On Going Programmes of Rural Development
CHAPTER - II

ON GOING PROGRAMMES OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

An Overview:

It would be necessary to examine the rural scenario in India before elaborating rural development as a concept. The present can be understood in a better manner if the past is clear and factual. Nearly 81% of India's population lives in villages spread over 6,30,000 villages. Agricultural farming provides gainful employment for 90% of its population. Out of the working force 72% were agriculturists comprising cultivators, agricultural labourers and those engaged in livestock, forestry, fisheries and plantations. Their contribution to national income is considerable.

Although major efforts, planned programme and strategies for rural development were put into action, after 1947, as a concept, it had received the attention of the national leaders much earlier. It may be said that agricultural development is a major part of rural development but that is not the total plan. Rural Development is a broader concept and is concerned with the total development of the rural economy as a whole. Rural development is a wholistic concept rather than a sequential

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one. Thus, it is equally concerned with the development of infrastructure like roads, transport, power, insurance and banking, development of cottage industries, rural poverty, unemployment, encouraging traditional crafts and industries and providing modern education, health facilities and providing cheap but decent houses for the rural poor and deprived.

The programmes for increasing agricultural production and to bring improvement in other spheres of rural areas were of three broad categories viz. 2

A. The programme for increasing agricultural production
B. Area Development Programme, and
C. Programmes for special target groups

The three main programmes introduced for increasing agricultural productions were:

A.1. Intensive Agricultural Area Programme (IAAP):

The Intensive Agricultural District Programme was introduced in 1960-61 on the recommendations of the Agricultural Production Team sponsored by the Ford

2. Madan, G.R. India's Developing Villages, Print House (India), Lucknow, 1983, p.22-44.
Foundation. The team observed that there were no inherent soil, climatic or other physical reasons for the present-low yield. Therefore in selected districts attempts were to be made to provide all the essential elements for increasing agricultural production such as supply of fertilizers, pesticides, improved seeds and implements, supply of adequate credit to all farmers including uncreditworthy, etc., with the help of extra extension staff especially in agriculture and co-operatives.

In 1964-65, a modified version of the same approach was extended to several other parts of the country in the form of Intensive Agricultural Area Programme. These programmes were concerned with the promotion of Intensive agriculture and were taken up in those areas which had assured irrigation facilities. The main concern of the programme was with specific crops. In the beginning the selection of districts was on the basis of assured irrigation facilities, minimum hazards and well developed rural institution.

However, it was subsequently discovered that these programmes operated within the limitation set by existing crop varieties which had relatively low response to fertilizers. Thus, the major change occurred with the
introduction of the high-yielding varieties all over the country. In a sense the scheme as such was given up. It needs to be pointed out that another similar scheme under the head projects for Intensive and Integrated Agricultural Development was taken up during the Fifth Plan.

A.2. Projects for Intensive and Integrated Agricultural Development:

The experience of Intensive Agricultural District Programme showed certain deficiencies in the frame for intensive development. The administrative boundaries of the district were a handicap in the scientific development and optimal utilisation of irrigation facilities. There were many other developmental sectors ancillary, to agriculture which could not be touched. This led to setting up of task force on Integrated Rural Development by the Planning Commission in October 1971. It submitted its first report on IADP in the canal irrigated areas in September 1972. The report highlighted the problems of command areas of the River Valley Projects where the realisation of the fullest production potentials could be attempted by mutually reinforcing measures connected with the development of local land and water resources.
On the basis of recommendations made by the Task force on IRD, some pilot projects were taken up during the Fifth Plan period in certain districts. These projects envisaged integrated land and water development in conjunction with other complementary programmes including consolidation of holdings. For the optimum utilisation of land and water Resources, the measures that were taken up includes:

Consolidation of holdings; land levelling and land shaping; Realignment and lining of water courses; Draining and cleaning of nallahs; Provision of drainage and ditches; Provision of supplementary irrigation facilities from ground water resources wherever necessary and Provision of supplies.

Initially it was proposed to take up 4000 hectares in each of the selected districts and the effect of demonstration spread to cover more area.

A.3. High Yielding Varieties Programme (HYVP):

The hybridization techniques for certain crops were introduced from 1960. However, the propagation of
various high-yielding varieties for wheat, paddy, bajra, maize and jowar over fairly large areas was taken up as a full-fledged programme from 1966 onwards. The new strategy was connected not only with higher yield but with great intensity of cropping due to development of short duration varieties suited to different agro-climatic conditions.

B. Programme for Area Development:

The special programme for Agricultural development only helped the rich farmers in better regions where means of irrigation were adequate. Some programmes were introduced for the development of special areas.

