CHAPTER - I

RESEARCH PROBLEM, OBJECTIVE AND METHODOLOGY

1.1.1 Introduction

Despite the immense efforts made, both at the national and international levels, a significant proportion of mankind continues to eke out an existence in the most abject conditions of material deprivation. Recent studies on the living conditions have brought out the existence of substantial destitution in the midst of plenty.¹ Millions live constantly under the threat of starvation in the less developed countries.² Countless suffer from diseases of various sorts and lack access to the most basic medical services. The squalor of urban slums is too well-known to be depicted. The tragic waste of human resources in the third world is symbolised by nearly 300 million persons remaining unemployed or underemployed in the


mid-1970s. The situation portrayed above has worsened over the years despite impressive growth rates in many developing countries. Sharp inequalities in the distribution of income and wealth within and between countries highlight the depth of impoverishment of large sections of mankind. Realising the fact that "poverty anywhere constitutes a danger to prosperity everywhere" a world-wide war against this global threat has been launched. The Governments in developed and developing countries and a number of international and national agencies and institutions have been in the arena for the last few decades to fight the scourge of poverty.

Among the less developed countries of the world, India has a substantial number of people in rural areas living below the poverty line. Of the 273 million people living below the poverty line in the country (in 1984-85) around 222 million live in the rural areas.\(^3\) They are largely of landless labourers, small and marginal farmers,

rural artisans and other workers. Elaborate studies have been made by eminent scholars on this subject. Dandekar and Rath, Ojha, Minhas, Bardhan, DaCosta, and Ahluwalia are some of the pioneers in this area who have drawn attention to the magnitude of poverty in India and the challenge it poses to progress. They reach a general consensus on two issues: First the percentage of population below the poverty line has not declined substantially despite planned effort. Secondly, the absolute number of the poor has increased over the years. In the following sections we have presented the efforts of government and various agencies to control poverty in rural areas of the developing countries particularly in India.


1.2.0 Poverty Eradication Programmes

1.2.1 World Over

A programme of poverty eradication includes a wide range of activities such as those to raise agricultural output, to improve health and education, to expand communication and to improve housing. The stress on each of these activities varies with the requirements of a region or country. The nature and content of such activities in any such programme will vary depending on the political, social and economic circumstances that prevail in a given country or region. The programmes of development in the less developed countries had a different meaning prior to 1970's, such as the one to induce rural people to substitute rational economic calculation for the dictates of custom and tradition. But after 1970 the concern has been to achieve greater equity in the distribution of gains from economic growth between urban and rural areas and among economic and social classes within the rural areas. After the second World War in the first development decade, community development became a major focus of all rural development programmes. It involved direct participation of the people in the solution of their common problems and in the promotion of the
material well-being of rural people 'without revolu-
tionary changes in the existing political and economic order'. The programme disillusioned the people in the developing countries because the benefits of the pro-
gramme by and large did not reach the weaker sections. At this time there was a change in the technology in agriculture which ushered in the green revolution. This gave the agricultural sector more or less equal import-
ance in development and modernisation. In the context of increased agricultural production, there emerged many types of programmes to contend with the differential impact of increased agricultural production on income distribution both among inhabitants of the same region and among several regions. For instance, in Pakistan different strategies like Village Agricultural and Industrial Development (V-AID) Programme, and the Basic Democracies System and Rural Works Programme were adopted to fight poverty. Bangaladesh experimented with Comilla Projects to solve the problems of underdevelopment and poverty in rural Bangaladesh. Malaysia, Philippines and Sri Lanka are the other countries which adopted similar strategies. International organisations like
World Bank, International Labour Organisation (ILO), Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), Asian Development Bank (ADB), Economic and Social Commission on Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) etc., had great role in evolving strategies for poverty eradication in the less developed countries. These institutions evolved labour-intensive strategies to promote development, emphasizing "growth from below", "participation", "employment-oriented programmes" "basic needs" etc. Of course, these strategies connote different meaning in different countries. But since our interest is in what has been done in India we shall look into the Indian situation in a somewhat detailed manner.

