CHAPTER 3

RURAL DEVELOPMENT DURING PLANNING PERIOD

3.1.0.0 Introduction

After attaining independence, the main concern of the Planners was to pay adequate attention to the rural development sector. Thus in 1950, the Planning Commission was set up in order to prepare the development plan of the country and several Five Year Plans were formulated for the most effective and planned utilisation of the country’s resources. Beginning with the First Five Year Plan in 1951, we are now passing through the IX Five Year Plan. During this period, several changes have taken place in the policy framework of rural development.

In the beginning of our development planning, it was sought to initiate a process of all-round balanced development to ensure a rising national income and a steady improvement in living standards of the people over a period. The aim was not merely to plan with the socio-economic framework but change it progressively through democratic methods. It was to be achieved through full
participation of the people. The consecutive Five Year Plans and their major development are briefly described below:

3.2.0.0 The First Five Year Plan (1951-56)

When India attained freedom, it presented a picture of poverty, malnutrition, poor standards of public health and mass illiteracy. This was the background against which the First Five Year Plan was formulated and there was a resolve to reconstruct the country socially and economically. Since majority of the population lived in rural villages, special attention was given to rural development programmes in the First Plan itself. The programme had a two-fold objective to correct the disequilibrium in economy caused by the Second World War and partition of the country and also to initiate simultaneously a process of all-round balanced development.

The First Plan emphasised that the central objective of planning in India is to raise the standard of living of the people and to open out to them opportunities for a richer and more varied life. For achieving the desired changes in the social and economic life of the rural areas, a comprehensive programme known as Community Development Programme was launched

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2 Government of India, Planning Commission, First Five Year Plan, New Delhi, 1952, p.11.
through which emphasis was given to the development of agriculture, irrigation, power, transport, communication, education, health and employment.

3.2.1.0 The Community Development Programme

The Community Development Programme (CDP) was the first concrete effort drawn up for the development of rural areas, immediately after the formation of the Planning Commission in 1950 under the chairmanship of Jawaharlal Nehru. The CDP, launched in 2 October 1952, was designed to initiate the socio-economic transformation of rural life. Through this programme, the rural people directly participated in the solution of their common problems and unite the community efforts with those of the Government for their betterment.

The UN Report observed the term ‘Community Development’ has come to connote the process by which the efforts of the governmental authorities to improve the economic, social and cultural conditions of communities, to integrate these communities into the life of the nation, and to enable them to contribute fully to national progress.

According to Jawaharlal Nehru the Community Development Programme was “the process by which the efforts of the people are united with those

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of the governmental authorities to improve economic, social and cultural conditions of communities, to integrate these communities into the life of the nation and to enable them to contribute fully to national progress."

Through this programme, the Development Block was introduced as a unit of development administration. The programme covered the areas of development of agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry, fisheries, forestry, rural and cottage industries and promotion of health, sanitation, communication and social education. The programme was a multi-purpose one, but placed emphasis on agricultural production as the areas selected were those endowed with irrigation facilities or had assured rainfall.

Despite its multi-faceted nature, the programme mainly focused on the economic improvement of the rural poor. Thus agriculture got priority attention and other employment avenues were to be promoted to reduce the pressure on land and so development of cottage industries and other crafts were considered to be important.

The National Extension Service Programme was another attempt during this period.

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5 U. C. Ghildyal, "Changing Pattern of Community Development", Kurukshetra, New Delhi, October 1, 1972, p.29.

3.3.0.0 The Second Five Year Plan (1956-61)

The Second Five Year Plan extended the community development activities all over the country with the inception of Panchayati Raj in 1959. The main objectives of the Plan were:

i. an increase of 25% in the national income,

ii. rapid industrialisation with particular emphasis on the development of basic and heavy industries,

iii. large expansion of employment opportunities, and

iv. reduction of inequalities in income, wealth and more even distribution.\(^7\)

The Khadi and Village Industries Programme, Village Housing Projects Scheme, Tribal Area Development Programme, Package Programme, Intensive Agricultural District Programme were the major programmes of rural reconstruction during this Plan Period.

