Chapter-3: Community Development & Land Reform: The Theoretical Concepts
CHAPTER-3

"COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT" & "LAND REFORM" -
THE THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

Community Development, as its name suggest is a combination of processes in which a community develops its capacity to make adaptations, achievements and adjustments with its environment and ensures progress from a lower level of functioning to a higher level. It involves increased utilization of resources, better participation of the members of the community and inculcating a sprit of co-operation among members for improving their standard of living through working for better amenities and facilities. The extension services of community development covers activities beyond the immediate environment of the local community and go deeper into the mainstream development of the state and national plans of development, particularly rural development and agro industries. It also provides the missing links between rural fields level workers and urban administrators. Whereas “Land reforms mean such institutional changes as make properly relation favorable to the tillers of the soil and which raise the size of units of cultivation to make them operationally viable”\(^1\). In broad sense, land reforms mean all the changes which are deliberately introduced to overcome the institutional and motivational hurdles which keep agriculture in a state of backwardness or stagnancy. Land reforms aim at altering the property relations in land to the benefit of small farmers and tenants. The term land reform includes the measures adopted with a view to enlarging the size of unit of cultivation to make it economically viable. In another words land reforms mean only the redistribution of property rights in land for benefits of small farmers and agricultural workers. It would be proper to include in land reforms any change in agricultural relations and agricultural organization aimed at the improvement and modernization of agriculture.

\(^1\) Aggrawal, A.N., Indian Economy - chapter-18 - Land Reforms, P-241
"F.A.O" has defined it, "Land reform means not only redistribution of land but also other measures directed at better tenancy systems and more efficient land management".

The concept of Community Development implies orderly movement of an organization or a social system from a lower level of functioning to a higher level of functioning and integration. U.N.O. ² has defined it as "Community development has been defined at different times as a movement, an instrument, an approach and finally as a process and / or a method". The use of the terms, lower and higher, is relevant in considering the meaning of community development. The lower-higher-continuum may be stated in terms of certain quantitative values if the purpose is to denote aggregative growth in respect of selected attributes or a group of them. "The complementary term "Community Organization" is more often used in areas in which levels of living are relatively high and social services relatively well developed, but in which greater degree of integration and community initiatives is recognized as durable. Both terms as well as the combined form "Community Organization and Development" refer to similar concepts of progress through local actions" ³.

The territory commanded by a community, the size of the population supported upon it, the amount of money and time contributed by the members upon organizational matters and maintenance of social assets, size of the budget of the educational, religious and local self governmental bodies etc are the three specification used to denote aggregative growth in the communities. This enables the research studies to rank them on higher or lower positions in accordance with a selected scale of values. "Development" means some qualitative changes reflected in the capacity of a community to respond to the more complex and remote objects of environment with a complex and varying

² United Nations, Bureau of Social Affairs, Social progress through community development (1955)p-76
³ Ibid-p-6
response repertory. Not only new elements are added in the process of movement to a higher level or old ones allowed to fall off, but they are also organized into a new "Gestalt". The question of integration of various elements with references to one another is therefore as important as the new differentiation of structures, or the maturation of older ones. Community development is essentially an adjustmental accommodative and dynamic process characterized by the improved capacity of the community to make more complex adaptations, achievements and adjustments with its environment in the course of progressing from a lower level of functioning to a higher level of functioning and integration.

Community development can not be identified with a programme of directed social change. The movement of a community from a lower level of to a higher level is characterized by social changes which are sometimes of very far reaching character but such changes may not be accounted wholly or in major part by attempts at conscious direction. Community development is the term used to describe the technique, many government have adopted to teach their village people and make more effective use of local initiative and energy for increased production and better living standards. Community development is a process of social action, in which the people of a community organize themselves in planning and action define their common and individual needs and problems make group and individual plans with a maximum of reliance upon community resources and supplement these resources where necessary with services and material from governmental and non governmental agencies inside or outside the community. The term community development has come into international usage to denote the process by which the efforts of the people themselves are united with those of governmental authorities to improve the economic, social and cultural condition of the communities, to integrate the communities into the life of nation and to enable them to contribute fully a national progress. Self help and mutual aid are emphasized upon as the core of
community development approach which distinguishes it from several other approaches of assisting the people technically or otherwise. People's participation is recognized as the principle method of involving the people and securing their growth as mentioned in hypothesis. It may be through participation in group discussions systematically organized, or simply by contributing one's share of labour in the community work. Organizational measures have been indispensable to involve various departments and agencies connected with the rural development work and to co-ordinate their working, whether it be the creation of an inter departmental comic for rural development programme, or the provision of a central leadership under a Development Commissioner, or the integrations of planning and budgeting functions at the levels of area development authority, the necessity for coordinated working is inevitable. As a geographical concept, “Community is a term which is applied to all society and social groups where they are considered from the viewpoint of geographical distribution of individuals and institution of which they are composed. Commonly is not merely an aggregate of persons distributed over space, but a socially organized group of human beings”. Community development embodies two major ideas. The first is that of conscious acceleration of economic, technological and social change (development). The second, that of locality refers to planned social change in a village town or city, it relates to projects that have obvious local significance and that can be initiated and carried out by local people. According to the widely accepted United Nations definitions, communities as units of combine outside assistance with organized local self determination and effort. They achieve goals that are both material (a new school house) and nonmaterial (literacy, lowered infant mortality).

The accent on development suggests that the emerging nation move through a series of stages on their way toward modernization. Leaders realize that to achieve economic goals more quickly, large number of people, especially in the
rural areas, has to be mobilized. In the communist countries the collectivization of agriculture was the method chosen, in several non-communist countries, such as India and the Philippines, Community Development or its equivalent is being used. Neither approach has proven a panacea, nor each has had pronounced and often unanticipated social effects. The term “Community Development” now enjoys wide usage in the west, even though community organization still best describes the mobilization of local resources for social welfare purposes. In 1948 the United Nation Organization had one Community Development Adviser in one country; in 1962 it had 47 such experts in 31 countries.

The mixed ancestry of community development gives a clue to the problems of defining the term. Social workers, Adult Educators, Local Government Officials, Economic Planners, City Planners and Agricultural Extension Workers consider their respective professional fields to have been forerunners of community development, a fact which supposedly gives them each the right to speak authoritatively about its content and methods. In their descriptions of the current scene various writers not unexpectedly stress different themes. The emphasis is upon accomplishing sets of activities in health, welfare, agriculture, industry, recreation, and the like that can be quantified and reported. In this connection community development may be said to be a method through which national goals are to be achieved.

The government of India has been quite specific in treating community development as a method designed to initiate a process of transformation in the social and economic life of the Indian village. As a method it was supposed to do three things, achieve unity of thinking and action between all development agencies of government and between the official agency, the people’s agency and the people, transforms the social and economic outlook of the people, chiefly through village organization, and conduct intensive area development based on a multipurpose approach. Recognition by the Indian government that
agricultural development presented special problems too great to be borne by the ministry of community development has led to abolition of this ministry. But there has been no decrease in the number of community development projects, and community development will no doubt continue to be regarded as the single most important method available to the government for coordinating social with economic planning. It must not be assumed that all community development programme are governmental in nature. In United States, for example, the stress has been upon local initiative, usually sponsored by private groups or organizations (women's clubs, men's civic clubs, junior chambers of commerce, welfare councils), with only an occasional assist from some governmental agency. Thus community development is viewed as a method of carrying out specific projects, each worthy in its own right, rather than as part of some detailed national plan. The non-material benefits to the people are thought to be as valuable as the material goals achieved, since it is assumed that the more local residents are involved in planning and decision making, the more they will rely upon their own community resources and less upon the government. This reflects the strong individualistic and ameliorative strains in American culture as well as the value placed on local self reliance and democratic participation. In Asian countries which for more than ten years have had the widest experience with community development, certain discernible trends are under way. First the programmes are stressing economic (including agricultural) goals more heavily than heretofore. Second, they are making greater use of local governments as the need for decentralization becomes more apparent. Third the training of village level workers is stressing the practical aspects (for instance, the actual grafting of fruit trees) as well as the theoretical aspects- a new educational departure for these countries. Fourth, new administrative arrangements are being devised to assure the co-ordination of subject matter specialist in accomplishment of program aims. Undoubtedly, community development programmed do give village people a feeling of political involvement which they would otherwise not have, they have
substantial its material accomplishments (roads, school buildings, new plant varieties, etc.) to their credit. But the biggest gain perhaps lies not at the village level but in the better understanding of village problems by higher government officials. Land reform tends to be associated with community development more than it was in Asia. In the developed countries, community development is increasingly being relied upon as a method for local improvements. Social workers, agricultural extension workers, public health educators are being trained in its techniques, and a few institutes have been set up to prepare specialists in community development as a special professional field. The harmonious and co-operative community life has generally been a feature of village communities in India since ancient times; some people even believe that this is as old as the civilization in the country. "The development of Mohanjodaro and other places connected with the Indus Valley Civilization are said to be the forerunners of the concept of intensive development."^4

As a Movement:-

The community development movement, introduced in 1952 and intensified from 1953 onwards is based primarily on its rural approach to planning and development. It wants to ensure that the people of the villages—at least their local leaders—should be associated with the local leaders process of decision making to bring the community development programme in real operation.

