Programmes for reduction of poverty in India have to be viewed in the wider perspective of the socio-economic transformation in the country. The experience of the working of the poverty alleviation programme is not uniform in the country as a whole. As the Seventh Five Year Plan states, the performance of Integrated Rural Development Programme has been better in the relatively developed regions in the country which are well provided with infrastructure. Moreover, in view of the deficiencies noticed in the implementation of IRDP it has been suggested that greater priority should be given to the rural employment programmes like National Rural Employment Programme. Employment Programmes provide secure wage income to the poor through the creation of durable community assets.

Against this background of non-uniform implementation and performance of special employment programmes and anti-poverty programmes, the present study tries to assess the working of NREP in Anantapur district of Rayalaseema Region of Andhra Pradesh State. Anantapur district is one of the chronically drought prone districts
of India and has been identified by the World Bank for special assistance. So, it is hoped that the study of the performance of NREP in Anantapur district would be of considerable interest both to the planners and to the administrators.

The study is based both on primary and secondary data. Official reports concerning the working of NREP have been widely used. Along with these, a sample study also has been undertaken. In all four villages have been selected at the rate of 2 villages from a block. For intensive study of the working of NREP the author himself personally canvassed the schedules and collected the primary data.

The study is presented in six chapters. Chapter I deals with Introduction. A review of special employment generation programmes is presented in Chapter II. Chapter three deals with the working of Food-for-work programme in India. Working of NREP in Anantapur district constitutes the fourth chapter. An analysis of the socio-economic background of the beneficiaries is presented in the fifth chapter. Summary and conclusions of the study are presented in Chapter VI.
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