3.3.1.0 The Intensive Agricultural District Programme

The Intensive Agricultural District Programme (IADP) was introduced in 1962 with all the essential elements for increasing production to the extent needed, such as supply of fertilizers, pesticides, improved seeds and implements.

and composite scientific demonstrations. More liberal credit and agricultural extension were also provided under this programme. The objectives of IADP were:

i. To emphasise the necessity for government policies that could provide farmers incentives, assure needed inputs such as fertilisers, improved seed varieties, essential financial resources and competent staff to the betterment of the programme,

ii. To put together a package of practices within the resources and competence of all cultivators that were to be field-tested and adopted to farm conditions and then recommended through extension workers for the farmer's adoption,

iii. To transform existing or create new institution-oriented to and capable of providing all the cultivators with the services and inputs related to the recommended package of practices,

iv. To provide markets that were farmer-oriented and trustworthy.

3.4.0.0 The Third Five Year Plan (1961-66)

The Third Five Year Plan laid emphasis on reduction in poverty and promotion of economic prosperity by way of self-employment. During this

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period, the Planning Commission initiating the process of involving the States in Plan preparation. The States were asked to compile data in respect of their developmental performance, priorities, resource position and suggest the ways for minimising the gap between the developed and underdeveloped regions. All these plans thus emerged were intended to be suitable to the geography, climate, traditions and customs of the concerned States.

The important rural development programmes during this period were:
Applied Nutrition Programme, The Rural Industries Projects, Intensive Agricultural Area Programme, High Yielding Variety Programme, Rural Works Programme, Tribal Development Block Programme etc.

3.4.1.0 Applied Nutrition Programme

The Applied Nutrition Programme was introduced in the rural areas in 1962 in collaboration with UNICEF and some other agencies.\(^\text{10}\) The main ingredients of the programme were production and distribution of nutritious food. Besides, the programme also activated education and consumption of nutritious food.\(^\text{11}\) The beneficiaries of the programme were the pre-school children and the pregnant and nursing mothers. In addition, the School Feeding Programme of the Ministry of Education and the Special Nutrition Programme of the

Department of Social Welfare covered millions of children of poor families. However, if these nutrition programmes have to make any impact, these should be based more on local needs. Also, there is an immediate need for co-ordinating different programmes in the area of nutrition. The Seventh Plan laid down the measures taken to line up the Special Nutrition Programme and mid-day meal with other inputs like health, water supply, hygiene and sanitation.

3.4.2.0 Panchayati Raj

The formation and introduction of Panchayati Raj system is a major development during this Five Year Plan period. Panchayati Raj is an important feature of the Indian political system which ensures the direct participation of people at the grassroots level. Though Panchayats have been in existence in India since ancient times, they suffered a setback during the British rule. After independence, the framers of the Constitution decided to give them importance and directed the States to organise Village Panchayats as units of rural self-government. Accordingly in 1956, the National Development Council appointed Balwant Rai Mehta Committee to suggest measures for the better working of the community development and National Extension Service. The Committee submitted its report in 1957, in which it recommended:

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12 Ibid., p. 33.
i. the formation of a hierarchic three-tier system of rural local government to be called Panchayati Raj. The three tires are the Grama Panchayat at Village level, the Panchayat Samiti at intermediate level and the Zilla Parishad at District level

ii. genuine transfer of power and responsibility to these institutions,

iii. adequate resources to all bodies to enable them to discharge their responsibilities,

iv. that all social and economic development programmes be channelled through these agencies,

v. that the system be evolved to effect further dissolution and dispersal of power.

The recommendations of the committee was approved by the National Development Council in January 1958 and thus set the stage for the launching of Panchayati Raj Institutions throughout the country.

The three tier system of Panchayati Raj was first adopted by Rajasthan on the 2 October 1959. Gradually this system was adopted by most States even though the system differed in matters of detail.
3.5.0.0 The Interim Planning Period (1966-69)

The mid-sixties were also years of severe drought so that the Country had to settle for Annual Action Plan for three years (1966-69).

The adverse economic situation in the Country occasioned largely by the severe drought of 1966 and 1967 made the Government declare a 'Plan Holiday' and in the place of the Five Year Plan, India had three annual plans for 1966-'67, 1967-'68 and 1968-'69. Also the sixties witnessed the Green Revolution consequent to the introduction of new chemical fertilisers and high yielding seed varieties. 15

3.6.0.0 The Fourth Five Year Plan (1969-74)

‘Growth with Stability’ was the main objective of this Plan. The Plan expected to increase the national income at the rate of 5.5 per annum through the growth of agriculture and industries.

