CHAPTER -7

AN ANALYSIS

Integrated Rural Development Programme was conceived with the objective to raise the level of living of the poorest of the poor, the very poor and the poor families in rural areas by giving them productive assets, inputs and credit for generating income on a lasting basis. The genesis arose from the fact that poorest of the poor, very poor and poor (hereafter referred generally as poor or poorest) have nil or negligible resources and also have very low capacity and skill to generate income. This was the result of the fact that the previous five, five year plans, despite claims of the planners failed to take the fruits of benefits to the poorest rural masses who were living a destitute life and continue to do so. The conceptualization of IRDP is based on self sufficiency, self help and self reliance. To this extent the concept of IRDP fairly coincides with Gandhian scheme of rural uplift. The use of the word 'fair' has been used as IRDP, as a concept does conform to Gandhian scheme of rural development but IRDP as the fundamental tool of holistic rural reconstruction on Gandhian Model, is quite debatable. Gandhi envisaged village as the basic unit of development not only for economic uplift but also as social and political units of Indian polity. To what extent IRDP entails Gandhian model of rural development, keeping in view the dynamic nature of Gandhian postulates and based on the field study (Chapter - 6) is the focus of discussion in this chapter.

The concern of Gandhi was evidently for those who were standing last in the ladder viz. poorest of the poor. This is known by the name 'Antyodaya'. In the context of IRDP this is taken as to cover poorest of the poor. To this extent, Gandhian
concern and IRDP, as envisaged by the programme itself, has to prove the test of our scrutiny done during the field survey and results obtained therefrom.

The identification of IRDP families as done in 1981-82 and additional survey in sixth plan and seventh plan were done on the basis of laid down criteria to include marginal and small farmers who have land upto one hectare (MF) and one to two hectare (SF) and half the size in both the cases if land is irrigated and also included agricultural labourers and rural artisans, as the target groups. Those families in which any member was serving either in government or elsewhere including those who were doing part time jobs such as village postman etc., have not been included into the survey. There are instances where father and son got separated (infact lived together) to reap the benefits of IRDP subsidy. It has been observed that in some cases son was serving and father doing agriculture farming but during survey were identified as living separately. This bears testimony to the fact that all identification of rural poor were done by village Pradhans, VLWS, or village surveys conducted by teachers, patwaris etc. The land lists were available with village patwaris and on the basis of above criteria of land, the identification seems to have been done in a meeting of the above functionaries. DRDA officials are other such functionaries involved in identification. Table 6.1 shows that no identification was done in open Gram Sabha. The fact can easily be corroborated by the fact that only 0.9 per cent information about rural poor was gathered by fellow villagers. This lack of knowledge about identification indicates clear bias of the government functionaries in the procedure of identification. Therefore, it is quite faulty and unreliable. The ideal thing would have been to effectively democratise the selection process through actual gram sabha meetings where in the bottom most of the poor would have been identified and then segregated for IRDP coverage based on actual measurement of incomes of the
households. The perfunctory and careless manner in selecting the beneficiaries ab-initio raised the question of the validity of the programme in meeting its objectives.

The data in table 6.21 shows that only 18.1 per cent beneficiaries covered were in the income range of from below Rs.1000 to Rs. 2500, 22.7 per cent from Rs. 2501 to Rs. 3500, 39.3 per cent Rs. 3501 to Rs. 6400 and 19.9 per cent (20 %) per cent clearly above Rs.6400. Contrary to it table 6.29 pertaining to non-beneficiaries, who have not been covered under IRDP, indicates that 32.5 per cent households were having income below Rs.1000 to Rs.3500 (old poverty line) and 67.5 per cent having income between Rs.3501 to Rs.6400. The above result vividly indicates, whereas 20 per cent beneficiaries were above the revised poverty line of Rs.6400 who have been given assistance, 32.5 per cent non beneficiaries having income below Rs.3500 (old poverty line) have not been given any assistance. Thus, poorest of the poor approach is not adopted. The Gandhian postulate of Antyodaya is found missing from IRDP approach. The reasons of such approach and solution can be attributed to the personnel involved in identifying the poor families. The job was not entrusted to specialised experts such as investigators who are adept in conducting surveys but was given to non specialised personnel. It is seriously doubted whether door to door survey has been carried out or not. The parameters of identifying the poor were quite debatable and were clearly not rational. There was therefore, no scientific basis of selecting the beneficiaries. The ignorance of rural poor about such identification is another sad point. About 95.0 per cent non beneficiaries were not aware about IRDP (Table 6.28). Ignorance is attributed to various reasons, prominent one are inadequacy of extension services and illiteracy. Inadequacy of expert extension services is apparent, as discussed above but illiteracy played a crucial role and is a great impediment in the way of IRDP becoming an effective vehicle of poverty amelioration. Education is not a component under IRDP and is separately looked after by State Government under various schemes. Ignorance is
the result of illiteracy and the poor are not aware of the developmental activities taking place around them. Neither they are desirous of knowing it nor they have been educated to avail of the developmental schemes. If poverty is to be tackled, poor must be educated both by ways of formal as well as informal education processes. Even by the standard norms of literacy adopted at the national and State levels to place a person in the literate category, (which certainly is not adequate standard), the average literacy in the two blocks is 45.7 per cent (agricultural labourers being literate to the extent of 27.8%). This is far below the State literacy rate (table 6.8). In an area where so much illiteracy is rampant, the process of development ought to be slow. Coupled with this, the rights of these poor are taken away by relatively better off among the poor and this points to the bias in selecting the beneficiaries by government and village big wigs including official and non official functionaries. If old poverty line (Rs. 3500/-) is the 1st priority for coverage of rural poor then only 40.8 per cent beneficiaries fall in that group and rest 59.2 per cent are between Rs.3501 to Rs.6400 and above.

