CHAPTER 3

PERFORMANCE OF POVERTY ALLEVIATION PROGRAMMES IN INDIA:
EMERGING EVIDENCE AND CHALLENGES

3.1. INTRODUCTION

India lives in villages. There are around 6 lakh villages largely inhabited by rural poor, which constitute about 77 percent of our country population. They are largely comprised of small and marginal farmers, agricultural labourers, artisans, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. Agriculture occupies the predominant position and a place of pride in the economic life of India. The Rural economy's prosperity and social life centre round agriculture. It provides livelihood to over 70 per cent of the total population, substantial employment to millions of people, raw materials to agro-based industries and market for industrial products. The share of Agricultural income in the overall national income of the country is estimated to be around 33 per cent. Therefore, an all-round development of rural India is impossible without the development of the agricultural sector. But notwithstanding its vital role in the enrichment of the economy, this sector has remained the most neglected sector in so far as 300 million of the rural people live below poverty line, about 30 per cent are homeless, millions are ill fed, ill-clothed, ill-housed, ill-nourished, ill-educated and thus, lead a miserable life.

During the periods of struggle for independence, National leaders had pledged the people that after independence national resources would be mobilized and directed towards the removal of poverty from the country. Thus, free India was committed to rapid economic development to provide a better quality of life to the masses. In March, 1950, the planning commission was constituted and the Government adopted the path of economic planning whereby India set out major objectives that it wanted to achieve in the coming years and these objectives were phased out in various five years plans. Some of the important objectives were; (a) To increase production to the maximum possible extent so as to achieve higher level of national per-capita income; (b) To achieve full employment; (c) To promote faster industrialisation of the country; (d) To remove poverty and reduce inequalities of income and wealth; and (e) To provide social justice.
3.2. RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES: AN OVER VIEW

3.2.1. Community Development Programme

The Community Development programme was launched during the first five year plan period (on 2nd October, 1952) with a view to make systematic approach to reach as much as rural poor as possible through developmental activities more particularly in the field of Agriculture, animal husbandry, social education, public health, programme for women, children and youth etc. This was a unique step taken which was viewed as unparallel in the history on any developing country. The basic objective of the movement was to secure the full development of material and human resources of rural areas on an area basic and to develop local leadership and self-governing institutions. The central idea was to raise the local community to higher levels of living with the active participation and initiative of the people. This pattern was revised from first April, 1958 when National Extension Service Blocks were set up with lesser area and population coverage.

At the initial stage, each block had a team of 8 Extension Officers on various activities, 10 Gramsevaks and 2 Gramsevaks. Later, this pattern was made flexible to suit the local needs and size of the block. Generally at the state level, the controlling department was Rural Development Department /Community Development Department. In some states, the Gramsevaks were controlled by Agriculture Department and Extension officers by the respective Departments. The Block Development Officer at the Block level was to act as the Co-ordinator for all programmes executed through the agency of Block. The programmes relating to community Development of Rural Development under the Ministry of Agriculture.

3. 2.1. 1 Social Education

Provision for audio-visual with recreation of village community through mobile units, organizing community entertainment programme, organizing, youth leaders training centers, sports, and organization of welfare groups for youths and women.
3.2.1.2. Housing

Demonstration and training of personnel in charges of rural housing programmes providing assistance in the form of supply of building materials, providing assistance for improvement of new village sites.

3.2.1.3. Employment and Training

Provision of gainful employment to under-employed and unemployed through development work undertaken in the villages. Provision of training of Village Level Workers other Block personnel in the community Development Programmes, besides organization of training of agriculturists, members of village Panchayat and village leaders.

3.2.1.4. Co-operatives

Strengthening of the Co-operative Societies with a view to enable them to provide credit to framers for agricultural development.

3.2.1.5. Animal Husbandry and Plantation

To strengthen the animal husbandry activities by establishment of new livestock centers and establishment of one Veterinary Hospital in each block Headquarters and control of cattle epidemic. To take steps to raise plantation in waste lands of the village and educate the rural mass on plantation through different small programmes.

3.2. 2. Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)

Village Panchayats have been an age old institution in India Deriving power from the customary laws and local conditions. In the year 1957, Blatant Ray Mehta Committee recommended for administrative decentralisation of the process of developmental programmes, its implementation and control through elected bodies. Thereafter, on the basis of the report of the Study team, Panchayati Raj System was introduced with a three-tier system or approach, such as Zilla Parishad at the district level, Panchayat Samiti at the Block level and Garm Panchayat at the village level. The system was first introduced in Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh in 1959. Out of 21 states, namely Andhra
Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. Two-tier system namely Panchayat Samiti at Block level and Gram Panchayat at village level is in force in Assam, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and Orissa. Only Gram Panchayat system at village level is in practice in the states of Jammu & Kashmir, Kerala, Manipur and Tripura. On the contrary, states Meghalaya and Nagaland have no Panchayati Raj system.