As an Administrative tool:

To the top bureaucracy, who through its leaders are accountable to the parliament, Panchayati Raj is but an instrument for implementation of the community development programmes and should be used as an administrative tool more suited in a democracy like ours than even in a single live administration.

As an Agency of Local Self Government:

To some others, *Panchayati Raj* is essentially a political system of civic administration. A local government par excellence and a municipality at its own level, the new pattern merely bears an accent on developmental functions. The system intensifies and promotes the concept of *gram swaraj* where the people will be empowered to develop their qualitative development. “Sanchita Tripathi”⁵ said, that realizing the felt needs of local empowerment in 1992, the 73rd Amendment was promulgated to provide the first step towards decentralization of powers at the grass root level. *Panchayats*, after the historic 73rd Amendment, were made the smallest unit of governance with financial and political autonomy.

**Community Development as the institutional model for the Panchayati Raj:** The question of finding an ideal institutional model for *Panchayati Raj* is inextricably linked with the problem of finding a wholesome philosophy for the movement and worthwhile function.

**Community Development as an Integrated Approach to Economic Development:** The administrative coordination committee of the United Nations in distinguishing community development from social development observed—“Community Development may properly be considered as a component of the wider concept of economic and social development.”⁶ Community development may help social development by increasing the productive capacity of the people, by educating them as consumers of certain goods and services and by influencing the kinds of activities they may undertake. Similarly social development may release such forces as might promote the capacity of the people to help themselves.

---

⁶ United Nations,Bureau of Social Affairs,Social progress through community development (1955)p-76
Community Development and Extension Education:- “Prof. Franco” has examined the two concepts of Community Development and Extension Education in the following manner:

(1) Extension education places emphasis on the individual for improving rural conditions for all people. On the other hand, community development emphasizes cooperative or group action for improving rural conditions.

(2) Extension education is a more indirect approach whereas community development is a more direct approach.

(3) Community Development is directly concerned with developing social organizations while extension education is concerned with the hopes to improve social organizations but does not attack the problem at his level.

Indicators of Community Development: “The key indicators for such an approach were improvement in health, education and employment of people in general with particular emphasis on vulnerable groups such as minority population groups, women and other socially deprived groups”^7.

Health:- The well known indicators of health status are the expectancy at birth, child mortality rates, female mortality rates, birth amended by trained manpower, nutritional status, immunization coverage etc. The importance of access to clean drinking water which is one of the most important measures of health can not be overemphasized. Market friendly development efforts have been promoting the sale of safe drinking water, soft drinks and alcohol pouch in their places to combat water borne diseases, responsible for more than 35 percent of the death of young children in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Education: - Access to quality education is considered an important aspect of community development in the developing nations. Literacy levels are taken as

an indicator along with enrolment at school particularly female enrolment. For example, among the least developed countries, literacy rates average only 44.7 percent of the total population in 1997. The corresponding rates for all developing countries are approximately 64 percent and 99 percent respectively. Further, the impact of education particularly in the rural areas and among the women remains grossly under researched.

Access to Employment:- Development specialists indicate that the labour force in the developing countries is under utilized on account of under employment- people, both rural and urban, working less than they could (daily, weekly or seasonally) and employment- people who are able and willing to work but are unable to join the labour force. Many exports have suggested better education facilities for promoting proper utilization of labour force.

Political Development:- Political development aims at creating a system of distribution of power to take collective decisions which have implication for the society as a whole and to enforce them through a transparent, participatory and legitimate process. The legitimacy here means that people in general have participated in expressing their opinion about who should govern and how? In other words a system of democratic institutions is put in place, which is sustainable and functional. Before considering the problems of community development, we must define what we mean by Community. "Arensberg and Kimball(1965)"\(^8\) defined that “Community should be viewed as a process that involving social structure and cultural behavior”. Our own approach will start with the notion of community as a master system encompassing social forms and cultural behavior in independent subsidiary system(institution). As far community is concerned we deal primarily with rural communities-village and small towns — for two reasons. First, most community development projects have taken place in such communities and second the problems of urban communities are so distinct that they are best treated separately. What are the

---

\(^8\) Arensberg and Kimbal,1965, pp-2-3
limits of community in terms of population size? "Frankenberg"\(^9\) points out that size on its own is not a distinguishing criterion. Most of the communities which have been involved in community development have ranged from a few hundred to a few thousand people; it is not possible to be more precise than this. In addition to absolute numbers, density of population is important, obviously the opportunities for development are greater where there is a relatively high density than where the population is thinly scattered over a wide area. "A detailed knowledge of the ethnological and demographic features of the population is an essential prerequisite for any community development project"\(^{10}\).

Community Development is an educational process which also owes something of its inspiration to the social work origins of the concepts and methods used in community development programmes and field practice. However, in the voluminous material on the subject, the nature of community development will be found described as a programme, a method, a movement, a philosophy as well as a process.

Programmes vary enormously from country to country, according to the structure of the agency created to serve community development and the development priorities set out in national plans with which at least financially most community development programmes are associated. Programmes of community development are best considered as manifestation of action taken by people in groups, village or district communities, after the process of education for attitude change has precipitated change leading to decision for action. The distinguishing characteristic of community development is the educational process by which people change themselves and their behavior and acquire new skill and confidence through working in cooperation.

\(^9\) Frankenberg, 1966-p-238
\(^{10}\) Brokensha D, and Hodge, P.- Community Development- An Interpretation,- Chandeler Publishing Comp., California(USA) 1969-p-6
The content of community development means essentially providing, first, the machinery through which all the agencies of the administration can work together for social and economic objective, second, providing to each area certain minimum resources and technical knowledge with which the area could develop and its problems could be brought nearer solution, and third, giving to the people of the area at each level the opportunity to organize themselves for mobilizing their own resources, throwing up leadership, to solve their own problems and mobilizing energies which otherwise lie untapped.

In the scheme of community development the core was agricultural extension because it is in agriculture that a great part of our rural problem begins. The particular institution one adopts for agricultural extension is not a matter of any rigidity. From the beginning we have contemplated that the multipurpose village worker was a phase and that a time would come when agriculture would demand more specialized services and higher skills.

From early stages of Indian planning, the idea of planning from below has been accepted. Planning from below has to be specially emphasized is a context like the one faced by us is India. The problem faced are so difficult, the development required is so large and the possibility of mobilizing required resources by way of central and state revenues so limited that, for maximization of effort, it is essential to explore for local development. The sectors in which our development has been especially slow are those of agriculture, small scale industries and related sectors. Scientific knowledge and techniques have to be applied in a concrete way to the natural and human resources available in the given area and an operationally feasible programme has to be worked out. This can only be done if there are effective planning agencies at grass-root levels. What should be treated as the basic unit for area planning? For some years after the inception of planning, the emphasis was on the village as the basic unit for planning. Gradually the role of the development block and the district began to receive, somewhat greater attention. With the
development of Panchayati Raj institutions, it came to be increasingly realized that the basic unit for the plan has to be not the village but a larger area (either a taluka or a district) but even now the urban areas in the taluka or the district are left out of the Panchayati Raj institutions. There is therefore no institution at present which is effectively in a position to carry out the function of area planning for a taluka or a district as a whole. The planning commission has emphasized the importance of district, block and village plans for many years but what this means in terms of planning, organization and methods has hardly been worked out. It is necessary, therefore, that concrete measures for developing area planning organization should be taken at an early stage.