1.2.2 Indian Case

We may now look at the various plan documents to get an idea of what kind of poverty eradication policies and programmes have been followed since the dawn of the planning era in India. The following table (Table 1.1) summarises the different approaches to poverty removal followed in India. The evolution and implementation of community development programme coincided with the starting of the First Five-Year Plan in 1951. The community
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Emphasis</th>
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<tr>
<td>Rural Reconstruction</td>
<td>Village centred movement based on principles of voluntary effort.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Development</td>
<td>Rural Development based on ideas of motivation, self-help and self-reliance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Target sector</td>
<td>Intensive development of a selected sector or sectors of activity with emphasis on concentrating on areas of comparative advantage</td>
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<tr>
<td>Target Groups</td>
<td>Growth with social justice for the weaker sections of the population.</td>
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<td>Growth Centres</td>
<td>Spatial planning and development.</td>
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<td>Backward Area Development</td>
<td>Reduction of regional imbalance in development.</td>
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<td>Development of drought</td>
<td>Strengthening economic infrastructure and reducing severity of drought or promoting optimum utilisation of irrigation potential</td>
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<td>Prone Areas and Irrigation</td>
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<td>Command Areas</td>
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<td>Minimum needs</td>
<td>Equalisation of social consumption</td>
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development programme aimed at developing to the fullest extent material and human resources of an area through the co-operative efforts of the people and the active help of the State. The programme was intended to tackle rural socio-economic problems as a whole and to converge on the totality of human development. The theory behind such a programme is the psychological view of poverty with reference to individuals. Implied in this is the view that poverty arises from genetic deficiency, individual maladjustments, incompetence, social deprivation, environmental pressures or structural factors. Therefore, the way to deal with the problem of poverty would implicitly draw from the need to strengthen the personalities of the poor individuals.

One of the fallacies of psychological explanations of poverty is their tendency to degenerate into psychologism, that is, explaining social facts in terms of psychological and individual categories. A structural phenomenon cannot be explained in terms of individual phenomenon, one of the

basic assumptions of individualism is the primacy and the freedom of the individuals. Individuals are fully responsible for their actions or behaviour. Milton Friedman holds that the free market system symbolizes the freedom of the individual and expresses in institutional terms the enlargement of the role of the individual. Such a view is mechanical and ignores the internal relationship between individuals. Individuality itself is due to collectivity. The principle of community action and individual social service are all humanist and try to tackle poverty on an individual or group basis. But this really raises the question as to whether poverty can be tackled at the individual level.

The doubts raised on the effectiveness of the community action and individual social service led to the adoption of the "target sector approach" to poverty eradication and rural development. It was hoped that the fruits of development that would initially flow only to the well-endowed sections of the rural society would gradually

percolate down. Several supportive measures like progressive taxation, subsidies, nationalisation etc., were also adopted, but this approach however did not work. This approach, which initially had agricultural development as the main target, later incorporated a minimum package approach of inputs on a selected area basis. It benefited only the richer class and accentuated disparities between the large land owners and the majority of small farmers, tenants and agricultural labourers. The report of the All-India Rural Credit Review Committee observed that "the small farmers have not benefited in proportion either to their numbers or their needs from the various programmes of rural development which have been under implementation during the three five year plans". As far as the small cultivators are concerned, the 'new strategy' acted as "an agonizing change from security in the midst of poverty to growing insecurity along with poverty".


A third thrust of the poverty eradication programmes is of providing gainful employment to the poor on the assumption that the poor are the largely unemployed and therefore the problem of eliminating poverty is one of giving employment to the unemployed. Following this line of argument a specific group is taken for an in-depth study and the plan priorities are accordingly modified. Importance is given not only for expanding employment opportunities but also for maintaining a minimum standard of living. A national programme for minimum needs was, therefore, adopted to lay down norms for the provision of elementary education, drinking water, health and nutrition, house sites for rural landless, roads and electricity, slum improvement and clearance. But even this approach of creating employment opportunities is called into question. In the first place, the whole concept of gainful employment is not clear. Secondly, the capitalist process of production will employ labour up to a certain point where the marginal productivity of labour equals the prevailing wage rate, and beyond that point, employment generation


will not take place. If that is so, relying on wage employment for eradicating poverty will appear dubious. This means that the policy of promoting employment growth alone is ineffective in removing poverty.