This Panchayati Raj system has been accepted as the institutional pattern for rural development. The role of the system was to educate and motivate the rural people and encourage them to adopt improved and scientific methods of arming, maximize mobilization of human resources in rural areas, and enhance the process of socio-economic transformation the countryside. Broadly, the villages Panchayats are responsible for improvement of agriculture, village industry, animal husbandry, communication, sanitation, primary education and public health. The Panchayat Samites are responsible for preparation and implementation of developmental planes for the particular Block and are vested with special executive responsibilities in the field like primary education, health and sanitation and communication. The Zillah Parishads on the otherhand present a different picture. In some States, they were co-ordinating bodies exercising general supervision over the working of Panchayat Samities and advise he government on the implementation of programmes whereas, in other States, they are vested with executive functions in various fields including planning and development and advising Governments.

Although in theory, the Panchayati Raj bodies are considered as the agency for rural planning and development, in practice it was being done by Government agencies. Besides, the power and responsibilities along with administrative and technical, personnel and financial resources are being said to be transferred to the elected bodies but in practice the role of Panchayati Raj bodies have become mere agencies of State Governments.

No doubt under favourable conditions, the programme has succeeded to some extent in improving the rural economy, but in most of the States, its performance was found to be far from satisfactory because meager activities, weak resource-utilization and due attention not given for successful implementation of the programmes.
3.2.3. INTENSIVE AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT PROGRAMME (IADP) AND INTENSIVE AGRICULTURAL AREA PROGRAMME (IAAP)

In the year 1960, on the basis of the report of the Ford Foundation Team known as “India’s Food Crisis and Steps to Meet it”, a significant feature took place and a new programme known as “Intensive Agricultural District Programme” based on the principles of concentration and better management of resources and efforts in potential and responsive area with assured water supply was introduced. It was called a package programme. The programme was “intensive” in the sense that all aspects of improvement essential for a rapid increase in farm production and income were to be accrued simultaneously in the selected districts in co-ordinated and integrated manner. The concept was based on an intensive impact approach at the district level. It was to be organized as a single operation programme directed from the District Officer under the guidance of agriculturally trained District Officer.

The main objectives were: To find out and pave the way to increase the productivity of agricultural land by using modern technology of Agricultural production; To identify such technological methods, which may attract the cultivators to adopt modern, improved productivity methods; To develop a package of practice in association with the research resources available in the country; To evolve an administrative pattern at the district level that would implement the agricultural development programmes more effectively in a well co-ordinated and integrated manner.

3.2.4. Whole Village Development Programme (WVDP)

On the recommendations of the National Commission on Agriculture for improvement and modernization of Indian Agriculture with a view to promote welfare of the people, and urgency of increasing the productive capabilities in rural areas and promoting the welfare and prosperity of the masses through equitable distribution of the benefits of development, the “Whole Village Development Programme” took birth during the Fifth Five Year Plan Period. Through the scheme, it was stipulated to explore
the possibilities of adopting a whole village programme to develop the potentials of a village in particular and adjoining village in general.

The aim of the project were: Consolidation of holdings; Overall land development plan on maximizing irrigation potentials subject to maximum limit of investment based on the need to repay investment credit by extra production; Change in Cropping pattern for the best use of irrigation and for ensuring the best control of irrigation and drainage.

The prime theme of the scheme was concentration of entire multifarious resources available in the village and its utilization in the most scientific manner for betterment of the village community. The core idea was to achieve social justice by reducing the disparities in the distribution of income among the rural population and programme also laid emphasis on non-agricultural sectors so as to allow free flow of benefits among all the sectors allowing thereby agricultural sector to thrive better.

3.2.5. Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP)

Drought Prone Areas in India have continued to suffer from chronic instability of weather, crop production and consequential economic burden, necessitating for an immediate need to evolve a strategy of development to mitigate these conditions. The geographical side of such areas differs from State to State. For instance, in Rajasthan the drought prone areas spread over 56% of geographical area covering 33% of the population. More or less prominently a similar state of affairs prevails in states like Bihar, Gujarat, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh. These areas constitute a major factor contributing to regional imbalance in the country since overall productivity has been abysmally low. Due to acute water scarcity and moisture stress, these areas remain a continuing source of strain on the financial resources of the nation given in shape of relief measures. Hence, a special development programme designed for Drought Prone Area was introduced in 1970-71.

