PART - III
CHAPTER - 9
OPERATIONAL PROBLEMS FACED BY IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES IN THE STUDY DISTRICT

-- BACKGROUND
-- NATURE OF PROBLEMS
-- PROBLEMS OF OTHER AGENCIES
-- OPERATIONAL PROBLEMS
-- PROBLEMS OF BLOCK
-- PROBLEMS OF DISTRICT RURAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
-- PROBLEMS OF PANCHAYAT AND MAHKUMA PARISHAD
-- PROBLEMS OF CO-OPERATIVE
-- PROBLEMS OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION
-- PROBLEMS OF ANIMAL AND HUSBANDARY
9.1 BACKGROUND

The theme of this chapter is to observe the numerous problems faced by the various agencies, functioning in the study district. The field observation have been made to know the actual facts, although oral view of the personnel are the main consideration for analysing the problems. However, in a short period of long journey it is not possible for anybody to note-down all the possible facts, yet, it will be wise job to have a cross examination of the beneficiaries and the concerning agencies to sort out the problems of both sides. As such, in this chapter, I try to analyse the Agencies problems and the next chapter will give the people's expression about it.

The term 'problem' means a question involving uncertainty and difficulty in implementing the development programmes. Therefore, now a days, many rural development agencies, operating in the country side with common objectives but under different flags. Some of them are governmental agencies, formed and worked under government directions and some of them are voluntary agencies formed by social leaders, and have to work under the trust's direction. At present there are more than 44 agencies/institution, including 9 international organisations working for rural development in India. Among these, co-operatives, commercial banks and regional rural banks have been working at the grass-root level.
Besides, financial and other agencies play a catalytic role in rural development. This apart, the corporate sector and voluntary agencies have embarked upon the task of rural development. A number of scientific and technical organisations - such as the research stations of the ICAR, Agriculture Universities, Regional Research Laboratories, Krishi Vigyan Kendras, community polytechnics, Indian Institute of Science and Technology, etc - are located in various parts of the country. The mobilisation of resources and their deployment in agricultural, non-farm activities, rural artisans, cottage industries, and rural development is a continuous process.

The government agencies have a constitutional obligation to uplift the rural masses from the traditional social's mud. They have been established to perform their functions in rural areas as an agency of the government but as a limb and kin of rural families.

For last 40 years the economic planning, the government has been trying for bringing the poors to the mainstreams but no remarkable success have been seen due to various shortcomings. As such, a big question has occurred frequently that what are the problems of stagnation of rural development as well as agricultural development programmes.

9.2 NATURE OF PROBLEMS

The problems of rural development are three-fold in character, viz. man's made problems, materials problems and monetary problems. Further, it may be classified in to the categories; general and specific problems.

The first set of problems are generally faced by all the agencies in the country as a whole. Because, the plans, policies
and programmes are formulated at the central level without considering the weightiness of particular regions. As the problems vary from region to region, naturally, the programmes framed for the country as a whole, would not be able to solve the need of the particular region. As such, during the formation of programmes, more emphasis have been given on political benefits than the economic gain. Besides, frequent changes of programmes has also created many drawbacks to the implementing agencies at the grass-root level. Hence, these problems are creation of man for the satisfaction of certain sections by investing more money for fulfilment of target without seeing the balanced development of the down trodden societies.

The general problems are conventional nature like social, cultural and economical not equally applicable to all the areas. But specific problems are cadastral with the development agencies. These problems may be divided into two categories: organisational and functional. These problems are acute with the agencial services of various rural development departments.

The development agencies are busy for fulfilment of plan's target and rendering services to the people by hook or crook. As such, although they claim a balance development in all areas and sections but justice and equity are not possible due to occurrence of various constraints. Sometimes, people are also felt dissatisfaction about the general treatment of the district development agencies.

The communication gap has created some stereotype notions and ideas between the agencies and public without having contracts each other. As a result, the privileged classes have
been enjoying the larger share of the development programmes due to less participation of poor classes.

Since the introduction of community development programme and the Panchayati Raj these wide gap have been narrowed down to some extent by creating an awareness among the people at the beginning of the programme. But things have not been remained as some, what it was in 1952. With the programme of the country, the development strategy has also been changed by creating larger agencies for the development of the country side. Hence, it will be most significant to see the problems of all the development departments in general at the present stage of the study.

Personal interview with the development agencies are taken with the help of verbal questions and discussions and also official data collected from them. So that in nearfuture steps can be taken to solve the multi factors problems.

9.3 PROBLEM OF OTHER AGENCIES

Rural mass development is a complex operations requiring micro-level planning, motivational techniques, inputs production and testing, development of agriculture and allied sectors, availability of resources, co-ordinators and cooperation, orientation and training of development workers, improvement of infrastructural facilities, monitoring, evaluation, follow up, research, permanent creation of assets and employment etc. No single agency can solve these complicative task. As such, various agencies were created for each sectors of development during the plans periods.

