisted by the Department for International Development (DFID), UK in 1999 with a proposed total budget of £45.543 million based on pro-poor watershed-based sustainable rural livelihoods approaches. The project has been implemented in five semi-arid and drought prone districts of Andhra Pradesh. viz. Anantpur, Kurnool, Mahaboobnagar, Nalgonda and Praksham. Under the project, 500 micro watersheds were proposed to construct and 100 micro watersheds each in the aforesaid five districts having an area of 500 hectors of the districts land. Funds for this project were provided to the State Government as grants-in-aid through the Department of Land Resources. The State

125 . See for more details in Rural Development website on Paval Vaddi Scheme, it is accessible at, http://www.rd.ap.gov.in/PV_Doc.htm date 18/2/2008.
Government has created necessary administrative structure for implementation of the project. The project was formally completed in 2006.126

**South Asia Poverty Alleviation Programme (SAPAP)**

The South Asia Poverty Alleviation Programme (SAPAP) was initiated in 1995 in Andhra Pradesh. The programme was assisted by UNDP with response to Dhaka declaration of the SAARC Summit held in 1993 on eradication of poverty by 2002 in all SAARC countries.127 The programme is implemented in the three poverty stricken drought prone-districts, namely, Anantapur, Kurnool, and Mahaboobnagar. Within the three districts, SAPAP concentrated itself on twenty of the poorer mandals.

The SAPAP reported that it has contemplated the process of social mobilization as an institutional mechanism to mobilize the poor into SHGs for their collective empowerment at the grassroots level. The collective body facilitates interaction between the poor and the government machinery for better access to public resources and services and also acts as a pressure group to keep the state more accountable to the institutional power of the socially mobilized poor. The empowerment model of SAPAP includes the components, social mobilization, institutional building, and capacity building to remove the obstacles that perpetuate poverty and enable the poor to overcome their vulnerable condition. The SAPAP was implemented in collaboration with local NGOs and the state government.

SHGs of poor women are promoted with the underlying principles of physical proximity, homogeneity, and affinity.128 The SAPAP has been replicated with suitable modification in the most backward mandals of Andhra Pradesh in the form of Andhra Pradesh Rural Poverty Reduction Project (APRPRP).

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128. Ibid.
**Andhra Pradesh District Poverty Initiatives Project (Velugu 1st Phase)**

The Project, called the Andhra Pradesh District Poverty Initiatives Project (APDPIP)\(^{129}\), is being implemented in 180 backward mandals of the six districts of Adilabad, Mahbubnagar, Anantapur, Chittoor, Srikakulam and Vizianagaram. Its objective is to improve opportunities for the rural poor to meet their priority social and economic needs and reduce the incidence of child labour and school drop out of girls. The project proposes to achieve its objectives through social mobilization and empowerment of the poor, especially women, improvement of their livelihood skills, and providing access to productive assets, infrastructure and social services.

The project also aims at improving the concern for the poor in all existing institutions. The total project cost is Rs 593.12 crores for the first time slice of five years ending December 2005. The Project is expected to benefit 6.30 lakh families directly and indirectly impact on all the poor in the Project areas through increased participation of the poor in other ongoing poverty alleviation and development programmes. Out of the target, 1.09 lakh families have been covered ending December 2001.

**Andhra Pradesh Rural Poverty Reduction Project (Velugu 2nd Phase)**

The First phase of Velugu project i.e. (commenced in June, 2000), Andhra Pradesh District Poverty Initiatives Project (APDPIP) is reported to have been a successful programme in empowerment through social mobilization in 180 backward mandals of the six districts of Adilabad, Mahbubnagar, Anantapur, Chittoor, Srikakulam and Vizianagaram. Then the Government of Andhra Pradesh has rolled out the second phase of Velugu project called Andhra Pradesh Rural Poverty Reduction Project –APRPRP in the rest of 16 districts of the state. The Velugu project thus covers 861 rural mandals across the state.