At the initial stage, the approach was based on labour-intensive schemes. The aim was to ensure that the rural works taken up under the programme were of a permanent nature, could be programmed, since the basic objective was provision of enjoyment through direct construction works. At the outset, 56 districts of the country spread over 13 states were selected on the basis of the following criteria:
Objectives:

The main objectives were: 1) Development and management of water resources; 2) Measures involving soil and moisture conservation; 3) Afforestation with special emphasis on social and farm forestry; 4) Development of pastureland and development of animal husbandry; 5) Livestock and dairy development; 6) Use of improved seeds and fertilizers.

The major thrust of the programme in order of sequence were watershed management, soil conservation, afforestation and Fourth Five year Plan was reduced to Rs 84.88 crore as to budgetary constraints. State Governments also spent Rs .90 crore as their share during the sid period. More than 50 percent of the expenditure was incurred on irrigation works while construction of rural roads accounted for 25 percent. The balance was spent on soil conservation and afforestation. During the Fifth Five Year Plan, to Rs.275/- crores and Rs. 380/- crores during the Sixth and Seventh Five Year Plan Periods respectively. Thus, the emphasis was on economic development of these areas programmed to be achieved through activities, which in the long run,would contribute actively in creating conditions conducive to mitigate the efforts of drought in these areas.

Though the main objective of the DPAP was management of watershed and water resources, in practice it was something else. The authorities in charge or DPAP in different States considered the funds provided under the programme as an additional fund and failed to intensity the activities aimed at integrated watershed management. It so happened that the funds under normal grants of the district meant for the projects to mitigater drought condition got diverted to other works. Such diversion of funds restricted the scope of intefreated approach on watershed management.

As most part of our country is rained receives scanty and uneven rainfall drought is a regular phenomenon and put tremendous pressure on our economic resources. The planners should, therefore, formulate suitable concerted measures like watershed
management and conservation of water for better agricultural production under rural development programmes.

3. 2.6. Cash Programme for Rural Development

This programme was sponsored by Central Government and implemented through the agency of State Government in April, 1971 for a period of 3 years. The main objective of the Scheme were: (a) Direct generation of employment for 1000 persons, on an average, continuously over a working season of 10 months in a year in all rural districts of the country through the execution of projects which were essentially labour intensive; (b) The production of assets of works of a tangible nature in consonance with local development plans so that all round development of the district becomes possible.

The labour intensive works under the scheme mainly relate to land development and reclamation, conservation of roads, drainage, minor irrigation projects, water conservation, soil conservation, afforestation and special repairs of these community assets. The project taken up under the scheme were of most absorptive in nature as such could perennial potentialities of employment for soon as they were completed, the labour force were thrown out of employment.

3.2.7. Food for Works Programme (FFW)

The food for works programme was started in the year 1977-78, as a non-plan scheme to augment the funds of the state Government for the maintenance of public work. The scheme was designed to offer gainful employment to the rural poor and improve their nutritional status and income level through development of infrastructure and creation of community assets by utilizing surplus food stocks. The category works quality for assistance under the scheme included irrigation works, soil and water conservation, afforestation by Forest Department, construction of village roads, construction of field channels, construction of school buildings and community centres. This programme was merged with National Rural Employment programme in the year 1980-81.
3. 2. 8. Small Farmers, Marginal Farmer and Agricultural Labourers Development Agency

The creation of these two Agencies lies in the Report of the All India Rural Credit Review committee, which was constituted in 1966 and submitted its report in 1969. The committee pointed out that there were a significant section of cultivators whose land holdings were small and who were unable to benefit from the new strategy because of poor resource base. To put it in the words of the committee “It is now generally agreed that the small farmers have not benefited in proportion either to their numbers of their needs from the various programmes or rural development, which have been under implementation during the three plans. This is also broadly true in regard to availability of traditional credit for agricultural”. The committee further opined that “If the fruits of development continued to be denied to large section of the rural community ,while prosperity accrues to some ,the resulting tensions, social and economic, may not only upset the process of orderly and peaceful change in the rural economy but may even frustrate the peaceful national effort, to step up agriculture production”. The committee was also of the view that if these farmers were assured of adequate resources they could switch over the stage of subsistence agriculture to commercial agricultural. The committee, therefore, recommended the establishment of countrywide network of pilot projects in the form of Small Farmers Development Agency(SFDA) and Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers Development Agency(MEAL).