A fourth line of poverty eradication strategy is based on the need for reconciling growth with distributive justice. The strategy of the Draft Fifth Five-Year Plan, 1974-79 to eradicate poverty is to initiate and to nurse a composition of growth which favoured the rural and urban poor. The Sixth Five-Year Plan also followed the same strategy emphasising redistributive measures to deal with poverty. Several programmes were designed to help weaker sections such as those of agencies for small farmers, marginal farmers and agricultural labourers, crash schemes for rural employment, programmes for "Depressed Areas" etc. But even these programme did not succeed in eradicating poverty. The magnitude of the problem which these programmes have to deal with is enormous. As the sixth plan document


noted "The pace and manner in which the problem of rural poverty has been dealt with so far leaves much to be desired both qualitatively and quantitatively. Only a small fraction of the rural poor have so far been covered effectively by these poverty amelioration programmes. The bottom deciles of the rural poor i.e. the landless and the rural artisans who are the poorest, have in most cases been left untouched".  

1.3.1 The New Approach to Poverty Eradication: IRDP

The main weakness of the developmental approaches followed, so far is that they view the problem of poverty only from one angle. By launching some beneficiary oriented programmes, it is hoped that poverty can be ameliorated and an all-round development promoted. This approach is symptom-oriented and did not strike at the root of the problem. It will be noted that these programmes were sectoral and hardly integrated. In fact, planning failed to tackle


19. The Sectoral Programmes are those which are managed by different sectoral departments.
the problems of poverty, unemployment, interpersonal income inequalities which in a great measure are inter-related. In the 'seventies, economists and planners thought of the necessity to accelerate economic and social development by integrating some of the important aspects of development. This necessity arose because of the disappointment caused over the previous decades by the uncoordinated and unsuitable character of action programmes practised in the developing countries. The "Integrated Rural Development Programme" (IRDP) is the result of the failure of such programmes.

The use of an integration concept to denote a new approach to development problems is derived from the joint approach principles. The failure of a number of incoherent and uncoordinated projects that were unsuited to cope with the country's real problems has led people to pin all their hopes on the integrated approach. The new approach aims at the development of the area with emphasis on amelioration of poverty of the people in that area. It is a locally planned, a resource-based area development programme aimed at the overall socio-economic improvement of the people below

the poverty line. Many developing countries, including India, are now experimenting with this new approach to development.

1.3.2 IRDP in India

IRDP was initiated in 1978-79 in 2300 development blocks, in areas covered by special programmes like Small Farmers Development Agency (SFDA), Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP) and Command Area Development (CAD). IRDP was extended to all the development blocks in the country with effect from 2nd October, 1980. As a major programme of poverty alleviation in the sixth plan, the objective of the programme was to provide assistance to families below the poverty line to enable them to improve their income level so as to eventually cross the poverty line. This was to be achieved by providing productive assets to the identified families below the poverty line. In short, identification of the economic activities, formulation of projects based on these, provision of forward and backward linkages, arranging credit and choosing the right beneficiary were the most important steps taken under this programme in an attempt to provide assistance to the intended beneficiaries. To achieve the objective, a five year development profile or a perspective plan would be drawn up for
each development block and aggregated at the district level. This plan was to be based on an assessment of the developmental assets of the blocks and to broadly deal with optimum utilisation of the ground and surface water, dairy, animal husbandry, fisheries, village industries, and activities in the tertiary sector. This plan would become the framework of action for the relevant sectoral schemes for raising the incomes of the identified target groups. The important point to be noted is that IRDP was to be not just an anti-poverty programme but a programme which sought to ensure optimum utilisation of local resources with the objective of providing economically viable activities to the rural poor through a comprehensive micro-level plan (block plan).

1.4.1 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A review of the past studies on IRDP is done in this section with a view to identifying the research gaps and issues for further study. The available studies are classified into (1) national level macro studies covering a number of states and (2) micro-studies covering states, districts and/or blocks. At the national level a few major evaluation
studies have been undertaken by Programme Evaluation Organisation (PEO) of Planning Commission, National Bank for Agricultural and Rural Development (NABARD), Institute for Financial Management and Research (IFMR) and the concurrent evaluation sponsored by the Department of Rural Development, Government of India and carried out by a reputed research institutions in the country (CEDR).

Recently, in addition to the evaluation studies at the national level, there were some thought provoking theoretical probings into the effectiveness of anti-poverty programmes by eminent scholars among others like N. Rath, Indira Hirway, D. Bandyopadhyay.


The national level studies and discussions, in fact, led to clear thinking on the strategies to be adopted for rural development in the country.


