CONCEPT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

India has been a land of villages and very high proportion of population living in rural areas. Rural development is urgent necessity in India now and will continue in future. The principal objective of rural development is the development of rural people, particularly the rural poor. Majority of the population live and work in villages and therefore, tasks relating to rural development acquire special significance. National development is inconceivable and impossible without rural development (Sud, 1992, 4).

The phenomenon of planned rural development is not very old one in India. In fact it is in the 20th century and more narrowly in its second half that this phenomenon surfaced, flourished debated and refined accordingly. These days, rural development has been one of the most debated matters in the third world countries, in general and in India in particular. Number of scholars and scientists from various disciplines has attempted to define rural development as per their vision and capacity, personal biases and ideological predilections.

Rural development is often confused with agricultural development. No doubt agricultural development is the foundation of the rural areas and of the industrial sectors, but it is not an end itself. Agricultural development or to be more specific agricultural productivity is closely related to rural development. The health of the rural community and the quality of life, education, rural industrial development, employment generation and the development of transport and other infrastructure are other components.

The term rural development is much wider than the term agriculture development. There are other sectors in rural areas viz. infrastructural development – like roads, drinking water, housing, fuel, cottage and small scale industries, processing and marketing of goods, which play important role in overall development.
Rural development is a process, which increase the capacity of rural poor to influence their total environment. The benefits occurring from technical development must be distributed and the participation of weaker section of the rural people in the process of development to be assured.

Rural development in its comprehensive sense relates to all round development is taken as the development of rural areas to achieve desired positive change both in a quantitative as well as qualitative sense. Rural development is the ultimate analysis that involves the provision of opportunities for the optimum utilisation of the population residing in the rural areas.

It is a strategy to make able a target group of people poor men and women and to gain their children more of what they want and need. Persons who are below the poverty line are included in the strategy of rural development.

CONCEPT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

For understanding the meaning of rural development one has to grasp the meaning of the two words - of rural and development. Rural is noun and development is its adjective. Now a day, 'development' has become an alluring word and carries such a wide as well as specific meaning that common man as well as specialist both can use it in their own contexts. In general usage, this word has been used in the sense of growth, meaning expansion in number or quality of the same or collection of goods valued high. It has, most often been preceded by some adjectives, such as economic, social, regional, industrial, agricultural etc. These contexts restrict the meaning of the development to a certain specific sphere of human domain. Later, it was realised that all spheres of human domain are intricately interrelated and one sphere cannot be developed isolating from the whole. Consequently, 'development' is used as independent concept connoting the holistic approach of human progress, and every nation developed or developing is striving for it. Some of the ideas assembled under the jargon word 'development' are explained here.
Evaluation of the Development Concept

Development is an old theme, but has been evolving new contents and fresh concerns. The realization of unacceptable low living standards among national populations as a whole is certainly the youngest, yet it can be traced back into the eighteenth century. The view of the development as the realization of the economic potentials is far more ancient, and the germ of the concept of economic and social progress goes back to classical time (Brookfield, 1975, 2). Further, the concept of development has undergone serious evaluation and fundamental change over the past four decades. These changes were in part a response to the shortcomings and failures of policies and programmes implemented during the 1940s and 1950s and in part a reaction to changing economic and social conditions during 1960s and 1970s.

The change in perception of and approaches to development can be traced by reviewing development theories and strategies during three recent periods of evolution (Ruddle and Rondinelli, 1983, 6-21). The first period spread over 1940s and 1950s when international assistance organizations aimed at rebuilding the physical and industrial structure of countries that had attained relatively high levels of productive capacity before the Second World War and at re-establishing market mechanism in European economies. With the success in rebuilding European economies attention was turned to poor nations of the world and largely those strategies were blindly copied in poor countries, which were used successfully in Europe. They aimed at maximizing economic growth, industrial output and export production through capital-intensive investment and were relaying on the free operation of market system and 'trickle down' effects to generate sustained economic growth. It was assumed that industrialization is the panacea for the economic progress, which will necessarily lead to social progress.
The second period began by the early 1960s when it became increasingly apparent that in most developing counties the strategy of rapid growth through capital intensive industrialization was not working satisfactorily and as such during the period from early 1960s to the early 1970s, international development agencies and national governments were concerned with removing 'obstacles' or 'bottlenecks' to development. They primarily concentrated investment in key sectors of the national economy and attempted to modernize developing societies by transferring methods and industrialization from western industrial countries.