The objectives of the scheme were :(a) To identify the eligible small and marginal farmers; (b) TO investigate and identify the problems of small and marginal farmers in the district and formulate suitable programmes; (c) To arrange inputs and services required by the small and marginal farmers; (d) To provide irrigation;(e) To help eligible farmers in securing loan from co-operatives and Nationalized Banks for sinking wells on their own land; (f)To encourage digging and deepening of wells for group of farmers (g)To help eligible farmers in securing the facilities of storage and market their production activities to be undertaken by the cultivators participating in the programme and ensure supervision and their implementation.

In case of all the productive schemes 25 per cent of the total amount was sanctioned as subsidy for the small farmers and 33.33% for the marginal farmers and
agricultural labourers and the rest as loans. The main emphasis of the SFDA/MAFL was on crop husbandry in irrigated and rain fed areas. The programmes was duly supported by activities like development of minor irrigation, soil conservation and land development, water harvesting techniques, consolidation of holdings coupled with a shaping and construction of watercourses and field channels.

3.2.9. Tribal area Development Project and Integrated Tribal Development Projects (TADP) AND ITDP

One of the Directive Principle of State Policy in the constitution enjoins that the “State will promote with special care the educational, land, economic interests of weaker sections and, particular, of the scheduled castes and schedule tribes and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation”. This directive has been reflected in the Five Year Plans, which have sought to raise the living standards of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections. The objective of the programmes is to foster the economic development of the tribal population so as to bring them within the ambit of developmental efforts of the country and in particular to make an impact on the agricultural development of these areas. The core economic programmes including horticulture, land reclamation, land development soil conservation, minor irrigation, control of shifting cultivation, and cattle development, were programmed to be undertaken under the Scheme. Each of these projects is intended to cover 10,000 tribal families or 50,000 tribal population who constitute the weaker sections even amongst the tribals. The idea was to bring these backward areas at par with developed areas of the State.

However, decades of development have had no desired impact on these socially, economically and educationally backward groups. Their problems could not be solved through the percolation of general economic growth. The majority of the scheduled tribe population is still languishing below the poverty line and face special problems peculiar to them, continuing to pursue traditional occupations, they are also unable to enjoy the benefits of economic growth and participate in the process of modernization of the country.
Accordingly, tribal sub-plants were formulated covering 63 percent of the tribal population in the country in 16 States and 2 Union Territories. The tribal sub-plan areas were divided into 180 Integrated Tribal Development Projects (ITDP) for operational purposes. The Tribal sub-plan envisaged development efforts in the identified areas with resources pooled from: (i) outlays from state plans; (ii) investment from central ministries; (iii) special central assistance; and (iv) institutional finance.

The objectives of TADP & ITDP were: (a) to increase agricultural production in the area with introduction of modern technologies, use of improved seeds and fertilizers etc; (b) to take up plantation of suitable fruit bearing trees to meet the requirements of the tribal who mostly depend upon minor forest products; (c) to provide credit and marketing facilities and strengthening the existing ones; (d) to take steps to free the tribal from the bondage of indebtedness; (e) to discourage the tribal from shifting cultivation and to take up settled cultivation; and (f) to initiate measures to improve the educational, sanitary, health and drinking water problems along with provision of ancillary facilities.

Besides, the National Commission on Agriculture observed “The problems of development of tribal areas is primarily linked with the general backwardness of these areas poverty of the tribals, exploitation by no-tribals and the absence of social and cultural integration of the tribals with the rest of the population. These areas investment and other developmental efforts for improvement of the tribal areas, there has not been any increase in productivity to reach the corresponding levels elsewhere. Many tribal inhabitants are in the interior forests and are isolated for lack of communication and marketing facilities, which would have at least enabled a flow of income to the tribal population. Thus the tribal areas, by and large, have failed to take the benefit from the impact of the new technology. This uneven sharing of gains from technological developments and the resulting disparities in income distribution has, at places, led to acute social tensions. This slow pace of agricultural development and the continuing exploitation of tribals by non-tribals underscore the need for intensive social and economic development of their areas in the country.”

During Fifth and Sixth Year Plan Periods, the achievements were laudable since 5.72 lakh hectares of additional area were brought under minor irrigation, 1.08 lakh hectares under soil conservation, about 8000 hectares of land put under horticulture,
approximately 52,000 hectares of land restored to tribal farmers, more than 8000 villages were provided with safe drinking water and 6528 villages were electrified.