The Crash Scheme for Rural Employment, Drought Prone Area Programme, Small Farmers Development Agency, Tribal Area Development Agency, Pilot Intensive Rural Employment Programme, Minimum Needs Programme and Command Area Development Programme were the major rural development programmes during this period. All these programmes helped to

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accelerate the overall development of the country but their contribution to reduce the rural poverty or to generate employment was not much.

3.6.1.0 The Drought Prone Area programme

The Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP) is an area development programme, initiated in 1970 to mitigate the severe scarcity conditions in the selected chronically drought affected areas in the country. The main objectives of the programme were:

1. Restoration of ecological balance,
2. Development and management of irrigation resources,
3. Soil and moisture conservation and afforestation,
4. Restoring of cropping pattern and pasture development,
5. Changes in agronomic practices,
6. Livestock development,
7. Provision of drinking water supply, and
8. Development of small and marginal farmers and agricultural labourers.\(^\text{16}\)

The DPAP formerly known as Rural Works Programme\(^\text{17}\) is in operation in 54 chronically drought affected Districts in the 14 States which have been selected on the basis of objective criteria like incidence and pattern of rainfall,

severity of occurrence of drought and existing irrigation facilities. Originally, the programme has an objective to generate employment opportunities, its particular emphasis was on labour-intensive schemes. In January 1972, the programme was reoriented and as a result, its primary focus was on development works as to provide a more or less permanent solution to the problem of drought rather than on schemes merely to create employment opportunities.

The programme was implemented as a centrally sponsored scheme and the expenditure is borne equally by the Central and State Governments concerned.

With the progress of the programme, it was necessary to give greater attention to increasing capacity of the areas to withstand drought in future and make significant dent on the problems with the help of available technology. The long term strategy for development of these areas ultimately lies in the integrated area development approach on the basis of available resources and needs.

3.6.2.0 The Crash Scheme for Rural Employment

The Crash Scheme for Rural Employment (CSRE) was launched during

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the IV Five Year Plan period. This is a centrally sponsored scheme initiated in 1971 to provide employment to at least 1000 persons in each of the selected Districts for a period of 10 months in a year.

The job was based on various labour intensive rural works such as minor irrigation, soil conservation, afforestation, link roads etc. Assuming 25 working days in a month, the scheme is expected to generate 2.19 lakhs man-days of employment in every district. The State Governments have been maintaining this tempo and it is expected that the achievements would reach a still higher level of performance during the current year with a view to offer suitable manual work to every person in the age-group of 15 to 59. This will take care of the employment requirements of workers for varying periods.²¹

3.6.3.0 Pilot Intensive Rural Employment Project

The Pilot Intensive Rural Employment Programme (PIREP) was an ad hoc scheme and as such could not result in stable gainful employment in the real sense of the term. Subsequently in 1972, a central sector scheme the Pilot Intensive Rural Employment Project (PIREP) was started and implemented in areas having different socio-economic conditions on a pilot basis.²²

The main objective of PIREP is to ascertain the dimension of the problem of rural unemployment and underemployment and to identify systems through which this unemployed and under-employed labour force can be put to best possible use in socio-economic terms.\textsuperscript{23}

3.6.4.0 The SFDA and MFALDA

The Small Farmers Development Agency (SFDA) and the Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers Development Agency (MFALDA) were introduced in the Fourth Five Year Plan to improve the economic conditions of small and marginal farmers and agricultural labourers by assisting them to rise their agricultural output through adoption of:

i. agricultural inputs including agriculture implements,

ii. development of minor irrigation i.e. dug wells, pump sets, tube wells, community irrigation works both ground water and surface water projects, and

iii. subsidiary occupation schemes such as animal husbandry, dairy, sheep and goat rearing, poultry and piggery\textsuperscript{24}

The farmers having landholding of 1-3 hectares were categorised as small farmers and those having landholdings below one hectare were considered

\textsuperscript{23} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{24} L.P. Vidyarthi (Ed.), \textit{Rural Development in South Asia}, Concept Publishers, New Delhi, 1982, p.27.
as marginal farmers. For agricultural labourers, these projects are executing labour intensive rural works to provide off-season employment and thus assure them regular income throughout the year.

