Chapter 9

PROBLEMS AND PLANNING

The Government has been trying to reduce the rural-urban gap right from the independence. In this globalization era, while a small segment of Indian population is rich enough to eat, shop at luxuries malls and drive new cars, while in rural area millions in the vast are still struggling for survival. Especially in backward areas it is getting more entrenched, even though Government is taking lot of steps. Still in India poverty is an acute problem, about two thirds of Indian population still lives in rural areas and almost 170 million of them are poor.

In most of the underdeveloped countries there is a huge gap between urban centres and rural areas which results in the underdevelopment. The major sign of the level of development is the proper allocation of resources. When there is a discrepancy in access to these resources underdevelopment mainly strikes. Underdevelopment is generally visible due to some major problems like lack of education, medical facilities and transport and communication facilities. General causes of rural underdevelopment are as under:

- Inadequate access of employment opportunity
- Insufficient physical resources, such as land, access to credit and capital
- Poor access to the means of transport and communication facilities in the villages
- Lacking in market due to which rural poor use to sell their goods and services at low price to the middleman
- Inadequate knowledge about environment leading destruction of natural resources and it reduce productivity
- Inadequate access to rural development programmes
- Lack of local people participation in development programmes

Poverty is the prime problem in rural areas and is a major hindrance behind the development. As a result the living standard is far from being satisfactory. Most of the rural residents can hardly afford their basic needs and they lead a primitive life. In rural area major source of income are derived from agriculture and livestock rearing. They use primitive methods of farming and hardly contribute to their welfare. Lack of education is the major threat to their survival.
The rate of illiteracy is extremely high as compared to urban area and most of the rural women are deprived of educational opportunities. ‘The development process has to be more spatial and decentralized and should move upward from bottom rather than flow down from top’ (Parekh, 1992). So, the developmental programmes need to be outlined in terms of basic needs priority on food, shelter, clothes, health and education. So that the inequality between regions can be reduced and then other plans can be based on the needs of the society.

The needs of development are not same for all regions. Moreover, the perception of development also varies with the people concerned. The Government perception may differ from planner, social worker and local people. Perhaps the root problem lies in copying the process of development of one area for another one. ‘Problem of development are bound to differ in arid areas from marshy tracts, hilly forested areas from cyclone hit coastal tracts and so on’ (Desai, 1992). To develop any area it should be viewed from various angles in order to make planning process relevant to the society.

9.1. CHARACTERISTICS OF YUKSAM DEVELOPMENT BLOCK

Yuksam development block occupies an area of 10,457 hectare and is located in north-western part of the State. The terrain is hilly and undulating, with an altitude of 1,780 meters. During summer season soil erosion is prevalent due to heavy rainfall. These areas are economically depressed with low production of food crops and inadequate facilities for growth. Medical facilities are absent in two GPUs. The highest percentage of respondent (57.3 per cent) of the Yuksam development block avail basic facility and they don’t have any problem related with electricity, tap water connection, housing and sanitation facility. About 2.9 per cent household of the development block are not electrified.

On analysis of drinking water facility, nearly 12.3 per cent respondent stated to be insufficient. The problem of drinking water is acute especially during summer when spring and river gets dried up. Further the study of income and expenditure among the respondent shows that there are 4.6 per cent households which seemed to have problem related with expenditure more than their income and about 0.4 per cent household are having sanitation problem. The findings also revealed that about 11.7 per cent of the household are having multiple problem related with housing, sanitation, electricity, water
supply and income. The study of the housing pattern in total sample shows that about 10.8 per cent of the families are living in kutcha house. Tashiding and Yuksam GPUs are most populated and developed in terms of administrative set-up, tourist facilities, and educational institution, and weekly market, medical facilities, post-office and connected with metalled roads.

Most of the villages which are not connected with the roads are thinly populated. Land is cultivated once in the year with low yield, lack of levelled land and farming techniques are age-old, cow dung are used for fertilizers; rain water is the main source of irrigation. Most of the farmer practiced dry cultivation, multiple cropping is practiced, agricultural plots are rather small, nearly 64.5 per cent household have less than 1 acre land, about 7.3 per cent household have below 2 acres of land holding, 18.5 per cent household having 2 to 5 acres landholding and only 9.2 per cent household have more than 5 acres of land and about 0.8 per cent household are landless.