Further out of 59.2 per cent, 39.3 per cent fall in Rs.3500 to Rs.6400 and 19.9 per cent are initially above Rs.6400 (Table 6.21). This clearly indicates that the benefits are reaped by those who are more influential, well connected and have political and local official patronage. This points to a pick and choose method in selecting beneficiaries. But, clearly 20 per cent beneficiaries were above revised poverty line and thus managed to get themselves identified as IRDP beneficiaries to siphon off the rightful share which ought to have gone to deserving poor. Although, Antyodaya approach has not been adopted as it should have been, yet it is not the fault of the programme which does conceptualise selection of beneficiaries on antyodaya basis; an approach similar to that of Gandhi, but for the wrong selection by those who are executing the programme at the grass root levels.
Among the poor the dominant sections lie in the SC/ST classes. These classes remained deprived since ages. The concern of Gandhi was so great for these classes that he termed them as 'Harijans' - the sons of God. The IRDP objectives emphasized at least 30 per cent coverage of these classes who are inherently poor and could not emancipate themselves from the shackles of poverty so far. This study shows positive indications in this sphere. The overall coverage of SC comes to 79.1 per cent (Table 6.6). The blocks have negligible tribal population except a handful migrated from interior/tough areas. The overall coverage of ST is 1.8 per cent. Thus like Gandhi, the IRDP has laid adequate stress on the coverage of SC/ST classes.

It has been inferred from the study that the population of agricultural labourers/landless people is quite negligible. Only 8.3 per cent of agricultural labourers of the total sample were found in Mashobra Block whereas in Theog no agricultural labourer/landless came within the ambit of this survey (table 6.7). It has been observed from the study concluded under IRDP that these people are getting help in the form of small business like 'Manyari shops' etc. which are reasonably remunerative occupations.

Before concluding the aspect of Antyodaya approach it is pertinent to refer to a very interesting contradiction observed during the study. An analysis of Table 6.7 goes contrary to the income approach of coverage discussed in Table 6.21 (Chapter -6). Whereas, income approach concluded that poorest of the poor approach was inadequate under the programme, the land ownership pattern shows that the sample constituted 75 per cent and 84 per cent of marginal farmers in Mashobra and Theog blocks respectively (overall 79.1%). The small farmers accounted for 16.4 per cent and the remaining 4.5 per cent agricultural labourers. Since agricultural labourers/landless are found
negligible, the land ownership pattern shows adoption of poorest of the poor approach which stands against our analysis of income approach.

This contradiction needs deep probe on various parameters. It is evident that the marginal farmers have an average family size of over five members to support (Table 6.8). The land upto one hectare (in case of MF) and mostly unirrigated can not generate enough income to support such a big family size. Therefore, these rural marginal farmers seek employment elsewhere and specifically in non farm sector, such as road construction, private construction work, tree plantation and other unskilled labour work and thus support their families. This income generation was not taken into account while identifying the poor families, as only those poor household having government or recognised jobs were excluded. It is this aspect which is responsible for this conflicting and contrary results of the two approaches. During the survey this aspect was observed and the beneficiaries informed (during interview) that as their land holdings were small and unviable, therefore, they needed to supplement their income by wage employment in non-farm sectors. Similar is the case even with the small farmers. The study therefore, emphasizes the need of a broad based survey by really expert investigators to identify the beneficiaries on a very rational basis and to exclude those who don't deserve it but managed to get to be identified and to include those deserving who are left out. The influential and better off farmers should not be allowed to siphon off the benefits of the deserving and should not be allowed to create a distinct class within the rural poor. The other reason for the resurvey is that a very long period of about ten years have passed since the inception of the programme in Shimla district. During this period a definite section of rural poor may have crossed the upper limit and may be quite better off and needs to be excluded.
The above controversy about identification of poor, the concept of poverty line etc. may not concern Gandhi at all. Really speaking, the analysis is too technical to be fitted into Gandhian framework. After all we are debating about those who are largely below a defined poverty line or may be a little over but certainly we are debating about technical classification of the level of poverty and identification of poor on that basis. The simple fact remains that poverty is there, persisting and is perpetuating. Gandhi never involved himself about the dexterity of diction as it tends to defeat the purpose of his conviction. On this plank even the determination of poverty line is questionable. Let it be clear that Gandhi never wished to glorify poverty and his concept of voluntary poverty applies more to rich classes so as to limit their wants for a better distribution in the society. He was a dynamic thinker and no other person grasped the spirit of rural India as did Gandhi. The limiting of wants will make resources available for the use of poor and they can be made partners in the process of production. Gandhi never set poverty standards but was in favour of lesser gap between the bottom and the top. In this context and in the circumstances existing at that time and reshaping of Gandhian postulate of poverty no such poverty line can be drawn. Food, clothing, shelter, better nutrition, health, cleanliness, education and development of mind, body and soul are the factors which determine Gandhian line of poverty. Although, he was not an economist in the conventional sense of the term, yet he went beyond the concept of poverty and its determination by the present day theoretical economist. His contention deem to include consumption needs and all other determinants needed for a life which differentiates between a man and an animal. He never visualised that poverty line which is needed to save a man just for his survival but, his concept of poverty envisages a reasonably decent, but simple level of living to all. Use of local cheap cloth, food shelter etc. do not prohibit laying down a minimum level of decent living. A rational and modern rethinking of Gandhian concept on these determinants envisages a holistic but reasonable level of living rather than to determine.
a minimum consumption level to save a man from death of destitution. The present poverty line is, therefore, clearly in contrast to Gandhian ideology and needs to be recasted so as to set a minimum level of living to achieve for each individual poor. An inherent contradiction is therefore, apparently seen between the present day modern economists' and planners' conception and that of Gandhi, who are themselves enjoying a much better standard and strangely prescribing destitution levels for the more deprived poor. It is their endeavour that poverty will be vanished by trickle down effect as if the prosperity will pass through them to the poor classes. The programme designers have failed to set up a rational, adequate and decent minimal standard of living for extreme deprived.