B.1. Drought-Prone Area Programme (DPAP):

It has been estimated that in the whole of the country there are 128 districts with low to medium annual rainfall under 1125 mm, and which have very limited irrigation facilities. These districts account for nearly 68 million hectares or about half of the total net area sown. Out of these 128 districts, 91 have an annual rainfall ranging from 750 to 1125 mm. Covering 42 million hectares and this area holds good premise of responding to a new package of technology.
In the second plan, 45 dry farming projects covering about 400 hectares each, were taken up in different states and were extended through the Third Plan. The programmes taken up in these projects included engineering measure such as contourbunding and terracing, and agronomic practices relating to water conservation. However, the programme had only a limited success.

Besides the normal funds allocated by the states, the Central Government was to contribute Rs.2 to 3 crores for each drought-prone districts, depending upon the area characterised as drought prone. Integrated plan of development for each such district was to be carefully drawn up in consultation with atleast five departments viz., agriculture, irrigation, animal husbandry, forestry and co-operation.

B.2. Command Area Development Programme:

With the large public sector investment of about Rs.2,500 crores in major and medium irrigation projects, the need was felt for the optimum utilisation of the irrigation potentials. The need for land shaping and other farm works, the non-existence of proper drainage systems leading to the problems of water logging, salinity and
alkalinity, the practice of doing field irrigation, the non-adoption of roastering system of irrigation as well as irrigation during the night and the inadequacy of infrastructure and inputs led to the under utilisation of the irrigation potential in case of large number of projects. It was therefore, felt that an integrated area development approach should be adopted in dealing with all these points in order to ensure optimum production. This matter came up for consideration before the Irrigation commission and was also dealt with by the National Commission on Agriculture which came to the conclusion that more co-ordinated work was required to be done by the Department of Irrigation, soils and Agriculture to make the best use of the irrigation system with its modernisation and the adjustment of cropping patterns to the soils and agro-climatic conditions of the command areas.

This programme of integrated development of 50 major irrigation projects covering 14 million hectares were also to help the rice programmes which previously suffered because of bad water management. The multi-cropping programme too received encouragement, with special emphasis on the cash crops, particularly oil seeds and pulses which were in serious short supply.
B.3. Hill Area Development Programme (HADP):

The hill area presents special programme relating to socio-economic transformation. The major thrust of this programme lies in the identification of backward regions in states with sizeable hill areas and formulation of a separate sub-plan for the development of these areas. Pilot projects were taken up under this programme in Himachal Pradesh, Utter Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. The main strategy in these projects was the integrated development of agriculture, animal husbandry, horticulture, land-development and soil conservation, minor irrigation and other basic infrastructural facilities on water shed basis.

Similarly there are schemes for tribal areas, less developed plain areas, where special programmes have been taken up with the assistance provided by the Central Government. Such areas can be categorised either under special area programme, specific target group programme or regional development programme.

C. Programmes for special target group:

The programmes introduced for certain special target groups were:
(1) Special Programme for Small Farmers and Agricultural Labourers.

(2) Rural Industries Projects and Rural Artisan Programme
(3) Antyodaya Programme
(4) Rural Works Programme
(5) Jawahar Rozgar Yojana

Special Programme for Small Farmers and Agricultural Labourers:

It was realised that inspite of large incentives given to co-operative farming for mitigating the effects of uneconomic holdings, it has not been possible to organise co-operative farms among the small farmers. The farmers whose holding was less than 2 hectares comprised 52% of the rural households while agricultural labourers were 24%. The new agricultural technology tended to add a further dimension of disparity between those who had resources to make use of it and those who had not. On the other hand several studies conducted in recent years showed that small farmers where no less progressive than the larger farmers provided that they had the suitable means to participate in the available technology.
Although the programme was initiated in 1969 the working was started only in 1971-72. By the end of March 1973 the agencies had identified 24 lakhs small farmers and 11 lakhs marginal farmers and agricultural labourers. Out of these 35 lakhs, 15 lakhs were brought within the co-operative fold. One of the important items among the physical programmes taken was minor irrigation under which wells were dug and pumpsets were installed.

Rural Industries Projects and Rural Artisans Programme (RIP and RAP):

With a view to accelerate the development of rural areas, the Rural Industries Projects (RIP) were initiated as a centrally sponsored scheme in 1962-63 to involve appropriate methods and techniques for intensive development of village and small industries. The main objective of this programme were to enlarge employment opportunities to raise income and standard of living of the Rural People and to reduce exodus to urban areas.