Economic transformation and development of rural India involves not only an intensification of the agricultural and related sectors but also the development of small and medium industries which would provide increasing employment to the unemployed in the countryside, utilize other local resources (especially new materials) and also cater to a certain extent to local requirements of various kinds of commodities. The development of schemes for evolving a rational pattern of land use, soil conservation, minor and medium irrigation, rural electrification, transport and social services requires formulation of programmes for whole areas. If the overall development of the given areas is to be thought about in an integrated way. It is essential to think in terms of developing existing or new centers which would be semi urban in character and which would serve as nucleus around which various developments in that area will revolve. This can only be done if the area is not too tiny for such an integrated programme to be worked out. If the idea of making the district the basic planning unit is accepted, this should be taken to imply that the district planning agency would be empowered to think in terms of coordinated development plan for the district as a whole, irrespective of the particular executive agencies which would implement the different programmes. Panchayati Raj institutions, Municipal Institutions, State Governments
agencies, and in some cases, Union Government agencies may all be executing different kinds of schemes and programmes in the district, but to ensure that all these programmes are so coordinated in such a way as to ensure a well integrated development plan for the district as a whole, it would be useful to vest the routine administrative control over the district planning organization in the district officer. For technical and functional purpose, the district planning agency should be responsible to the planning agency at the state level.

For ensuring organizational coordination it may be useful to have a district planning council consisting of the representatives of the *Zila Parishad*, the *Panchayat Samitis*, municipal institutions, the District Cooperative Bank etc and the district officer would also be associated with it. There should be another committee (with the district officer as the chairman) consisting of the top administrative and technical officers of the main executive agencies operating in the district. It would obviously be necessary for a number of study teams to be set up under the auspices of these two bodies to carry out the task of working out studies and specific development schemes and programmes. The major difficulty in implementing such ideas at the moment is that there is no model of a district plan which has been systematically and scientifically worked out. The immediate task, therefore, must be to arrange for such model technical plans to be worked out in a few districts. This will provide indication as to the kind of work that the district planning agencies will carry out. Such clarification is also necessary in order to develop an appropriate training programme for building up a corps of district planning officers. It would probably be fatal to start this experiment unless such basic model have been attempted and training course carefully devised for building up the district planning cadres.

**Community development and Integrated Area Development:** Integrated area development has been recognized as a major object of the community development programme from its inception. Several of the first community
projects were located in areas of major irrigation project and it was envisaged that the development programmes of the community projects, especially agricultural extension, land reclamation and soil conservation, would enable the cultivators to utilize the irrigation waters earlier and more fruitfully and accelerate the development of these areas. Some other project was located in backward areas and location of these was considered the first step in initiating rapid development in the areas. But with the rapid expansion of the community development programme, emphasis shifted to provision of specific services and construction of works, and integrated area development was given less attention. This shift in emphasis was perhaps necessary at the time, it became inevitable after it was decided to extend the community development programme over the whole country. But the economic development of the last 12 years is now focusing attention again on integrated area development. Location of major industrial, power, transport, irrigation and other projects in bringing about major changes in the economy and social life of several areas of the country. In some other like central Punjab, growth of small scale industry is producing rapid socio-economic change. Besides these areas of concentrated development, in most other areas, the country also, growth of commerce and improvement in communications, is leading to expansion of towns and increasing interaction between them and the surrounding villages.

It is necessary and important that those concerned with local planning consider how their areas can benefit from these major developments, more fully and adequately. They should concern themselves specifically with the question, what complementary development activities are needed in their areas in order that the people can take greater advantage from the major projects. The example of an agricultural extension programme which enables cultivators to utilize irrigation waters more quickly has been given above other example of such complementary development activities are-rural electrification and development of small industries in the area of a major power project. The need
for such complementary development activities has been recognized. The local leaders in Panchayati Raj institutions have a great opportunity in the field. They should identify the complementary developments needed in their areas consequent on the start of a new project and press for their inclusion in the appropriate development programmes of the state government. They can also play a useful role in making the people of their areas aware of the new opportunities for improving agriculture, starting small industries etc brought by the project. One effect of the development of the last few decades has been that the interaction between the towns and the villages served by them has increased, and the towns have a much more important role in the economy and social life of the villages. The village people come to the towns more frequently and obtain many more of their requirements from them than they did in the past. The very activities of Panchayat samitis-distribution of taccavi loans, distribution of permits for supply of chemicals, fertilizers, cement or C.I. sheets, deciding appeals from decisions of Panchayats and various elections have added to the frequency of these towns’ visits. Many village leaders and affluent cultivators visit such town almost daily. Most of these towns have expanded considerably in recent years on account of growth of commerce, resulting from larger agricultural production and higher incomes in the surrounding villages, and of their service functions. This expansion will continue as these towns will have an increasingly important role as centers for distribution of new materials and servicing and repair of power-driven implements and machines. This, for the simple reason that facilities for the distribution of new materials and repairs and servicing of machines cannot be created at more than a few central places. Very little attention has been given so far to examining the inter relationship between these towns and their surrounding villages and ensuring the development of the two is complementary and mutually beneficial. Indeed there are many instances of defective planning resulting from a failure to appreciate this relationship. The location of facilities like primary health centers and secondary schools has
generally been decided upon considerations like availability of local contribution with the result that in many cases the facilities is located not in the small town or large village which is the natural center of the area to be served by it, but in a village which comes forward to pay the required contribution. In many blocks the block headquarter town itself is not well located for serving the needs of the block area.

The first community projects did contain the nucleus of the ideas of securing appropriate interaction between towns and villages. The programme of these projects included development of *mandi-centers* and improvement of communications between these and the villages and using the centers for providing an increasing range of services and dissemination of new ideas to the villages. But the idea was gradually dropped because other problems were considered more urgent.

The larger field of local planning and a more active role in it for *panchayati raj* institutions should result in plans becoming more closely related to local needs potential and resources and aspiration of the people. They should as a consequence, evoke greater and more fruitful participation from the local people and accelerate their economic progress and social advance. Participation here does not mean merely raising contributions for construction works, the word has been used in much wider sense and includes successful working of institutions, adopting recommended practices and modern techniques in agriculture, and displaying the initiative required for starting new enterprises like small scale industries. Evoking such participation from the local people and contribution to their accelerated economic and social progress are the criteria of usefulness of local plans and of success of the local planning process. The success of *panchayati raj* institutions as planning agencies will be judged by the contribution their plans make to the achievement of these objectives. Most of the states have followed the three tier system as recommended by the *Mehta Committee Report* (1958). The relationship
between Gram Sabha, Panchayat, and Samiti is a delicate matter. In general, Panchayat must need to the advice of the Gram- Sabha because any other cause would be suicidal, but the Panchayat as a body of representatives cannot be relegated to the role of a mere executive body. It must provide leadership and initiative and have sufficient manoeurability to discharge its functions in the most effective manner. The Panchayat, however, may easily be put in an embarrassing position if a few vocal members succeed in persuading the assembled people to reject a certain tax proposal for sramdan or a programme. It has to be left to the panchayat to make the necessary an adjustment in the programme or budget in the light of criticism of the sabha. If it feels that the risk is worth-taking and that it enjoys the mandate of a majority, it should go ahead with the programme. The samiti comes into the picture indirectly. The village plan and panchayat budgets require samiti's approval and support. If the samiti does not take into account the various village plans, nothing can be more frustrating. The samiti can lend prestige to the sabha if the pradhan, Vikas Adhikari or the senior officers make it a practice to attend sabha meetings and assist and advise it in decision making.

Land Reform-

Land reform is a planned and institutional reorganization of ownership and tenancy of land can be namely benefited except when it is combined with certain policy efforts.

Thus concept of land reform includes two types of institutional changes. First is related to agrarian relations and second about the size of the unit of cultivation. Some economist adopt a narrower concept and restrict the definition of land reforms only to the scope of the subject is unjustified in the context of Indian conditions. Because changes in the property relations have relevance to the unit of cultivation. Two types of reforms are so intimately bound up with each other that unless these are viewed together no worthwhile impact can be made on
agricultural progress. Therefore, the definition of land reform includes improvement in agrarian relations of the size of small units of cultivation. Thus, the concept of land reforms encompasses two types of change. One is related to agrarian relations between the owners of the land and the tenants who cultivate land. The reforms of these relations involve such changes in the condition of tenancy that the tenants get incentives and justice in their farming operations. The second type of change concerns the size of the unit of cultivation. This involves reforms along with two lines, one is such a redistribution of the ownership of land that a part of large-sized land is transferred to those who own very small sized lands, another line of reforms concerns the small and scattered pieces of land which, though owned by single owner, amount to farming of small sized units located at various places. The reform in this case envisages consolidation of these dispersed units through exchange of pieces with other owners so that the farming units in each case become a compact unit fit for efficient farming.