3.2.10. Minimum Needs Programme (MNP)

The concept of the Minimum Needs programme (MNP) emerged and crystallized out of the experience of the previous plans that neither growth nor social consumption could be sustained much less accelerated without being mutually supportive. The programme was essentially directed towards investment in human resources development. The provision of free or subsidized services through public agencies is below poverty line, and thereby improves the productive efficiency of both the rural and urban workers. Integration of social consumption along with economic development has been considered necessary to accelerate growth and ensure achievement of plan objectives.

Besides, it has also been observed that the benefits of the programme cannot reach the poorest of the poor unless conscious efforts are made to achieve the end. Since there are disparities in the social consumption not only between the income groups but also between different parts of the country. As such, the implementation of the programme was considered necessary to reduce the disparities between the ‘Haves’ and the Have nots. The programme also envisaged to reduce the disparities in the development of social services and infrastructure as prevailing in different regions and States.

The programme was introduced in the Fifth five Plan period and continued during the Sixth Five Year Plan Period.

(A) Elementary Education

The universalisation of elementary education was the objective of the programme, e.g. 100% enrolment in the age groups of 6 to 14 years. However, it was proposed to achieve this objective in 2 stages. eg 95% of enrollment in the age group of 6 to 10 years and 50% in the age group of 11 to 14 years by 1990.

Non formal education for adults, particularly in the productive age group of 15 to 35 years was also a part of the programme. The target was 100% coverage in the age group 15 to 35 years by 1990.

(B) Rural health
Rural health infrastructure needs to be strengthened in order to achieve the objective of “health for all by 2000AD.” The norms envisaged were (A) one community health volunteer for a population of 1000 or one village by 1990, (B) establishment of one health volunteer for a population of 5000 in plain area and 3000 in tribal or hill areas by 2000 AD, (C) one primary health center for 30000 population in hill or tribal areas by 2000 AD.

(C) Rural Water Supply

Out of total habited villages of 576000 in the country, the problem villages having the criteria were identified with a view to provide safe drinking water to such villages by the end of the 6th plan. The criteria were (a) those which do not have an assured source of drinking water within a seasonal distance of 1.6 kames, (b) those where the sources of water are endemic to water borne diseases like cholera, guima-worms etc., (c) those where available water contain excess of salinity, iron, fluorides or other element hazardous to human beings.

(D) Rural Roads

Initially it was planned to link up all the villages having a population of 1500 or more with all-weather roads during the fifth and sixth five year plan periods. Besides, it was stipulated that 50% of the total number of villages in the population group of 1000 to 1500 would be connected by road within 1990. The achievement was far from satisfactory.

(E) Housing Assistance to Rural Landless Labourers

It was estimated to provide housing facilities to 14.5 millions of landless labour households by 1990.

(F) Environmental Improvement of Urban Slums

The objectives of the programme were to make 100% coverage of urban slum areas in the country by 1990, giving priority to areas inhabited predominantly by
scavengers, in improvement of water supply, sewerage system, paring of streets, drainage, community latrine etc.

(G) Nutrition

The nutrition programme involved two components namely, (a) Special Nutrition, and (b) Mid-day meals. During the fifth five year plan period, when the programme launched, it was programmed to provide nutritious food to 5 million children in 600 Intensive Child Development blocks and five lakh women with integrated health services under Welfare services and nutrition, Under the Mid-day Meals programme the number of beneficiaries were about 17 millions children.

(H) Rural Electrification

It was decided to cover at least 60% of the villages in each States and Union Territory to be electrified by 1990.

3.2.11. Command Area Development (CAD)

After independence, recognizing the importance of irrigation to boost up crop production, quite a good number of Major and Medium Irrigation Projects were taken up in the country. Many more were taken up in subsequent stages. These projects were considered and sanctioned in the manner of interdependence projects with no provision for Command Area Development. The estimates of the projects in most cases included only the cost of the projects and construction of watercourses. The irrigation Department did not feel responsible for Common Area Development. As such, the utilization of created irrigation potentials was of traditional nature. The urgency and necessity to boost agricultural production create additional employment opportunities and boost up level of income in the rural areas drew the attention of the policy makers for rapid command area development. In the Third Five Year Plan, certain measures necessary for securing speedy benefits from irrigation projects were initiated and in the Fourth and Fifth Five Year Plan periods, some special programmes of command area development were taken up.
The Sixth Five Year Plan endorsed the above views of the Commission for realizing the maximum benefits from the command area development programmes and an integrated approach to this effect was formulated. The National Commission on Agriculture puts it as- "All steps necessary for the development for the development of land in a command area to be taken up together in an integrated manner".