Moreover the study results do not take into account the price changes, which are so frequent in Indian context that the poverty line concept cannot be pegged to a single parameter even for a short period of time. This induces inherent error in percentage of people crossing the poverty line. This inherent fallacy questions the number of people crossing the poverty line at a longer period of time. An updating with price adjustments brings down drastically the number of people crossing the 'poverty line'. This concept of poverty line fixation is, therefore, quite questionable and on this basis, the results arrived at may not be reflective of a dynamic position. At point 'A' if 25 per cent of beneficiaries crossed the poverty line then immediately it is quite possible that this 25 per cent slumps only to ten per cent. This is another factor which challenges the concept of poverty line and its fixation. The gradation of poverty line of Rs. 3500 to Rs. 4800 and Rs. 4800 to Rs. 6400 points towards inherent fallacy of the concept and determination of poverty line. The fact is that determination of poverty line revolves around a static concept of poverty which is extremely difficult to determine as well as to maintain. The determination includes just bare minimum and ignores social and political necessities. Even to maintain this level in face of increasing cost of living is becoming difficult. In such a
situation it can't be said quite categorically as to how many poors have crossed the poverty line. The study points towards this inconsistency in conception. Gandhian conception was not only broad based but holistic and comprehensive too. The study observes that two sets of living standards are fixed: one for rural class and the other for urban class which is wholly unjustified, discriminatory and tends to bring more inequality, discontentment and class conflict in society in the long run. Concept of poverty has to be redefined to make it more comprehensive and not just fulfillment of consumption at minimum levels to sustain life. This study amply shows that at the lowest level both the capacity to absorb investment as well to possess skills, to utilize skills appear to have been thrusted on the people.

Thus the goal of IRDP was not adequately designed. The progress may be slow but the goal should be high and adequate to call a man a man with respect and dignity. Therefore, on the basis of field study the constant endeavour is to rationalize the findings on Gandhian perspective and it can be substantially concluded that both the fixation of poverty line and the identification of beneficiaries need imminent review for setting up humanistic goals and such level of poverty which can promote economic, social and political development of rural masses. On these issues though IRDP seems to be on Gandhian mental yet it fails to cover holistic concept of rural reconstruction as envisaged by Gandhi.

There is therefore, a case to make IRDP more broad based, flexible and its coverage more rational and bottom oriented to make the progress more effective and tangible though somewhat slow.

Health, hygiene, sanitation, drinking water and above all education are the parameters which need to be integrated in the programme.

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Education is the key to development and with such rate of literacy based on government norms, it is difficult to break the shackles of poverty. Education breeds knowledge which in turn removes ignorance and infuses a sense of self respect and urge of development in any person and for poor it is an essential element for their development. As Prof. Galbraith puts it beautifully, "on this planet, there is no literate population that is poor and no illiterate population that is not poor".  

It is appropriate to mention here that the Government of Himachal Pradesh since March, 1990 launched a new programme called "Antyodaya" and identified rural poorest of the poor through a survey. The programme was designed to cover one lakh poorest of the poor families in its 1st phase, who are destitutes poor or poorest of the poor and have their annual income below Rs.3500 PA or less. The programme has been devotailed into the IRDP to make it comprehensive and bottom oriented and the additional burden of subsidy on food etc. is born by the State through its own resources. Under the programme, five kg. wheat, one kg. rice, per adult member of family and two and half Kg. wheat and half kg. rice per child of the family and one kg. salt per kg. per family are given on highly subsidised rates. In addition, all the school going children of the household are given assistance for books and school uniforms in a graded scale for children going for primary, secondary and higher education. Preference in employment is also given in government service and all non agriculture employment generation programme sponsored by State or Centre Government. In case of death of a worker of Antyodaya family (a person aged between 15 to 60 years) a compensation of Rs.5000 is given to the family. Adequate stress is given to education and provisions have been made to give graded grants and loans for students pursuing all types of education. Another important feature of Antyodaya is that


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families are identified irrespective of caste and purely on economic criteria. Although, Gandhi never advocated such charities yet in the present circumstances of extreme deprivation and with a shift in consumption styles, it becomes difficult for such poor to exist. Apart from IRDP help and other assistance as mentioned above, the provisions of such help in kind are designed to raise the nutritional levels to further raise the physical capacities of these extreme deprived classes so that over a period of time they can acquire adequate skills to become self sufficient. There is, of course, inherent danger that these rural poor may become a continuous liability for State exchequer and develop into social parasites. The other danger is that political appeasement is attached to this charity. But, the intention of the programme is not such. The objective is to help these poor on all accounts for a limited period in this way and side by side absorbing them in employment as well as self work and to make them self reliant and production partners in the context of the region and the country. There is, of course, nothing wrong to bring this element in IRDP so far it tends to help and exploit the skills of these poor by safeguarding them on starvation front and to help them acquire skills at a faster rate by raising their physical capacities. This should not be permanent feature and requires intensive and continuous monitoring of beneficiaries on apolitical rational basis so that these people be motivated to take up self employment schemes in a better way. As for as, these parameters are satisfied, this new approach of Antyodaya is largely harmonised on Gandhian principles as a component of IRDP. No concrete results can be possible as this programme has been launched recently and only in Himachal Pradesh.

Coming to coverage of beneficiaries under different schemes, the study shows the dominant activities in which the beneficiaries covered in Shimla district are, bullock pair, milch cattle, potato growing and irrigation tank, in primary sector; wheat thrasher and rural artisans like, black smithy, cobblerly and carpentry etc. in secondary sector and atta chakki and small
business (maniyari, kiryana shops, band playing and mule pair etc.) in tertiary sector. As per table 6.17 primary sector covered 63.7 per cent beneficiaries followed by tertiary sector 20 per cent and secondary sector 16.3 per cent. Before analysing the activity wise beneficiary position one thing is observed that there persists a great confusion in classification of various activities in primary, secondary and tertiary sectors. This confusion is negligible where as primary sector is concerned but secondary and tertiary sectors have great overlapping if the list of activities prepared by DRDA Shimla mentioned in its 'A Hand Book on IRDP for Shimla District'\(^2\) published in January, 1986 is seen in comparison to the Compendium of Project Profiles prepared by HIPA Shimla. Actually, the State Government has initially constituted a high level committee under the chairmanship of Shri B.K. Sharma, vide notification No. (Trg) FG-4/83-dt 10th May 1983 to prepare, 'A Compendium of Viable Projects under IRDP\(\square\)TRYSEM'.\(^3\) The Compendium was prepared by The State Centre for Research and Training in Rural Development of H.P. Institute of Public Administration, Fairlawns, Shimla and published on 23rd February 1985. It contained information of 93 projects/activities (five in Primary Sector, 32 in Secondary Sector and 56 in tertiary sector along with their unit costs).