The various agencies connecting with banking institutions, that have been functioning in the study district (Golaghat) are mentioned below --

9.4 OPERATIONAL PROBLEMS

The stable perception of perennial problems faced by the rural development as well as agricultural development agencies are multi-farious and it would not be possible to give all the problems of each agency separately. However, an efforts have been made to give a summarised important description of the agencial problems of the district agencies which are obtained during the interview with the various development personnel.

All the agencies of the study district pointed out that there were several problems that they have to face during the implementation of the rural development programmes.

1. The major problems in this regard, is the lack of up-to date data about the demographic and socio-economic parameters of the poor families. There is no immediate agency who could provide the processed data for operational use.

2. Socio-cultural and attitudinal barriers of the village people like traditional ideologies, religious ethics have obstructed to village people in accepting the modern technologies and agencies' helps.
3. In almost all agencies have shortage of trained personnel for collection, interpretation and timely processing of data which hinders the agencies for effective functioning and to take right decision making.

4. The development agencies reveal that the financial resources are a major constraint to develop a parallel network system exclusively for agriculturist and rural poor. Frequent political interference has obstructed them in implementing the development programmes as per their chalked out plan.

5. The development process has created a matrix organisation at the district level, which requires both horizontal and vertical relationships. In such an organisation, the procedure rightly points out, 'it requires multiple roles for people and sometimes, they got confused about these roles. If dilutes authority and increases requirements for co-ordinationi and control' * I

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9.5 PROBLEMS OF BLOCK

At present set up of block is quite inadequate, ineffective and having no resources in their hand to execute the plans and programmes. Because there are two department in the C.D. Block. One is for C.D. & Panchayat programmes and other is for Rural Development programmes. The R.D.O. of C.D. Department is trained person whereas the senior B.D.O. is drawn from revenue circle. The C.D. Department has limited works with little fund and the whole rural development works have been carried out by the Rural Development Department. Hence, it creates internal conflict between the two at blocks level. The B.D.Os are simply heading the blocks. Because all the agriculture, veterinary, industry extension officers, who are working at block level, are not under his control and supervision. In a sence, there is no co-ordination of works amongst these officers.

The vertical relation between the D.C. and R.D.O. is an important factor for timely implementation of the programme. Sometimes, delayed communication between the two have also affected the development process.

In order to spotlight, the classificatory clientele needs of the villages, a careful survey of the field areas is necessary. But due to lack of fund, inadequate staff, heavy pressure of proper works and limited availability of time, the survey of actual situation is seldom possible. As such, sometimes, the beneficiaries are selected from the official data not from the actual field sites.

In remote villages there are no motorable roads to enter the villages. The block authority could not take any development works due to shortage of fund.
The plans and programmes are prepared at the top level and funds are allocated according to number of population. As such, the programmes are to be implemented according to top level directives not as per local needs.

The responses of the people about the progressional actions are not commandable, due to lack of mass media like, television, radio, newspaper, audio visual etc. They could not able to contact the remote villages with their existing extension staff to say about the development programmes and its utility.

The frequent change of development programmes have also affected by the agencies. Both beneficiaries and agencies become puzzled due to overlapping of works in the same block.

It is very easy to announce a programme to attract the mind of the people. But during the time of implementation, the fund are not sufficiently provided to satisfy the people. This is happened in case of village industry, where alteration has to be made the pre-estimated projects. This has lost the interest of the people.

The lengthy official process for inter-department correspondence has obstructed the field officers in taking the prompt action even for a minor matter of development works.

Political preferences in the selection of beneficiaries has obstructed the independent work of the block's authority.

A rare promotional changes in the existing block level organisation is an another cause of frustration of extension officers.

Sometimes, in absence of Panchayat Raj, the block organisation has failed to mobilise the people for more voluntary contribution and services for development works.
After the Community Development programme was transferred to the state sector at the end of 1966, the progress of the C.D. programme was slowed down and relegated to low priority works like feeding, village roads, repairing, minor irrigations, health and sanitation etc.

9.6 PROBLEMS OF DISTRICT RURAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

The integrated Rural Development Programme has been implemented in the study district under several practical difficulties and operational hindrances. These hindrances restrict its effectiveness by reducing investment cost per unit to uneconomic unit. For example, due to lack of banking facilities in the rural areas, the credit mobilisation cannot be done at a minimum cost.

The non-availability of supportive infrastructure is a nearest distance has prevented the agencies to initiate the small family oriented enterprises for poorest of the poor.

The non-availability of inputs and assets at local places have compelled the agency to import the inputs from outside which resulted in draining out of the resources.

The wage rate fixed by the government under NREP is very lower than the prevailing local rate. As such local labourers are not willing to participated in the programme. On the other hand, the local youth donot come forward to take up these jobs as a matter of prestige. Hence, to mitigate the labours scarcity, the agency has to import labours to fulil the mandays target.

