CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION
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Rural development is the key to the development of our country, as more than seventy per cent of the population live in rural areas where poverty is rampant. For the last five decades India has been faced with the problems of poverty and inequality. To meet these challenges the Government have adopted various policies and strategies of rural development. Yet, the decades old saying that India is a rich country inhabited by the poor people still holds true, though not so strongly as it did earlier. A review of rural development over the past years suggests that we are not making a significant dent on either poverty or inequality.

The concept of rural development is not new in India. It had received the attention of people like Tagore, Gandhiji and many others much before independence. Gandhiji knew for certain that unless and until the village economy of India was boosted, "Swaraja" would be meaningless.\(^1\) To him the soil of India lives in villages and India's salvation lay in rural reconstruction.

After independence when the constitution of the Indian Republic was adopted, in its very preamble, it sets forth the national objective to secure to the citizens of India: Justice, social, economic and political and equality of status and of opportunity. \(^2\) The Directive Principles of State Policy also directed the Government to ensure to every citizen to get an adequate means of livelihood and security against concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment.\(^3\)

The post-independent India has witnessed several programmes of rural development such as the Community Development Programme in the fifties, agricultural development programmes like Intensive Agriculture Development Programme in the sixties and the target group and area development programmes like Small Farmer Development Agency, Integrated Tribal Development Programme, Drought Prone Area Development Programme etc in the seventies. During the mid seventies there
emerged a new approach called 'Integrated Rural Development', which aimed at direct frontal attack on rural poverty.

Before reviewing these programmes of rural development it is necessary to understand the concept of rural development and the policies and strategies of various rural development programmes.

Rural Development Defined

The concept of rural development is viewed differently by different scholars. Some say it is a change, others hold it is growth and still others view it as change and growth both. Development needs to be conceived as a dynamic process directed towards transforming the entire society, embarking together its economic, social, political and administrative aspects for all round balanced upward change.

Rural development is defined as 'improving the living standard of the mass of low income population residing in rural areas and making the process of self-sustaining'. Development began to be conceived to be more than economic growth. Equity, from the point of view of narrowing the ever widening gap between the rich and the poor, has been recognised to be an inalienable dimension of development. It is also realised that unless the living conditions of the majority of the rural poor, who live below subsistence level, are improved, there can not be development in its true sense. This highlights the "basic minimum needs" approach to development.

Development may refer to the production and utilisation of material resources or to the enrichment of human resources or both. Material means of production refers to the economic factors such as infrastructure for development whereas enrichment of human capital refers to the uneconomic factors such as social, political, ethnic or educational background of the people who participate in the development task. Rural development has been defined as a strategy to improve the economic and social life of a specific group of people, i.e. the rural poor including small and marginal farmers, tenants and the landless. In this definition of the World Bank
women and children are not mentioned. Robert Chambers gives a complementary definition. Rural development is a strategy to enable a specific group of people, poor rural women and men, to gain for themselves and their children more of what they want and need. It involves helping the poorest among those who seek a livelihood in the rural areas to demand and control more of the benefits of development. The group includes small scale farmers, tenants and the landless.

These definitions are at a general level. At the lower level they have sub-objects. Some of these are increasing productivity, improving equity and maintaining and enhancing the renewable resource base of the environment. But these are means, not ends, and can be tested against the primary objective of secure and decent livelihoods. No sub-objective is automatically good. The productivity of land or labour can be enhanced in ways which impoverish: a farmer can mechanise his agriculture and increase production but destroy the livelihood of labourers. Production that leads to net impoverishment is not development. Production is a means, not an end. The end is in the lives of people. Equity is also treated as an end. A dramatic levelling down may reduce inequalities while destroying livelihoods; at the extreme, many are equal because many starve. Protecting the environment is held by conservationists as an end at the cost of the livelihoods of the poor. In practice the outsiders who are removed from and do not perceive the lives of the poor people often treat means as ends. Many of them are conditioned to give more weight to interests which are national and urban rather than local and rural. Deprivation of the rural poor is accepted in order to benefit urban and other interests. The priorities of the rural poor are not general they are not agricultural production, equality or the environment. They are particular, immediate and personal.