It may be useful here to refer to a view point which would restrict the scope of land reforms only to owner-tenant relation. This narrow perception of the land reforms considers the subject of the size of land as strictly outside the institutional field. According to the view, it is a technical matter, but this is wrong. For example, the tenancy reforms, without ensuring a reasonably sized land for the tenant, will to good to the actual tenant-cultivator, again, the small holders, without their lands being augmented through transfers of some land from the large holders, will not be able to produce more and add to the national product. In the absence of such transfer, these lands being unviable will be producing much less then their potential, so in the case of small and scattered holding, taken as individual pieces, these can produce very little. However, when these are consolidated these can produce much more than would be the case otherwise because of the possibility of using to the fullest the inputs as also the labour. What comes out of this brief observation is that the progress of
agriculture is intimately related to both types of changes. These changes, it may be added are in essence institutional because these bear upon tenants and owners in the first case and owners and beneficiaries in the second case. As for technical elements are concerned these are strictly inputs like water seeds, fertilizers, implements etc. these are directly related to the outputs. Institutional reforms, on the other hand, are indirectly related to outputs as these provide a healthy environment for agricultural operations. “Dutt and Sundaram” have analyzed it as that “Productivity in agriculture is mainly dependent on two sets of factors- technological and institutional. Among the technological factors are the use of agricultural inputs and methods such as improved seeds, fertilizers, improved ploughs, tractors, harvesters, irrigation etc. which help to raise productivity, even if no land reforms are introduced. The institutional reforms include the redistribution of land ownership in favor of the cultivating classes so as to provide them a sense of participation in rural life, improving the size of farms, providing security of tenure, regulation of rents etc. In other words the institutional factors, such as the existence of feudal relations, small size of farms, sub division and fragmentation, insecurity of tenancy rights high rents etc. act as disincentives to the peasantry to raise production”. They weaken the capacity of the farmers to save and invest in agriculture as also to enjoy the fruits of their labour. Consequently, two schools of thought emerged. The socialist believe that the existence of feudal or semi feudal relation was the real cause of backwardness and poverty in rural communities. The emancipation of the peasantry from the bondages of institutional depressors will unleash forces which shall automatically raise levels of production in agriculture. The other school of thought believe that agricultural productivity is purely a technologic phenomenon and that it can be raised by the application of superior agricultural methods. Thus, whereas the key to higher productivity lies in technological change, according to one school, it lies in institutional reform, according to the

---

11 Dutt and Sundaram,- Indian Economy, chapter-31- Land Reforms-P-549

73
other. Quite recently both the schools of thought are converging and opinion has come to center round the idea that land reforms and technological change are not mutually exclusive factors but are complementary in the process of agricultural development. “It is held that technological change can work more effectively in a congenial agrarian structure and in this way the process of development can be accelerated. The purpose of land reforms is, therefore, twofold, on the one hand, it aims to make more rational use of the scarce land resources by affecting condition of holdings, imposing ceiling and floors, on holdings so that cultivation can be done in the most economical manner, i.e., without any waste of labour and capital, on the other, it is a means of redistributing agricultural land in favour of the less privileged classes, and of improving the terms and condition on which land held for cultivation by the actual tiller, with a view to ending exploitation.

The Indian National Congress in 1955 in a resolution on land reforms stated, “Unequivocally, there is only can fundamental method of improving village life, namely, the introduction of a system of peasant proprietorship under which the tiller of the soil in himself the owner of it and pays revenues direct to the government without the intervention of any Zamindar or Taluqdar”.

Significance of Land Reforms-:

The growing importance of land reform is supported by the following points:

a) Enhanced Agricultural Asset - Since land is one of the principle assets of individual and household wealth, land reform measures leads to increased assets.

b) Distributive Inequity - Land ownership is often socially uneven i.e. some social segments possess large land holdings whereas others are left with

---

12 Avadi Session of Indian National Congress, held in 1955.
either very small strips of land or no land at all. Land reform aims at judicious distribution of land and promote equity.

c) **Distribution and Poverty** - Unequal land distribution pattern is one of the principal cause of poverty in developing nations, leading to large extent of people living below poverty line. Land reform measures corrects these inequalities by improving the per capita income.

d) **Productivity** - Better managed and organized land distribution coupled with contemporary agricultural production supplements yields: higher land and capital productivity.

e) **Income** - The above benefits result in higher net income streams from agriculture as compared with other possible forms of economic activity for the rural poor.

The significance of land reforms can be summarized as-

(1) Method of land reforms helps in raising production without extra capital. Thus land reforms is a costless method of increasing production, land reform creates a climate where in the cultivator puts in hard work and takes more interest in agriculture operations. He bestows his loving care with such activities as timely plugging, proper sowing and fertilization of land, watering the land close supervision of agriculture can be expected only from those cultivators who find condition of work favorable for hard work. Such activities involve no extra cost, nor do they require extra investment.

(2) It provides incentives to the actual tillers for raising production and effecting improvement in agriculture. Land reforms are guarantee to the farmers that they will not be exploited and farmers will get the full reward for their efforts. This acts as a super to them to put in hard work, make investment and strive for the most efficient use for resources. It is true that for raising agricultural production, what is
needed is that the supplies of inputs like water, seeds, fertilizers, and other agriculture resources should be stepped up sharply.

(3) Land reforms will dispense justice to millions of farmers, because changes in tenurial relations in favour of the tillers will mean that he is assured of getting the fruits of his labour and investments. A policy of ceiling coupled with distribution of surplus land among the landless and small farmers will reduce inequalities of wealth and income and increase the productive assets of poor farmers. A compact unit of farming through consolidation of scattered holdings will raise the efficiency of farmers.

(4) A vigorous and rational farming system will help a great deal in promoting planned development. Land reforms will enable planning commission to bring about a close integration of the agricultural economy with the planning process. This type of integration will be possible because the cultivator will have a direct relation with government. Land reforms system is of special importance in enlisting the co-operation of masses. In favourable agrarian system farmers will find it to their advantages to give of their last to the belonging efforts. The elimination of the heterogeneous and large varieties of several relations will result in some uniformity of the system in whole of the country. This step itself will smooth the process where in the planning authorities will find of easier to formulate and implement uniform policies.

(5) "The acute distress of rural poor in the agrarian economy in the recent past, occasionally taking the form of suicides by peasants is a symptom of the deep sealed malady of exploitative social relation compounded by neo liberal economic policy failure in initiating the right kind of public response. The suicides in rural Andhra Pradesh
reflect very high level of indebtedness that became unviable as some peasants who had sold their land had no other assets to pledge and could not even repay the interest on their loans, leave alone the principle. The relations are embedded in the engagements of poor rural households in forced commerce via the various markets for land, labour, credit product and inputs. And these relations are manifested in the subordination of poor rural households to the various representatives of the *sarkar*. Here again comes the importance of land reform which not only ease the discontentment prevailed among the peasants but also becomes an upward step in the village community development.

**Objectives of Land Reforms:**

1. A great role is assigned to land reforms in furthering the over all objective of a welfare economy.

2. The agrarian structure has been sought to be changed in such a manner that land relations do not obstruct but promote the growth of agriculture.

3. To lay down the foundation for modern agriculture.

4. Land reforms aimed at creation of just land relation, free of exploitation.

5. To remove such motivational and other impediments in agricultural production as arise from the agrarian structure inherited from the past and also to eliminate all elements of exploitation and social injustice within the agrarian system so as to ensure equality of

---

tenurial status and opportunity to the vast sections of the rural population.

6. Object of consolidation of land holdings with a view of making units of cultivations of sizes suitable to modern farming techniques.

7. The tiller of the soil was to be brought in direct relations with the state of this all intermediaries were to be abolished. This measure was necessary to end the exploitation of the tillers.

8. To reduce inequality of land ownership by introducing land ceiling on land were necessary in view of the widespread land hunger through it was not possible to give adequate land to each who desired it.

9. The agrarian structure has been sought to be changed in such a manner that land relations do not obstruct but promote the growth of agriculture.

10. Land reforms are instrument of raising the income earning capacity of the poor farmers and also a redistribution measure.

11. The objective of land reforms is a part of the broader objective of Indian planning, namely, rapid economic growth and social justice.

12. Tenants cultivating land belonging to the landlords were to be made owners of land by enabling them to purchase the land they tilled.

13. The objectives of land reforms are not to be seen in isolation, but as constituents of larger strategy of promoting the aim of the Indian society. These land reforms envisage concrete measured that put the cultivators at the center of things.