In general planning means series of actions or shaping of an action in advance. The Oxford Dictionary defines only the verb ‘to plan’ meaning to make plan, to make a design, to arrange beforehand. ‘Development planning for a hilly and mountainous area has acquired a new dimension with the growing awareness of the need to prevent the erosion of the life supporting resources base of the hills for sustainable use’ (Maithani, 1992). Any developmental plan requires full participation of the Government, planner, social worker and local residents.

‘Integrated rural area development and planning cannot be succeeded without removing the inter-areal disparities in the levels of socio-economic and politico-cultural development’ (Mishra, 1985). Due to lack of co-ordination among them in the implementation of plan and programme continues to be the problem, however good the plan may be. Moreover poor management, limited resources, lack of awareness, limited funds is often responsible for improper implementation of various rural developmental schemes especially in rural areas. To overcome the problem, it is worthwhile to mention that we must understand the problem faced by the villagers; in order to minimize these disparities. In this chapter an attempt has been made to assess problem and proposals are recommended for the development.
9.2. PLANNING FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

One of the objectives of this research is to suggest proper development plan for future. Geographical condition is the main problems of the hills, nature of terrain impose several limitations on productive activities and development of infrastructure facilities on the other.

Education: ‘Education is one means of generating confidence and countering difference’ (Rao and Kumari, 2005). Lack of education is the central problem of rural development. According to Prof. Amartya Sen, primary education advances human security by enhancing political participation, economic opportunity and human capabilities. There are multiple linkages along with education and development. Education also help to breed self-confidence, it provides greater employment opportunity, it enable people to realize their rights, education can also help to let the person to socialize towards the communities and help to provoke respect among them. So, education is considered as one of the most important factor in achieving rapid economic development with social justice.

In recent era the universal topic we often discuss is how to improve the quality of education, how to reduce educational inequality, why the students from urban backgrounds are more successful, and why do these advantages continue over time? The answers are many like difference in the social-economic, cultural, and infrastructure facilities combine to preserve advantage across generations. Change in economic inequalities also affects schooling of the children, if the people are very poor they give basic priority to stay alive. Policymakers increasingly recognize the reason behind inequality and some are taking steps to reduce these inequalities. But it is difficult to predict how a precise system completely removes the educational inequalities between the rural and urban students. Apart from the several combined solutions, direct impact on the education is through schools only.

The standard of education received in the rural and urban area has wide difference; this is the major factor that enables the urban students to do more than the rural. The rural students are being discriminated because they cannot make use of the resources and opportunities that have in big cities. Most schools are not well equipped with desks, blackboards, libraries, computers and other visual aids. As people are very poor and uneducated, poor medical care manifests itself as another problem inflicting
rural inhabitants. In Yuksam development block health services are hard to find in many villages. The rate of infant mortality is high in rural area and many women die while delivering birth. For example, it takes at least 4 hours to reach the nearest place which has a health care centre. These people are not much aware of the importance of their health. As unhealthy and uneducated people, the chances of prosperity and well-being are very low. They do not have enough money to meet the expense of health care as well.

The spatial distribution of educational institution is uneven at Yuksam development block. There are total 51 villages and 49 educational institutions. There are multiple GPWs where even primary school are absent. So many children do not go to school beyond primary level and that village cannot provide the population for maintaining school. Moreover, the teachers are unwilling to go and serve in these impoverished areas. If teachers were offered more attractive opportunities then they would be more willing to go and contribute to the disadvantaged children there. Therefore the overall literacy of the development block is quite lower (60.4 per cent) than the State average (82.2 per cent).

So there is need to improve the quality of education by improving facilities like providing special funds to the teachers who work in the remote areas, providing more funds to institutions for scholarship, furniture, building and textbook. Proper training should be given to the teachers so that the guardians feel encouraged to send their children for better and higher education. These facilities should be provided in the area especially where the education institution and literacy level is comparatively low. Therefore education is only important factor that plays a significant role for the upliftment of the rural poor and which also brings equality between rural-urban sector and also within each sector itself.