In the Indian context rural development has necessarily to be basically oriented towards reduction of poverty in rural areas. The Sixth Plan has also reinforced this: the aim of agricultural and rural development will be growth for social justice, achievement of full employment in the rural areas in a period of ten years and removal of poverty.
Strategies of Rural Development

Implementation is the execution of a programme aimed at achieving specific policy objectives. The literature on policy identifies two competing views of the process: i) the compliance approach and ii) politics of administration approach. The compliance approach assumes that implementation is a technical routine and administrators are bound to comply with guidelines established by political leaders. The second approach views administration as an integral part of the policy making process in which policies are refined, reformulated and even abandoned in the process of implementing them. However in reality the implementation of rural development projects in the developing countries is not merely a technical process but rather one of political interaction. Indeed a variety of political, behavioural, economic and organizational factors determine the extent to which rural development programmes are implemented as they were planned. A typical rural development strategy is defined as one "that achieves desired increase in farm output at minimum costs, makes possible widespread improvements in the welfare of the rural population, contributes to the transformation of a predominant agrarian economy and facilitates a broader process of social modernisation."

The strategies of rural development can be analysed on the basis of programme contents and assessment of implementation problems. Griffin classified rural development strategies as technocratic, reformist, and radical. The technocratic approach is directed at increasing rural productivity either by incorporating more conventional inputs such as land or by encouraging farmers to adopt improved technologies. This approach relies on the principles of competition, free market and private property as sufficient conditions for achieving the growth objectives. The reformist strategy attempts to reconcile redistribution with faster growth. The redistribution takes place largely from the upper income group to the middle. The beneficiaries of this approach most often are the middle peasants and large farmers. This approach is the
most popular as a nationalist stand in most of the developing nations. The radical approach aims to achieve rapid social change and redistribute political power, wealth and income to attain a higher level of production. It emphasizes social, political and economic equality and not the growth objective.¹⁵

More or less similar to Griffin's is the classification of Roth. He classifies the rural development strategies in three categories: i) radical structural, ii) incremental structural and iii) radical functional. The first approach seeks to alter the existing institutionalised socioeconomic and political structures of the rural areas. The second approach aims at gradual change through programmes like community development, land reforms and intensive agriculture. The radical functional approach seeks to emphasize changes in productive processes, adoption of new high yield varieties, intense scientific application of technical inputs and extension facilities.¹⁶ The World Bank has identified three approaches for rural development. These are i) minimum package, ii) comprehensive approach and iii) sector or special programme approach. The first approach co-ordinates in a single project technical, administrative, financial and institutional inputs. The second approach attempts to improve the productivity of selected crops throughout the country. The third approach provides single service such as health, education and public works. Owing to variation in the situation of development in the developing countries, the World Bank has shown reluctance in prescribing a definite strategy for rural development.¹⁷

Noting the experiences of the Third World countries, some critics observed that in some selected cases, rural development strategies are found to be political instrument to achieve political purposes.¹⁸ Empirical observations further reveal that in the competitive interest-oriented party system, rural development strategies are mostly short term and concentrate on a specific short-range problem, consequently, the planning process has to accommodate conflicting and contradictory demands of interest groups.¹⁹ Frustrating experience, therefore, made some observers to label the past three decades as "a quarter century of anti-rural development".²⁰

Robert Chambers has termed these strategies or approaches as those of the
outsiders who are themselves neither rural nor poor. They include academic re-
searchers, aid agency personnel, bankers, journalists, politicians and other profes-
sionals. These outsiders under-perceive rural poverty. They are trapped in urban 
cores which generate their own sort of knowledge. The direct rural experience of 
most urban-based outsiders is limited to the brief and hurried visits, from urban cen-
tres, of rural development tourism. These exhibit six biases against contact with and 
learning from the poorest of the poor. These are spatial - urban, tarmac and road-
side; project - towards places where there are projects; person - towards those who 
are better off (less poor and more influential), men rather than women, users of 
services rather than non-users and those who are active, present and living; sea-
sonal - avoiding bad times of the wet season; diplomatic - not seeking out the poor 
for fear of giving offence; and professional, confined to the concerns of the outsider's 
specialisation.21

Robert Chambers is also critical of the approaches based on partial precon-
ceptions - mainly of political economists and physical ecologists. The former belong-
ing to negative social science explain poverty in social, economic and political terms. 
On the other hand the physical ecologists belonging to positive practitioners school 
explain it in physical and ecological terms. When it comes to rural development the 
academics seek problems and criticise. They look for things going wrong, they write 
about failures not successes. While the practitioners (administrators and scientists) 
seek opportunities and work, they look for what might go right. There is critical pes-
simism for academics and positive optimism for practitioners.