During the third period from the early 1970s to the present, international assistance organizations and developing country governments have been seeking to achieve more balanced development in the international economy by reducing the growing disparities between rich and poor countries, to achieve greater equity in the distribution of the benefits of economic growth within developing nations, to reduce the high and growing levels of absolute poverty and to provide for the basic human needs of those living in absolute poverty while increasing their productivity and income.

In consonance with these changes the meaning of ‘development’ has been changing. Initially, it was synonym to economic growth. But this concept of development as economic growth is criticized bitterly for its shortcomings and equity with growth is recognized as the objective of development. It is not a purely economic phenomenon. It is less as state than the process and is perceived as multidimensional process involving the re-organization and reorientation of entire economic and social system. It also involves radical changes in institutional, social and administrative structures, as well as in popular attitudes and sometimes customs and beliefs.

**Traditional Meaning of Development**

Development is frequently assumed essentially as economic concept and it meant that capacity of a national economy, whose initial
condition has been more or less static for a long time, to generate and sustain an annual increase in its gross national product (GNP) at rates between 5 to 7 per cent. For example, 1960s was accepted as the First Development Decade by United Nations in which development was conceived largely in terms of the attainment of a 6 per cent annual growth rate of GNP. The thinking of this period focused mainly on the concept of successive stages of economic growth. Its advocate was W.W. Rostow. According to this doctrine, the process of economic development was seen as a series of successive five stages through which all countries must pass. Therefore, focus was on rapid industrialization at the expanse of agricultural development. During this period, most common measure of development had been per capita GNP. In this context definition of less developed countries offered by Samuelson (1973, 765) is that "A less developed county is simply one with real per capita income that is low relative to the present day per capita income of such nations as Canada, the United States, Great Britain and Western Europe generally. "Accordingly the development was the state of affairs prevailing in the northern hemisphere and underdevelopment were the circumstances existing in the southern one. The western countries served as model of development to be copied by the developing countries also. The gap between richest (USA) and poorest (Rwanda) is more than 90 times.

In fact, GNP is incapable of presenting the real state of development, because of several shortcomings. Most of the countries particularly falling in the realm of the developing world do not have evolved accurate accounting system, resulting in inaccurate GNP for them. At the same time, many of goods and services do not enter into the cash economy. There is wide difference in methods and value systems of the countries of the world. Because of these technical reasons GNP of countries with contrasting level of development is not comparable. Further, it does not say any thing about the level of human well-being which is the basic objective of the development. It tells about the resources provided but not how they affect people's
lives. To obtain the complete picture of development it is not sufficient to realize the amount of resources brought about by economic growth. It is also necessary to examine the impact of these resources on the life of the people.

**The New Economic View of Development**

The experience of 1950s and 1060s led to the 'dethronement of GNP'. In fact, a large number of developing countries achieved the overall UN growth targets, but the level of living of the masses of the people remained for the most part unchanged. It means there was a gross mistake in the definition of development. Some theorists began questioning the assumptions underlying capital-intensive industrialization models. Dudley Seers, for instance, pointed out that the prevailing conditions that made rapid and sustained industrialization possible in western societies constituted a 'special case' and that economic development policies, applied successfully under those conditions could not be transferred or replicated in developing nations. He noted that in Europe and America factors of production had been abundant during the period of industrialization. But in developing nations the conditions were far different (Seers 1972). Therefore, attention was diverted to solve obstacles and bottlenecks to industrial expansion during this period. As such, economic development was redefined in terms of reduction or elimination of poverty, inequality and unemployment within the context of a growing economy. 'Redistribution from growth became a common slogan.

Greater attention was given to programmes for asset redistribution institution building, population and family planning, labour intensive and small scale industrialization, agricultural expansion, more appropriate use and conservation of natural resources and human resource development. Key sectors of the economy were identified into which national resources and international assistance were channelled. Research into new high yielding variety of seeds, construction of irrigation system, improvement of agricultural training
and extension programmes, creation of marketing system, the organisation of co-operative and credit schemes and land reform were major activities which were provided financial and technical assistance to strengthen the agricultural sector. Similar approaches were adopted in other sectors also.

Because of these targeted efforts, average annual growth rate in GNP was relatively high, but showed no simultaneous improvement or witnessed actual decline in employment, equality and real incomes of the bottom 40% of their population. The emphases on exploiting natural resources on expanding industry rapidly and on concentrating investment in the large metropolitan centres of developing countries created increasingly severe environmental hazards and led to destruction or deterioration of those countries natural resource base.