Later on, in order to broaden the scope of projects/activities the above committee was constituted afresh\(^4\) to include

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schemes other than IRDP and TRYSEM. The committee was entrusted to prepare "A Compendium of Project Profiles on IRDP, TRYSEM, KVIC, Industries service and Business ventures. It contains 232 projects/activities in all (IRDP-10 in Primary sector, 60 in secondary sector, 47 in Tertiary sector, 49 in self employment schemes, 53 in Khadi and village industries and 13 in miscellaneous categories). This compendium was published on 27.1.92 by the same institute. The activities shown in primary, secondary and tertiary sectors by this committee do not conform to activities shown by DRDA. This indicates that there is lack of co-ordination between district Level body and the State agency. Interestingly the studies of concurrent evaluation of the IRDP performance were carried out by HIPA. Therefore, it is quite natural to draw inference that such confusion may be there in other areas/districts in identification of activities. It is suggested that the entire state should adopt same activities and make a depart only in local specific activities.

The broad categorisation of the schemes received by the beneficiaries in Shimla district are given in Table 6.17. This table clearly indicates that animal husbandry activities are the main activities preferred as per survey by beneficiaries and about 50.9 per cent of the total activities provided were milch animals. It is true that animal husbandry sector is otherwise contributing a lot to the income of farmers in Shimla district in the form of milk and other products. It is very cheap to rear animals due to availability of open pastures and grazing lands in the district. Under IRDP, it was observed and most of the beneficiaries are also of the view that they can get only this help and it was not even harmful to add one animal to a herd already existing. People also opted for this activity because it does not require any extra investment or skill upgradation and they have the requisite skills in this field since ages. In this regard it is worth to mention that the holding sizes are quite small and there is acute shortage of crop byproduct fodder and animals are mainly dependent upon grazing in open land. It has been observed that most of the animals provided were of local
breed with low productivity and hence have poor income generating capacity. This fact is also corroborated by the analysis that beneficiaries crossing the poverty line are not to that extent as it should have been. Expert opinion favours Jersy Cows as a very successful animal for this district as buffaloes can not survive in severe cold and due to ready available market in Shimla city and around upcoming townships where milk is imported from outside the district and state also. Although, a large milk processing plant is located at Shimla by Himachal Pradesh Milk Federation, but it is being fed by Solan and Sirmour districts which are quite far away. It has been informed and found correct that the survey blocks do not exist on the milk collection route of H.P. State Cooperative Marketing & Consumer's Federation, Shimla (MILKFED) due to some departmental problems between Milkfed and Animal Husbandry Departments. This has deprived the beneficiaries of the marketing facilities network which the Milkfed has been providing. But soon, as it was informed, these areas will also be transferred to Milkfed from department of Animal Husbandry. It is therefore, essential that proper guidance and encouragement be provided to beneficiaries to take up schemes to rear and upgrade cross breed animals which will boost their income in the times to come. The above discussions and observations conform to Gandhian thinking of using local resources, local knowledge and local enterprise to subserve the production process and also its marketing in local and nearby areas. This component of IRDP could have had tremendous impact but the study reveals that systematic and expertise planning was not contemplated in the preparation and execution of IRDP in Shimla district in this sphere. The block officials were keen to achieve the annual targets while the beneficiaries were eager just to reap the subsidy. It is observed that it is beneficial to supply milch animal as this requires no special technique or what ever

5. As per discussions held with Managing Director, H.P. Milk Federation, Shimla.
technique is needed can easily be transferred to farmers and this activity is supplementary to agriculture too. The thrust is therefore, adequate as the objective is to provide additional income to rural poor by giving them extra work under self employment to add to their farm income. This is what Gandhi too, had contemplated.

But the backward and forward linkages will have to be kept in mind. If a milch animal is supplied care must be taken to provide nutritive fodder, better management of veterinary facilities and easy marketability. The above requirements are condition-precedent and not condition-subsequent. This points to inherent defect in planning and implementing this extremely viable scheme of IRDP. Precisely due to above reasons this activity could marginally help the beneficiaries to cross poverty line. This fact is supported by Table 6.22 as just about 21 per cent of beneficiaries under this scheme were able to cross the poverty line. Despite this fact, it has been observed by interacting with beneficiaries and official agencies that this activity has the requisit potential to help the beneficiaries to a large extent to make them self reliant had due steps, as narrated above, been taken before giving this activity to selected beneficiaries by the authorities.

The two other activities in primary sector viz. tank irrigation and vegetable growing were found quite successful in general and especially in Theog block. This block and other similar parts of Shimla district are most suitable to grow off-season vegetable crops which are very remunerative. Once assured irrigation is available, the beneficiaries can shift to this activity which has tremendous potential to give quick remuneration in a short span of time and can help the beneficiaries to cross the poverty line. Such activities should be encouraged in the district in general and in areas, in particular, where there is potential to grow these crops. All the beneficiaries who were given help in the form of irrigation
tanks have crossed the poverty line and about 80 per cent of those taking help for vegetable or potato growing have also crossed the poverty line after taking help under IRDP. Since these activities are in the primary sector and can be easily adopted by the farmers by providing to them extension services for transfer of technology, as they are living in these areas, therefore, these activities be encouraged to exploit local farmers' talents. For this, post harvest management can be improved easily and definite linkage can be established in the growing areas. Provisions of adequate infrastructure, storage capacities such as cool and cold storages, establishment of local mandies and vans for marketing etc. be developed in these areas. What is needed is adequate thrust, motivation and dedication on the part of extension staff and agencies and the activities can be very well taken in a cluster approach, a dream of Gandhi but no where found in IRDP.

Bullock pair were also given under IRDP but they were not successful enough (only 20 per cent beneficiaries were able to cross poverty line) as mostly people use them only on their own farms and hence extra income was not generated in the form of hiring out the animals. As the average holding size is quite small, it is not advisable to continue this activity except in cases where cooperative and cluster approach is adopted.

In Shimla district IRDP has not shown much diversification effect as most of the activities provided were given in primary sector and rural industries and tertiary sectors were not given due weightage.

In the secondary sector only giving a wheat thrasher was not much successful as this district is not producer of wheat. The hiring of thrashers was not beneficial and it could not be adequately used and it was also not easy to transport/shift the thrashers from one village to another due to difficult topography of the areas. It has been observed that most of the beneficiaries used the thrashers on their own farms. It has also
been observed that relatively better off farmers have opted for this agriculture implement. It has also been informed during the course of the survey that thrashers and other implements were got purchased by rich farmers through IRDP beneficiaries to avail of the subsidy on it.