These partial approaches are likely to miss significant truths. Robert Cham-
bbers, therefore, suggests a balanced pluralist approach combining both the ap-
proaches. Pluralism recognises multiple causation, multiple objectives, and multiple 
interventions. It also embodies a philosophy of reversals of the six biases of rural 
development tourism. It includes reversing the narrowing of professional vision to 
broaden it, reversing the direction of learning to enable the core people to learn from 
the rural poor, reversing the flows of information in organizations so that those at the
top learn from those below, and reversing the management bringing changes from authoritarian to participatory communication. Reversals such as these are sought, not as absolutes but to a degree to offset built-in biases and to achieve a more balanced understanding and better action. This constitutes the third culture of the rural people.\textsuperscript{22}

To achieve reversals it is best to start acting and learn by doing. The best way forward is through small steps putting the last first not once but again and again. Small reversals then support each other and together build up into a greater movement.\textsuperscript{23}

Robert Chambers devises a strategy called Rapid Rural Appraisal - a compilation of family profiles, combining the methods of social anthropology, journalism and statistical method. Deprivation has to be assessed with indicators like quality of housing, wealth in land and animals, tangible assets and nutritional status.

**Deprivation Trap:** Robert Chambers has limited his discussion to deprivation which is material and social. The poor households face five interlocking clusters of disadvantages which trap them in deprivation. They are poverty, physical weakness, isolation, vulnerability and powerlessness.

The household is poor. It has few assets in the forms of land, animals and tangible goods. The household is physically weak. The ratio of dependents to able bodied adults is high. It is seasonally hungry and its members are weakened by sickness and malnutrition. The household is isolated from the outside world. Its location in the village is peripheral. It has no access to information and education. The household is vulnerable. It has few buffers against contingencies like social conventions, disasters, physical incapacity, unproductive expenditure and exploitation. These situations often force poverty ratchets entailing the irreversible loss or sale of assets, making people poorer and more vulnerable. The household is powerless. It is an easy victim of predation by the powerful. Its position is weak in negotiating terms for the use of its labour or the sale of its produce. It is easily exploited by the rural elite.

Robert Chambers says that these clusters of disadvantages interlock. This is
Figure 1.1
Depression Trap.

variously described as the vicious circle of poverty, the syndrome of poverty and the poverty trap. Linking the five clusters gives twenty possible causal relations. Fig. 1.1 depicts that they interlock like a web to trap the people in their deprivation. Each cluster becomes a determinant of other four clusters in different degrees.

Chambers has concentrated his attention on the 'last', on the hundreds of millions of largely unseen people in rural areas who are poor, weak, isolated, vulnerable and powerless. To him whatever one's ideology it seems right to reverse the forces which exploit those people and make and keep them physically and socially wretched.

Rural Development in India

In spite of the formulation of various strategies and their implementation, the rural development programmes in the various countries of the Third World including India, have not yet succeeded in removing poverty and inequality to the desired extent.

In India, as in most countries of the Third World, the earlier approach of rural development called "multipurpose" approach had proceeded on the assumption that normal programmes of rural development like those in agriculture, irrigation, industries, electrification, transport and communication, would produce a multiplier effect and thereby generate employment and raise the living conditions of the poor. The Community Development (1952), the Intensive Agriculture District Programme (1960-61), and High Yielding Varieties Programme (1966-67) belong to this category. Hence not much direct attention came to be focussed on the problems of poverty and unemployment.

During the fifties and sixties, these programmes were launched on the assumption that poverty would be ameliorated automatically through "trickle down" and spread effect. The planners and policy makers were guided by the capital intensive industrialization policies that were aimed at maximizing gains in gross national product
regardless of the patterns of income distribution. These policies called for centrally conceived comprehensive plans for national development. The plans were produced usually only for international consumption to satisfy the requirements of international leaders.26

In terms of economic growth, it remained sluggish during the fifties and sixties, even where growth rates were high only a small group usually benefited from increased national production. Income disparities between the rich and the poor and among the regions widened. The living standard of the poorest groups in the least developed countries declined and the number of people living in what World Bank officials called "absolute poverty" were increasing.27

The earlier strategy focussed largely on economic growth in the belief that an increase on gross national product (GNP) will percolate down to the poorest and thereby eliminate poverty, inequality and unemployment in the country. However the growth model stands as the "God that failed" even after over a quarter of a century's experience and experiments with it. A rising growth rate has been no guarantee against poverty. To quote Mr. Mahbub Al Haq, "we were taught to take care of our GNP, since this would take care of poverty. Let us reverse this and take care of poverty first, since GNP can take care of itself, for it is only a convenient summation and not a motivation for human effort".28