14. To regulate rent and to offer security of tenure to the tenants.
15. Abolition of all exploitative intermediary interest between the state and the tiller of the soil.

16. Regulation of rent.

17. Conferment of the tenant's security of tenure and eventually ownership rights.

18. Imposition of ceiling on ownership agriculture lands and distribution of surplus land among the landless and small holders of land.

19. Consolidation of small and fragmented pieces of land to make them viable farming units.

**Land Reforms Lead to Community Development**

Agricultural predominance in the economic structure of a country is typical of its underdeveloped rural economy. Agriculture is not only our occupation but a way of life which Indian masses have lived though ages together, this particular way of life has generated its own outlook which is resistant towards change. The mental conditioning of the people is so rigid that science and logic have no meaning for them. Agriculture as a style of living has generated its own social code beyond which everything appears irrational to our rural masses. Superstitions, dogmas and institutions associated with different stages and operations of agriculture are not predominant as a way of life. This fact has to be born in mind while initiating a discussion on Indian rural economy.

**Land Reform and Community Development as Parallel Concepts**

"Community Development" and "Land Reforms", are interconnected concepts, hence these are two parallel concepts, which have to be implemented with each other. Truly speaking, Community Development is not possible, without proper land reforms, especially in those areas where majority of the population depends upon the agriculture. Therefore land reform is essential to
raise the living standard of the people, to raise their social and economic development and to bring overall community development. Report on Land Reforms\textsuperscript{14} says that Citizens of the industrialized world do not commonly recognize the continuing great importance of agriculture to the well being of people in poorer countries. An estimated 45\% of the world's population still makes their living primarily from agriculture, depending directly on the land for their income, status and security. In many traditional less developed countries, and a number of the economies in transition, these agricultural families back a stable and predictable relationship to the land they farm, and thus face serious economic and social security.

**Measures to achieve Land Reforms:**

(1) Abolition of Intermediaries:

The improvements in the tenurial system have been on two fronts. One, there has been complete abolition of the Zamindari system which was the creation of British rule. Zamindari system was prevalent in India in different forms. The process of abolition of this system was initiated as early as 1948 in Madras. Laws abolishing absentee land-lords were enacted in Bombay and Hyderabad in 1950. Orissa, Punjab and Rajasthan followed suit in 1952. Earlier in 1951, similar measures were adopted in Bihar, U.P, M.P, and Assam. In Bengal the enactment of legislation was delayed till 1954-55, Up to March 1968 all these laws were implemented and process of abolishing intermediaries was completed. Second, all the intermediary tenures i.e. the intermediaries were Zamindars, who paid land revenue to the government and extracted the same along with rent from the cultivators have been eliminated. As a result, the cultivators numbering more than two crores came into direct contact with state.

Zamindari system was exploitative as it involved the existence of an intermediary class which had no interest in agriculture except to such as much

\textsuperscript{14} Report on Land Reforms, "Land Reform in 21\textsuperscript{st} century"- by Land Reform Institute, Hydrabad,-P-1
as possible from the actual tillers of the soil. Some of these tenures were of
great antiquity also and existed for exploitation since very long in past. The
laws enacted by different states provided for compensation to the landlords.
Andhra Pradesh, M.P., Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Assam decided to pay to
the compensation in cash, while Rajasthan, U.P., Maharashatra, Bihar and
Gujarat paid compensation partly in cash and partly in bonds. These bonds
have to redeem over a long period of 30 to 40 years. The value of total
compensation paid to the landlord was Rs. 690 crores. In Bengal and Tamil
Nadu the compensation was equal to a multiple of the net income of the
landlord. This multiple was high in case of high income and low in case of low
incomes. In West Bengal, the rate of compensation varied between 3 to 20
times of the net income. In Gujarat, Maharashatra, M.P. and U.P. the
compensation was fixed at a multiple of the revenue assessment. In Kerala the
compensation was based on the market value to land.

While the aim was to abolish intermediaries between the “tillers and the state”
in actual practice the legislative enactments equated intermediaries with
Zamindars and consequently the legislation left a class of rent receivers and
absentee landlords under Ryotwari untouched. Venkatasubbiah\(^{15}\) writes, “The
party and the government at the centre and in the state began to give thought to
curtailing the power of non-zamindari rentier only at a sub-sequent stage of
their agrarian policy”.

Effects of abolition of intermediaries:

(1) **Zamindars** could no longer exploit the tillers by charging exorbitant
rents.

\(^{15}\) Venkatasubbiah, H., *Indian Economy since Independence*, p-57
(2) The state started collecting land revenue directly from the farmers and the income from this source rose from Rs. 50 crores in 1951-52 to Rs. 363 in 1993-94.

(3) The government came in possession of large cultivated waste land.

(4) The amount of compensation to be paid to the landlords was quite large and this was likely to add fuel to the fire of inflation. So a large part of the compensation was paid in bonds redeemable over a fairly long period.

(5) Over 2 crore tenants have been brought into a direct relationship with the state. About 60 lakh tenants or share croppers could become owner of the land.

(6) The laws abolishing intermediaries could not eradicate feudalism. The landlords retained land by posing as self-cultivators. In U.P., many intermediaries became owners of land but let it out to tenants and a system to tenancy-at-will come into existence.

(2) Tenancy reforms in India:

These reforms concern the betterment of the conditions of tenants who works on lands owned by other. These consisted of fixation of rent also security of tenure through protection against rack renting and eviction, ownership rights have also been conferred in many cases over lands cultivated by the many tenant after the fulfillment of certain condition such as payment of price for land, steps have also been taken to prevent the evidence of home stead tenants. These are the tenants who live in huts and are some improvised shelters built on small pieces of land adjacent to the farm land of landlords under whom they work. In many cases they have been given the ownership rights over these views to ending levels. The bargaining position of tillers has remained weak.
wing to their large number and this fact comes in the way of implementing the laws in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Bengal, Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab and should be brought down to the one fourth or one fifth of the gross produce. In some states, special measures were taken to give relief to tillers of small plots.

Objectives of Tenancy Reforms:

The security of tenure is a must if the tenants are to be induced to improve land and increase production. The policy makers of our country have formulated schemes in which they have struck a balance between the tenant’s right to secure tenure and landlord’s right to resume land for personal cultivation. The security of tenure to the tenants is ensured by state laws by providing that a tenant can be ejected only in accordance with the law. The tenant can be ejected under the following:

1. Sub-letting of land by him.
2. Failure to pay rent.
3. Use of land for the purpose other than cultivation.
4. Damage caused by him to land.
5. Landlord resumes land for personal cultivation.

Assessment of Tenancy Reforms:

Tenancy reforms have enabled lakhs of cultivators to become owner of non resemble land. It is estimated that 50 lakh cultivators have acquired ownership due to this reforms. In U.P., Maharashatra and Gujarat, the ownership rights are conferred on 16 lakh, 11 lakh and 6 lakh respectively. But due to following reasons success of tenancy reforms are limited:
(1) The Zamindars have taken advantage of the loose or vague definition of personal cultivation. Big Zamindars have resumed land under the pretext of self cultivation and house passed it over share croppers on oral leases. These share croppers have constantly remained under the threat of ejection.

(2) Illiteracy

(3) Poverty of the cultivators prevents them from taking resources to law for securing justice.

(4) Different types of administrative difficulties have rendered the laws ineffective.

(5) Government officials are found to have worked in hand and glove with landlords. This has acted as a serious hurdle to the effective implementation of the laws.

(6) In our country land records are neither up to date nor reliable.

(7) The ejection of tenants has taken place in the name of voluntary surrender of land by them, but really speaking these evictions are forced one.

Tenancy reforms are enacted slowly. Many landlords have escaped them by transferring parts of land in the many names.

(3) Ceiling of land:

Measures of land ceiling have been aimed at reducing the inequalities of land distribution and at providing the weaker section of the rural society with income earning land. Every state of our country has enacted laws to limit the maximum size of land and that any family can own. The ceiling size of land
varies according to the quality of land; less for irrigated land and more for dry areas, less for grain crops and more for orchard etc. The land declared surplus over the ceiling is taken over by the state. This surplus land is than distributed among the landless agricultural workers and small farmers. Generally agricultural workers and small farmers are belonging to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. This re-distribution of land will help to enlarge the size of small plots owned by small tillers. It will also, help to some extent to satisfy the land holder which is wide spread in India. In the old ceiling act which existed before 1972 the unit of application was an individual rather than a family. More over the ceiling were fixed at levels such that a family could retain quite a large quantity of land. The table mentioned below provides the ceiling limits on land holdings in various states including Uttar Pradesh.