Under rural artisan category loans were mainly given to cobblerly units and village 'khaddi' (weaving units). As regards 'khaddies' the beneficiaries were trained in TRYSEM centres while cobblers were trained at home only (Occupational hereditary training). Both these were fairly remunerative activities as raw material was available within the villages. Two cobblers have opened their shops in urban hinter land and earning satisfactorily. 'Khaddi' units faced some problems as they could not find enough work due to limited supply of wool and as more and more people were being trained in this trade, the share of an individual, khaddi weaver went on decreasing. During discussions with the beneficiaries, it was mentioned that forming of some co-operative and purchase of raw material and marketing through it may be beneficial. Experience of other districts like Kullu where hand weaving is quite successful is the motivating factor and such cluster approach can be useful for this activity. These were the only two activities financed under rural artisanship.

There is good scope to manufacture wooden toys and also boost industry by installing some agro-based units such as jans, Juices and Pickles at co-operative or individual level. These occupations can be very successful to women folk.

This will certainly have a good impact on diversification of activities and income generation in the district. Appropriate arrangements should be made to sell the produce and it should be as per the consumer demand. Low alcohol based industry has also good potential due to availability of adequate quantity of culled fruit (not fit for table purpose) in the district.
In this regard production of non-fortified wines which have natural alcohol contents up to nine per cent can help the farmers tremendously. Every year a large quantity of fruit is wasted and all this can be used for production by each household for preparation of non-fortified wine. The government should delicense this produce. This could be taken as a very fruitful village industry in fruit growing areas and can generate sufficient income. On co-operative bases industries making other by-products of fruits can also be taken up. These activities can use the potential of women and are also capable of generating employment.

It has been seen already that under secondary sector only 16.3 per cent coverage has been done. It is interesting to note that the DRDA has classified a list of secondary sector with almost 31 schemes but the coverage is mainly confined to three four schemes. This is a sad commentary, as secondary sector has the largest potential to provide gainful self employment to rural classes. Gandhi particularly stressed to give additional work to idle hands so that, apart from farm income, the poor have a source of permanent self employment through out the year. This aspect is not taken care of in the scheme and no effort has been made to identify potentially viable schemes in the secondary sector. A lot of paper work has been done but there remained a yawning gulf in putting the same at execution level. This speaks of the half hearted approach adopted by the implementing agencies and lack of dedication on their part. In an interaction with concerned authorities, it is an admitted fact that economics of such schemes were never taken care of and by and large, hit and trial method was adopted. It is here that a serious exercise is needed by the planners and experts and unless they involve themselves in the process of rural upliftment with desired dedication, the IRDP will never succeed as an effective tool for eradication of poverty.
In the tertiary sector the coverage was only 20 per cent and main activities are small business, pack animals and atta chakkis etc.

In this sector pack animals has shown a good potential as most of the fruits and vegetables are being transported upto road head on these animals. Work is available to them almost throughout the year. As apple season ends, potato season starts and then comes the vegetable season. It has been observed that people from other parts of the State migrate temporarily with their pack animals to this district and earn good money during the fruit and vegetable seasons. Gorkha labour also migrates from Nepal to work in orchards during the apple and potato seasons mainly to perform transporting fruit and potato to road head from the orchards, apart from doing other related harvest works. All this can be done if this activity is encouraged and beneficiaries are given pack animals. It also provides them supplementary income during the tourist season.

The above analysis emphasises the need to greater diversification in all the sectors and mainly in secondary sector. Secondary sector is essentially rural raw material based sector and all activities have backward linkages to agriculture/primary sector. As Gandhi was concerned with providing additional work to rural millions, the programme diversification has not done enough in this direction. The stress was on cheap technology, easy availability of labour, contagious markets, so that rural poor can adopt all these things and become capable of producing such goods which are locally made and have good local acceptability. Without adequate policy support the effect of IRDP in secondary and tertiary sectors is not quite encouraging. There is a need to do effective decentralization of some of the major industrial produces like cloth and shoe which can be produced at cooperative level so as to adopt adequate and new technologies and also to get the benefits of economy of scales. This, of course is a vital decision and unless, like Gandhi, the main instrument of
development is shifted to village or any other such defined unit as the fundamental unit of development and rural development is taken as a basic concept of rural and national development, IRDP will never become an effective and meaningful concept of development and will remain only a mere programme. Conceptually, the strategy will be discussed later in this chapter.

The above analysis about identification of poor, the approach content of Antyodaya and the coverage analysis, point to some key factors ignored under IRDP approach. One thing is vivid that IRDP has been assigned assisting role in the over all context of the economy and it is not the basic strategy of development. It has not been developed into a basic concept of development model. Any basic concept of development model lays a pre-condition of studying the whole system and structure of the economy, its political and administrative structure, its resources, its level of technical status compared with various essential parameters and then lays down a strategy of its development. Fortunately for the developed world a very systematic change occurred with the break through of Industrial Revolution. Transfer of economy from agriculture to industrial was a sequel to agricultural surplus and by the time this transformation took place, the rural sector was in a very sound position. But in our context, poverty, ignorance and illiteracy were and are the hallmarks of dominant rural sector and establishment of big industries took place either because the raw material and labour were available in India (so that finished goods can be available cheaper to foreign consumer) or they came up due to administrative and political expediency. This created a structural dichotomy in our economy which has perpetuated over a long period of time.

The above arguments raise a fundamental question of diversification not only of complete sectoral development but within the rural sector itself. It is this aspect which Gandhi grasped so quickly and succinctly and his concept of integration is not harmonised by IRDP which essentially remained a programme.
Firstly, as we have analysed, no proper diversification of activities was seriously undertaken by IRDP and secondly, it was also not possible as our economy suffered from fundamental structural disabilities. The example of China is a pointer in this direction. Apart from taking up massive land reforms and re-distribution of land, building dyes and dams, digging irrigation channels, constructing roads and intensive cultivation of land, it laid stress on irrigation, fertilizer and better seed and great diversification took place within the agriculture sector. Adequate attention was paid to forestry, fisheries and animal husbandry and slowly a shift was made to small industries, mostly based on agriculture production. The important point is that for diversification of all these activities local talent was developed simultaneously both in terms of labour and entrepreneurs. The development of areas and industries was done as per their need and this played a crucial role in solving the problem of rural unemployment. A gradual and systematic change was allowed in rural sector which matched their endowment potential and technological adoption. Such technology was very well taken by labour and the production function of this diversification changed from mass production to production by masses. The process of diversification took place only on indigenous capabilities and small units were encouraged to develop into major producers. This is what Gandhi visualised by integrated development. It is this aspect, although existing on paper, yet missing in the Indian context.