34. It is to be noted that these discussions on IRDP have appeared after the completion of the present study.
At the state level there are a number of case studies on IRDP by individual scholars and institutions. In respect of the latter we have however reviewed only a few studies which cover only the state of Kerala. This is mainly because, the focus of the present study is on Kerala and as our study region is quite diverse in its structure from the rest of the country, the applicability of the findings from studies outside Kerala may not be great. The studies conducted in Kerala are by institutions like Kerala State Planning Board (SPB), Department of Applied Economics, University of Cochin (UOC), Centre for Development Studies (CDS), Institute of Management in Government (IMG), and by an individual.


researcher. In the following section is presented a review of these studies, especially the methodology adopted and the findings.

1.4.2 **Methodology Followed:**

The NABARD, PEO and CEDR studies have drawn sample IRDP beneficiary households from all over the country. These studies compared the "before" and "after" effects of the programme to draw inferences on the impact of the programme. This approach however, fails to account for the changes in the economic conditions of households that would occur without the programme and therefore lead to an erroneous statement of the benefit attributable to the programme. It is essential to include non-beneficiary households (control group) in the sample size to avoid such methodological pitfall. This is a serious drawback.


of the above three studies. However, the IFMR study covered (which was limited to 3 states) both beneficiary families and a control group of non-beneficiary families. In addition to this, the NABARD, PEO and IFMR studies have been conducted in a drought year i.e. 1982-83, which would have depressed the returns from the schemes following the escalation of input prices, especially in the case of animal husbandry schemes. 41

The studies conducted in Kerala are also not free from methodological shortcomings. For instance, except for the studies by CDS, SPB, none of the studies took a control group for purposes of comparison. Secondly, though the SPB study is more comprehensive, its sample size from each block was limited to 50 beneficiaries and 20 non-beneficiaries. Therefore, the coverage of the sample with respect to schemes in each block is very small. This limitation of the study got further aggravated when all the beneficiaries of the selected blocks were clubbed into one group without considering the differences in the levels of development of the blocks.

Further, the SPB study was carried out in the year 1980-81, the year in which IRDP started gathering momentum in the state. Hence the SPB study came rather too early to assess the impact of the programme.

The CDS study is not that comprehensive in the sense that it covered only two villages. Also, the non-beneficiary households (76) outnumbered the beneficiary households (52) in the sample. Since the number of respondents under the schemes interviewed was very small the conclusions drawn from such study have to be read with much care.

Another shortcoming of the studies under reference, relates to their assessment of the impact of IRDP. It is to be noted that the criterion of crossing the poverty line as the sole indicator of the success of the programme is confronted with a major drawback. That is, it does not take into account the set of factors determining any upward movement in household income. Whether a beneficiary household is able to cross the poverty line depends upon both the pre-IRDP and the post-IRDP household situations. The
pre-IRDP factors which determine the crossing of poverty line are (i) the asset position, (ii) the income levels, and (iii) the quality of manpower. The post-IRDP factors are (i) the amount of IRDP assistance, (ii) incremental income realised by the household and (iii) the sustained flow of income over a number of years. Therefore, our contention is that by taking poverty line as the key indicator of gauging the impact of IRDP, most of the studies referred to failed to comprehend the full impact of IRDP among its beneficiaries. It may also be noted that with the exception of the survey by NABARD and CEDR, all other studies have not made any adjustments for rise in prices while defining the poverty line based on income.

The NABARD study is silent about the cost effectiveness of IRDP. The PEO study examines incremental income flow schemewise. But the PEO study simply ignores the cost effectiveness of IRDP across different situation/levels of development. The CEDR (Phase-I) study has

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42. Cost effectiveness is defined as maximum income generation per unit of total expenditure incurred.

worked out the extent of income generated from asset and also the percentage increase in family income. It is found that half of the sample beneficiaries had more than Rs.1000/- income from assets (in these cases the ICAR is less than 3). Further with respect to family income about 38 per cent of the sample beneficiaries experienced more than 50 per cent increase in family income. However, it is important to study the differences in the rate of return at different socio-economic and physical structure. 44 Unfortunately none of the studies carried out in Kerala had analysed this aspect of the programme and this is a major limitation of these studies.

Yet another limitation of the studies under review is that they failed to analyse the financial strength 45 of

44. Economic structure includes the following main elements: the output and employment in each sector and income distribution. Socio-economic structure includes: types of production organisations, large factories, plantations, small scale family owned industries or farms, production co-operatives or a certain combination of these production units. An indication of the number of people involved in the various production organisations and their output. Physical structure includes: land use pattern, pattern of service centres transportation and public facilities.