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\(^{129}\) Government of Andhra Pradesh, APDPIP Mid Term Report, SERP, October 2003, p.4.
Indira Kranthi Padham (Velugu 3\textsuperscript{rd} Phase)

The activities of DWCRA and Velugu were integrated under a programme called Indira Kranti Padham\textsuperscript{130}. The basic objective of this integration is to implement various programmes for strengthening of Self-Help Groups with similar implementation strategy. The new scheme Indira Kranti Padham had been designed by clubbing Women Empowerment with Poverty Alleviation. Activities with the DWCRA groups are main objective in this project. Even it is a central scheme; the Government of Andhra Pradesh has been showing more importance to the Self-Help Groups which have given realistic hopes for the poor people to organize, and through their collective strength prove that they are bankable and can enhance their social and economic position by operating in the mainstream market systems.

The performance of Self Help Groups has been good in terms of the number of poor people getting organized, the activities they undertake, and presenting themselves as a viable model to make many other ailing welfare delivery systems efficient and it is effective. There are many instances of SHGs of women growing at a fast pace in Andhra Pradesh. The SHGs at the Mandal level get organized into Mandal Samakhyas, which have substantial amount of money as savings. Recently, the government of Andhra Pradesh has registered 5,313 village organization and 211 Mandal Samkyas as primary cooperatives under Andhra Pradesh Mutually Aided Cooperative Societies Act under the velugu project (Indira Kranthi Patham) project\textsuperscript{131}.

Indiramma Programme

Indiramma programme (Integrated Development in Rural Areas and Model Municipal Areas) is launched by Dr. Y.S. Rajashekar Reddy, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh in 2006. It is aimed at to achieve integrated development in rural areas by developing the roads, construct houses and school infrastructure, and take up other development

\textsuperscript{130} Government of Andhra Pradesh, G.O. Ms. No.83. Merger of Swarnajayanthi Gram Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY) and Velugu into Indira Kranthi Patham – Common guidelines – Orders – Issued. Dated.21.03.2005,

programmes. This programme is estimated to benefit rural economy by improving the existing infrastructure and it is targeted to build 7 million houses for the rural poor by the year 2009. Under this scheme, there are 8 identified components to provide the needy people in the state such as housing for all, roads, sanitation (especially encouraging individual sanitary latrines (ISLs)), drinking water, electricity to every household, primary education, Integrated Child Development scheme and health for all.

**Summing up**

Poverty alleviation programmes constitutes an important dimension of the public policy thrust to bring about rapid reduction in rural poverty. In recent poverty eradication phenomena, two major changes have occurred. Wage employment and credit-cum-subsidy self employment have been formulated and notified. Further, these programmes are now targeted to enhance the income generation opportunities for poor families. A review of various developmental programmes taken up since independence indicated the need for a new comprehensive programme for the eradication of poverty in rural areas. Though a number of programmes have been in operation for the uplift of rural poor, yet, achievement of the objectives is not upto the mark. The programmes did not cover the target groups i.e., poorest of the poor families. The studies also indicated that much of the programmes have been corrupted by administrative mal practices. It was, therefore, proposed that such target oriented, especially with pro-poor concept, and community based organization’s involvement for the self-sufficiency and economically vibrant schemes has to come up.

The Government of Andhra Pradesh has been implementing the welfare programmes and developmental projects mainly to empower the rural poor through creating additional income resources. Even the governing power is changing through the elections in democratic form from the one political party to another; the programme implementation is highly focused by these political parties. The programmes are mostly formulated to acquire the electoral victory more than the development of the people. There is also a tendency in the state to capture the power and domination over state governance. In the context of development, state government has promoted developmental activities mainly
with the assistance of World Bank. Some of the programmes are financed by the state itself and some other are supported by external developmental agencies including World Bank, UNDP and DFID.

Some of the field level evaluation studies on poverty alleviation programmes explored the loopholes in implementation in terms of negligible assistance, lack of supervisory staff at field, absence of coordination with different authorities and communication problems, insufficiency of supervisory staff, wrong selection of beneficiaries, lack in timely funds released, lack of education and skill development initiatives among the poor families and lack of awareness on different schemes among people. The selection procedure of the beneficiaries is mostly biased and wrong. There are malpractices in the programmes have emerged from the evaluation studies.

The above programmes are being implemented all over the country to empower and provide basic amenities such as employment, housing, education, rural infrastructure and health. But, according to various evaluation reports of the Planning Commission, and academic and independent researches most of the programmes were not up to the mark in achieving the structured objectives.