**Contemporary Meaning of Development - Welfare improvement**

Now, the concept of development extends beyond the economic growth and quantitative measurements of income, employment and inequality. It is even more than that. The United Nations Research Institute for Social Development initiated work in this respect, which was synthesized by Drewnowski. (Drewnowski, 1974, Scott et.al. 1973). Drewnowski says, "Development is a process of qualitative change and quantitative growth of the social and economic reality which we call either society or economy. The close interrelationship between economic and social elements precludes any purely social or economic development. It is therefore; better not to speak of social development or economic development, but of a single process called simply "development (Drewnowski, 1974, 94-95). He regards the development as "unfolding of creative possibilities inherent in a society" as opposed to growth, which is merely "an expansion of the system in one or more dimensions without change in its structure" (Friedmann 1972, 91-92).

The increased production is seldom, if ever, equally distributed or its composition equally approved. This gist of the arguments presented is that the development is synonymous with progress, as experienced
and evaluated by the people involved. Development is a welfare improvement, and therefore, those conditions and circumstances capable of enriching the welfare of the people are development. Welfare cannot be expressed by the per capita income. In essence, development is improvement or human progress. It is reiterated by Goulet that "Development can be properly assessed only in terms of the total human needs, value and standards of the good life and the good society perceived by the every societies undergoing change. Although development implies economic, political and cultural transformations, these are not end in themselves, but indispensable means for enriching the quality of human life" (quoted in 'Desouza and Porter 1974, 3).

The survey of lessons of the last three decades, and reflections on the meaning and content of development leads to the following conclusions. (1) Development is more than material progress; it contains cultural, social, political and above all human dimensions. (2) Development is largely an autonomous process and can be engineered form above only to a limited extent. The purpose of this process is (I) to achieve a sustained increase in production, (ii) to distribute resources equitably (iii) to respect the natural environment and the ecological balance and (iv) to modernize in a way that builds on society's indigenous value and meets the non-material needs of people. (3) No model of development can achieve these four objectives simultaneously and in all countries. Growth may conflict with redistribution, both may conflict with environmental concerns and conservation, and change and disruption may conflict with traditional values. (4) It is very difficult, if not impossible to follow a strategy of grow first and redistribute later' (5) The diversity of countries and people suggests that there is a need not for a single development strategy but for a range to suit the economic, social, political and cultural circumstances of different societies.

Development is accepted as the sustained elevation of an entire society and social system towards a better or more human life. In this context, three basic components or core values as suggested by Goulet,
should serve as a conceptual basis and practical guideline for understanding the inner meaning of development. These core values are: life sustenance, self-esteem and freedom, representing common goals sought by all individuals and societies. (Goulet, 1971, 87-94). While the necessities for sustenance of life in a purely biological sense are common to all people, those things on which esteem and freedom depend may be very much culturally specific. The meanings of these core values are broad and universal.

It can be concluded that ‘development’ is both a physical reality and a state of mind in which society, through some combination of social, economic and institutional processes, secure the means for a better life. The components of better life vary from society to society but as identified by Todaro (1979, 98), development must have following three objectives in all societies: to raise levels of living, including, in addition to higher income, the provision of jobs, better education and more attention to cultural and humanistic values. These all serve not only to enhance material well being but also to generate greater individual and material self esteem; and to expand the range of economic and social choice to individuals and nations by freeing them from servitude and dependence not only in relation to other people and nations but also to the forces of ignorance and human misery.

**A Point of Change in World Development**

The Society for International Development, Rome launched programmes of national and regional conferences with the objectives to explore thinking on development problems and alternatives and to identify more meaningful strategies for future. The findings of these conferences are summarized by Richard Jolly (1980, 118-125). He asserts that both development and developed countries perceive a point of change in world development in the 1980s. In the developed countries, inflation and recession, energy crisis, terrorism and increasing sense of alienation and pointlessness have increasingly been raising question about the desirability and sustainability of past development patterns. After two hundred years, industrial revolution
seems to be losing its confidence, if not momentum. Within developing countries, the perspectives are notably different. Poverty along with related problems of unemployment, rising prices and gross inequalities and imbalances, especially between rural and urban areas, is a continuing reality. There is also increasing awareness of the global dimensions of these national problems and considerable unity over the injustices and asymmetries of the world economic system. There is widespread agreement on the need for fundamental international change if development countries are to participate more fully and equitably within the world economy. The energy crises in the north, social restlessness in north and south and growing dissatisfaction with mass poverty in the south have become burning problems at present.

In these perspectives, certain alternatives have been suggested to the existing conditions. These alternatives for future relate not just to changes in policy and action but much more fundamentally to changes in beliefs, values and objectives as to what should be achieved. This recent concept of development revolves around four key themes- basic needs, more growth, greater participation and self-reliance. These can form core objectives of development in rich as well as poor, industrialized as well as agricultural countries. However, the meaning given to these concepts and weightage given to them vary.