It has been analysed by the survey that no such structural design was in-built in the programme. Neither it has been conceived as a tool of social transformation nor it has the required components to do so.

In the Gandhian perspective, the dust is clearing as to the viability of given schemes from the point of view of the beneficiaries and it established his apprehension that unless schemes are locally oriented much dent is not going to be felt. The creeping alleviation of destitute groups within the little
better bracket of destitute group exposes the fallacy of the IRDP even when the study finds overall asset intact position to 84.6 per cent (table 6.20). Such a paradox points to some inherent defects in the IRDP programme execution. This bears testimony that second dose of help was required in district Shimla in general (table 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3).

The above discussion, when viewed from the objectives of programme of IRDP which were to a reasonable extent have Gandhian contents of self reliance, self help, self production and reaching the poorest of the poor, although indicate some positive trends but the same are not enough to give sustained income to these classes on permanent basis. On this plank, IRDP does not care for infrastructural linkages nor they are inbuilt in the programme or harmonised with other rural uplift programmes.

This is basically because of the reason that the conception of IRDP is not as integrated as it sounds, as well the strategy is not fundamentally made for basic and structural changes in the economic, social and political development of our predominantly rural nation. This is here that the whole programme content comes in conflict with Gandhian ideology.

Says the seventh plan, "Poverty Alleviation Programme have to be viewed in the wider perspective of socio-economic transformation in the country. While the present strategy of direct attack on poverty through specific poverty alleviation programme is justified on account of insufficient procolation of benefits to the poor from overall economic growth, it should be appreciated that the strategy of direct attack on poverty cannot be sustained and would not yield the desired results, if the overall growth are inequitably distributed. For one thing, the resources and the capabilities needed for running such programmes cannot be generated in the system unless the economy itself is buoyant and there is a sustained increase in output "..." The programme for poverty alleviation should thus be regarded as
supplementing the basic plan for overall economic growth, in terms of generating productive assets and skills as well as income for poor6."

Though the programme contents, as prefaced by the plan, do indicate such social transformation through structural change, awareness, improvement in literacy and education and a rudimentary change in outlook, motivation and attitudes, but it does not place full reliance on its rural strategy as the major source and tool of development, like Gandhi thought of these attitudinal changes about rural mindedness and also urban sector subserving the majority rural sector.

This reduces IRDP as a simple programme and not a concept of rural development. The results of our study (table 6.22) refer to the slow impact of IRDP due to all these conceptual deficiencies.

The activity-wise and overall impact of IRDP in Shimla district is presented in Table 6.22. It is clearly evident from last two columns of this table that IRDP has marginally improved the income levels of beneficiaries in Shimla district. To analyse the effect, the beneficiaries are classified in four income groups i.e. upto Rs.3500/- (old poverty line), Rs. 3501 to Rs. 5000, (Rs. 5000 is chosen as near to Rs.4800 as IRDP designed to cover first beneficiaries having income upto Rs. 3500 then Rs. 3501 to Rs. 4800 and then Rs. 4801 to Rs. 6400), Rs. 5000 to Rs. 6400 and above Rs. 6400. Last two columns of this table reflect that before IRDP 41.8 percent of beneficiaries were in the income group of below Rs. 3500, about 30.9 per cent beneficiaries were in the income group of Rs.3501-5000, 7.3 per cent were in income group Rs. 5000 to 6400 and rest i.e. 20 per cent were already above poverty line. After taking IRDP help, 

6. The Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90), Planning Commission, New Delhi, P.50
beneficiaries were able to shift to higher income groups and their new position came to be 6.3 per cent in income groups of below Rs. 3500, 18.2 per cent in income group of 3501-5000, 25.5 per cent were in the group of Rs. 5000-6400 while, 50 per cent were having income above Rs.6400 i.e. they were above the official poverty line.

As about 20 per cent people were already having their incomes above poverty line before taking help so the percentage of beneficiaries who actually crossed poverty line were about 30 per cent only. Sector wise and activity wise position has already been described in previous text. IRDP can not be outrightly rejected as not having helped the poor at all. The programme has helped the poor meagerly and there was income mobility among the poor.

Due to the slow mobility of beneficiaries to higher income groups, as the study indicates, the extent of impact of IRDP on poorest of the poor is not enough. Although they moved to higher income groups but many have failed to really cross the old poverty line or the second cut off line i.e. Rs. 4800. About 50.2 per cent beneficiaries remained below the revised poverty line of Rs. 6400. It points to the fact that those beneficiaries who are poorest, have neither the skills nor adequate resources but also have negligible capacity to utilize the resources provided to them under IRDP. It seems imperative, therefore, that the scope of IRDP needs to be enlarged enough to have the strategy of wage employment, on sustained basis, as a component under IRDP. Besides taking measures which raise the skills of the poor and their physical capacities, it is essential to give continuous wage employment on a lasting basis, in addition to self employment to the poorest of the poor. Those poor who are near or just above the poverty line, the strategy of self employment and selection of specific activities/industries, on cooperative/clustre basis can be adopted. The need is also to improve the planning, execution and monitoring of the programme with active participation of the beneficiaries, strong political
will and constructive and firm awaking among the poor to improve their living conditions (health, hygiene, sanitation, housing, nutrition, education etc.) and hence the betterment of the whole country.

Another paradox which points to many discrepancies is the extent of asset intact position and the number of persons crossing the poverty line. As per survey result, 84.6 per cent (table 6.20) assets were found intact and with such percentage of asset intact position only 30 per cent beneficiaries could cross the poverty line. This shows that many a precautions escaped the attention of planners and executors. It leads to the fact that initial resource base of beneficiaries was quite weak and over it the quality of asset provided might not have been upto the mark. The preparation of the resource inventory at the local levels was not preplanned in the planning process and formulation of schemes evolved with the passage of time. It also points to the fact that all type of infrastructures were not adequate to assist the beneficiary. The basic agencies have neither the will nor the expertise to work out the economy of schemes, extent of help required and the probable results under the existing circumstances. This leaves an impression that transfer of assets could be a common phenomenon and grabbing the subsidies the main target of the beneficiaries. Although, element of subsidies does not fit into the Gandhian conception yet it needs separate examination. Whatsoever, the intentions of planners may be, with such extent of asset intact position the extent of beneficiaries which crossed the poverty line is not a satisfactory position. If the contents of price escalations are put into the analysis, the picture will be further frustrating. Here a little rationalisation could be done because IRDP, despite its fallacies, did help the poor to see a ray of hope and the question of rise in prices is a national phenomenon.