During the seventies the effectiveness of the "trickle down" theory was questioned and it was replaced by the theory of direct social intervention as a means of promoting measures that alleviate poverty among the sections of the society. On the basis of growth-with-equity policies, clientele specific programmes like Small Farmer Development Agency (SFDA) and Marginal Farmer and Agricultural Labourer Development Agency (MFAL) were launched during the Fourth Five Year Plan. Also a variety of special programmes were launched to deal with specific areas and problems, such as Drought Prone Area Development Programme (DPAP), Desert Development Programme (DDP), Hill Area Development Programme (HADP) and Command Area Development (CAD).
To implement these programmes, the Government created plethora of agencies which caused a lot of confusion, overlapping of benefits accruing to certain groups of people and above all generated ugly facts. Both impressionistic and evaluative studies showed that a sectoral or project approach as such was not adequate from the viewpoint of social justice and full employment.

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

The Sixth Five Year Plan adopted a new approach called Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), which aimed at direct frontal attack on rural poverty by providing productive assets to the rural poor and thereby creating self-employment and generating income. It sought to end the multiplicity of programmes operated through multiplicity of agencies and replaced them with a single integrated programme through a nodal agency called District Rural Development Agency (DRDA).

Conceptually it is an integrated programme. The Draft Sixth Plan observed: "Integrated here covers four principal dimensions: integration of sectoral programmes, spatial integration, integration of social and economic processes and above all the policies with a view to achieving a better fit between growth, removal of poverty and employment generation." But the planners were not sure that this task of integration would be immediately carried out in most blocks. Therefore as an interim device it was decided to centre attention on a target group consisting of small farmers, marginal farmers, agricultural labourers, non-agricultural labourers and rural artisans. The poor households with less than Rs. 3,500/- annual income are identified on antyodaya principle under which the poorest of the poor are to be selected first. In the subsequent Seventh Plan the poverty line has been raised to Rs. 6,400/- and the cut-off line for identification of poor households would be Rs. 4,800/-. The provision of assets is to be made available to the beneficiary families partly through government subsidy and partly through bank loan. It helps in creating self-employment and
generating income so as to push them to cross the poverty line. Its allied programmes like NREP and RLEGP aim at providing supplemental wage employment and TRYSEM at providing skill to the rural youth of identified poor families so as to enable them to take self-employment.

The Government of India claim that the magical effects of IRDP are expected to "reduce the poverty ratio to 10 per cent by 1995" by lifting tens of millions of rural families above the poverty line.

Review of Literature on IRDP.

Many research studies have been conducted to examine the impact of IRD Programme on the beneficiary families. The literature on the subject is also available in the periodicals and research papers. A review of the available literature is necessary to familiarize the researcher with the concepts and issues pertaining to the subject.

The literature on IRD Programme reveals a contrast between two groups of studies. The first group consists of intensive micro-studies reported by scholars with first-hand knowledge of the functioning of IRDP. These studies have highlighted many serious flaws in the IRDP strategy and projected a negative view of the programme. 31 The second group of studies consists of large scale household surveys carried out by Government or by Banking institutions. 32 These surveys provide an encouraging and rosy picture of the achievement of IRDP. To cite only one example, according to the third round of the Concurrent Evaluation (1989)), more than 80 per cent of the beneficiaries belong to the target group, and, among those who started off below a poverty line of Rs. 3,500/-, more than half crossed this line after inclusion in IRDP. 33 This, if true, would certainly be a creditable achievement.

In these large scale surveys the investigators simply calculate the proportion of households which have crossed the poverty line by comparing pre and post IRDP
income figures which is misleading. During calculation they ignore the other factors like, (i) inflation, (ii) change in family size and (iii) interest payment on loans. Even when non-poor were assisted under the programme their annual incomes were invariably entered in the official records as below the poverty line. This fact is also not considered by the evaluation studies. The changes in income between these two single years can by no means be taken to indicate the long term impact of IRDP on the household income.

To Jean Dreze, the failure of anti-poverty programmes such as IRDP is particularly severe in the backward states of the Hindi belt, which includes Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Rajasthan. As it happens, these four states are those with the lowest literacy rates in India and it would be surprising if there was no relation between these low levels of literacy and the dismal performance of anti-poverty programmes.34

The concurrent evaluation also provides very misleading information regarding the process of selection. The procedure requires the involvement of 'Gram Sabhas' i.e. village assembly consisting of all adult members of a village. For Gujarat, the reported proportion of beneficiaries selected by the Gram Sabha is 100 per cent. (e.g., Government of India, 1989 : 48). During the field study in Gujarat Jean Dreze spoke to the investigators who made it clear that they regarded 'Gram Sabha' as synonymous with panchayat. Moreover they conceded that in practice the work of the panchayat is really done by the headman and his allies have privileged access to IRDP loans. In other words, while the concurrent evaluation tells us that in Gujarat 100 per cent of IRDP beneficiaries are selected by a village assembly of all adults, in reality there is no trace of such assemblies being convened. The concurrent evaluation could hardly be more misleading on this crucial point.35