The Major objectives of the Command Area Development programme: (a) modernization and efficient operation of the irrigation system and development of main drainage system; (b) construction of field channels; (c) land shaping and land leveling; (d) construction of field drains; (e) straightening the field channels and water courses; (f) exploitation of ground water through tube wells, open wells etc.; (g) adoption of suitable cropping pattern; (h) enforcement of suitable rostering system of distribution of water to farmers; (i) plan for supply of inputs like fertilizers, credit, insecticides etc; (j) strengthening of existing extension network, training to extension workers and progressive farmers and conducting field demonstrations.

Under the programme, though the emphasis was laid on land development and utilization of irrigation resources, the small and the marginal farmers who own only a very negligible area under the command areas, realized only an insignificant share of the benefits of the scheme. The execution of CADP, however, generated some additional employment opportunities for the Agriculture labors. As a matter of fact, the benefits flowing from the scheme were mostly appropriated by the large and the medium landowners.

3.2.12. National Rural Employment Programme (NREP)

The NREP programme was launched in October 1980 and became a regular plan programme right from April, 1981. The programme replaced the earlier programme of Food For Works. In fact Food For Works programme was renamed as National rural Employment programme. The problem of unemployment in the rural areas is mainly seasonal. However the very dimension of the problem of unemployment calls or a multi pronged strategy, which aims, on the one hand on resources development and, on the other, on supplementing the existing employment opportunities available to the rural poor, particularly during the lean periods of the year. Since programmes like SFDA, DPAP, DDP, CADP, TRYSEM aimed at resources development of the needy individuals
on area basis, a beginning was made in providing supplementary employment opportunities in the rural areas through the Food Works Programme. Basing on the experience gained from Food For Works programme, a well directed and sustained programme like NREP was drawn up for providing supplementary employment opportunities to masses during the lean periods of the year. The objectives of the programme were to: (a) to generate additional employment opportunities for the unemployed and under employed persons; (b) to create productive community assets for continuous flow of benefits to the poverty groups; (c) to bring about over-all development of the rural area; and (d) to provide nutritional standards to rural poor through supply of food grains as wages. The NREP was implemented as a centrally sponsored scheme on 50:50 sharing basis between the Centre and the States. The Central assistance was in the form of supply of foodgrains and the rest was the cash commitment of the States.

The wages paid under the programme were at par with the prevailing wage rates in the states. The quantum of foodgrains as part of the wage was in equal proportion with cash. The maximum limit on foodgrains was set at 2 kg. per head per day. Contractors were totally excluded from the execution of the programme on which employment was offered through NREP. Neither the distribution nor the contractors. The implementing agencies were required to attach priority to works relating to social forestry, and pasture development, soil and water conservation, irrigation, flood control, improvement of village tanks and ponds, construction of primary school buildings, improvement of village environment, hygiene and sanitation, and those works which were beneficial to village community at large.

An outlay of Rs. 980 crores was provided in the Sixth Five Year Plan Period with the anticipation of generating 300 to 400 million man-days of employment on an average per year during the Plan period. Similarly, during the Seventh Five year Plan Period period an outlay of Rs. 2,487.47 crores was provided with a target to generate a total of 1,445 million man-days of employment.

The Sixth Plan experience showed that the distribution of foodgrains was not up to the mark of 1 Kg. per man-day for a variety of reasons on account of the problems of storage and movement of foodgrains, quality of foodgrains, and the diversion of foodgrains
to the public distribution system, and in some cases, preference of local people for course foodgrains. The distribution of foodgrains had also an impact on the stabilization of prices of foodgrains in the area.

The evolution of performance made by the programme Evaluation Organization, the National Institute of Public Administration and Gandhi Labour Institute highlighted some positive aspects of the programme like prompt payment of wages, creation of durable community assets and the implementation of projects through Panchayati raj institutions rather than executing the departmentally.

3.2.13. Million Wells Scheme (MWS)

In our country, the land holdings being small and the large irrigation projects being expensive, and small irrigation schemes being more effective as experimented in China and elsewhere, the MWS was introduced in the 1988. The objective was to lift the small and the marginal farmers through the provision of assured but reliable source of irrigation.

During 1988, this scheme was started as a part of NREP and aimed at installing dug wells for the benefits of the small and the marginal farmers belonging to the scheduled Cast and scheduled Tribe categories free of cost. The target was to construct one million of such open irrigation wells within two years. But in the very next year, NREP was merged with Jawahar Rajgar Yojna(JRY) and focus on MWS became dim in the light of a major shift in Government policy towards the Panchayati RAJ bodies and making wage employment programmes to reach each and every village in the country. In the year 1989, the MWS become a sub-scheme of JRY, but no specific funds were allotted for this purpose. Realising the importance of the scheme in eradication of rural poverty, it was restored in the year 1990 when 20 per cent of the JRY funds were specifically ear-marked for MWS.