To reduce educational inequality Government should open primary school in every villages, emphasise should be given on good educational resources by improving quality of teaching faculties, infrastructure, adopting modern methods in school activities by adding extra curriculum and its prospectus and also facilitating the rural students to access all the modern educational resources such as internet, computer, teaching learning materials library and school uniforms, textbooks and mid-day meals should be made available at the right time. Educational awareness camp should also be encouraged in remote villages for the rural parents to expose educational advantages in order to fairly
execute the distribution of facilities provided by the Central and State Government. The concerned department should also keep a strict vigilance in the remote areas for the successful implementation of the programme in an appropriate manner. It is observed from various studies that education not only builds up knowledge and information but it also helps the citizens to understand the complexities of life. Some of the affordable solutions that can be accountably achievable to provide the standard education are:

**Promoting rural schools as good educational resources**
- Improving the physical environment (infrastructure)
- Improving the quality of teaching faculties
- Applying innovative methods in school activities
- Added curriculum which has multi functional/cultural/technical aspects

**Enabling the rural students to access all educational information and resources**
- Libraries and computer centres
- Counselling from experts from various Department like Education, Science and Technology, Health and Nutrition, and Culture.

**Creating good educational awareness among rural parents**
- Counselling, dramas, documentary films, poster exhibitions, informative leaflet should be produced for the coverage of educational advantages

**Getting the local bodies to secure sustainability in acquiring quality education**
- Building teams with various categories of the people like youth, member of the panchayats, parents, NGO’s, and students of the higher education to be required to make school education successful

It can be noted that there is a gender disparity in educational attainment after elementary level. In case of higher education enrolment of female is very negligible and levels of female literates are more up to the elementary level. There is not much scope where female can use her capacity in a productive manner. It may be because of various restrictions that they don’t desire to go for higher studies. Mostly the girl child is engaged in domestic chores to free household adults for work. Girls hardly get an opportunity to make their choices. ‘There cannot be educated people without educated women. If general education had to be limited to men or to women, the opportunity should be given to women, for then it would more surely be passed on to the next generations (Dr. S. Radhakrishnan)’.
In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, ‘women is a companion of man gifted with equal mental capacities, she has the right to participate in the minutes details of the activities of man; and she has the same right to freedom and liberation as of man’. In order to reduce inequalities in higher studies, the following policy should be recommended:

- Above the elementary level, all girls should have a school which is easily accessible wherever such arrangements cannot be made, a hostel should be set up.
- Provision of scholarship should be introduced for higher studies to enable girls to continue education.
- The number of female teachers needs to increase.
- Employment opportunity for women must be increased.
- Each school must have safe drinking water and separate toilet for girls.
- Gender awareness workshop should be conducted and mass media should be utilized for campaign for projecting positive image of girl child.

In Sikkim there is no women’s college which is very necessary for educational empowerment of women. The department should keep more attention for proper functioning of all the facilities being rendered to these backward units so that they do not neglect such benefits that have come up on their way.

Health care: The distribution of health care and medical facilities is inadequate and are not able to fulfil essential requirement of the villagers. There are two Primary Health Centre (PHC) at Yuksam development block, one is located at block headquarter and another at Tashiding GPU, beside these there are 5 Primary Health Sub Centre (PHSC). Still there are two GPUs where health care facilities are not available. To remove these disparities and to fulfil the health requirements of the people in the area, it is necessary to plan more facilities to cover population and to remove existing gap. There are some common problems of people in the study area regarding the health care system and it has been observed during the field study:

- At early stage people have some traditional attitudes towards the disease and adopt traditional method of healing and show unwillingness to seek medical care. Due to non availability of basic health care facilities at villages, people have to travel longer distance with huge expenditure.
It is necessary to look at the national health care policy before going through the proposals. The health care is one of the important parts for the implementation of minimum need programme in the country. The aim behind this programme is to provide primary health care facilities at the door step. In order to remove these disparities Government should provide basic knowledge and education to the people about welfare schemes, health care services, first aid training, personal hygiene and family planning. The basic hospital facilities like minor surgery, X-ray unit, and pathological laboratory should be established with specialized doctor in every PHC, in order to provide primary health care facilities to the villagers.

