CHAPTER – VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION
7.1. MAIN FINDINGS

The Food for Work Programme was conducted for the authorities concerned. No details of physical checking and inspection of works were available in the districts. No specific staff was sanctioned either at the centre or in the states for the execution of the programme. The work was managed by utilizing the services of the existing staff through readjustment in nature and did not provide them a continuous and permanent income stream.

71 per cent of the beneficiaries reported that the workers under the FWP were available within the village of their residence only less than 10 per cent received wages fully in cash. The rest in cash and kind or only in kind the wages paid in time only 52 per cent of the sample beneficiaries admitted. The wages paid under the FWP were sufficient to meet their daily expenses 45 per cent selected beneficiaries reported that the wages paid under the programmes were equal to the prevalent market rates; While 30 per cent reported that, the FWP wages were higher than the market rates. Another 25 per cent maintained that the FWP wages were lower than the markets rates.

Both plan and non-plan works undertaken incurred on creation of community assets. Construction of assets like school building dispensary buildings, community halls. Some of the works could not be completed because of erratic supply of food grains and shortage of building material.

About 36 per cent of the selected beneficiaries admitted that their consumption levels had gone up due to the FWP. The increase in course of helped them in meeting above of their social obligations. Dearth and skilled hands made the local people learn non-traditional occupations
like carpentry and masonry work. Despite these tangible developments, it was apprehended and was evidenced source cases that the durable assets created under the programme of high benefit, only the upper strata of the village community benifited.

7.2. **Major suggestions**

The question of expanding the scope of the programme to cover other activities, such as social forestry, plantation development, maintenance and beautification of ancient historical monuments in the rural areas may be considered since the majority of the rural people suffer malnutrition, it is suggested that the government may widen the range distributed to include nutritional food grains.

Considering the opinion of the vast majority of the selected beneficiaries, payment of wages may be made on a daily or on a weekly basis. Efforts should also be made to measure the works within three or four days after their completion so that payments to the beneficiaries are made immediately thereafter. The arrangements for the distribution of food grains may be analyzed through the public distribution system in all the states on a uniform basis. The Food Corporation of India should be directed to ensure the constant supply of food grains. The FCI may be made, the sole supply and distributing agency unto fair prices shops. In order to locate the rural felt needs of the village's community it may be desirable to organize or activise local groups, unions, associations and other voluntary agencies working for the welfare of the rural people.

The scope of the programme may be widened to include activities like constructions of houses for the weaker sections, construction of forest roads connecting remote villages, plantation of trees to withstand soil erosion, development of handicrafts.
The study was undertaken in the Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh a major recipient of food grains and which generated maximum employment under FWP.

1. Among the studied households, a high ratio of workers over 80 per cent belong to lower age group people, engaged in the FWP majority of these workers reported as wage earners in the previous year.

2. Almost all the beneficiaries belong to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and backward classes and economically poor people. They have large families of high rate of illiteracy high. Dependent workers ratio, low income, and high rate of unemployment and under employment.

3. The incidence of poverty is observed to a great extent among the beneficiary householders, more than 90 per cent beneficiaries are below the poverty line, defined in terms of per minimum desirable consumption expenditure. The selected households have limited value of assets but large financial liabilities, land and livestock accounted for a nominal amount for each of the household.

4. FWP has generated extra employment to the workers under the study. An increase of 25 per cent in employment is recorded during the FWP year over the previous one despite large number drought days. Additional employment undertaken by the beneficiaries in the FWP has generated employment opportunities income assets. FWP has been contributing to about 45 per cent of the total work activities in the case of sampled households. This programme has replaced the wage labour as the main source of employment. Increased employment intensity per worker and more households in the upper strata of employment are also the other impact of the programme.
5. All the beneficiary households reported increase in their household’s income since they started to work with the FWP.

6. Additional income generated through FWP has positively affected the level and better of expenditure of beneficiaries. There per capita and per household total as well as consumption for the beneficiary households smaller family size households is more dependent on their cereal requirements of FWP supplies.

7. The caloric intake, calculated on the basis of adult units among studied households, is higher than that of national average but far below than the recommended allowances by the nutrition advisory group (1968) for workers involved in heavy work.

8. There was significant impact on rural wages under the FWP wages for all the agricultural operations and non-agricultural Jobs have gone up since the FWP was introduced in the district. The impact was more at the beginning of the programme.