Jean Dreze undertook a case study in Palanpur, a village in Moradabad district in western U.P. The allocation of IRDP in this village has the following features: (1) some of the most vulnerable groups (the landless) have practically no involvement in IRDP, (2) the poorest of the poor are largely excluded; (3) affluent households have
been liberally included in the programme; (4) overall there is no discrimination in favour of the poor in the allocation of loans.

On the basis of discussion with villagers and bank officials, Dreze outlines the following reasons for the low involvement of the poor in IRDP.

1) The poor are at a disadvantage in the competition for institutional loans. They are not well placed to pay large bribes, fill complicated forms, influence the village headman and find themselves guarantors.

2) The bank officials themselves are often reluctant to deal with poor borrowers because they believe that the poor are bad risks.

3) There is lack of interest among them for this programme. They are afraid of being cheated or of not being able to repay.\(^{36}\)

The initial hopes that credit based promotion of self-employment would be embedded in an integrated exercise of local planning for development have never materialised. As Rath (1985) has aptly argued, "Integrated rural development" is really a misnomer, and in practice IRDP is little more than a subsidised credit scheme. Its main distinguishing feature is that eligibility for credit is restricted to the poor.\(^{37}\)

Muthaya et al (1983)\(^{38}\) in a study covering Gujarat, Karnataka and Kerala states observed, the beneficiaries of IRDP did not possess adequate knowledge of different schemes and the amount of subsidy disbursed to them. This was because of lack of adequate contact with the concerned officials as well as the mass media. The supply of inputs and services required for effective handling of the schemes were also not sufficient.

Krishnan (1984)\(^{39}\) found that targets were fixed without realistically understanding the magnitude of poverty in a specific region resulting in benefits being liberally passed on to better off sections. The utilisation of assistance for the intended purpose was defeated. Consequently, the families below the poverty line were not in a position to raise their income to the desired extent.

Dhillon et al (1985)\(^{40}\) suggested the periodical and regular monitoring of IRDP for which adequate staff was necessary at block level. It requires completion of
formalities at credit camps, more effective district level consultative committee, strengthening the follow-up action at grass root level, training, regular technical and managerial advice to the participating families, provision of effective infrastructural support, effective liaison between DRDA and banks to avoid inconvenience and delay in disbursement of loan, joint identification of beneficiaries by Government departments and banks to avoid misidentification etc.

Setty(1988) in his article 'Field Approach to IRDP' emphasises examining, developing and establishing organisational and functional linkages among the four factors of rural development, viz, resources, organizations, infrastructure and the people. Further the approach focuses on the utilisation of local institutional leadership to guide and educate the community towards development.

Rao(1989) concluded that IRDP only partly achieved the objectives with which it was launched. A sincere effort has been lacking at all levels to link the programme with the requirements of a particular village community, the skills available in the village for various activities and the economic viability of various schemes in regard to potential available in the village.

Khatkar(1989) in his study covering district Mahendragarh of Haryana state has found that the amount of loan was inadequate in majority of the cases forcing the rural poor to borrow from other private sources which had aggravated the problem of indebtedness. Due to target oriented approach of IRDP, its benefits had percolated to non-target groups too.

After careful analysis Noor Mohammad observes that in rural India the main factors obstructing the economic progress of the poor are: illiteracy, apathy towards development programme, unawareness of the new programme and lack of commitment of the politicians and bureaucrats. All the rural development schemes are primarily monitored by the local, poorly paid officers used as village level workers. These workers together with elementary school teachers have taken the task of identifying the beneficiaries for IRDP schemes. As a result of their background and weak social status, they could not resist the influence and hence the IRDP is
meeting the same fate as the other programmes have met.

A recent study of Earthscan, a British Institute for Environment and Development, has pointed out that each village in India is different from the other village because of many local differences. The study has indicated that it is impossible to impose an externally determined plan on all villages and expect it to work. It has also emphasised that isolating one problem from other aspects of life is an artificial and counter productive policy. So each village should be considered as the smallest unit and it should be made responsible for planning and implementation of IRD programme.