On the basis of field study, requirements for health care institutions and staff have been drawn. As a whole 2 PHSC are proposed for D.Narkhola and A.Chongrang GPUs, for providing primary facilities to these areas. The both PHC should have specialized doctor along with basic hospital facility.

**Housing:** Shelter is one of the basic needs of human being. In Yuksam development block, Government has implemented 5 major housing schemes, namely: Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY), Mukhya Mantri Awaas Yojana (MMAY), Rural Housing Schemes (RHS), distribution of 30 pieces GCI sheets and house up-gradation of Rs. 15,000 thousand per household has provided to take up immediate repair of their houses constructed earlier which are in dilapidated condition. Rural Management and Development Department has constructed so many houses till date under various schemes, many houses are under construction and many families received these schemes recently.

The analysis shows that the progress is not bad but the demand is continuously increasing at a faster rate. Still 10.8 per cent families of the development block are living in kutch houses on the basis of field study. The major factor responsible for widening the gap in demand and supply of housing is rapid increase in population and wide spread in poverty. The entire problem should be removed by providing schemes to the household who especially belong to weaker section. Houses should be properly constructed under the norms and supervision of the Government. Effective campaign and discussion should be carried out to highlight the guidelines of the schemes to the beneficiaries in order to minimise and misuse of the schemes.

**Drinking Water:** Tap water facilities exist in every village; all the villages in the development block depend upon natural spring and river. Water is not filtered, from the
The emphasis should be paid to provide filtering facilities in every GPUs and it should be supplied through tap. Beside these various preservative measures should be adopted regularly. Water tank should be covered properly; plantation should be done around the source of water in order to preserve the source. Proper maintenance and repairing should be made in order to minimize the wastage of water.

Sanitation: Sanitation is one of the most important components of development and closely related with the quality of life. Therefore, it has been added as one of the component of the Minimum Needs Programmes from 1987-88. The programme aimed to improve the quality of life in rural areas by constructing sanitary latrines for individual households. Large number of household are benefited under Total Sanitation Campaign, there is still 0.4 per cent household of the development block who does not have sanitation facilities. To remove these disparities it is necessary to provide sanitation facilities to every household. In order to increase consciousness in rural population regarding the use of sanitary latrines there is need for health education and extension to highlight the importance of sanitation. The provision of sanitary latrines should be made in public places located in the rural areas and adequate arrangements should be made for the maintenance of such facilities immediately after their construction for their daily cleaning and up keeping.

Transport and Communication: The socio-economic condition of a region is basically dependent upon transport and communication facilities. It represents social circulation and help to break isolation of people living in core areas with those residing peripheral areas. It has certain effect on the socio-economic development of the region. Within Yuksam development block there are still 9 villages which are not connected by road. Yuksam development block is only served by single metalled road, which passes through the area via Tashiding, A.Chongrang, Gerethang, Yuksam, T.Khachodpalri and Melli GPUs. Remaining three GPU namely K.Mangnam, K.Labdang and D.Narkhola GPUs are served by kutcha un-metalled road. Under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), 10 link roads are under construction and are about to complete. The GPUs have better road network which are connected by all weather road.
- All the villages should be connected by link road with other areas. All the existing unmetalled roads should be metalled and maintenance should be done wherever needed. Yuksam development block is only served by private taxi services not served by daily bus service. Thus, there is a need for passenger buses in order to improve the transportation system.

Good communication system not only support rural economy but also gives great help to socio-economic development of rural area. In Yuksam development block the distribution of communication facilities is uneven. There is no post office at K. Mangnam and K. Labdang GPU. The circulation of newspaper is very limited. Good communication facilities are very necessary for all the villages for socio-economic development of the rural areas. The telecommunication facilities are also lacking in the villages. So to overcome these gaps following proposals have been made:

- Every GPU should have post office
- Each post office should have telephone facilities
- All the GPU should have public television

*Power and Electricity:*

Electricity is needed for the development of both urban and rural sectors. The electrification of the study area can only serve domestic purposes. About 95.7 per cent household of Yuksam development block are electrified and 4.3 per cent household are facing problem in connection or yet need to be electrified. There are 3 household who receive the schemes of bio-gas plants which are useful in two ways, firstly it provides manure to the farmers for their agriculture field and secondly it can be used as cooking fuel and light.