9. Remarkable fall in the prices of major food grains has recorded since the programme started in the district.

It is apparent from the foregoing analysis that the solutions for the most baffling problem of unemployment and underemployment, which have high concentration in rural area in India, can be found in labour intensive techniques. But again such technology and product should not be pursued to the point. Wherein it may result in low productivity and creation of non-productive assets thus regarding the growth rate by wasting valuable scarce resources of the economy programmes like Antyodaya, FWP, and minimum needs programme, which have been designed for giving jobs and reasonable living standards of the vulnerable rural sections of society. It is highly significant not only in helping the poor segments of society but in raising their meager purchasing power little on the one hand and creating national assets on the other such measures may have their impact felt in containing the
price raise in the long run. Thus the FWP as an instrument of job creation in rural areas has bright prospects if the programmes are well planned and coordinated and leakages are plugged.

The potential for FWP to be self-targeting was defeated by wages being set above the market rate in less endowed villages. This drew slightly better off people away from out migration in the more productive and diversified locations. FWP wages were not high enough and few were willing to participate in the programme this highlights the need for better understanding of the labour market and agrarian relations among the policy makers both at the centre and the state. The case of FWP reinforces recent thinking within the planning commission that mismanagement and misappropriation are more important causes of continuing poverty and deprivation. There are shortages of funds in themselves. Perhaps one way of avoiding such high levels of rice is released promptly so that cash payment does not have to be resorted. The pressure faced by District Collectors sanctioning works and distributing time also, needs to be recognized. Further, transfers of this magnitude should not be allowed until such time as robust channels ensure that resources meant for the poor really can reach them.

On the basis of the evidence gathered about FWP, some of the result has wider implications in respect of the effectiveness of the programme. At the existing wages, added employment has potentially raised the average income among the workers. The programme has not provided food for the people but also served social purpose through the construction of link roads and digging water storage ponds and tanks in the needed areas.

The programme has helped in migrating people from the hard hit areas of Chittoor District to the town and cities. The local people have
started thinking that they will get food at a very reasonable rate if they work on a FWP project but will starve if they go to towns and cities.

FWP has helped in stabilizing the price of major food grains in the rural areas. Transfer of labour force from the local market to the FWP projects has positively increased the wages in the villages.

It will take some time to see the change in infrastructure in Chittoor District, it requires more Jobs. The urgent need is to plant the fast growing and steady grasses so that heavy rains do not wash away the earthwork, grass planning can be taken for both the sides of link roads and embankments of ponds and tanks; it will be advisable to develop fish culture for further development of the rural areas.

There have been reports that block level officers, police, local leaders, Food Corporation of India persons press reporters are involved in the other type of people wanted to take undue advantages of the situation which also had affected both the implementation of the programme in mandals. But, generally the programme is being implemented efficiently in most of the blocks in the districts.

The evidence shows how the very generous allocation of rice to AP, resulted largely due to the political leverage of the centre, did not translate into equally abundant employment for the very poor. The Government of Andhra Pradesh killed several birds with one stone by giving something to everyone, the poor, the local leaders and government officials- The benefits appear to have been heavily skewed away from the poor in this case compared to other employment generating programmes. Why the government used its leverage to obtain rice instead of cash, given to the weak in the fiscal situation of the state. What appears to be plausible is that the government anticipated some linkages and also several direct and indirect benefits for the poor by flooding the market

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with rice but it does not expect misappropriation of such enormous quantities.

The potential of food FWP to be self-targeting was defeated by wages, which were theoretically below the market rate; the poor rarely command even the legal minimum wage. In most location FWP did not attract very poor local labourers, instead it attracted people away from out migration and it is rarely the poorest who can migrate as well as immigrant labourers. This highlights the need for better understanding of labour relations among policy makers both at the centre and the state.

Porobably, the most disturbing message from this research work is that almost everywhere local leaders, politicians panchayat officials and particularly sarpanches have been heavily involved in corruption. This calls into question, the promise that decentralization holds for improved accountability and better service delivery. Although it could be argued that the motivations for this are generating cash, because no real empowerment through fiscal decentralization has resulted in two doubts, (1) its cost effectiveness and (2) the dependency of the masses on the government.

In reply to the first objection, we would like to stress that though cost consciousness is important, the programme should not be evaluated strictly on the basis of the usual cost benefit analysis. It should also be viewed in terms of its direct and indirect socio-economic lack of alternatives. Moreover if the programme is implemented properly their long-term economic and ecological benefits which could be very substantial and be amenable to measurement.