The Rural Artisans Programme (RAP) which was another Centrally sponsored scheme provided for the upgrading of the skills of rural artisans, adoption of new skills through training of artisans and providing tools at
subsidised rate at the end of the training period. It should be stated here that the Rural Artisans programme was discontinued in the beginning of Sixth Plan in 1978. The programme was now to be taken up in areas not covered by the Rural Industries Programme. The latest programme introduced in this respect is the District Industries Centre (DICs) programme started in 1978 during the Janatha Government regime.

Antyodaya Programme:

The term "Antyodaya" stands for the upliftment of the poorest of the poor.\(^3\) This scheme was introduced in 1978. Under this scheme five poorest families in a village were selected in a grama sabha meeting. Each Antyodaya family could be given loan and subsidies up to Rs.5,000 for taking up an occupation of his own choice. 50% of the amount was to be available as subsidy from the Government. Loan was to be disbursed in kind for the purchase of tools equipments etc., which were to be hypothecated to the bank issuing the loan. The activities that could be taken up under the programme were to suit the experience and aptitude of the family members concerned. These could include purchase of milch cattle, pig-rearing, shoe-making, goat-rearing, bullock-cart etc.

Rural Works Programme (RWP):

The Planning Commission in the Third Plan recommended for the Rural Works Programme to provide employment to the weaker sections and the aim was to provide employment to about 2.5 million people during the slack season. However, as pointed out by the Planning Commission in the Fourth Plan the Rural Works Programme could not yield results commensurate with the expenditure because it was not integrated into local development planning. This deficiency was to be made good by integrating local programmes with area development plans. As stated earlier special programmes for weaker sections were undertaken under the SFDA programme during the Fourth Plan. However, Rural Works Programme was proposed to be taken up in 40 chronically drought prone district with an outlay of Rs.100/- crores to provide unemployment relief in such areas. Instead of Rural Works Programme as such certain other schemes were taken up in subsequent years to provide employment to the underemployed, unemployed in the rural area. Some of these were,

a) Crash scheme for Rural Employment

b) Pilot Intensive Rural Employment Scheme  
c) Special Employment Guarantee Scheme  
d) Food for Work Programme  
e) National Rural Employment Programme  
f) Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme  

Crash Scheme for Rural Employment:

Instead of Rural Works Programme taken up during the Third Plan period, a crash scheme for rural employment was taken up in 1971-72 as a non-plan programme to promote quick and direct employment to at least some specific numbers in each district. The scheme had a two-fold purpose viz.,

(i) Generating employment for thousand persons on an average per year in each district, and,

(ii) Production of assets of a durable nature in consonance with local development plan.

The work undertaken was to be such as it would be completed within two working seasons. During the years 1971-72 and 1972-73 the expenditure incurred were Rs. 31 Crores and Rs. 52 Crores and the employment generated was 800 lakhs and 1300 lakhs man-days respectively. Experience of, the working of the programme showed that resources were thinly spread over a large number of small projects mostly connected with communication.
Pilot Intensive Rural Employment Scheme:

During 1972-73 a Pilot Intensive Rural Employment Scheme was taken up in 15 selected blocks to provide full employment to everyone who was willing to work. These adhoc schemes of crash employment and Intensive Rural were gradually given up as the programmes like SFDA, MFAD and DPAP were fully spread up and in view of the integrated approach towards area development of which rural development and employment were to form the basic objectives. Similarly, more employment was to be generated through the construction of rural roads, programme of drinking water supply, construction of educational buildings, primary health centres, etc., under the minimum needs programme.

Special Employment Guarantee Scheme:

Special schemes were formulated by the government to provide increasing employment avenues in the rural areas. This scheme formed part of the State Plan Programme of the Integrated Area Development Scheme for small farmers and agricultural labourers. The works proposed to be undertaken under the scheme related to contourbunding irrigation, roads and village industries.
Food for Work Programme:

The Food for Work Programme was introduced in 1977 during the Janata Government Rule. This was to provide employment to the unemployed/underemployed village workers during the slack season and at the same time to create community assets of lasting value and provide cereals at reasonable prices. The wages paid to them are in the form of food grains.

National Rural Employment Programme (NREP):

The Congress regime in 1980 made some modification in the above scheme and it was renamed as 'NREP'. In the programme development projects and target group-oriented employment generation projects were closely intertwined. A large number of people in the rural areas are without assets or possess grossly inadequate assets and need to be provided wage employment. This segment of the rural poor which largely depends on wage employment has no source of income during the lean agricultural period. Under this programme development projects aimed at generating employment for the rural poor would be initiated. NREP would be implemented as a centrally sponsored scheme on 50:50 sharing basis between the centre and the States. The
centre would provide its share in the form of foodgrains to the extent surplus food grains were available and the rest in cash.

Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP):

Rural development for poverty alleviation has been the major thrust of the Government strategy during the VII Five Year Plan. The programme known as Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) was launched in 1983. Its objective was to improve and expand employment opportunities particularly for the rural landless labourers to provide guarantee of employment to at least one member of every rural landless household upto 100 days in a year.

Instead of problem-based area programmes or target group area programme or comprehensive area development programme a new approach in which community participation or proper development of service on hierarchial basis in a particular area or region was emphasised were also tried. This took the form of whole village development, Integrated Rural Development, Regional Development etc.

Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP):

To alleviate rural poverty, the Sixth Plan
launched an Integrated Rural Development Programme directed mainly towards the poorest sections in rural areas viz., families of landless labourers, small and marginal farmers, rural artisans, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and socially and economically backward classes. Households below the poverty line were to be assisted through an appropriate package of technologies, services and assist transfer programmes.

The operational strategy of IRDP intended to follow the 'household approach' rather than 'individual approach'. The poorest households would be identified and the economic upliftment of these households would be sought through a package of activities involving all working members, with particular attention being given to women.

Of the approximately 20,000 families in a block, about 10,000 - 12,000 families on an average would be below the poverty line. It was proposed to cover 3,000 families on an average in each block and bring them above the poverty line during the 5 year period (1980-85).

These scale of resources available for the programme would be Rs.5 lakhs per block in the first year of
the plan, Rs.6 lakhs in the second year, and Rs.8 lakhs each in the last 3 years of the Sixth Plan.

Minimum Needs Programme:

The Sixth Plan intended to continue the Minimum Needs Programme introduced in the Fifth Plan with a total outlay of about Rs.5,800/- crores. 5 This programme laid down the following targets and outlays.

Elementary and Adult Education:

The programme targeted for 95 percent enrolment in the age group 6-11 and 50 percent in the age group 11-14 to extend elementary education. Besides, the plan intended to cover 100 percent of illiterate adults in the age group 15-35 by 1990 through a programme of non-formal education.

Rural Health:

The Sixth Plan proposed to establish 600 primary health centres and 1,000 sub-health centres over and above the 5,400 PHCs and SHCs existing then. In addition, there

was a scheme to provide a Community Health Volunteer (CHV) for a population of 1,000 in a village.

**Rural Roads and Rural Electrification:**

Regarding rural electrification, the plan proposed to extend the benefit of electric energy to an additional 46200 villages.

**Housing Assistance to Rural Landless Labourers:**

The Sixth Plan proposed to cover all the remaining landless households for the allotment of house sites and 25 percent of the eligible house-holds i.e., about 3.6 million for provision of assistance for construction of houses.

**Environmental improvement of Urban Slums:**

Slum Improvement Programme including water supply, sewerage, paving of streets, storm water drains, community latrines, etc. Covering the remaining 40 percent of the slum population (i.e.) 10 million would be completed by 1985.

**Applied Nutrition Programme:**

This programme is designed to improve nutritional
status of people, particularly mothers and children in rural areas, and is based on self-help activities and promotion of local resources – vegetables, fruits, poultry, fishery etc. This programme ensures to utilise, in co-operation with the health personnel, part of the foods locally produced for feeding programmes for young malnourished children in the village and also for pregnant and lactating women. The small sized production units, village poultry units, kitchen and country gardens etc., are educational aids to teach villagers of the importance of growth and value of such nutritive food.

State Government implemented this programme in selected community development blocks with the help of UNICEF who are supplying the basic equipment for the production, components and for training of the participants. The FAO and the WHO render technical service for those aspects of the programme with which they are concerned. The programme, however, is a part of the National Planning effort and the major part of the financial resources comes from the respective State Plan schemes whose contribution per block is of the order of Rs.51,000 annually. The provision made in the Fifth Five Year Plan for this programme were of the order of Rs.20 crores. It is reported
that there are 1275 applied nutrition programme blocks in the country. More than 10,000 villages have been covered and by the end of the year 1984-85 another 20,000 villages are likely to be covered.

Extension Education and Training Schemes:

There are various central sector schemes for extension education and training of associate women workers in the rural areas. Under the programme for training of associate women workers, 24,000 women were trained. These women would give technical guidance to Mahila Mandals for giving fillip to the nutrition programme.

With regard to extension education a network of farmers training institutions has been started in the country where besides training the field workers, farmers are given instructions regarding latest agricultural techniques. They are also taken around demonstration plots and agricultural farms run by the State Government. These farmers serve as leaders of the community to disseminate

knowledge of modern technological inputs and scientific crop planning.