**TABLE: 8**

**Ceiling Limits on Land Holdings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Irrigated with two crops</th>
<th>Irrigated with one crop</th>
<th>Dry land</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Suggested in National Guidelines of 1972</td>
<td>4.05 to 7.28</td>
<td>10.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Actual Ceilings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>4.05-7.28</td>
<td>6.07-10.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>6.74</td>
<td>6.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>6.07-7.28</td>
<td>10.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>4.05-7.28</td>
<td>6.07-40.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>7.25</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>4.05-8.10</td>
<td>10.12-12.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Keralla</td>
<td>4.86-6.07</td>
<td>4.86-6.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>7.28</td>
<td>10.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td>7.28</td>
<td>10.93-14.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In 1971 central land reforms committee recommended a ceiling range of 10 to 15 acres for good land receiving perennial supply of water from irrigation. For other type of land, the ceiling on the basis of a family. Thus liberal approach to ceiling on land was given effect up by all the states and a new land ceiling acts to give, to the recommendations of the committee was introduced. Now, the unit to application was a family of five consisting of husband, wife and three minor children. Some states distinguished between irrigated land with two crops a year and irrigated land with one crop a year and separate ceiling were prescribed for them. Mechanized farms, sugarcane farms land of private trust etc. are not exempted from land ceilings acts. By the end of Jan, 1993, the total surplus land was estimated to be 6.78 million acres. The following arguments constitute the case in favour of ceiling of land.

(1) Land is a gift of nature and its supply is fixed. It is therefore highly unfair to allow a few to possess large areas of land. In view of the intense land hunger, it is necessary to make distribution as even as possible consistent with the criterion of efficiency.

(2) Land ceiling are useful in mitigating economic inequality in rural families possessed 30 per cent of land and about 55 percent families owned only 7 percent of land. These inequalities of land ownership cannot fit within the framework of our social objectives.
(3) Land ceiling and the distribution of surplus land will create a large class of peasant proprietors. These farmers can be induced to go to join into co-operatives with a view to enjoying the economics of large scale production.

(4) Land ceiling will enable the government to distribute the surplus land among the land less workers and this will enable them to work hard and increase production. Therefore, economic development can be speeded up by imposing ceiling. Moreover, the size of uneconomic holdings can be increased by giving a part of surplus land to the small peasants.

Criticisms of the policy of land ceilings base their case on the following arguments:

(1) Land ceiling would be of no use to give land to lakhs of small farmers for they would not be in a position to develop it for want of resources. In that case, production and agricultural progress will be hampered.

(2) It is not fair to impose ceiling on land when there are no similar ceiling on other forms of property such as houses, industries etc.

(3) Breaking of large plots into a number of small forms would reduce the advantages of large scale production. Modern agricultural practices cannot be introduced on small farms. Use of modern agricultural machinery consisting of tractors harvest combines etc. would not be an economic proposition when the farms are smaller.

(4) Imposition of land ceilings would not yield surplus land adequate to satisfy the land hunger of the lakhs of tillers.

(5) Land ceilings and the distribution of surplus land would result into numerous small farms which may adversely affect the marketable
surplus. Small farmers may not be able to meet the raw material needs of the expanding industries.

It can be said that the pace of implementation of land, ceilings has been very slow. The total area of surplus land which became available consequent to ceiling has been quite small and only a small fraction of it can be actually distributed. Following factors are responsible for the inefficient and slow implementation of ceilings.

(1) Most of the state governments lacked the political will to implement the ceiling promptly and effectively. Land lords could influence the ruling as well as the opposition parties.

(2) Land ceiling acts contained some loopholes to the advantage of the landowners. For example, laws of some states permitted the transfer of excess land within a specified period after their enactment.

(3) In some states, implementation suffered on account of the lack of proper records. In some cases, records were not available while in other cases, they were highly inadequate.

(4) By taking advantage of the time gap between the policy announcements and the enactment of acts, many landowners could make ceilings by resorting to fictitious transfer and sale of land.

(5) The influence of the landlords with the state government resulted into numerous exemption which enabled the rich to hold large areas of land. This influence has also come in the way of quick and effective implementation of ceilings.
(4) Reorganization of Agriculture through Consolidation:

These reforms provide a compact piece to farmers, whose owned lands are not only very small in size, but are also scattered over large areas. Small and scattered pieces of land are a big handicap in efficient cultivation, as these involve wastage of resources on looking after so many pieces and underutilization of resources in each plot. Measures in the form of laws for the consolidation of holdings have been undertaken in most of the states. These legislative measures permit consolidation on a voluntary basis. In Haryana, Punjab and western Uttar Pradesh, the work of consolidation has been completed. Thus, the evil of fragmentation holdings can be overcome by consolidation. When a farmer possesses small plots scattered at different places, cultivation becomes difficult and inefficient. It is better for the farmer to have a complete block rather than scattered holding. Through consolidation, a farmer can be given plots contiguous to one another forming a single field. There are two methods of bringing about consolidation of landholdings. In the first method, the entire farming areas equal to that under his ownership. In second method, farmers can be induced to exchange their fragmented holdings so that each farmer gets the land areas at one place. In actual practice, exchange of holdings becomes difficult due to different sizes of holdings.

Every state government has enacted law regarding the consolidation of holdings. States like Gujarat and M.P. have provided for voluntary consolidation. Under the laws fragmentation below a certain area is not allowed and transfers of land are regulated with a view to preventing fragmentation. The act also provides for who receive land of less value etc. The process of consolidation can be initiated at 50 percent of the farmers in a village possessing two third of the village land desire and apply for consolidation. Rest of farmers can not then object to and refrain from consolidation. The process of
consolidation has been going on in India for a long time. The work of consolidation of land holdings is rendered difficult by the following factors:

(1) Our farmers, being illiterate and conservative, fail to realize the importance of consolidation from the point of view of agricultural progress and national economy.

(2) Lack of proper records and trained staff is a serious obstacle to consolidation.

(3) Our farmers have a terrible attachment for their ancestral land. Which they are not prepared to exchange for other plots.

(4) Financial difficulties act as another hurdle. The cost is to be borne either by the cultivators or by the government. In both cases involves financial burden.

(5) The movement for consolidation is opposed by the rich farmers as well as those possessing land of superior quality. The latter are not willing to part with their land in exchange for other plots.

(5) Provision of Land Records:

Agriculture land in many areas is still recorded in the names of persons who died long ago and whose legal successors are the owners but their names are not entered in the records. Transfers of land by act of parties take place without the consequential mutations being effected in the records. There is thus an imbalance between records and reality. The system of record of rights in land in India is fiscal in nature. The person shown on the records as responsible for payment of land revenue is presumed to be the owner unless proved otherwise, thus title to land is only incidental and arises from the presumption of payment of land revenue. With the abolition of land revenue in some of the states, even this presumption would be lost. To overcome this problem the system of
registration of title to land by the state should be introduced “to enable dealings in land to be effected with security, expedition and cheapness”. This system would facilitate access to credit and other facilities.

(6) Co-operative farming:

Ceiling on land, reclamation of land, and consolidation of holdings will definitely help in the solution of the many problems of small farms. But because of non availability of adequate land, it may not be possible to increase the size of all the small farms. It is here that co-operative farming becomes relevant. Very small farmers with land below the desirable limit can pool their lands and operate more efficiently. These farmers will continue to be owners of their land and will share the surplus produce as per their contribution of the land.

Of course, these co-operatives have to be of a special type under it, labour is to be engaged to the extent that total production is maximized. This means that the employment of labor should be determined by the considerations of additions to production and not the market wage. It is only then that the participating farmer will have more employment and the country more production. Such co-operatives should get help from the non farming co-operatives in matters of credit, marketing etc, facilitating the smooth working of the co-operative farming.

Evolutionary Aspect of Land Reforms in India:

Under Mahatma Gandhi, the motto of swaraj was democracy based on decentralization of political as well as economic power. In this movement the village pyramid was considered having base of poor peasants and big land owners above them in ascending order, Gandhi ji advocated that economy was based on love and spirit of service and self sacrifice. The ultimate objects in
Gandhian theory is to completely abolish the deep rooted concept of ownership whether of land, capital or skill.

His followers led by Vinoba Bhave launched “Bhoodan Movement” to realize the revolutionary dream of the Mahatma. It was apprehended that agrarian legislation particularly land distribution and land ceiling laws would fail to achieve the objectives as big land owners knew how to escape the mischief of law. “Vinobha Bhave” wrote in Bhoodan Ganga, “Dan” does not mean charity, it really implies equal distribution.