But this does not absolve the rationale, the policy makers have in programming the concept of IRDP which comes in distinct conflict with the Gandhian conception as a basic instrument of
total social, political and economic development policy of our economy and particularly of rural economy. The Indian planners assigned a secondary role to rural development, whereas Gandhi, conceived it as the fundamental policy tool of all development activities. IRDP seems more as a programme of political necessity than as a thoughtful concept. Historically, the rural development preceded the industrial development. But in colonial rule such systematic process could not take place in our country and even after independence till the beginning of sixth five year plan, no sincere efforts were made to adopt a policy to directly tackle the problem of rural poverty. We have seen in chapter I & II that the agrarian discontent forced the government to make a policy to directly attack the poverty menace or else it threatened to take its toll by the way of political instability. It became pertinent to pay direct attention to satisfy the needs of these poor classes as a sequel to the developments rather to frame a development strategy on indigenous strength. Nowhere, therefore, the rural potential was recognised as a tremendous force of social, political and economic development and this does not form the basic strategy of the process of development and thus does not qualify on Gandhian parameters in the form it is conceived presently. The Gandhian conception of rural development comes very near to Chinese experiment already discussed in this chapter.

The very slow economic impact of IRDP also raises many a fundamental questions such as:- appropriate technologies of which the poor can make use, what role the subsidies have played-whether the subsidies killed the entrepreneurial potentials of rural people or they have been used for political appeasement. Is the programme really integrated in its content and scope? There may be various other related issues which will crop in between discussion of the above points. The above issues are also interrelated.
Our belief is confirmed that despite pre-dominant coverage in animal husbandry sector (mainly milch cattle) which is in primary sector and in which no special technological skills are required as they are available locally, very small percentage of beneficiaries in comparison to its coverage have crossed the poverty line. This points to the fact that apart from other deficiencies as pointed above, in this chapter, the dedication in execution was missing and the motto seems to be to achieve the target than to really help the ignorant beneficiary in quality terms. The evaluation and monitoring was lacking and there was no integration remained alive between beneficiary and executing agency after help. Apart from execution deficiencies, the adoption of appropriate technologies is extremely essential. Technologies cannot be used uniformly but must be both activity specific and region specific. In a country like ours where regional disparities are so overwhelmingly identifiable, the use of inappropriate technology can fail even the best of the programmes and IRDP is not an exception to this rule. It has been observed during survey that technology transfer was not adequate and coupled with lack of other infrastructure, the results were not as they should have been.

It also seems pertinent to discuss the rationale of subsidy component and its effects on working potentials of rural poor. As is clear, subsidies were designed into the programme to help the poor to acquire assets and the quantum of subsidies ranged from 25 per cent to 50 per cent. This component is quite substantial and is a definite burden on the exchequer. If the returns on these subsidies are not continuing the whole mechanism needs reconsideration. Make no mistakes, Gandhi was totally opposed to the very concept of subsidies-charities and wished to make rural dominant classes to stand on their own as considerable partners in the production process based on local technology, skills and resources. It is here that Gandhian thinking needs a bit rationalisation too, as so deprived classes as that of rural poor can not have the capacity to acquire assets only on loan component and also to manage working capital to operate the
assets. Therefore, the element of subsidy was quite right as a system of help to such people as rural poor who have almost nil resources to acquire assets for taking up self employment programmes. But, the continuation of subsidies do raise a basic issue and question its continuation itself. It is here that the evil of political appeasement creeps into the programme. One time subsidy is thinkable and to this extent even Gandhian thinking needs reconsideration, but continuation of subsidies gives definite political dimension to the programme. Not only this has affected the State exchequer, it also proves fatal to the entrepreneurial potential of the poor and makes them parasites and dominantly dependent upon the government. This brings the element of corruption into the system on a sustained basis. This has further led to leakages and adequate financial help fails to reach the poor. The beneficiaries too have answered that financial help was adequate but the poverty alleviation results do not support this contention of beneficiaries. It clearly reflects their lack of knowledge and judgment about the level of investment under the programme. No peoples participation was taken in determining the level of investment which was decided at national level only. The above argument is well supported by the study also as so less percentage of people in primary sector could cross the poverty line. It further confirms the apprehension that subsidies have not reached the poor to the required extent.

During the survey mostly identified persons given assistance have agreed to the adequacy of level of investment. This is certainly due to their ignorance which gives a rosy picture of per capita level of investment as satisfactory a level as around Rs.4250 (Table 6.5) but the fact that second dose has become imperative is not compatible with the adequacy of investment level. Second dose was made available to only 11 per cent beneficiaries. The requirement of second dose itself shows that the level of investment is quite inadequate. This is a pointer that the programme was not designed/evolved from below after studying the viability of schemes and other factors. But
the continuation of subsidies put tremendous burden on the budget without any gainful results. This also impaired the seriousness and objectivity of the programme. The system of subsidies need to be looked into afresh and rural poor must be made aware to pay for the money they have taken by seriously becoming producers with a view to pay off their loan. A high loan component induces the loanee to pay off it and for that he has no other option but to work very hard. It is here that he is induced to work with full potential. This sets in a chain and the burden of State goes on decreasing and the programme should also aim at it. The schemes were generally not conceived on any project formulation basis indicating their viability and suitability to the beneficiaries but devotaled into the programme from above. Therefore, there was no definite level of investment which could be laid down so that one time subsidy is sufficient to put the clock into motion and generate adequate income. It has been shown already in chapter III that the efforts of some voluntary organisations run on Gandhian principles and updating adoptable technologies bore good results than IRDP. This even can be taken as a positive point to make IRDP more effective. But this involves the hard decision to rationalise the concept of subsidy component into the programme. The subsidy intake must infuse production process on a sustained basis rather to turn into an instrument of political appeasment, counter productive to entrepreneurial skills of poor and means of corruption of this programme.