The main objectives of SFDA was to assist potentially viable small farmers to become surplus producers. Thus the major responsibilities were:\footnote{25 Vasant Desai, \textit{Op.cit.}, p.62.}

i. to help the small farmers by organising and arranging services and supplies (the services including customs service with regard to machines, implements and similar requirements and supplies includes improved seed, fertilizers and pesticides) required by them,

ii. to arrange irrigation from the most practicable sources,

iii. to assist them in securing loan facilities from co-operative banks and other credit institutions,

iv. to arrange facilities such as storing, transporting, processing and marketing their produce,

v. to attain income through animal husbandry (dairying, poultry, piggery etc.) and even agro-based industries.

The MFAL programme focused on marginal farmers and agricultural labourers and the major responsibilities were:\footnote{26 Ibid.}
i. to identify the eligible marginal farmers and agricultural labourers,

ii. to investigate their problems and formulate economic programmes for providing gainful employment to them,

iii. to promote rural industries and evolve adequate institutional, financial and administrative arrangements for implementing various programmes,

iv. to promote the creation of common facilities for the production, processing, storage and marketing of products, and

v. to evaluate the programme from time to time.

The basic objective of the programme was to raise the earning capacity of the target groups which was sought to be achieved through programmes relating to improved agriculture and subsidiary occupation. The focus of the SFDA was directed more towards intensive farming while the MFALS laid stress on the provision of subsidiary occupations and other employment generating programmes. These schemes were to be prepared in collaboration with the technical departments of the State Governments and were to be implemented by the regular departmental machinery of the State.27

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3.6.5.0 The Tribal Area Development Programme

The Tribal Area Development Programme (TADP) started in 1970-71 with 8 pilot projects in selected tribal areas in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar (one each) Madhya Pradesh and Orissa (two each) were implemented through the Department of Rural Development.

The programme has the objective of bringing tribal areas in the mainstream of economic development of the country through programmes in the fields of agriculture, animal husbandry, land development, minor irrigation and cooperatives are being intensified. These are supplemented by the programme of construction of link roads in these areas.28

The basic approach of these projects is to identify a core programme of economic development and to put through social services in the shape of drinking water facilities, education and health to bring about an all round development. The project plans are drawn up according to the local needs of the people and so flexibility in approach to development is an in-built feature of these projects to permit local variations in view of the socio-economic and ecological setting.

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3.6.6.0 The Minimum Needs Programme

The Minimum Needs Programme (MNP) introduced in 1974, during the Fourth Five Year Plan was to raise the standard of living of people below the poverty line.

The objectives of the programme include:

i. The provision of elementary education for children up to the age of 14,

ii. Providing availability of public health facilities which would include preventive medicines, family planning, nutrition and the detection of early morbidity and adequate arrangements for referring serious cases to appropriate higher authority,

iii. Supplying drinking water to the needed villages suffering from scarcity or having unsafe sources of water,

iv. Provision of roads for the needed villages,

v. Provision of house sites for landless rural households,

vi. The environmental improvement of urban slums, and

vii. Provision of rural electrification. ²⁹

The Minimum Needs Programme was revised in the Sixth Five Year Plan with a larger outlay and also with an additional programmes of adult education.

3.7.0.0 The Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-79)

The draft Fifth Plan proposed to strengthen and concretise the target group oriented programmes started during the Fourth Plan period. During the Fifth Plan, emphasis was to be laid on integrated development both spatial and functional.

The important rural development programmes were: Hill Area Development programme, Special Livestock Production Programme, Food for Work Programme, Desert Development Programme and Training of Rural Youth for Self-employment.

The Janata Government reconstituted the Planning Commission and announced a new strategy in planning. The objective was changed as ‘Growth for Social Justice’ instead of ‘Growth with Social Justice’. The new pattern was the ‘Rolling Plan’, which meant that every year the performance of the Plan would be assessed and a new Plan would be made for the next year. The Rolling Plan started with an Annual Plan for 1978-79 and as a continuation of the terminated Fifth Plan.
3.7.1.0 The Special Livestock Production Programme

The Special Livestock Production Programme (SLPP) was initiated by the Ministry of Agriculture in 1975-76 on the basis of the recommendations of the national Commission on Agriculture. The programme aims at providing greater employment opportunities to the weaker sections and the rural masses.30

The programme intended to provide financial assistance to small or marginal farmers and agricultural labourers for setting up of poultry, piggery and sheep production units and for rearing of cross-bred heifers.31

The programme consisted of two parts viz. (i) Cross-bred heifer rearing, and (ii) Setting up of sheep, poultry and piggery units

Under the first scheme, assistance is given to small and marginal farmers at the rate of 50% and 66 2/3 % to agricultural labourers for feeding of cross-bred heifers from 4 to 32 months of age.