In the year 1993-94, much more importance was attached to the scheme, as result of which JRY restructured and allocation of MWS was raised from 20 per cent to 30 per cent of JRY funds and one-third of the benefits under MWS were also extended to the non-SC/ST poor, the small and the marginal farmers. In the year 1995-96, when more emphasis was laid on construction of houses under India Awas Yojana IAY, a sub-
scheme of JRY, the allocation under MWS was accordingly reduced. But still the NWS continues to be one of the important programmes of Government for eradication of poverty in rural areas.

MWS is a centrally sponsored Scheme and expenditure is shared by the Centre and the states on 80:20 basis. Allocation to the states is made on the basis of the proportion of rural poor in a state to total rural poor in the country. Allocation to districts is decided by the state Government keeping in view the potential of irrigation and the land held by the target groups. Its main aim was to provide an asset to the target groups with assured irrigation for agricultural development, but from 1993-94 onwards MWS had been extended to cover non-SC/ST poor, the small and the marginal farmers as well within its ambit. It was, however, ensured that the funds for such non-SC/ST beneficiaries did not exceed one-third of the total allocations.

The achievement under the scheme under the scheme was quite catchy as measured from the angles of allocation of funds, expenditure incurred and wells dug. Available empirical evidence showed that allotment of funds witnessed a quantum a quantum jump from Rs.271.44 crosses during 1988-89 to Rs.1,049.61 crores during 1994-95 and the incurred expenditure made a similar up till March from Rs.132.99 crores to Rs.77.18 crores during the corresponding period.

3.2.14. Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment (TRYESM)

One of the major objectives of the Sixth Five year Plan was to promote employment opportunities to eradicate poverty. As a part of the strategy promoting self-employment, Central Government launched a scheme from 15th August, 1979 named as the National Scheme for Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TYSEM). The objective was to provide technical skill to the rural youth with a view to make them capable of taking up self-employment in the field of Agriculture, industries and household/professional trades etc., basing on the local need, capabilities and skill of the rural youth.

The Sixth Five Year Plan aimed at to train 2 lakhs of rural youths every year at the rate of 40 youths per Block per annum. The target group comprised of rural youth between the age group of 18 and 35 years from the families living below the poverty line. It was also indicated that a minimum of 30 percent of the youths should belong to
scheduled Caste Scheduled Tribe communities of which a minimum of 33.33 per cent should be rural women.

During the Sixth Five Year Plan Period, as against the target of imparting training to 10.05 lakh of youths, the achievement was 9.4 lakh. This accounted for 93.3 per cent of the target set for the reference period, 4.64 lakh of youths could be provided with self-constituted 31.5 per cent and women trained constituted 34.8 per cent.

During the Seventh Five Year Plan Period, the process of skill formation of the members of target group was considered as an integral part of the IRDP. The training to the youths under the TRYSEM was, therefore, considered to be imparted on the basis of actual requirements of the locality and need of the some. The cost of the training in the form of stipends and raw materials etc. required to be met out of the funds earmarked for infrastructure development under the IRDP.

However by the end of 1994-95, trained youths numbering 50,708 could not be rehabilitated which constituted 28.30 per cent of the trained youths. During the year 1995-96 the number of rural trained was 16,589 of which 10,572 were rehabilitated.

3.2.15. Jawahar Rojgar Yojana (JRY)

During the year 1989-90 two employment generating programmes viz. National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) and Rural Labour Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) were merged into a single programme known as Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) and since then it is in operation as a centrally sponsored programme. The expenditure under the programme is shared by the Centre and the state on a 80:20 basis. Under the programme, wage employment is provided to the unemployed in the rural areas particularly in public works that directly benefits the village community.

The objective of the programme were: (a) to provide gainful employment to the unemployed and under-employed of the households below the poverty line with special preference to SC and ST communities; (b) to create durable and productive community assets with a view to improve the overall quality of rural life.

The scheme further stipulated that that 30 per cent of the total employment opportunities are to be provided to women beneficiaries.
During 1989-90, a total of 517.63 man-days of employment could be generated at an estimated outlay of Rs.10,445.27 lakhs, of which, the share of SC, ST and women constituted 30.46, 36.76 and 20.71 percent respectively. During the subsequent periods ending 1994 mostly a positive could be noticed in terms of investment made under the programme while the man-days of employment generated showed a decelerating trend.