45. See Section 5.5.1 of Chapter V of this thesis.
beneficiary and non-beneficiary households. This drawback hindered drawing of any conclusions on grant of further doses of bank assistance to poorer sections.

1.4.3 Major Findings

Having seen the methodological part of the studies under review, let us now look into their major findings. The questions to which these studies addressed themselves by and large are: How far the programme has achieved its objective of raising the poor households above the poverty line? If the performance in this regard is not satisfactory, what are the reasons for it? What are the policy measures that would invigorate the programme? In what follows we have presented the findings of the studies referred to by way of answers to the above questions.

The studies on IRDP under review have observed that in the formulation of the programme a uniform strategy was followed irrespective of the levels of development of blocks, incidence of poverty and characteristics of population, which has led to the ineffectiveness of IRDP. Inflexibility of the programme was another serious lacunae to which the studies have drawn attention.
Secondly, though IRDP was conceived of as a family-based programme it was not so while giving the assistance. The studies observed that the unit of assistance was an individual in most cases. Thirdly, the infiltration of non-poor into the programme was observed by almost all studies referred to. This figure was as high as 80 per cent in Cannanore district of Kerala (Kuttikrishnan), 47 per cent in Gujarat (NABARD), 39 per cent in Kottayam district of Kerala (UOC) and as low as 7 per cent in Andhra Pradesh (NABARD). At all India level the CEDR study (Phase I) revealed that 20 per cent of the beneficiaries were non-eligible as per the norm of Rs.3500 as poverty line. Generally the studies from Kerala brought out a higher rate of misidentification of poor. Fourthly, it was pointed out that the programme had given undue importance to animal husbandry scheme. There was no proper resource inventory of the blocks and the provision of adequate forward and backward linkages was lacking in the whole exercise. Fifthly, institutional coordination, especially that of banks, was far from satisfactory.

Sixthly, among the studies none has come out with the fact that IRDP is a total failure in the sense of not
having helped any of the beneficiaries to cross poverty line. The estimates of those crossing the poverty line vary widely from 18 to 20 per cent as in the NABARD study to about 50 per cent as in the case of the study conducted by PEO. The study by UOC observed that the income of 54.67 per cent of the sample beneficiaries improved after implementation of IRDP. The studies by SPB and Kutti Krishnan have shown that 19 per cent of the households were able to cross the poverty line on the adoption of the IRDP. The CDS study figure was 34 per cent. But the IMG study found that 60 per cent of beneficiary households could not make any economic gains and even in the case of the majority of others the additional income generated was inadequate to enable them to cross the poverty line.

Lastly, on the question of planning and implementation of IRDP, the studies have noted many imperfections, especially at the implementation level. In fact, IRDP was conceived of as an instrument for integrating the rural economy through the integration of sectoral programmes, spatial integration, integration of social and economic processes and integration of the policies for rural development
programmes meant to remove poverty and unemployment.\textsuperscript{46} It is to be noted that none of the studies had looked into this aspect of IRDP i.e., IRDP in the framework of a micro-level plan.\textsuperscript{47} The reason for this may be, as pointed out by PEO study, the failure on the part of the authorities to prepare the five-year perspective plans. There were neither cluster plans nor block plans; in the case of most of the DRDAs (District Rural Development Agency) the requisite planning teams had not been organised and the resource surveys were not prepared as prescribed under the guidelines.

1.5.1 Present Study - Its Need

The review of literature done in the light of the requirements of an 'integrated approach' (micro level planning) brings out the following research gaps in the available studies:


1. The basic idea of 'integration' has been left out in the past studies in the sense that these studies did not try to find out what actually happened to the 'integrated approach' at the field level.

2. The most important lacuna in these studies is that the interaction between the phenomenon that determines rural poverty and underdevelopment is not considered. The question is whether the schemes selected are consistent with the requirements of particular village/block or region. The horizontal and vertical linkages between different functions which need to be established are not promoted at all.

1.6.1 Objectives of the present study

Considering the above limitations of the available studies, and in view of the importance of the programme in terms of its investments in various schemes, its employment potential and the promise of the upliftment of the weaker sections of society it holds out, we propose the present study with the following specific objectives:
1. To ascertain how far IRDP has helped the target groups in improving their household economic conditions.