Indira Hirway in her study of the target group approach in Gujarat, has found that IRDP did not incorporate any measures that would reduce the stronghold of the rich on the poor and thereby help the poor to participate. IRDP has become a partial approach that leaves out the urgent needs of the poor. Consequently, as far as the problems of non-percolation and non-participation are concerned, IRDP does not seem to be an improved version of SFDA.

S. Maheswari has discussed the role of bureaucracy in rural development. To him the strategies and approaches of rural development in India have been changing from time to time, but the bureaucratic system, the instrument of implementation, has remained more or less stable. The functionaries at the village level are responsible for identifying IRDP beneficiaries. It is this level which is having depleted and not-so-motivated staff. The IRDP is a much more intensive programme but the number of VLWs is not generally adequate. When a new scheme is launched, new posts are created but at the supervisor level, resulting in the emergence of what may be regarded as a top heavy extension agency with poor complement of workers at the village level.

Regarding DRDA, Maheswari says that though one of the major motivations behind the setting up of this agency has been to curb departmentalism in the execution of the programme, the problem of co-ordination at the district level looms large with each functional department preferring to hoe its own row.
The progress in monitoring and evaluation is not satisfactory. An effective bureaucracy is not necessarily the one which merely prides itself over the fulfilling of targets of financial expenditure and of physical nature. The target obsession makes the concerned officials claim highly exaggerated achievements, and if only these get computed, India's villages must have been developed several times over.

Regarding subsidies Prof. Maheswari says that an unintended effect of the Government's programme of subsidies, loans and benefits has been the corruption of large section of the rural community, a propensity towards overdependence on the Government has increased. This is not the end of the story. Many traditional occupations have ceased to be self perpetuating and it will bound to disrupt the organic character of rural life.

Bhupendra Hooja has studied the role of banks in extending loan to IRD beneficiaries in the state of Rajasthan. In his opinion the banks have a tendency to show total dependence on the official machinery not only in respect of loaning operations for identifying deserving beneficiaries or in the cumbersome work of documentation, but also in fixing limits of credit per unit or the choice of schemes or activities for which loans can be sanctioned. They seek all possible safeguards to protect their advances as also recoveries of outstanding loans.

Another unpleasant aspect of the dependence syndrome is the role of unscrupulous 'middle men' or intermediary agents or touts. It is also found that the commercial banks have not yet been able to make any big effort in respect of short term credit, particularly seasonal or annual crop loans for pesticides, fertilisers and seeds. Sometimes there are considerable time lags between various stages of loaning operations. Many loans are sanctioned or released towards the close of the year.

L.C. Jain et al has undertaken some field studies on the working of IRDP in certain selective blocks in the states of Bihar, Rajasthan, U.P. and Karnataka. The finding of the study is that poverty is not being diminished in the expected quantity and quality. The basic reason for the failure of this programme is the exclusion of the people from participation either in planning or implementation process and the
abandonment of the institutions of democratic decentralisation. A vast development bureaucracy has replaced the elected panchayats on the plea that panchayats could not be expected to emancipate the poor as they were dominated by powerful elements. The bureaucracy was considered a better option. To him in the absence of community involvement these assistances have failed to generate a development process. All that has been generated is dependency. The resulting development is grass without roots.48

Mr. Jain goes to the extent of suggesting winding up all the officially administered rural development programmes until the community and its elected bodies are able to shoulder this responsibility. Without it there is no hope for development, specially development with a focus on the poor. For all its faults, the institution of elected panchayats offers the best hope for development with equity, economy and integrity in the absence of any other option in sight.49

This study as well as other studies on poverty and rural development also show a high degree of interdependence between the programmes and the nature of delivery organization, any improvement in one can not yield much profit without reforming the other. The programme innovation by itself has not overcome past weaknesses regardless of the delivery mechanism. This is true of programmes for special sections or policies towards special sectors. And equally, the rural development delivery organization can not be fashioned independently of the structure of Government as a whole, specially district government.50

Jain has also criticised the implementing agency particularly the local level bureaucracy for the failure of rural development. It has lost its credibility among the rural poor as it has closely identified with the village power structure. It is easily susceptible to political interference and corruption.

Hence people's participation is a pre-requisite for the success of rural development programmes. Here by participation it means direct involvement of people and not through their representatives. This is because given the existing socio-economic and political structure of the society, representative of the people are most likely to
represent the rich rather than the interest of the poor majority.\textsuperscript{51}

However, in such a large country like India, direct participation of people is possible only at the local (village) level. Voluntary and willing participation is possible only if people benefit from such participation. Often people do not see the benefit directly and so lose interest in the programme. So sharing of benefit is an essential element for people's involvement in a programme. Participation by outside agencies should be confined to the role of catalyst.