Finally, the programme proposed here is considerably different from the FWP on Rural Public Works programmes that have been implemented in India. So far the broad outlines have been formulated on
the basis of experiences accumulated in many national and historical contexts and provide a sound basis for launching a concentration attack on the problem of poverty alleviation in India.

As noted earlier the programme is productive and constructive coupled with the concept of human welfare but certain evils have crept in the programme both in its formulation and execution, therefore, the following suggestions are worth putting to improve the program.

The mode of payment of wages partly in cash before making payment consent of the beneficiaries should be taken into consideration.

1. The government should burden the working sphere of the programme by including in its range some more programmes, which could provide technical skills to the beneficiaries. Thus rendering them capable of working in cottage industry or business in cycle works.

2. Grama Panchayat should be directly held responsible for programme implementation.

3. Minimum standard should be prescribed for the implementation public work programme for maintenance and construction of works. These guidelines should be followed for the purpose of construction and maintenance under the programme.

4. Process of giving contracts to private contracts should be prescribed.

5. There should be different monitoring agencies at different levels viz district, block and panchayat.

6. A FWP cell should be constituted on lines of Antyodaya.

7. One set of surveying instruments is made available to each block.
8. To meet the paucity of technical personnel, a short duration-training course in surveying and levelling is imparted to the select village level workers.

9. The district authorities should be empowered to take decisions suitable to local conditions as and when needed.

10. Only such roads sanctioned and undertaken which of the village people are curious to have and are clear of encroachment.

11. Such pocket areas should be identified where employment seekers are large in number.

12. Provision of constructing culverts and drains is made simultaneously, so that achieved work is protected from being crowded. It is observed that the village panchayats pay a certain percentage of commission for distribution to the agencies besides payment of handling and transport charges. It is suggested that the agencies should be made the property of the village panchayats from its sale back to the Food Corporation of India. However, it will be appropriate for the Ministry of Rural Reconstruction to issue uniform instructions to all the states. It is suggested that employment opportunities should be increased to raise income level higher wage rate and creation of community assets. The following are the suggestion measures in the light of the empirical study for effective implementation of FWP:

- Efforts should be made to provide food grains preferred by the beneficiaries.
- Majority of the beneficiaries preferred weekly payments. As such, efforts should be made to make weekly and timely payments in all the areas.
- It appears that the inspecting and monitoring arrangements at the centre for effectively supervising the FWP and its implementation are rather unsatisfactory or far from satisfactory. Supervision,
therefore, needs to be strengthened to avoid creation of non-
durable assets.

➢ The Section banks should be increased.
➢ Cross bunds should be provided if feasible in large holdings.
➢ While creating the bund at a point where land belongs to two
farmers, boundaries have to be clearly demarcated, through this
may violate the principle of the counter, it will help in avoiding
litigation.
➢ Cost benefit aspects of the assets should be created.
➢ Impact of the programme on the state and national economics
including contribution to the state and national income.

The motivations for private gain and power cannot be used.
Mechanisms for limiting corruption have not been effective. The case of
FWP also reinforces recent thinking within the planning commission that
mismanagement and misappropriation are more important causes of
containing poverty and deprivation rather than shortages of fund
inflows.

The encouraging outcome is that the media are playing an
increasingly important role as a watchdog and so is the multiparty
system in the state, which provides at least some counter force to the
government. Phone complaints by the poor against people in positions of
power may mark, the beginning of a new culture of voicing protest,
difficult challenges because simply formulating monitoring and checks
and controls must be built in or way that they cannot easily be falsified.
At any rate the monopoly that the state and local elite hold in
implementation needs to be eroded and they could be achieved by
allowing in more independent agencies, Non-Governmental Organization
(NGO's) and the media into the process. But exactly how this can be
done significantly would have to be worked out through further research and field trails. Until such time that resources meant for the poor are really reaching them further transfers of this magnitude should not be allowed.

Employment has been recognized as a socio-economic necessity. The process of economic development aims at giving employment to every person. However, further employment remains a myth in all societies. Hence, any attempt at socio-economic development should try to provide employment for the people in tune with their needs and abilities.