Satisfaction of basic needs is considered as foundation of development. A more appropriate definition of development would begin by identifying basic needs. As Paul Streeten suggests (1980, 4) that in many underdeveloped countries the objectives of development would be defined as raising the level of living of the masses of the people. This implies meeting such needs as continuous employment or secure livelihood, more and better schooling, better medical services, safe water at hand, cheap transport, and energy and of course a somewhat higher income. The list of conventional basic needs vary with the time, space and culture. However, they are mainly physical but also include
non-physical needs, particularly in over-developed countries, where the pressure of industrial society squeezes family and human relationship.

Significance of economic growth and often acceleration of economic growth cannot be overlooked. In fact, any meaningful programme of meeting basic needs would require massive investment, which would be possible by growth. Therefore, growth continues to be a priority development objective. Acceleration of growth will be needed in certain developed countries also to revitalize industry, to make possible more effective participation within the world economy and to permit a socio-economic change within the country.

A development effort requires the full mobilisation and the direct and continuous participation of the people. This participation can be aroused by raising mass consciousness, decentralized decision making and by encouraging collective participation in production, allocation and distribution of resources. It also depends upon the adoption of the technology, which integrates human development with the local resources.

The fourth objective of development is that of self-reliance. Self-reliance is used 'in the sense that the country has to manage its own problems to make its own decisions and to work for what it needs'. For assessing problems and potentials nation has to place reliance on the energy of the people. Thus man regains pivotal position in the process of development both as agent and as beneficiary. It enhances development software: health as well being, education as free access to knowledge and information, useful employment as a means of self-fulfillment. Development hardware, i.e. machinery, factories, vehicles, dams etc. is important because it helps in promoting the software and should be shaped accordingly. Thus self-reliance leads necessarily to reshaping the economy and society in order to meet basic needs.

These alternatives can be summed up by quoting Gilbert Rist saying that one might describe the development as 'the circumstances under which the member of a particular social formation are able to
share a totality of meaningful social practices of their own choice, without imposing undue strains either upon other (present or future) communities or upon the natural environment (Rist, 1980, 103).

**Concept of Sustainability and Sustainable Development**

The concept of the sustainable development was propagated in early 1978. It emerged as the key issue in development planning at the Stockholm Conference on Human Environment in 1972. The delegates of the conference declared that a correct approach should be to lay the major emphasis on meeting the basic needs of the people and on improving their quality of life without adversely affecting the viability of the environment. By 1980, the International Union of Conservation of Nature emphasized the need for conservation of living resources to achieve sustainable development (IUCN 1980). Later the same UNGN defines conservation as the management of human use of the biosphere so that it may yield the greatest sustainable benefit to current generations while maintaining the potential to meet the need and aspirations of future generation (IUGN 1987). Since then several attempts have been made of define sustainability and sustainable development (Pezzey 1989). Lele (1989) has presented a critical review of the concept. It carries different meanings to different people. Brunttand Commission in its Tokyo Declaration (1987) defines sustainable development simply as an approach to progress which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs', (WCED 1987). The World Commission on Environment and Development explicated this definition in these words. "In essence, sustainable development is a process of change in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investment, the orientation of technological development and institutional change are all in harmony and enhance both current and future potential to meet human needs and aspirations (WCED, 1987, 46)."
The tenet of this concept is the utilization of the environmental resources according to their capacity of replenishing so that perpetual supply can be ensured. It is evident from David Pearce's view that sustainability refers to 'leaving the same or an improved resource endowment as a bequest to the future. (that is) the total stock of all forms of wealth (including environmental wealth) must not be depleted' (Pearce 1989, 17-20). Many forms of development erode the environmental resources upon which they are based; which in turn, undermine present economic development and reduces future possibilities drastically. Therefore, sustainable development should keep in view the stability of the ecosystem. With this view, the International Union of Conservation of Nature defines sustainable development as 'improving the quality of human life while living within the carrying capacity of supporting ecosystem (IUCN 1987 and Naik 1993, 11-13). Thus the question is not simply of sustenance of life but of good quality of life. Quality of life is 'adequately perceived conditions of life.' Now it is accepted as a process, a relationship, a sense of belonging and sense of wholeness. For increasing material production, people intervene in the environment and use inputs. Biophysical potentiality and inputs together determine the carrying capacity. But the biophysical system has a limit to assimilate inputs; therefore the intervention should be limited.