- The analysis shows that about 4.3 per cent household of the development block are facing electricity problem. Most of these household are situated far from the main linked road.
- It is essential that the entire household should be linked with power connection.

### 9.3. PLANNING FOR AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Agriculture is the major part of rural economy. So certain emphasis has been given to increase agricultural facilities and improvement in agricultural inputs.

- By timely supply of seeds, fertilizer and pesticides
- By imparting adequate knowledge about their uses and production
- The farmers feel difficulty to visit the centre situated at long distance. Moreover they do not get any information related with the distribution of seeds. It is felt that in all the centres the Village Level Worker (VLW) should provide notice to every village before distributing the seeds.
- The proposed for the appropriate location of seed distribution centres at every GPU’s. Therefore, the farmer could obtain the desired knowledge, benefit from the appropriate location and it removes the distance obstacles.

**Irrigation:** Inspite of this agriculture constitute the main source of livelihood even though only 2 percent of its total geographical area is under irrigation and use for paddy cultivation in this development block. Irrigation has occupied top most priority in agriculture on account of indispensability for increasing productivity, reducing dependence on monsoon and it helps in removing instability of production. The source of irrigation water is natural spring and river. To provide timely supply of water to field during dry period a certain amount of irrigation would provide great help. The proposal has been made to construct irrigation canal in every village, in order to increase net irrigated area and to provide regular irrigation facilities to the villagers.

**Cold Storage:** It has been observed that most of the farmers are having small pieces of land holding and they do not have proper storage, marketing and processing facilities. Due to lack of these facilities farmers use to sell their product to the retailers and middlemen at less than market price. In order to cater the needs of the local people and to prevent them from exploitation, Government has to realize this fact and need to construct cold storage facilities at every GPU.

**Credit and Banking Facilities:** The majority of people use to borrow credit from neighbours, shops and relatives. There are only 3 banks within Yuksam development block; the condition of co-operative societies is also not up to the mark which could give benefit to the rural poor. Lack of knowledge and education about the loaning facilities is also responsible to create such problems.

- To improve the banking facilities it is suggested that villagers can directly approach and advocate the facilities which are available in the banks. The rule should be clear, simple and well spelt out so that even uneducated farmer can understand and use them.
Veterinary Centres: There are 2 veterinary dispensary and 2 stockman centres, which exists in Tashiding, Yuksam, Gerethang and Melli GPU. In 5 GPU's there are no such facilities to remove this disparity, 5 stockman centres are proposed for K.Mangnam, D.Narkhola, K.Labdang, A.Chongrang and T. Khachodpalri GPU.

9.4. CONSTRAINTS OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

On the basis of study undertaken the following findings and suggestions have been made:
- Economic criteria should be given more importance than the social criteria for the selection of the beneficiaries.
- Awareness programmes on rural development schemes should be organised in the rural areas.
- Effective campaign against health care should be carried out.
- Exhibitions, seminars and discussion to highlight the guidelines of various rural development schemes should be organised by involving local residents within the development block.
- Documentary films, poster exhibitions, informative leaflet should be produced to raise public awareness on development issues.
- Training should be given to rural artists to uplift their skills and market their products.
- Strict monitoring is needed for proper implementation of MG-NREGA. Most of the people just went to take attendance in order to get money without any useful work.
- MG-NREGA increased the income of the individuals and reduces their work load. A problem of the unemployment is also solved. On the other side it also encourages laziness among the workers.
- Most of the farmers feel that after enjoying employment opportunity generated by MG-NREGA they are not able to do farming properly; they also lost their habit to work in their agricultural field. Besides these people become very much dependent on these schemes and have forgotten the tradition of farming.

Problem among the GPUs are area specific and study indicates that the development is normally guided by people. There is a steady growth and development preceded in the households. To remove these disparities and to fulfil the basic requirements of the people in the area, it is necessary to plan more facilities to cover population and to remove existing gap. If rural areas thrive with good educational, occupational and medical facilities and opportunities then the rural urban gap can be minimized. Therefore, the
State Government should keep a strict vigilance to make this unit for the proper functioning of all the facilities being rendered to these areas. Hence, GPU based planning strategy would be more effective in the process of development and removal of disparities.

REFERENCES