Under the second scheme, subsidy is provided at the rate of 25% to small farmers 38 1/3 % to marginal farmers and agricultural labourers and 50% to scheduled tribe people.

The expenditure of the programme is shared on 50:50 basis with the State and Central Governments

30 S.G. Hundekar, Management of Rural Sector, Mittal Publications, New Delhi, 1995, p.36.
3.7.2.0 The 20-Point Programme (Announced on 1 July 1975)

With the imposition of the Internal Emergency in June 1975, the 20-point programme was announced by the then Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi. This programme was announced on 1 July 1975 included the following items:

i. Continuance of steps to bring down prices of essential commodities.
   Streamline production, procurement and distribution of essential commodities, strict economy in government expenditure,

ii. Implementation of agricultural land ceilings and speedier distribution of surplus land and compilation of land records,

iii. Stepping up of provision of house sites for landless and weaker sections,

iv. Bonded labour, wherever it exists, will be declared illegal,

v. Plan for liquidation of rural indebtedness, legislation for moratorium on recovery of debt from landless labourers, small farmers and artisans,

vi. Review of laws on minimum agricultural wages,

vii. Five million more hectares to be brought under National Irrigation Programme for use of underground water,

viii. An accelerated power programme, Super Thermal stations under central control,
ix. New Development Plan for Handloom sector,

x. Improvement in quality and supply of people’s cloth,

xi. Socialism of urban and urbanisable land. Ceiling on ownership and possession of vacant land and on plinth area of new dwelling units,

xii. Special squads for valuation of conspicuous consumption and prevention of tax evasion. Summary trials and deterrent of economic offenders,

xiii. Special legislation for confiscation of smuggler’s properties,

xiv. Liberalisation of investment procedures. Action against misuse of import licences,

xv. New schemes for worker’s participation in industry,

xvi. National Permit scheme for road transport,

xvii. Income tax relief to middle class, exemption limit placed at Rs.8000/-,

xviii. Essential commodities at controlled prices to students in hostels,

xix. Books and stationery at controlled prices, and
xx. new apprenticeship scheme to enlarge employment and training, especially of weaker sections\textsuperscript{32}.

3.7.3.0 The Desert Development Programme

The Desert Development Programme (DDP) was started in 1977-78\textsuperscript{33} with the objective of controlling desertification and development of conditions for raising the level of production, income, and employment of people of the areas covered under it.

This programme was launched according to the recommendations of the National Commission on Agriculture and is being implemented in the lot arid deserts covering 131 Blocks in 21 Districts in five States - Rajasthan, Haryana, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, and Jammu & Kashmir. Thus the programme covered both hot and cold desert areas of the country. The programme aims at an integrated development of desert areas by increasing the productivity income level and employment opportunities of the people through optimum utilisation of physical, human, livestock and other biological resources.\textsuperscript{34} This is a centrally sponsored scheme and is administered by the District Rural Development Agency (DRDA).

The major activities under the programme are:

\textsuperscript{34} Laxmi Devi, \textit{Op.cit.}, p.86.
i. Afforestation (with special emphasis on shelter belt plantation, grass land development and sand dune stabilisation),

ii. Ground water development and utilisation,

iii. Construction of water harvesting structures,

iv. Rural electrification for energising tube wells or pump sets, and

v. Development of agriculture, horticulture and animal husbandry.$^{35}$

3.7.4.0 The Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment

The Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment (TRYSEM) is launched by the Central Government on 15 August, 1979.$^{36}$ This programme is designed as a tool for transforming rural youth into a productive force and thus it is viewed as a facilitating component of IRDP. The main aim of the programme is to equip the rural youth with necessary skills and technical knowledge to enable them to take self-employment in different vocations.$^{37}$ The operational strategy is to train at least 2,00,000 rural youth every year or forty youths in each block. Rural youth in the age-group of 18-35 living below the poverty line are eligible for training. A minimum of 30% of the trained youths should belong to SC/ST and a minimum of 33 1/3 % should be women.$^{38}$

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$^{35}$ Vivek Ranjan Bhattacharya, Op.cit., p.84
Training courses are designed with a practical bias and is given through 'learning by doing' methods. The vocations confined to the fields of agriculture and allied activities, industry, services and business activities. Training programmes are imparted through formal training institutions such as Industrial Training Institutes, Polytechnics, Krishi Vigyan Kendras, Nehru Yuva Kendras, Khadi and Village Industries Centres, Voluntary Organisations and also through reputed master craftsmen.\(^{39}\)

During the training period, the scheme provides:

i. monthly stipend and a necessary tool kit (after the completion of the course) to the trainees,

ii. honorarium to trainers or master craftsmen,

iii. Subsidy to the trained youth to set up self-employment ventures,

iv. to arrange the balance of the cost of scheme through institutional finance.