Further, sustainability can also be understood in social sense, meaning a thriving economy and social order with productive structures and relationships, which ensure a fair distribution of incomes, power and opportunities, thus providing the basis for social peace (Kayastha 1993, 63). Finally, sustainability is used in the sense of long-term carrying capacity of regions, where there is no negative impact on environment (Kuhnen, 1992). Thus essential elements of sustainability cover all aspects ranging from ethics, aesthetics, self-reliance, and basic needs to stability of human population (Chattopadhyaya and Carpenter, 1991, 1). In fact, it is people oriented and nature oriented development concept, in which social justice,
welfare, quality of life, and environmental protection are kept at par the economic growth. At the sometime, local population, resources, needs, aspirations and capabilities are given due attention in the development planning. It is because people have used local resources prudently for generations as the people observed religious, cultural and other practices finely honed to their environment. These traditions can make resources sustainable. Such transformational approach of man-resource - environment exists because they have evolved over time as successful adaptive mechanism with in a social, cultural and biophysical condition, and therefore must be used for future development (Ruddle & Rondinelli, 1983, 25-26). It requires multilevel planning for implementing equitable growth policies. It accommodates local people, resources and institutions, adopts modern technologies to local conditions, resources and capabilities without much deterioration in the environment. Thus, it is capable of synchronizing both resource management and the environmental protection.

**HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**

Now a day, ‘Human Development’ has become an alluring word. It is a new form of the concept of ‘development’, which has undergone serious evaluation and fundamental changes. Now the concept of development extends beyond the economic growth and quantitative measurements of income. It is the process of reorganization and reorientation of the entire socio-economic system for the welfare of human being. Development is accepted as the sustained elevation of entire society and social system towards a better or more human life. It is used as independent concept connoting the holistic approach of human progress as experienced and evaluated by the people involved. Human development is a comprehensive economic, social, cultural and political process that aims at the improvement of well being of the individual. The basic objective of the human development is to enlarge the range of people’s choices to make development more democratic and participatory.
The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in its first Human Development Report published in 1990, introduced this concept. Since its launch in 1990, the Human Development Reports have defined human development as the process of enlarging people’s choices. The most critical ones are to lead a long and healthy life, to be educated and to enjoy a decent standard of living. Additional choices include political freedom; other guaranteed human rights and various ingredients of self-respect. These are the essential choices, the absence of which can block many other opportunities. Human development is thus a process of widening people’s choices as well as raising the level of well being achieved. Thus men, women and children must be the centre of attention in the process of development. The development must be woven around people, not people around the development. Moreover, development must be participatory and for this people must have the opportunity to invest in the development of their capabilities- in health, education and training. They must also have the opportunity to put their capabilities to use- to participate fully in community decisions and to enjoy human, economic and political freedom.

Human Development is not merely ‘human resource’ development as such or the enhancement of the common educational facilities. It is much more than that, encompassing the health component of the people and freedom of having own choice in all matters of importance, which are also equally vital components of the human development. It is neither the economic development as such. The basic difference between the concepts of economic growth and the human development is that the first focuses exclusively on the expansion of only one choice – income – while the second embraces the widening of all human choices – whether economic, social, cultural or political. For any such development to take place, obviously economic growth is also essential but under a different perspective altogether. The basic tenet behind this is that it is the use of income and not income itself that is decisive in expanding human choices. Thus the real wealth of nations is their people and therefore the goal of the development should be enriching human life.
There has been a conceptual broadening in the notions of human well-being and deprivation in recent years. The notion of well-being has shifted away from just material attainments, or the means for development, to outcomes that are either desirable in themselves or desirable because of their role in supporting better opportunities for people. Similarly, poverty is viewed not only in terms of lack of adequate income, but as a state of deprivation spanning the social, economic and political context of the people that prevents their effective participation as equals in the development process.

Thus the concept of human development embraces the entire society and not just the economy. The political, cultural and social factors are given as much importance as the economic factors. Besides, a careful distinction is maintained between ends and means of development. While expansion of human options is regarded as the end of development, the expansion of income is treated as an essential means to it. The entire process has been made anthropocentric.