3.2.16. Indira Awas Yojana

This was a component Programme under Jawahar Rozgar Yojana introduced in the year 1985-86. The objective of the programme was to provide housing facilities or house sites to homeless Scheduled Cast and the Scheduled Tribes and the released boned laborers in rural areas. The scheme stipulated construction of low cost houses with the provision of some of the basic facilities. The other objective was to generate employment opportunities for the homeless family members at the time of construction of such low cost houses.

The pre-revised cost of the unit was Rs.14,000.00 for plain areas and Rs.15,800.00 in hilly and inaccessible locations. During 1995-96, total number of 51,033 low cost houses was constructed as the target of 62,958 with an outlay of Rs.7,494.88 lakhs.

3.2.17. Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP)

The scheme was introduced from August, 1983 with the objective: (a) improvement and expansion of employment opportunities for the rural landless laborers with a view to provide them the guarantee of employment to at least one member from each of the landless labour households for a period up to 100 days in a year; and (b) creation of durable assets for strengthening the rural infrastructure so as to meet the growing requirement of the rural people.

During the Seventh Five Year Plan, an outlay of Rs.1,742.78 Crores was shared equally by the centre and the state with the target to generate 1,013 million man-days of employment during the period ranging from 1985 to 1990. The ratio of wage and non-wage expenditure was prescribed to be maintained at 50:50 basis.

The impact of investment made under the RLEGP could be felt during the period ranging between 1983-84 where 20.94 lakh man-days of employment could generated.
During the two successive period, the achievements were spectacular where 184-73 and 115.01 lakh man-days of employment opportunities could be succeeding period ranging between 1986-87, 1987-88 and 1988-89, the level of employment come down sharply to 10.75, 14.89 and 12.81 lakh man-days respectively.

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

On the basis of the experience gained during the first three year of the Sixth Five Year Plan, when it noticed that the benefits of IRDP failed to trickle down adequately to promote welfare of women and children, a new scheme known as Development of women children on Rural Areas (DWCRA) was introduced in September, 1982, in 60 Blocks on a pilot basis, with stipulation to enhance the number in subsequent years and during the Seventh Five Year Plan. Now DWCRA covers the entire country. The main objective of this programme provide support services to rural women in order enable them to take up income generating pursuits keeping the view the local requirements and a availability of local raw materials.

3.2.19 Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS)

The Employment Assurance Scheme was launched as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme with the cost sharing pattern of 80:20 between the Centre and the State with effect from second October, 1993. The noble purpose was to generating employment opportunities for the rural poor on an assured basis in 143 blocks of 16 districts of the State. However, subsequently it has been extended to 250 blocks of 27 districts. The main objective of the scheme is to provide wage employment to the agricultural labourers and other workers who are in need of wage employment especially during the lean agricultural season. Under this scheme, assured employment of about 100 days to be provided to those persons who are above 18 years and below 60 years of age and seeking employment during the lean season. During the financial year 1995-96, 311.06 lakh man-days of employment could be generated with the expenditure of Rs. 13,133.80 lakh and 10.08 lakh persons were provided with employment. During the year 1996-97 (up to end of October 1996), 174.04 lakh man-days of employment had been generated at a cost Rs.
7,678.45 lakh and 3.19 lakh persons were provided with employment under the scheme. Accordingly, a sum of Rs. 600 lakh was provided for the purposes. The guidelines for utilization for special assistance were: Construction of 8100 dug wells in 135 non Special Foodgrains Production Programme (SFPP). Blocks at an average cost of Rs. 4000 per well which amount to Rs.324.00 lakh.

During the year 1995-96, 166 dug wells were dug and 957 pump-sets were energized at a cost of Rs. 123.20 lakh compared to 852 dug wells and energisation of 1256 number of pump-sets made at cost of Rs. 98.22 lakh in 1994-95. During the year 1996-97, (up to September 96), 27 dug wells were dug and 104 diesel pump-sets were energized at cost of Rs. 27.70 lakh under the scheme.

3.3. CONCLUSIONS

It is evident from the foregoing discussion that the development journey so long initiating several programmes with a set of objectives. The results of the programmes show the out of the programmes is not satisfactory. It is true that has been a rapid increase in the allocation and utilization of the funds, coverage of the beneficiaries, and generation of man-days of employment under self-employment programmes. Tangible improvement is missing in the rural areas. It has been learnt that wrong identification of beneficiaries, misappropriation of funds etc. It is important for us to examine the issues at the micro level. That is why an effort has been made to examine the said issues in DK district of Karnataka.