Besides training, the scheme envisages to organisational and operational linkages with other institutions so that credit, marketing and raw material supply may be provided to the trainees at the appropriate time.

3.8.0.0 The Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85)

The Sixth Plan was formulated after taking into account the achievements and shortcomings of the past decades of planning. The Plan released in 1981 May, declared the removal of poverty as the foremost objective. The Plan laid stress on rural development and its strategy and methodology for accelerating rural development consists of

i. increasing production and productivity in agriculture and allied sectors,

ii. resource and income development of vulnerable sections of the rural population by providing them access to assets, inputs and marketing services,

iii. skill formation and skill upgrading programmes to promote self and wage employment amongst the rural poor,

iv. provision of additional employment opportunities to the rural poor for gainful employment during the lean agricultural season through NREP, and

v. provision of essential minimum needs.\(^{40}\)

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The major rural development programmes during this period were Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), National Rural Employment Programmes, Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) and the 20-Point Programme.

3.8.1.0 The National Rural Employment Programme

In 1980, during the Sixth Five Year Plan the National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) was launched. It replaced the erstwhile Food for Work Programme incorporated the same characteristics under which it was envisaged to integrate the development projects and target group oriented employment generation projects.

NREP aims at providing supplementary employment opportunities to rural workers particularly during the lean periods of the year when they are not able to find gainful employment. It also aims at creation of rural economy and steady rise in the income level of the rural poor and thereby bring about improvement in the quality of life of the villagers. The main objectives of the programme are:

i. generation of additional gainful employment for the unemployed and under-employed persons both men and women in rural areas,

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ii. 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, and

iii. improvement of overall quality of life in rural areas.\textsuperscript{42}

NREP was implemented as a centrally sponsored scheme on 50:50 sharing basis between the Centre and the States. The wages paid under the programme should be on par with the minimum agricultural wage prescribed for the area. The quantum of food grains as part of wages should be such as to be adequate for the family's need. Contractors are totally excluded from the execution of the rural works.\textsuperscript{43}

The implementation of the programme has been entrusted to the District Rural Development Agencies. The execution of works under the programme will be mainly through the Panchayati Raj institutions so that works undertaken are wholly responsive to the need of the local populace. Besides 10% of the resources are meant for the works of direct and exclusive benefits to the SCs and STs.

Voluntary Organisations can also be entrusted with the execution of


\textsuperscript{43} Ibid. p.132.
permissible work under the NREP. The assets created under the programme include roads, school buildings, panchayat ghars, community irrigation, plantation etc.

3.8.2.0 The New 20-Point Programme

Since the 70s, development in general has begun to be viewed in terms of the contribution it makes to the reduction of poverty, inequality and exploitation. Rural development reflects these concerns and is manifested in special programmes for the weaker sections of the rural community and the backward areas. The major rural development programmes such as SFDA, MFALDA, NREP, IRDP, DPAP and the MNP have become too well known. They are part of the 20-point programme of 1982.44

The 20-point programme announced on 14 January 1982 included the following main points:

i. Increase irrigation potential,

ii. Raise production of pulses and vegetable oils,

iii. Strengthen IRDP and NREP,

iv. Implement agricultural land ceiling,

v. Enforce minimum wages for farm labourer,

vi. Rehabilitation of bonded labourer,

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vii. Welfare plan for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes,
viii. Drinking water for millions,
ix. House sites for rural families,
x. Slum improvement,
xi. Maximise power generation,
xii. Programmes of afforestation,
xiii. Promotion of family planning,
xiv. Welfare plan for women and children,
xv. Elementary education for children and removal of adult illiteracy,
xvi. Expansion of the public distribution system,
xvii. Liberalise investment procedures,
xviii. Primary health care facilities,
xix. Action against smugglers, hoarders, tax evaders and black-money operators, and
xx. Gear up public enterprises.\textsuperscript{45}