Much of the money allocated for rural development is being spent on administrative purposes. Which affects the masses in receiving the due share of the poverty alleviation programme.
Due to less co-ordination between the lead bank and other banks, the important decisions of the governing body have been remained in paper without prompt implementation.

The delaying tactics of loan issued to beneficiaries are eventuated due to involvement of double agencies.

It has also been noticed that almost of the beneficiaries, instead of utilising of the loan for one project, have been utilising for some other purposes. As bank, DRDA and block have no sufficient staff for follow-up practices, the beneficiaries have been mis-using the fund without creating permanent assets.

As the DRDA has no financial year, the bill for one year can be passed in other year. As such, the unscrupulous contractors could perseue the favourable persons for mis-appropriation of cash and kinds.

9.7 PROBLEMS OF PANCHAYAT AND MAHKUMA PARISHAD

The Panchayat Raj institution and community development programme have a cohesive relationship. The panchayat is the basic agency for the rural development. The community participation in welfare programmes is largely possible on the institutions of the panchayati personel. They could also motivated the people for voluntary contribution. However, the modest institutions has been deadlocked by a number of bottlenecks like political factionalism, corruption and eneiciency.

The panchayat election was not held in Assam since January 1979, which restricted the people of participate in the democratic process. So the actual situation could not be assessed due to dormant nature of these institions. The old panchayati
workers who have been still continuing in the hope of the revival of panchayat without getting their salary to fifty months.

Since the introduction of two-tier system of panchayat in 1972, the development works have been gradually decreasing the fund of Mahkuma Parishad and gram panchayat is very limited. The sources of income of these local bodies are daily and weekly markets, river crossing, taxes on mills, and partly from government helps. As such, they could not take any development works except utilising these fund for administrative purposes.

Moreover, in short a few problems faced by the panchayats as under.

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9.8 PROBLEMS OF CO-OPERATIVE

The another most important agency for rural development as well as agricultural development is co-operative organisation. This organisation is also failed in exercising democratic principles due to uneven socio-economic conditions and status and prevailing groupism among the different castes creeds.

I. The secretaries of the societies revealed that they have no godowns and no staff quarters in the rural areas. II. Due to shortage of staff, the up to date accounting system is cannot be prepared. The secretary himself has to do all the works. III. As there is no available of technical know-how and specialised person. So it is not possible to prepare perspective plans. IV. In providing the specialised services, they do not received the
supportive services from the other departments in timely. V. The societies have been suffering from the shortage of fund for credit mobilization in the rural areas. VI. There is no such agency to monitor or to assist these societies in execution of their projects as per plans and programmes.

9.9 PROBLEMS OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION

During the survey the researcher got an opportunity to attend a cluster training organised by the Agriculture Department of Assam. The training was held in a village library in Golaghat district, attended by following personnel.

1. Subject Matter Specialist (SMS) Nos - ?
2. A.E.P.S. No - 5
3. V.L.E.Ws No - 29

Total - 36

During the training, they have been discussing about the problems of agencies and the cultivators and measures to be taken for ongoing programmes of each V.L.E.Ws areas.

The problems, they faced, have been cited below in brief manner.

1. There was no permanent building to carry out the cluster training. 2. In absence of staff quarters in the villages, all the VLE workers have to run from village to village by their own way. 3. The agricultural productivity grew at a rate much below its potentiality due to the traditional practices of the farmers. 4. The cultivators, generally, do not willing to invest more money in agricultural fields. 5. Inadequate inputs supply is the main constraint of development of agricultural production. 6. There is no research organisation in testing the local conditions. 7. The transfer of technology to the farmers is not coming up-to-
the mark as farmers are not interested to adopt the modern technology. 8. The services of input agencies are not readily available. The quality of seeds, supplied by them are in poor standard. Besides, the recommended varieties are not available and untimely supply of seeds has posed a problems in regarding services timely. 9. The non-availability of sufficient modern implements in the local areas has handicapped the development agencies. 10. The measures for pest's attack could not be taken due to non-availability of pesticides and insecticides in timely. 11. Lack of sufficient irrigation facilities has obstructed the agency to motivate the people for adopting multiple cropping. 12. There is no proper co-ordination between the credit agencies with the development agencies.

Irrigation

1. The agency has shortage of machanical staff to supervise the shallow tubewells and pump sets in the operating fields. 2. Sufficient and good standard tubewells are not available in the local areas. 3. The pumping sets are not running properly due to irregular power supply and shortage of diesel oil.

9.10 PROBLEMS OF ANIMAL AND HUSBANDARY

Golaghat district is very backward in taking-up the subsidiary occupation like dairy farming, poultry and pig farming etc.

1. They have no sufficient staff to provide the extension services in the villages. 2. Due to short supply of fodder and non-availability of nutrative animal foods, the yield rate of milk of local varieties is very less. 3. There is not network of milk plants and milk chilling centres. 4. Other departments are not co-
operative in providing extension facilities. 5. They have no sufficient drugs and equipments to provide the treatment timely and adequately.