To secure the participation of the rural poor it is necessary to mobilise them through building up viable and self-reliant organization. However under the existing social system, equitable participation of the people in the process of development can be regarded as a gradual process. The process can be accelerated only when the poor become conscious of their rights and privileges and build up faith and confidence in themselves through united strength to achieve justice for themselves in the sharing of benefits of development.

Mobilisation of the poor is not an easy task. It should be done tactfully and gradually in the initial stages to provide confidence in the poor.\textsuperscript{52}

Many hold the view that the new rural development strategies, specially directed to the alleviation of rural poverty, can not be successful unless radical restructuring of the society takes place. Further, the Indian policy makers, it is charged, do not recognise the importance of structural changes. But in actual practice they opt for administrative or managerial approach, which is considered to be neutral and politics free.\textsuperscript{53}

It is also observed that the benefits are cornered by the rich, who have access to political power. The rural poor do not suffer primarily from lack of resources and credit but also from lack of power and access rooted in the inegalitarian economic and social structure.\textsuperscript{54} Some underscored that the dominant bureaucratic culture has frustrated the participative and decentralised institutional arrangements for rural development.\textsuperscript{55}
The Present Study

A close look at the evaluation studies will lead us to the fact that the general tendency is to conduct macro studies. This is, of course, necessary to provide the requisite policy direction. Such evaluation studies are purely informative and descriptive in nature. They try to find out whether the programme has been implemented as planned without analysing the underlying assumptions behind the programme.

Micro level study is as essential as the macro level study, as it gives the detailed knowledge of the functioning of the programme. The micro studies made by different scholars reveal the loopholes and inadequacies in the implementation of the IRD Programme. All these studies are almost unanimous on the fact that the benefits of this programme have not reached the target group to the desired extent.

None of these studies has taken an integrated and comprehensive view of the implementation and impact of the programme. The aspect of socio-economic constraints on the way of the success of IRDP has not yet received the attention it deserves.

The study of the functioning and efficacy of IRDP launched in Sambalpur sadar sub-division has not received adequate attention either from the government or from the academicians. As a result very little is known about the flaws in the implementation of the programme. The present study is a modest attempt to fill this gap to some extent. It is a comprehensive study comprising both a macro analytical and micro empirical study of the implementation and impact of IRDP as obtained in sadar sub-division of the Sambalpur district in the state of Orissa. Both the studies supplement each other in reinforcing the findings. As a macro study it deals with the overall progress of IRDP on the basis of secondary data. The researcher has limited the scope and area of the study to the sadar sub-division, as it represents an ideal administrative unit for the study of this programme. It consists of four blocks such as Dhankauda, Maneswar, Rengali and Jujomura. Of these four blocks the former two
blocks adjoining the district headquarters have better endowments in terms of land, water, animal stock, industry, banking and co-operative structure than the two other peripheral blocks. It helps the researcher to have a comparative study of the progress of IRDP as obtained in the four blocks. Another reason for the selection of this subdivision is the fact that it has a substantial scheduled castes and scheduled tribes population (56%), which constitute the real target group of the IRD Programme. For the purpose of empirical study the researcher has also limited the size of the sample to 300 beneficiaries from the universe of the sadar sub-division.

Objectives

The proposed study endeavours to undertake a comprehensive investigation into the working of IRDP in the area of the study. The main objectives of the study are as follows:

1) to analyse the progress of IRDP in physical terms in the sadar subdivision vis-a-vis at the district and state level and to find out sectoral imbalances in the achievements of the programme.
2) to appraise the process of identification of the beneficiaries and the selection of schemes for them.
3) to assess the impact of IRDP on the beneficiary households.
4) to identify factors which have inhibited the effectiveness of the programme and which have made them successful.
5) finally to put forward some concrete suggestions on the basis of the data collected for this study.

Thus this study is a modest attempt to find answers to the above inquiries.

Hypotheses

The hypotheses against which this research is undertaken are:

1) The benefits of the IRD Programme are likely to reach the poorest of the poor because of its direct attack on poverty.
2) As IRDP is an asset based programme, it is likely to increase the income of the beneficiary households in a significant manner and thereby help them to cross the poverty line.

3) The programme is likely to overcome the real constraints of the rural poor and help them to cross the poverty line. These include the lack of access to infrastructural and basic facilities like land, credit institutions, marketing, transport, veterinary care, health care, drinking water, education and information. The other constraints include lack of access to political power, influence and administration. The caste and cultural barriers of the society also constitute the social constraint of the rural poor.