The discussion on the impact of the programme on employment of the beneficiaries reveals that the average additional employment under the programme comes to 57.94 man-days, which forms 2.39 per cent of their total employment or 40 per cent of their employment in the non-farm sector. The discussion on target group-wise generation of additional employment reveals that the landless labour depend more on the marginal farmers for additional employment. Similarly, the target group of scheduled castes depends, to a greater extent, on the programme for additional employment than the target group of Backward Castes and forward castes. The discussion on scheme-wise generation of employment brings to light that the average additional employment created is more in the case of road laying activity than in construction activity which is attributed to the use of high cost material in the latter.

Thus, the foregoing analysis reveals that the target group of landless labour and labour from scheduled castes derive maximum advantage from FWP in terms of earning additional income and deriving additional man-days of employment.
7.3. Operational gaps in the implementation of the programme in the study area.

The following defects are noticed in the implementation of the programme in the study area:

1. The works are being executed by private contractors in the name of village panchayats in contravention of the guidelines issued under FWP.
2. The distribution of foodgrains is not satisfactory in some cases; rice is not at all distributed.
3. The workers engaged under FWP are not completely aware of the provision that wage component consists of cash and foodgrains.
4. The maintenance of NMRs is not satisfactory. Number of persons noted in the register does not tally with the number of persons who actually worked under the programme.
5. Daily reports of labour engaged on works are not sent to the concerned supervisory staff and the staff seem to be indifferent in this aspect.
6. Arrangements for the maintenance of assets created under the programme are not satisfactory.
7. The maintenance of records at the samithi level is altogether unsatisfactory. There is no timely submission of returns and reports with regard to the achievements under the programme.
8. There is no record at all of the assets created under the programme.
9. The utilization of funds is unduly higher in September and March leaving one out to suspect the correctness of such utilization on mass scale.
10. The technical and administrative wings do not have adequate staff for the effective implementation of the programme.
Though these defects impair the working of the programme, yet it is regarded as a food measure to provide security to the rural labour, which is proved by this field study. Thus the working of FWP in the study area is satisfactory, despite lapses in implementation.

7.4. Other general points of significance

Labour cooperative societies or agricultural labour unions should be promoted and encouraged to take up works under the supervision of the engineering cell at the block mandal level. The contractors may try to force their way into FWP. Perhaps the only way to check their infiltration into this programme is to have correct and tight fixed estimates and regular payments at prescribed rates for the prescribed work output. Then the contractors would have little incentive to intrude.

The practice of entrusting the task of transport and distribution of foodgrains to head mazdoor is not satisfactory. Provision should be made to give choice to the labourers in regard to the acceptance of foodgrains as a apart payment of wages. The Block Development Officer or the Deputy Executive Engineer should be allowed to purchase the necessary materials, if necessary, from the local market so as to complete the execution of work in time.

A number of field studies have identified that the officials have maintained bogus and inflated muster rolls to cover up the deficiencies, in spite of the supervision of village level committees. The fact is, these committees are being dominated by nominated persons who are generally the supporters of officials. In order to avoid this problem, the village committees should give majority participation to the workers to enable them to know what is written in the muster rolls.
It should be recognized that more and more active involvement of people would result in speedy and sound execution of the works. To achieve this objective, all rural contribution must be encouraged at every step. It requires vast publicity of the various provisions of FWP among the rural labour. They should know the estimates of the cost, duration of employment, date schedule of the works etc.

The allocations under FWP are not enough to take up works in every village, if any meaningful percentage of the target group is to be benefited; the works have to be executed on a cluster basis. Mere spreading of resources over wide areas fails to rejuvenate the rural economy.

The present experience in the matter of maintenance of assets created is not satisfactory. Very often, the assets created are not taken over by the department concerned. The process of handing over the assets to the departments should be expedited and the procedure involved in this should be streamlined so that the interim period can be minimized.

To eradicate massive poverty and unemployment in rural areas, so as to create year round employment. But it should be remembered that FWP is not the panacea for all the ills of the rural poor, Employment generation is not synonymous with creating wage employment. It is necessary to combine the provisions of wage employment with the creation of conditions for additional self-employment. It is time to switch over to employment oriented planning. Moreover employment oriented planning has a positive role in the present democratic context. These is pressure of growing population on limited resources. Unless creation of employment opportunities becomes the primary goal of planning and other objectives, the problem will continue to defy solution. It can be realized only in the framework of an expanding economy and dynamic well-planned agricultural sector.

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