3.8.3.0 The Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas

The Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) is a centrally sponsored scheme started in 1982. It was formulated as a sub-scheme of IRDP so that income-generating activities could be provided to women and

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid. pp.18-19.
enable them to become organised participants in social development and economic self-reliance. The target group of the DWCRA is the same as IRDP while the methodology of reaching it is through group strategy rather than individual beneficiaries. The women are expected to come together for an activity of mutual interest to all. Its primary skill is the formation of groups of 15-20 women from poor families, preferably from scheduled castes and scheduled tribes for delivery of services like credit, skill training, cash and infrastructural support for self-employment.46

The objectives of the programme are to focus attention on the women members of the families of the target group so as to increase their income and also to provide supporting services needed to enable them to take up income generating activities. Besides providing financial support, it also aimed at increasing women’s access to other welfare services. The programme assists women in the following manner:

i. Assistance of individual women to take advantage of the families already available under IRDP,

ii. Where individual women are found to be incapable of taking advantage of these facilities, they are organised into homogenous groups to take up economically viable activities on a group basis,

iii. Providing necessary supporting services to women of target group in terms of provision for caring of children while the mothers are at work, provision for working conveniences, suitable appliances so that they could improve their efficiency and reduce the drudgery, and

iv. Organising child care facilities to provide for security, health care and nursing of the children at NREP work sites.\(^{47}\)

3.8.4.0 The Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme

The Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) was introduced in 1983 with the objective of providing employment opportunities for at least one member of every landless household for a period upto 100 days in a year.\(^{48}\)

RLEGP aimed at creation of tangible community assets for strengthening rural infrastructure, which will lead to rapid growth of rural economy. Among these are, construction of link roads, digging of field channels to improve utilisation of the irrigation potential created by large irrigation projects, land development and reclamation of waste or degraded land with special emphasis on ecological improvement in hilly desert areas, social forestry, soil and water conservation and improvement of minor irrigation works.\(^{49}\)

RLEGP was a centrally sponsored programme. The wages paid under this programme partly in food grains and partly in cash. The food grain component was distributed at a subsidised rate. That would intended to improve the consumption in favour of poorer sections of the rural population and improve their nutritional standards. Later, RLEGP merged with the JRY programme.  

3.8.5.0 The Integrated Rural Development Programme

The details of the Programme will be discussed in the next Chapter.

3.9.0.0 The Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90)

The Seventh Plan envisages the continuance and expansion of the anti-poverty programmes. The programmes like National Rural Employment Programme (NREP), Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) and Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) constitute the major elements of the anti-poverty drive. However, an expanding economy and dynamic agricultural sectors are the pre-conditions for the anti-poverty programmes to succeed. Apart from the rural poor, this Plan also paid attention to the poor in the urban areas. The Seventh plan strategy focused attention on employment generation and poverty alleviation.  

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The major rural development programmes during this Plan Period were: Integrated Rural Energy Planning Programme, Special Livestock Breeding Programme, Jawahar Rozgar Yojana, Million Wells Scheme and Indira Awas Yojana.

3.9.1.0 Jawahar Rozgar Yojana

Jawahar Rozgar Yojana was launched on 1 April 1989, after merging the two earlier employment schemes namely, NREP and RLEGP.  

The objectives of the programme are:

i. to provide additional gainful employment for the unemployed and underemployed in rural areas,

ii. to create sustained employment by strengthening the rural economic infrastructure and assets and improvement in the overall quality of life in rural areas.

Under this programme, all works which results in the creation of durable assets can be taken up. These include social forestry works, soil and water conservation works, minor irrigation works, construction of roads, flood protection, drainage and water-logging works, construction of sanitary latrines, land development and houses for SCs and STs.

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JRY is a centrally sponsored scheme and the expenditure is shared between the Centre and the States in the ratio of 80:20. The guidelines for implementation of the programme are as follows: 54

i. The wage and no-wage ratio should be 60:40 since it is principally a wage-employment scheme,

ii. Contractors are prohibited from the execution of any work. The work is to be done through the elected panchayat and its members, the panchayat secretary and the committees of beneficiaries,

iii. While selecting workers for employment, preference is to be given to SC/STs and freed bonded labourers,

iv. 30% of employment opportunities were reserved for women,

v. Minimum wages are to be paid to unskilled/casual workers as per the notified minimum wages in the state and no discrimination is to be made in wages between men and women workers.