**Indicators of Human Development**

The quality of life and the level of human well-being are difficult to measure quantitatively. However, in search of a comprehensive measure that could capture the various dimensions of human development, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has develop a composite index, now known as the Human Development Index (HDI). It measures the over-all achievements in a country, if the basic dimensions of human achievement are (i) longevity, (ii) knowledge, and (iii) a decent standard of living. UNDP emphasized on education and health. Therefore, a methodology was evolved to construct a composite index. In India, three sets of indicators have been selected for preparing the Human Development Report 2001. Among them, HDI, a core set of composite indices, presents the state of human development for the society as a whole. Besides, Gender Equality Index has been estimated to reflect the relative attainments of women and the Human Poverty Index to evaluate the state of deprived in the society.
By now, several variables are included in above three sets of indicators of human development. Among them, **health indicators** related to longevity are birth rate, death rate with special reference to infant mortality, nutrition and life expectancy at birth. **Social indicators** include such variables as literacy particularly female literacy, and enrolment of school-going children, drop out ratio and pupil-teacher ratio. **Economic indicators** should be related with wages, income and employment. Per capita gross domestic product, incidences of poverty and employment opportunity are favoured indicators of this group. They are converted into a composite index to present the holistic picture of the Human Development. At present time, therefore rural development must be evaluated in context of the concept of human development rather than simply in context of economic growth or expansion of infrastructure.

Rural development is a spatial concept. It is not a new one. The definition of ‘rural’ is residuary because all over the world what is defined is an urban area and whatever is not urban is known as rural. The term ‘rural’ essentially means an area, which is characterised by non-urban style of life, occupational structure, social organisation and settlement pattern. Rural is essentially agricultural. Rural people have more deeply rooted community life and a slow moving rhythm of life built around nature and natural phenomenon and occupationally it is highly dependent on agriculture, animal enterprises, tree crops and related activities (Misra and Sundaram, 1979, 1-5). So the term ‘rural’ means a proportion of the population in which social, economic cultural life has witnessed slow change than in urban segment of population.

‘Development’ means quantitative as well as qualitative change in life. Development is an indicator of progress. ‘Development’ commonly associated with related of progress has been viewed social scientist in different perspective. Development must encompass more than material aspects of people’s lives. Development is a multidimensional process influenced by various factors. The development embraces the major economic and social objectives and values that societies strive for” (Shreekaman, 2001, 77-79).
Development is a series of activities or a process, which either improve the immediate living conditions - economic, social, political, cultural and environmental or increase the potential for future living or both.

Thus, rural development means desired change in rural area both in qualitative and quantitative sense. It is complete term that integrates a variety of elements of human life and activities. Rural development means desired change in social, economic natural and other elements. Rural development is a development of the rural areas in which a way that each element of the rural life changes in a desired direction and in sympathy with the other elements. It also means development of rural areas within the framework of the national goal and objectives and without prejudice to the development of urban areas of the country. Rural development means structural change in the socio-economic life or situation in the rural area in order that human welfare, which is the prime goal of all development, is secured at the earliest and that the society is able to observe changes necessary in the field of technology, men environment relationship, population growth etc.

The concept of rural development is not a new one. The first attempt for rural development in India was made in 1885 with an ultimate objective of bringing immediate relief and development of rural area in Barodra. The concept of rural development had received the attention of several pioneering people like Tagore, Gandhi and many other much before independence. Although poet Ravindranath Tagore perhaps the first person who sowed the seeds of planned programme of development for villages. Tagore’s Shantiniketan was systematic attempt in this direction. It is Mahatma Gandhi who is responsible for the beginning of an integrated development of rural India. It was he, who reminded us again and again that the soul of India lives in her villages and that in rural reconstruction alone lies the salvation of this country (Desai, 1988, 8-9).

The human terms Gandhi’s concept of rural development centred on the flowering and maturation of human and individual personality to its fullest extent. Food, clothes, shelter, education, simple and aesthetic
environment should be available for all. He envisaged a society based on
self-supporting and self-governing villages, where life is simple but pure,
where necessities of all class, caste, colour and creed are met, where all
enjoy social, political and economic freedom. This according to Gandhi was
real ‘Swaraj’ (Jain and Cargan 1993, 160-61) that is the way that
Government since independence has been experimenting with the concept of
rural development.

After independence on 18th April 1952 the Bhooman movement was
started under the leadership of Vinoba Bhave. The aim of the movement was
to acquire land for landless poor family. A similar kind of movement like
‘Gramdan and Shramdan’ was also started in the direction of rural
development. Thus many other programmes started in past period.

Agriculture development is a major part of rural development, but it
may not be synonymous with all-round development. Rural development is a
broader concept. It is equally concerned with the development of other
sectors like infrastructure, banking, development of cottage and small
industries, rural poverty unemployment, development of traditional crafts
and providing modern education, health facilities and providing cheap but
decent houses for rural poor families.

The concept of rural development in the Indian context demands that
agriculture should become a prime concern. Any theory of improvement in
rural areas to day implies improvement of peasant, agriculture, rural life
and farm communities. An education programme on agriculture should be
launched on a wider scale and agriculture scientists and technicians are
involved in transferring the new technology of agriculture to rural areas
(Jain and Cargan 1993, 160-61). It is a multidimensional concept and
encompasses the development of agriculture and allied activities – village
and cottage industries and crafts, socio-economic infrastructure, community
services and facilities, and above all, the human resources in rural areas.