He propagated the philosophy of love and truth. “On the appeal of Vinoba, lots of lands were donated by the Zamindars to him. Land collected up to 1955 was 5,64,031 areas in U.P”. The following details give the figures of land received and distributed until march 1956.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land received in acres</th>
<th>5,76,728</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No of donors</td>
<td>24,709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land distributed in acres</td>
<td>1,14,174</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After the independence, there was free flow of various thinking process and the policy option before the new government were based in agrarian sector on various ideologies. Jawaharlal Nehru wanted co-operation to be the basics of agricultural development, without which the development towards industrialization was not possible. Technological and institutional factors are not mutually exclusive but are complementary in the process of agricultural development. Without institutional reforms, technological reforms will ultimately collapse like pack of cards based on a poor base. It favours co-

---

16 Vinoba Bhave,- “Bhoodan Ganga” Vol.-1, p-18
17 R. N. Misra, -“Bhoodan Movement in India” Published by S. Chand& Comp., New Delhi P-57
18 Suresh Ram,- “Vinoba and his mission”- Published by Sarva Seva Sangh- Rajghat, Varanasi- P. 79
operative farming keeping individual ownership. “Ram Manohar Lohia” also believed in revolution but he believed in Marxist- Gandhian revolution suitable to the Indian environment. He differed with Nehru and wanted development of cottage or small scale industries in place of big industries. “Vivekananda says, I am a socialist not because I think it is a perfect system, but half a loaf is better than no bread. A redistribution of pain and pleasure is better than always the same persons having pains and pleasures. He further says, if the labourers stop work, your supply of food and cloths also stops. The well being of the higher classes now lies in helping the lower to get their legitimate rights”19. “Jay Parakash Narayan” gave a call for “Total Revolution” without impairing the democratic structure of the society. He adopted Gandhi and Lenin. “He did not like violence in revolution because as per “Tolstoy” the revolutions have done all things for the public but they have not taken trouble to bring down the leaders from the back of the public”20.

The first five years plan (1951-56) considered the abolition of intermediary rights. The first five year plan identified small and uneconomic holdings as the root cause of many difficulties in the way of agricultural development. Thus, the five year plan could only enumerate the importance of land reforms in any scheme of rural development in India. The plan even recommended that all land holders should be allowed to resume tenanted land for personal cultivation. “National Commission on Agriculture(1970-76) confirmed glaring disparities as follows- “In 1954 household owning land up to 5 acre(2.02ha) constituted in number 74.21 percent of the total households but they hold only 16.77 percent of total land. On the other hand, households with 25 acres (10.12 ha) or more constituted 3.71 percent of the total house holdings but owned as much as 34.27 percent of the total land”21. In May, 1955 the

---

19 Karunakaran,K. P.-“Modern Indian Political Tradition”-P-420
20 Jai Prakash Narayan- “Class Struggle of J P” p-5-6
planning commission set up a panel on land reforms under the chairmanship of Gulzari Lal Nanda for reviewing the progress of land reforms in the country.

The Second Five Year Plan (1956-61) discerned a definite trend towards ejection of tenants, attributed to ignorance of legislative provisions, possible lacuna in law, inadequate land records and defective administrative arrangement. The Third Five Year Plan (1961-66) stated the twin objectives of land reforms, namely-

1. Removal of impediments to the increased agricultural production.

2. Elimination of exploitation and social injustice in the agrarian system.

The Fourth Five Year Plan (1969-74) reviewed the progress of land reforms. The Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-79) concludes that the existing legislation fell short of the accepted policy and the objection of tenancy reforms still remained to be achieved. The Sixth Five Year Plan (1978-83) aimed to speed up the implementation of land reforms. After Indira Gandhi had again become the prime minister in January 1980, the draft sixth five year plan was recast and the draft frame work of the Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85) was discussed in the two day National Development Council meeting on 30-31 August 1980. This document was more explicit on the question of proper implementation of ceiling laws. The Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90) emphasized on the rural development and poverty alleviation. The Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97) put stress again on the rural development and poverty alleviation. It also emphasized on agriculture and allied activities. The Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002) aimed at the elimination of poverty alleviation programmes. The Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-07) is more focused on development of wastelands and degraded lands, rural water supply and sanitation with emphasis on agriculture.
Computerization of Land Records- (The need of the Time):

The history of land records is as old as the Indian civilization. Maintenance of these records has gone through a process of evolution as it passed through various administrative systems and socio economic compulsion. Without going into details, it can be safely stated that the present system of preparing and maintaining land records originated from the Mughal period and reached its scientific form during the British rule. All the subsequent efforts are largely revisional with De Novo preparations combined by newly accredited areas on the basis of existing laws and rules. Land records are of great importance to contemporary socio-economic imperatives and their revision and updating are necessitated for capturing the essentials of changes in social dynamics. The system of correction and updating of land records is very elaborate. Maps depicting land parcels (cadastral maps) are required to be updated every 30 years through the process of survey and settlement operations. Most states have not done any survey or settlement operation after independence. As a consequence, updating of records has sobered and they no longer represent the ground realities relating to ownership and possession. The situation has been well recognized at various forums at different points of time. In December, 1988 the Conference of Reverence Secretaries of states took cognizance of the poor state of land records and recommended immediate action. Even the first plan has taken note of this fact and its possible consequences. In a primarily agrarian economy with a distorted social structure, it has serious implication in terms of its impact of the execution of all welfare economy development activities. Since the first plan, planners have been advocating proper maintenance of land records as the basis for good administration aimed at social justice through better implementation of rural development programmes. This was reiterated in the second and third plans. The Sixth
Plans\textsuperscript{22} has envisaged the completion and updating of land records from 1980 to 1985. To quote the Sixth plan document, “Systematic programmes would be taken up for completion updating of land records for completion within a period of five years i.e. 1980-1985. In status where the backlog is heavy, aerial survey techniques may be employed for expeditious survey operation. Each cultivator would be given a passbook indicating his status/title to description of the land area, cess etc. along with a copy of \textit{khasra} /map and other details that are considered necessary. Appropriate provisions will be made in revenue laws to confer legal status on those documents as proof of title and rights in land. Similarly the Seventh Plan\textsuperscript{23} document also emphasized the need for updated and accurate land records. According to the Seventh Plan Document\textsuperscript{24}, “land records form the base for all land reform measures and therefore, regular period updating of land records is essential in all states. This will necessarily have to reform measures and, therefore regular periodic updating of land records is essential in all states. This will necessarily have to include a scientific survey of unmeasured land and recording of rights of tenants and share-croppers which have remained unrecorded up till now”. The Eight plan (1992-1997)\textsuperscript{25} and the Ninth plan (1997-2002) have also envisaged the fulfillment of all five year principles of national land reforms policies, that is, the abolition of intermediaries, tenancy reforms with security to actual cultivators, redistribution of ceiling, surplus land, consolidation of holdings and updating of land records. The general theme underlying the content of all plan documents has emphasized that land is an asset, which provides the primary and secondary needs of the people. Most of the problems of the people in the villages are due to land related issues. Planning and maintaining land records is a pre-requisite before any land reforms policies can be successfully implemented. To achieve this, latest information technology is a must for

\begin{flushright}
\begin{enumerate}
\item \textsuperscript{22} Sixth Five Year Plan, Planning Commission, Government of India.
\item \textsuperscript{23} Seventh Five Year Plan, Planning Commission, Government of India.
\item \textsuperscript{24} Seventh Five Year Plan, Planning Commission, Government of India.
\item \textsuperscript{25} Eight Five Year Plan, Planning Commission, Government of India.
\end{enumerate}
\end{flushright}
quicker storing, processing and retraining of information database in land records. Therefore, computerization of land records is an essential step to achieve all these goals especially if we have to realize the goal of decentralized planning and administration as envisaged in the 73rd Amendment to the constitution of India.

**Government Initiatives regarding Computerization of Land Records:**

The government of India and the state government have been seized with the recurring problem of inadequately maintained land record system as it had made the administration of land reforms difficult and had served to neutralize their benefits. A weak land record system had also been viewed as a systematic weakness that has helped the perpetration of atrocities on the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes. The following are the major imitative taken by the government of India for computerization of land records.

(1) The conference of revenue ministers of states/UTs(1985) advocated that computerization of land and crop-based data be taken up on a pilot project basis as a technology proving exercise in one Tehsil/Revenue Circle of each state/UT, as a central sector scheme.