**National Adult Education Programme (NAEP):**

The National Adult Education Programme was launched in the country in 1978. The objective of this programme is to educate adult in the age group of 15-35 years so as to

(a) enable them to pursue a course of literacy instructions;

(b) make them critically aware of the environment around them; and

(c) give them opportunities to raise their functional competence to changing environment.

The programme recognises the importance of the productive age group of 15-35 years. It is in this phase of life that people get married, upgrade their skills and have an understanding of the socio-economic perspectives. It is a developmental programme, oriented towards the people. It holds a promise to millions in the country of infusing a
hope among them to achieve self-reliance, upgrade their functional skills and secure social justice.

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

The scheme of Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment was initiated in 1979. The main thrust of this scheme was on equipping rural youth with necessary skills and technology, to enable them to seek self-employment. Normally, persons between 18-35 years of age are covered under this scheme. The target for the scheme is to impart training to at least 2 lakhs youths every year all over the country, with at least a minimum of 40 youths per block. This scheme has now become a part and parcel of the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP). The target of 40 youths per block is a part of the overall target of 600 families laid down for the IRDP, as a whole.

The target group for TRYSEM are small farmers, marginal farmers, agricultural labourers, non-agricultural labourers, rural artisans and all other persons below poverty line. The training is imparted either through institutions or through individual trainers. The District
Industries Centre, the B.D.O., the Extension Officer (Industries) and the V.L.Ws are associated in the process of selection of beneficiaries and identification of opportunities for training under TRYSEM priority in selection is accorded to the poorest families.

**Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY):**

Evaluation of the implementation of NREP and RLEGEP Programmes showed that even after 7 to 8 years of implementation more than 50% of the villages did not get the benefit of any work programme at all. There was also not much involvement of the people at grass-root level in identifying the items of work and implementation of the programme. Thus, a new scheme, Jawaharlal Nehru Rozgar Yojana was announced in February 1989 for intensive employment in 120 backward districts. With a view to making the rural employment programmes more effective NREP, RLEGEP and Jawaharlal Nehru Rozgar Yojana were merged into a single rural employment programmes on 1st April 1989, to be known as Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) with an outlay of Rs.2100 Crores as Central share during 1989-'90. The expenditure under the programme was shared between Centre and the States on 80:20 basis.
The objectives of the programme were, generation of additional gainful employment for unemployed and underemployed in the rural areas; creation of productive community assets for direct and continuing benefits to the poverty groups and for strengthening rural, economic and social infrastructure which will lead to rapid growth of rural economy and steady rise in the income levels of the rural poor; Improvement in the overall quality of life in the rural areas.

Conclusion:

Rural Development for poverty alleviation has been the major thrust of the Government strategy during the VII Five Year Plan. The significant shift from Community Development in the earlier Five Year Plans to target-oriented and area development programmes in the subsequent Plans culminated into specific employment-oriented programmes in the VI Five Year Plan - viz., self employment and wage employment programmes. In the Self-Employment Programme (IRDP), credit and subsidy were provided to generate income earning assets. The major intervention to promote self-employment in several areas has been to forge backward and forward linkages with available infrastructure and markets. The twin objectives of the wage
employment programmes on the other hand have been asset creation in rural areas for filling the infrastructure gaps, and providing employment and wage opportunities to the rural poor, seeking work and wage. The selection of public assets to be created under the wage employment programme was, in its turn to fulfil the minimum needs of the community.

Recognition of concentration of poverty amongst Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and free bonded labour who have faced social deprivation over the years has prompted ear-marking of special benefits under various programmes as also special programmes for these sections of society. More significant in this category is the introduction of Indira Awaas Yojana (1985) whereby houses were constructed with infrastructure of water and sanitation in the SC/ST habitations. The Million Wells Scheme (1988) was also introduced for the benefit of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes who had access to land for improving their agriculture. The poor social and economic status of women in society called for specific emphasis on programmes for women in various schemes implemented for development. Apart from the specific targets for women beneficiaries under the self-employment and wage-employment programmes,
exclusive programmes like DWCRA have been expanded to cover larger number of women in the country. During the year 1989-90 (upto December 1989) 19.96 lakh families were assisted under IRDP against the annual target of 29.09 lakh families. 69136 rural youth were trained under TRYSEM. Over 456 million mandays of employment were generated. 26698 hectares of surplus land was distributed among the landless. 45524 houses were constructed under Indira Awaas Yojana. 6120 problem villages were provided with potable drinking water. Over 32015 sanitary latrines were constructed.