The concept of rural development also change with time, it embraces
wider spectrum today than what was considered a few year ago. The World
Bank has recently defined rural development as – ‘a strategy designed to

In the words of Robert Chambers – “Rural development is a strategy to enable a specific group of people, poor rural women and men, to gain for themselves and their children more of what they want and need. It involves helping the poorest among those who seek a livelihood in the rural areas to demand and control more of the benefits of rural developments. The group includes small scale farmers, tenants and the landless (Chambers 1983, 147).

M. Kutumba and P. Perraju Sharma (1989) state that rural development is a strategy for growth in production and productivity in all sectors of rural economy by which rural people, especially the socially and economically weak, are enabled to bring about a sustained improvement in their living conditions through an increase in their incomes and access to social goods, the development of infrastructure and public services and their participation in political, social and cultural life”.

Rural development is not only economic betterment, but also creation and development of other such as education, health, nutrition, recreation etc. that are equally important in the total content of development.

The earlier concept of rural development in India to adopt the villages, the basic unit of rural development to be reverenced. In rural areas where most person are illiterate, lack social awareness and farmers with large holdings are cut-off from the benefits of development. Government can forward its maximum efforts to ensure development of rural areas by way of development programmes and incentive schemes etc. Thus, the rural development no longer means agricultural development alone. It is also not a social welfare case of pumping money into rural areas to provide for basic human needs. It encompasses a spectrum of activities and human mobilisation to make people stand on their own feet and break away from all the structural disabilities which chain them to the condition in which they live (Sinha 1994, 7).
Perspectives of Rural Development

For understanding the problems of the rural areas, two aspects of the rural areas must be viewed simultaneously, viz. internal structure of the rural areas and their relationship with external world. It is imperative to change otherwise almost stagnant socio-economic structure of the rural areas for initiating the rural development. There are three major components of socio-economic structure to be taken care of. They are economy, production activities and social services. Rural economy is solely dependent on agriculture. Though efforts have been made to diversify the economy but in vein. Non-agricultural activities could not withstand the competition of the urban economy. As a result, the share of rural workers on in agricultural activities has declined drastically during the planned period. Cottage industries based on mud, wood, leather etc have almost banished from rural scene. Therefore, diversification of the rural economy is one of the major problems in rural areas. Very high dependency and low productivity of agricultural activities is another serious problem. One of its manifestation is widespread unemployment. Low developed infrastructure and social services characterise these areas. Rural people have to run to urban centres for these services, which reduces their effectiveness.

Rural development cannot be thought of in isolation. It must be considered in context of its relation with urban centres. Somehow, the Indian policies of development have been urban bias. Consequently, towns and cities could develop at much faster rate that the villages. Under this situation, urban centres function as huge magnet and all resources- man and material- are siphoned to them from rural areas and rural areas are like barren lands with least productive capacity. People from these areas are flowing to towns and cities and are increasing the area and population of slums. In this context, relation between rural and urban centres have to made complementary to each other. At the same time, rural development is just a component of national development as a whole including urban industrial development. Therefore, balance between rural and urban areas must be made. Only by synchronizing both internal structure and external relationship rural development can be accelerated.
Approaches to Rural Development

Like India, in study region different rural development programmes have been implemented. The national measures of rural development were not accurate indicators of differential change in rural areas, because they were only quantitative averages. We have been adopting a number of approaches from time to time. The effort related to programmes exercise can be grouped under the following approaches:

1. Multi-purpose approaches.
2. Target sectoral approach.
3. Target group approach.
4. Area development approach.
5. Integrated rural development approach.
6. The current approach.

1. Multi-purpose Approach

In early fifties rural development programme began with multi-purpose approach based on the principles of all sided development. It approach also called as community development approach, because many rural development programme began with community development programme. In this approach included activities related to agriculture and animal husbandry, irrigation, cooperation, village and small scale industries, health and sanitation, education, communication and housing etc.

The programmes and planning under this approach, was indented to tackle rural problems as a whole and to a converge on the totality of human development. Community development programme, national extension services and Panchayti Raj comes under this approach and the aims was to raise the standard of living, promoting social welfare, social justice, a cooperative way of life, and building up the democratic organisation and institution of the people.