(2) A study group (1985) comprising representatives from the ministry of agriculture, the central statistical organization and from the governments of Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Uttar Pradesh also recommended computerization of core data in land records to assist developmental planning and to make their records more accessible to the people.
Computerization of Land Record (CLR) scheme:

"The centrally sponsored scheme on computerization of land records was started in 1988-89 with 100% financial assistance as a pilot project in the eight districts/states viz, Rangareddy (AP), Sonitpur (Assam), Singhbhum (Bihar), Gandhinagar (Gujarat), Morna (MP), Wardha (Maharastra), Mayurbhanj (Orissa), Dungarpur (Rajasthan) with a view to removing the problems inherent in the manual system of maintenance and updating of land records and to meet the requirements of various groups of computerize the CORE DATA contained in land records, so as to assist development planning and to make records accessible to People/Planners/Administrators". By 1991-92, the scheme had been extended to 24 district in different states viz Haryana, H.P, J& K, Kerala, Mainpur, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Sikkim, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and Delhi. During the eight plan, the scheme was approved as a separate centrally sponsored scheme on computerization of land records. The total expenditure on the scheme during eight plan period was Rs.59.42 crore which was utilized for covering 299 new districts and also for providing additional funds for the ongoing pilot projects. Thus, by the end of the Eight Plan, 323 districts in the country were brought under the scheme with an expenditure of Rs.64.44 crore. The scheme is being implemented since 1994-95 in collaboration with the national informatics center (NIC) which is responsible for the supply, installation and maintenance of hardware, software and other peripherals. The ministry of rural development is providing funds to the state governments for site preparation, data entry work and for purchase of necessary furniture and other miscellaneous expenditure.

---

26 India-2004, Chapter-23,-Rural Development, published by Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, GOI-p-590
Objectives of the ‘CLR’ scheme:

(1) To facilitate easy maintenance and updating of change which occur, is land database such as changes, due to availability of irrigation/natural calamities/consolidation/ or on account of legal changes like transfer of ownership, partition, land acquisition, lease etc.

(2) To provide for comprehensive scrutiny to make land records tamper-proof, this may reduce the menace of litigation and social conflicts associated with land disputes.

(3) To provide the required support for implementation of development programmes for which data about distribution of land holdings is vital.

(4) To facilitate detailed planning for infrastructural as well as environment of development.

(5) To facilitate preparation of an annual set of records in the mechanized process and thereby producing accurate documents for recording details such as collection of land revenue, cropping pattern etc.

(6) To facilitate a variety of standard and ad-hoc queries on land data.

(7) To provide database for agricultural census.

New Land Reform options in the 21st century:

“Citizens of the industrialized world do not commonly recognize the continuing great importance of agriculture to the well being of people in poorer counties. An estimated 45% of the world population still makes their living primarily from agriculture, depending directly on the land for their income, status and security. In many traditional less developed countries, and a number of the economics in transition, these agricultural families still constitute
substantial majority of the population. However great numbers of these agricultural families lack a stable and predictable relationship to the land they farm, and thus, face serious economic and social insecurity.”\textsuperscript{27} “For most of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century the dominant methodology for conducting “land reform” in non-Marxist setting was compulsory acquisition of defined lands from private landlords or plantation owners, often at a sharp discount from market value and redistribution of such lands to tenant farmers or agricultural labourers in farms whose size approximated that of small to medium size farms in that country. Sometimes ‘land reform’ also meant compulsory regulation to the landlord tenant relationship in an effort to elevate and protect tenant’s rights or resettlement of tenants or labourers on to (supposedly) uncultivated public lands. The latter approaches, in particular, were nearly always unsuccessful”\textsuperscript{28}.

Although land reform faded as a development priority in many parts of the globe during the 1970’s and 1980’s, the world witnessed a renewed interest in land reform near the end of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century. It seems likely that this interest in land reform will be sustained through the first part of the 21\textsuperscript{st} century. “The land reform approaches in the new century, however involve both new challenges (such as those in the decollectivizing and market-erecting transitional economies) and new responses. The approaches are likely to be substantially revised from those that dominated the past century. Policy makers should also recognize that the provision of secure land rights may be necessary for the maintenance of political stability in many countries”\textsuperscript{29}. In pursuing the new land reform approaches, policy makes should learn from cumulative past experience and be advertent to current needs, in a number of ways.

- In traditional developing countries, large scale land reform programmes that redistribute a large proportion of a country privately

\textsuperscript{27} Report on Land Reforms by Rural Development Institute, Hyderabad (AP) p-1
\textsuperscript{28} Report on Land Reforms by Rural Development Institute, Hyderabad (AP) p-20
\textsuperscript{29} Ibid- P-20
owned agricultural land to tenant farmers or landless labourers are unlikely to be politically feasible in most (but not all) settings.

- In many settings, especially in transitional economics but also in some traditional developing countries, it will be necessary to establish or strengthen land market prerequisite including secondary institutions such as land registration and mortgage that will help support, protect and add value to land rights.

- In many traditional less developed countries political and financial factors will likely make distribution of micro-plots—including house and garden plots more feasible and desirable than continuing efforts to distribute “full sized” small farms. Even tiny plots can in many settings provide a substantial increment to family nutrition and income, increased status and wage bargaining power, freedom from moneylenders, and a place for one’s own house. Such measure can be affordable even if the state must pay relatively high market values for land to be redistributed.

- Failed attempts to regulate the landlord tenant relationship should also be abandoned, except in special and compelling circumstances. For example in west Bengal, the state should either retain tenancy regulation for remaining tenants, since the costs of evictions have already been borne, or even better, provide the protected tenants with realistic options for becoming full owners.

- States should pay more attention to safe guarding and assuring customary land rights of the poor, including rights to forestland and grazing land. Thus, in addition to land reforms that help the poor to gain access to land, efforts are needed to help the poor, formalize or otherwise protect their existing customary rights to land.
• Policy makers have recently and belatedly begun to pay attention to intra household allocation of land rights. This should continue and increase, with efforts to ensure greater rights for women in the enjoyment, disposition, partitioning, and inheritance of land.

• Policy makers in many countries will need to undertake more systematic attempts to find timely compromise solutions to forestall violent, confiscatory and anti-democratic efforts to secure land for the poor (including efforts that may lead to backlashes that further undermine democracy, the rule of law, and the position of the poor).

• Policy makers should also recognize that there could be a potentially important supplementary role for “market assistance land reform” or negotiated land reforms.

• The state should assist land reform beneficiaries with simple complementary measures (other than housing) but not attempt to be the provider of all services to land reform beneficiaries. For example, the state may need to provide some support for credit, extension or basic infrastructure (such as extending simple, local roads and electrification lines from existing residential areas to newly distributed house and garden plots.

It can be concluded, that the experience of many countries shows the crucial role of land reforms in providing not only a source of income, security and status for the non-landowning rural poor, but also as a foundation for broader rural development and political stability. Accumulated experience also provides responses to the current challenges of land reforms that are highly likely to be both affordable and politically feasible over the coming years. Land reforms in many setting thus appear both necessary and achievable.
Critical Assessment- However, the success in the land reform movements has not been up to the mark. Land reform movements have been failure in many ways. The most dismal failure of the land reform programme has been in respect of the land ceiling and redistribution. There were courts proceedings, political problems and benami land holdings. And large parts of the land deemed surplus was declared unsuitable for cultivation. Regarding tenants, in practice, there were very few recorded tenants. Progress regarding consolidation of holdings was regionally uneven. Where this took place, it worsened the position of small tenants. In the economically backward areas the notion of a Civil Society where the state machinery is at least formally neutral between the contending classes, is absent. There is a De facto fusion of economic and political power, where the landlords and rich peasants use the repressive apparatus of the state to compel peasants to conform to custom. Peasant’s struggles are inevitably accompanied by violence, which is preceded and provoked by the violence of the landlords and their Senas (private armies) with the backing of the state apparatus. A number of reports of the Delhi based peoples unions for democratic rights during the 1980s and 1990s bring out this aspect quite vividly. “A new democratic land reform can not be delinked from what is integral to a new democracy and in this light the land reform should hasten the democratization of production, relations as regards ownership rights in productive property, the determination and form of remuneration of labour, the balance between material and non material incentives, sensitiveness to the gender and caste questions and the relationship between political cadres, scientists and the technologists, administrators and the actual tillers of the land”\(^{30}\). The land reform should be based upon mass support and therefore, if necessary gradualist.