2. To examine whether the formulation and implementation of IRDP is in accordance with the concept and philosophy of micro-level planning.

A study mainly focusing on the effectiveness of an anti-poverty programme (i.e. IRDP) could be seen in different ways. One way of understanding the functioning of IRDP, as stated in the first objective, is to study the economic conditions of the strata of population which the programme is expected to serve. It includes the assessment of the changes in the economic conditions of the IRDP beneficiaries. The economic conditions include aspects such as employment, income, consumption, saving (assets) and indebtedness. The other way is by testing its theoretical base through field perspective. The second objective of the study meets this requirement. It probes into the theory Vs. practice question of IRDP, within the socio-economic and physical structure. Integration and linking should find expression in the description and analysis of the current situation and the assessment of major potentials and constraints for local development.
In the analysis of the present situation a succinct description of the existing socio-economic and physical structure has to be given. By comparing the existing social, economic and physical structure with what is desired in future it is possible to indicate the programmes of action necessary to achieve the desired end.

1.7.0 METHODOLOGY

1.7.1 Selection of the Study Region:

For the present study, two blocks in Kerala have been selected. Kerala's economic history is one of marked inconsistencies: The highest density of population and the lowest per capita land area, the highest rate of literacy in the country off set by the lowest employment potential, substantially high-yielding agricultural sector but the lower per capita food production, the highest percentage of working population in the secondary and tertiary sectors accompanied by the lowest industrial productivity, the biggest foreign exchange earning potential but a very low per capita income, the smallest average land holdings and
the highest proportion of landless agricultural labourers in the agricultural population, topping in physical quality life index in the country but half of the population still living below the poverty line. So, as a state, Kerala has distinct features compared to other states in India which make out a case for conducting this study in Kerala.

As the problems posed in the study have regional perspective developmental aspects of the two main regions in Kerala\textsuperscript{48} - Travancore-Cochin and Malabar are taken for comparison. It is found that the levels of development in all respects are much lower in Malabar as compared to Travancore-Cochin. The difference between the two regions is seen in respect of agricultural and industrial development as well as in the provision of infrastructure in respect of transport, communication etc. Though the difference is narrowing down, in some respects, glaring disparities continue to exist even now. Malabar region has been taken for the present study considering its backwardness.

Within Malabar region two districts have been selected - a developed district and a less developed

\textsuperscript{48} See Chapter III for details.
district. This is so due to two reasons. First, within the region we find marked difference in socio-economic development and secondly the district is considered as the administrative boundary of the IRDP implementing agency i.e. DRDA. So Kozhikode a developed district and Wynad, the less developed district come under the purview of our study.

The blocks in each of these districts are ranked according to their levels of development. From Kozhikode district, the developed block - Panthalayani - and from Wynad district the less developed block Mananthavady are selected.

In the methodology that is followed for the selection of blocks, the aim is that the selected areal units should come under the tenets of micro-level planning. Two entirely different blocks and districts within a backward region of Kerala are chosen so that it will help us to arrive at conclusions relating to regional and intra-regional aspects of development.

1.7.2 Observational Design of the Study

In order to estimate the incremental net benefit

49. See Chapter III
arising from IRDP (a) the before-and-after situation and (b) with-and-without programme situation analyses are employed. This method of analysis has helped to account for changes in economic conditions that would occur even without IRDP and thus would avoid the erroneous assessment of the benefits attributable to IRDP. Thus we have assessed the change in the conditions of those with the programme (the experimental group) and those without any programme (the control group), and the difference observed in the ex-post conditions of the experimental (beneficiary) group and control (non-beneficiary group) was then imputed to IRDP intervention. To ensure that these two groups were comparable, care was taken to select the respondents of the control group whose socio-economic conditions were by and large similar to those of the respondents of the experimental group and were not influenced by the intervention of any other development programme.

1.7.3 Evaluation of Planning Techniques

IRDP being an exercise in micro-level planning our effort here was also directed to appraise how the planning agency identified the beneficiaries, evolved schemes of
development for the households, matched the households with the schemes, integrated household plans with the spatial plans, sectoral plans and non-sectoral plans. As part of this, we carried out a resource inventory of the blocks so that the gaps in functional and spatial integration of economic activities could be identified.