In the early year of its implementation, the programme received much appraisal by historians, politicians, and policy makers, but gradually some of its failure – such as uneven distribution of benefits, absence of clearly
defined priorities, lack of advancement in the sphere of self-reliance and mutual aid, inadequate improvement in the field of cottage and small-scale industries and smaller emphasis on agriculture production are so serious that some economists regard the programmes useful for limited purpose” (Shrivastava 1987, 21).

2. Target Sectoral Approach

The target sectoral approach was adopted in the third five-year plan and emphasized the adoption of package programmes relating to high-yielding seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and credit in selected areas with assured rainfall and irrigation. Intensive Agricultural District programme (IADP), Intensive Agricultural Area programme (IAAP), High-yielding Variety Programme (HYVP) and multiple cropping programme comes under this approach.

The main object of the package approach are to increase agriculture productivity with modern technology to demonstrate use of soil testing labs, balanced fertilizers are to change the altitude of farmers. This package approach brought the so-called ‘Green Revolution’ Soon it was found that this target sectoral approach benefited relatively few better-endowed areas and persons of rural community.

3. Target Group Approach

Rural development was conceived as an approach designed to improve the economic and social life of a specific group of people, the rural poor. This may be called ‘target group approach’ and involves extending the benefits of development to the poorest among those who seek livelihood in the rural area (Sundaram 1979, 17). This approach was adopted during the fourth five-year plan (1969-74). This has led to the formulation of some special programmes such as small Farmer Development Agency (SFDA), Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labour Schemes, Crash programmes for Rural Employment and Tribal Development Plan, Antyodaya, Programmes for Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas. It is noticed that these programmes showed better result.
4. **Area Development Approach**

While target group approach has been mitigation of inequalities between different groups, new approach began, which has been correction of regional imbalance. To the point of this imbalance, some aerial programmes started, which comes in this approach and these are Tribal Area Development Programme (TADP), Hill Area Development Agency, Command Area Development Programme (CADP), Drought Prone Area Development Programme (DPAP), and whole village Development Programme.

In this approach, the first step is to identify the backward areas. The programme, which comes under this approach implemented by sub-plan process and the sub-plan conceived as a smaller plan in specific area with the state plant. For each project an integrated area development programme, focussing attention on the problems of the area. The approach has been mainly followed for the development of the tribal and hill areas.

The success of this approach depends upon the removal of three basic constraints (a) Planning at the local level lacks the participation and involvement of local community exploding the utility of democratic decentralization (b) there has not been any qualitative improvement at the block level in relation to the challenging taste arising from the new technology (c) We have failed to evolve an affective unified agency with a centre of direction and radiating organisation in the various disciplines up to the field level, with interlocking coordinating functions at various levels of operation.

5. **Integrated Rural Development Approach**

This new approach started in 1979-80 and it is latest model of rural development and with it history. In this approach included minimum need programme, rural employment programme, training of rural youth for self-employment (TRYSEM). The main aims of JADP are:

1. Increasing agriculture production
2. Improving the distribution of income
3. Progress in social integration and mobilization of rural poor
IADP aims at reaching specific target groups, comprising the rural poor, particularly small farmers tenants landless labourers, women and young people, who are being by passed by socio-economic progress (Leupolt 1975, 36).

6. The Current Approach

Besides these approaches some other approaches are adopted, which play important role in the path of rural development. These are district planning approach, education approach, employment approach etc. without analysis of these approaches; we never find real progress in rural development.

Nearly every planning and programmes has implemented at district level, because it is necessary for the development of every villages, which comes under district. Our next approach based on education. It is not the type of formal education, but education means training the intelligence of the participants to deal effectively with problems. Education approach plays a vital role in rural development, because education is creative and educated person is a creative person. In the employment approach, different employment occasion presented for rural poor.

Thus, many approaches have seen in development process. If these approaches has implemented in systematic, we fight to the problem of development so our approaches is mostly based on our understanding of what development means and rural society. “The current approach can be characterized as an attempt to promote economic and social development by applying economic principles derived from experiences in developed concentrates to planned changes in developing countries” (Leupolt 1975, 34).

Conclusions

Rural development is not a new one concept to us. It also changes with time. Many persons and communities could analysis to concept of rural development. It is a poorest poor concept and it is a aerial concept. The real mean of this concept is to all side development of rural areas. To find this
target (Rural development) many approaches has implemented in our country and these approaches play an important role to the process of all sides development.

The application of these approaches in rural development planning obviously requires effective training of planners in their use and when not to use them as well. Approaches based on system analysis have already been developed and applied to a limited part of the field i.e. farm systems research and management information systems. Further applications can be expected to yield useful operating procedures and insights into the nature of both the process of rural development and the role of rural development planning” (Belshaw 1977, 289).