4) It is likely to encourage the participation of people in the planning and implementation of the programme.

Methodology

The present study is based on primary as well as secondary data. The secondary data were obtained from the records maintained in the offices of the Block Development Officers, District Rural Development Agency (DRDA), Sambalpur, the Department of Rural Reconstruction of the Government of Orissa and the Banks. Besides the government circulars and instructions the various committee reports also formed the very basis of the present work.

The primary data were collected through a sample survey of the beneficiaries selected from the sadar subdivision in the district of Sambalpur. For the purpose of this survey a beneficiary is the one who has availed the benefits of the programme during 1985-86 and 1986-87. Thus the universe of the present empirical study is definite and the source lists were obtained from the block head-quarters.

Cluster sampling design was employed for drawing the required number of 300 sample beneficiaries. The beneficiaries in four to five adjoining villages were grouped into a number of clusters, each cluster comprising of around 75 beneficiaries. From among these clusters four clusters were randomly selected for inclusion in the overall sample. The ultimate sample consists of all the beneficiaries in these four
clusters. While selecting villages for constituting clusters efforts were made so that schemes were represented in the sample in the same proportion as in the total population.

The data were collected from the sample beneficiaries through the personal interview method. The interview schedule administered to the beneficiaries and officials are given in Annexures I and II respectively. The other sources of primary data came from interviews with the officials of the Block, DRDA and Banks. The data collected in this manner have also been supplemented at appropriate places by the researcher's own observations after attending consultative committee meetings at the block and district levels.

The data collected from different sources have been presented in tables in one or more forms according to the requirements of analysis. Each table is accompanied by appropriate analysis and explanation of the data and its significance. The researcher has made limited use of sophisticated techniques of analysis and it is confined to cases wherever it is indispensable. Ratio, percentages and averages have been worked out for making comparisons and analysis.

Organisation of the Study

The whole thesis has been divided into eight chapters. The First Chapter entitled "Introduction" provides a brief overview of literature regarding the policies and strategies of rural development and the objectives of the study. It also states the hypotheses against which this research was undertaken, explains the methodology adopted for the study, organisation of the study and its limitations.

The Second Chapter is devoted to the profile of the district of Sambalpur. Keeping in view of the case study in mind an attempt has been made in this chapter to discuss the basic demography, natural resources and infrastructure facilities as obtained in the four blocks of the sadar subdivision in detail along with the district scenario.

The Third Chapter presents a macro analysis of the achievements of IRD
Programme in the province of Orissa in general and in the district of Sambalpur along with the sadar subdivision in particular.

In the Chapter Four an attempt has been made to identify the socio-economic conditions of the sample beneficiaries to undertake the micro empirical study. The socio-economic factors viz. caste, family size, age, education, awareness, occupation and income determine the success or failure of the anti-poverty programmes like the present IRD programme.

Chapter Five is devoted to an empirical investigation and assessment of IRD Programme in sadar subdivision. It includes the process of identification and selection of beneficiary households, selection of schemes and financing and purchase of assets for them.

The subsequent chapter, i.e., Chapter Six deals with the monitoring and impact of the programme. It involves the back up services, physical verification of assets and monitoring cards and assessment of incremental income.

The conclusions and inferences drawn from the findings of both the macro analysis and micro empirical study along with their policy implications constitute the subject matter of the Final Chapter. It also endeavours to make some meaningful suggestions to achieve desired success in rural development.

This brief introduction of the study will provide the necessary background to appreciate the operation of IRD Programme in Sambalpur sadar sub-division.

Limitations of the Study

To know the extent to which the study is reliable, it is important to state the limitations under which the study has been undertaken.

The first and foremost limiting factor of the present work is the sample size. The selection of 300 beneficiaries may not be quite representative of the whole sadar sub-division in the district of Sambalpur, as the sample would work out to be a very small percentage of total number of beneficiaries covered during these two years of 1985 - 86 and 1986 - 87. However all care has been taken to overcome this
deficiency by way of including the beneficiaries of each of the schemes and by making the sample a representative of the population.

The study depends mainly on the primary data collected from the beneficiaries who are mostly illiterate and do not keep proper record of their income, expenditure and other transactions. Though sufficient care has been observed by way of incorporating adequate cross checks in the interview schedule, it can not be ruled out that their reporting based on memory may not be fully correct.
References

3. Ibid.


22. Ibid., pp. 44 - 45

23. Ibid., p. 190


27. Ibid.


33. Government of India (1989), pp. VII, IX,


35. Ibid., p. 101.

36. Ibid., pp. 97-98.


49. Ibid., p. 217.