3.9.2.0 Million Wells Scheme

The Million Wells Scheme (MWS) launched during 1988-99 with an objective of providing open irrigation wells free of cost to poor, small and marginal farmers belonging to SC/STs and freed bonded labourers, as a sub-

scheme of NREP/RLEGP, continued under JRY.\textsuperscript{55} The State Governments are required to allocate MWS resources to the Districts. The allocation is intended only for open wells, bore wells or tube wells are not taken up under this provision. Where wells are not feasible due to geographical factors, the funds allotted under this scheme can be utilised for other schemes of minor irrigation like irrigation tanks, water harvesting structures and also for the development of land belonging to SC/STs and freed bonded labourers including the ceiling surplus land, Bhoodan land etc allotted to them. The money cannot be diverted for any other scheme or for categories other than SC/STs and freed bonded labourers.

3.9.3.0 Indira Awas Yojana

Indira Awas Yojana (IAY) which was an important component of RLEGP aiming at construction of dwelling units, free of cost for the poorest of the poor belonging to SCs, STs and freed bonded labourers continues. It is now implemented under JRY.\textsuperscript{56} Houses under IAY as far as possible, are to be built in clusters as per micro-habitat approach so that common facilities can be provided for the clusters. The plinth areas of the house should be between 17 to 20 sq. mts. The design could be specific to the area keeping in view of the climatic


\textsuperscript{56} ibid.
conditions. The houses should have a kitchen, smokeless chula and a sanitary latrine.

3.10.0.0 The Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97)

The Eighth Plan has recognised the need for a re-orientation of planning in keeping with the process of economic reforms and restructuring of the economy. The objectives of the VIII Plan are:

i. Generation of adequate employment to achieve full employment by the turn of the century,

ii. Containment of population growth through people's active co-operation and an effective scheme of incentives and disincentives,

iii. Universalisation of elementary education and complete eradication of illiteracy among the people in the age group of 15-35 years,

iv. Provision of safe drinking water and primary health facilities, including immunisation, accessible to all the villages and the entire population and complete elimination of scavenging,

v. Growth and diversification of agriculture to achieve self-sufficiency in food and general surplus for exports, and
vi. Strengthening the infra-structure (i.e. energy, transport, communication, irrigation etc.) in order to support the growth process on a sustainable basis.57

The major programmes during this Plan period are: IRDP, Jawahar Rosgar Yojana, Indira Awas Yojana and Million Wells Scheme.

3.11.0.0 The Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002)

The objectives of the Ninth Plan evolved from the Common Minimum Programme of the Government and the Chief Ministers’ Conference on basic minimum services. The suggestions are as follows:

i. Priority to agriculture and rural development with a view to generate productive employment and eradication of poverty,

ii. Accelerating the growth rate of the economy with stable prices,

iii. Ensuring food and nutritional security for the vulnerable section of the society,

iv. Providing the basic minimum services of safe drinking water, primary health care facilities, universal primary education, shelter and connectivity to all in time-bound population,

v. Ensuring environmental sustainability of the development process through participation of people,

vi. Containing the growth rate of population,

vii. Empowerment of women and socially disadvantaged groups,

viii. Promoting and developing Panchayati Raj, Co-operatives, and

ix. Strengthening efforts to build self-reliance.

IRDP was renamed as Swarna Jayanti Grama Swarozgar Yojana from 1 April, 1999 onwards.\(^5\)

3.12.0.0 Conclusion

India’s development performance since the inception of State initiated planned process has several achievements to its credit. The basic task of economic planning in India is to bring about a structural transformation of the economy so as to achieve a high and substantial rate of growth, progressive improvement in the standard of living, eradication of poverty and unemployment provide material basis for a self-reliant social economy and ensure social justice.\(^6\) To mention a few, there were achievements of self-sufficiency in food, stagnant changes in the structure of economy such as fall in the shares of non-agricultural sectors, the expression and diversification of the industrial sector and growth in scientific and technical manpower. In spite of this, India’s

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performance with regard to rural development had not been very impressive with a population growth rate of 2.2% per annum, there has not been qualitative improvement in the standard of living of people. Also there has been a little change in the overall income inequalities and majority of the population still live in the state of poverty. But with the help of current strategy for rural development through poverty alleviation programmes, a variable acceptance of principle of growth with social justice and the adoption of decentralised planning process, it is expected that the country would progressively eliminate poverty.