1.7.4 Selection of Households

The beneficiary and non-beneficiary sample households were selected on the basis of a multistage sample frame. The sample size of beneficiary households was 276 and that of non-beneficiary households was 60. For the selection of beneficiary households, the schemes were arranged in a manner in which the scheme with the highest number of beneficiaries was listed first. Among these the first five major schemes, having the highest number of beneficiaries from each block were selected for an intensive study. The sample beneficiary households belong to these schemes and they constitute around 14 per cent of the total beneficiaries in each scheme. The final selection of the beneficiary households was done on a random

50. The lists of beneficiaries of the year 1982-83 were obtained from the respective blocks under study.
sample basis. Wherever the sample beneficiary was not available for interview, the household immediately preceding (or following) him in the list was substituted to maintain the number of our sample size intact. The schemes that were common to both the blocks which came under the study were milch animals, goat rearing and petty shop. On the other hand, boat and net, and mat weaving schemes in Panthalayani block and land development and work bullocks schemes in Mananthavady block were specific to the respective blocks. The number of non-beneficiary households interviewed from each block was 30. The non-beneficiary households were selected on a random basis since there was no record at the block office or panchayat office about them. The help of block staff and panchayat staff was sought for this. However, care has been taken to ensure their similarity with the beneficiaries and that they belong to the poorer strata of the society.

1.7.5 Design of Tools

Data on the socio-economic background of the respondents, schemes taken by the beneficiary households, the economics of the schemes, constraints faced by the
beneficiary households in regard to the maintenance and management of the schemes etc., were collected by interviewing them with the help of a structured interview schedule.

Apart from using schedules detailed interviews were held with functionaries who were responsible for planning and implementing IRDP at district and block levels. The data sought from them related to the manner of beneficiary identification, evolution and identification of schemes, planning for locating the needed infrastructure and integration of the beneficiary household plans with block and district sectoral and non-sectoral plans.

In addition to this, we had informal discussions with knowledgeable persons — administrators, local leaders, fellow researchers — to obtain insights into the performance of the programme. We also collected secondary data from various official—published and unpublished—sources in order to build up background material.

1.7.6 Reference Year

Since the analysis involves comparison of before-and-after situations, it was felt that the reference period
selected should be such that it not only allowed sufficient time for the programme to have its impact on the economic conditions of the households but also that the year when the programme was implemented would not be too remote as to create the problem of memory lapse on the part of the respondents. In consideration of these points the reference period was fixed as 1982-84. Accordingly those respondents who obtained assistance in the financial year 1982-83 and assessed their economic conditions at two points of time i.e. in 1981-82 (before situation) and in the latter half of 1984 (after situation) were selected for this study.

1.8.1 Limitations of the Study

As mentioned in the text, the study on IRDP has covered only beneficiaries who took financial assistance in the year 1982-83. It is recognised that it is also important to study beneficiaries belonging to previous years. But the main reason for not doing so is to avoid the problem of memory lapse on the part of the respondents. (Here, it should also be noted that the study was completed in the year 1986 itself. But owing to some technical reasons
the thesis could not be submitted prior to this date). Further, though there were so many schemes under IRDP in the study region, the study is limited coverage to 5 major schemes in each block. This is mainly because the percentage of beneficiaries under other schemes is very much less compared to the schemes selected.

1.9.1 Plan of the Thesis

In Chapter II the growth and structure of Kerala economy has been presented. We have also examined here the regional perspectives of development in Kerala. This will give us an account of the extent and dimension of poverty in Kerala and the level of economic advancement attained by the Kerala economy. A profile of the study region, particularly of the blocks that are selected is discussed in Chapter-III. Here the objective is to appraise the availability of resources, extent of their utilisation and the potential that needs to be exploited in the region. Chapter IV discusses on the basis of resource inventory the kinds of programmes which might utilise fully the un-utilised resources and thereby help the region in fully reaching the growth potential.
Chapter V, VI and VII are based on the primary data collected from the selected blocks. Chapter V analyses the effectiveness of IRDP as an antipoverty programme by examining the individual schemes that have been provided to the target group of beneficiaries. In Chapter VI the differential impact of IRDP on different socio-economic categories of target groups has been looked into. Chapter VII deals with the theory vs. practice question of IRDP within the planning frame work. Here the problem of how far IRDP as an exercise in micro level planning has succeeded in integrating the three components of IRDP concept is explored. The last chapter summarises the findings and makes some policy recommendations.