Having critically analysed the IRDP on the Gandhian mantle, it has been observed that IRDP does prove its credentials, as a tool to bring development in rural sector. There are lots of rationalisations which need to be looked into. When we talk of development we do not look at it as only economic upliftment. Unless development brings enrichment in the quality of life and afford reasonable minimum level to all sections of society, the development does not qualify itself on social yardstick. So availability of opportunities and their actual and gainful utilization are the parameters on one hand and
creation of infrastructure, resources, technologies for such utilisation are the catalyst of development on the other. This is the broad spectrum integrated approach contemplated by Gandhi. Whereas, his stress started from the 'Atom' the IRDP came from the sky. The approach of IRDP, therefore, is too much centrally oriented and our survey amply justifies this. Neither planning has been made at local level nor any fruitful infrastructure has been created for the same. Although, on paper the implementation seems quite decentralised yet in practice it is not so. So much political polarisation has taken place at the village level that it is difficult for a poor to get help without satisfying such petty local pradhans who are supposed to be the doyen of democracy at the grassroot level. But, then the fault does not lie with him. The fault lies with the system which deliberately does not allow any decentralisation of its authority either political, financial or administrative. This reduces IRDP to a highly official controlled programme and peoples' participation, as envisaged by Gandhi, is severely missing. The programme fails to harmonize the local aspirations and the personal touch of the worker is not seen. Alongwith primary sector, adequate stress is not given to secondary and tertiary sectors. It is here that programme content must come down from paper to field. Gandhi advocated that village industries must be developed to provide gainful employment to rural idle hands on a permanent basis. This is an essential sine-qua-nome for eradication of poverty and here lies the widest scope for diversification.

Unfortunately one dominant stress of the programme is never seriously thought of and that is cluster approach or cooperative approach. Why this has not been implemented? The study points that the family as a unit is not an appropriate criteria for motivating villagers but village or a cluster of villages be taken up as a viable unit for adopting cluster approach. For this an exercise is needed as to what should be the ideal unit of village with its population, area difference etc. There are numerous agriculture based industries which can only run on such basis. This will give two advantages; firstly,
the establishment of such industry at small scale and upto the extent that it enjoys benefits of viable unit and, secondly, it can absorb growing technical know how gradually and smoothly alongwith providing gainful self employment and wage employment. The overhead costs will also be less and better production can come up with less cost applying indigenous technology. This will also reduce the number of villages perse and will make administration more easy and responsive. For this, structural changes are needed in the political and administrative set up even if the Divisional level Official structure is to be phased out. And it needs to be done quickly. This will require a total change of administrative structure at district level which should become the primary unit of development as headquarter of both administrative and political authority and directly responsible to State government. The 'village republic emphasis' can be changed to 'District Republic' headed by a district government having vast statutory, administrative, financial and political powers and ordinary law and order be brought under it too. The District Collector in such a model becomes ultimately responsible to Chief Administrator of the district and District Legislature be also made a permanent body. It is then that IRDP can become a tool of social transformation as envisaged by Gandhi. The district republic must be given constitutional status with clearcut demarcation of financial, administrative, political and legislatlive authority. The Planning Commission should also revise its draft where rural development must precede industrial development as per the needs of the country. In this sphere certain key production sectors like textile industry, traditional village industries, some other specified industries such as shoe industry, packing industry etc., dairy industry and the like be left for the cooperative sector in the villages. This will afford a march back to villages. Such local resource based industries will introduce the rural classes to a new culture and then they will have vast opportunities to go in for gainful self employment as well as wage employment. The target orientation should not be the end but target be rationalised so that less people be assisted but assisted in a fruitful way to
become self employed. The study indicates that such an approach be adopted as soon as possible other-wise doses after doses will not help the poor but make them increasingly dependent upon government help. This also points to the fact the subsidies must be either stopped or rationalised. Loan be given only at concessional rates but loan waivers should not be talked about, leave alone implementing them. It will be worse than giving subsidies. In chapter 3 it has been mentioned that voluntary organisations never resorted to subsidy syndrome but loans were extended and with excellent man management, dedicated service, the programmes proved quite useful. In IRDP, officialdom be reduced gradually and more and more voluntary organisations be encouraged to come forward for rural uplift, of course, without subsidy.

IRDP should be converted into a well defined strategy and must have sectoral linkages with highly specialised programmes. Parallel programmes of rural development should be submerged in IRDP and the programme content be widened so as to cover other aspects of rural life. Region and area specific thrust can be designed as inbuilt components into IRDP itself. Those components of the programme can be applied to a particular area which are most appropriate suiting to local conditions and infrastructure existing in the region/area. It is not a difficult proposition and such a system and strategy can be evolved at the district republic level. Once this is done, a team of dedicated workers, of course, well paid and trained can be created at District Level. All divisional level specialists be shifted to district level to assist in the process of social transformation.

In the ultimate analysis, although IRDP was conceived on Gandhian mentle yet it has not been made a tool of social transformation as it is assigned a secondary role by our policy planners. So far India remains a predominantly rural country, no growth policy will work by itself and disparities will go on magnifying. Gandhi advocated not glorifying poverty but
suggested rich to voluntarily live a life as simple as possible so that to afford opportunities to rural to come up. This concern is also vivid as natural resources are scarce all over the universe and he pointed towards their optimal use for balanced rational development. His poverty concept needs to be viewed in this context to give it a rational and modern interpretation. If IRDP is to prove its credentials on gandhian perspective it needs immediate structural changes as analysed above. IRDP has helped the rural marginally and it can go a long way if it is properly designed by submerging in it other programmes of rural uplift. It is essential to have a multi-dimensional strategy along with some specialised programmes and line department programmes to be components under IRDP. It should be left to local authority at the district level to select the best possible package of activities suiting to local conditions. This will bring in flexibility into the programme content and its implementation. The investment criteria needs also to be left to local authority as it will help making the schemes more viable and adoptable. Besides achieving greater degree of sectoral adjustments and harmony this will widen the scope extent and objectives of the programme. This multi-dimensional strategy seems to be an appropriate alternative which can be adopted as the fundamental strategy tool to achieve faster growth of rural sector in the overall perspective of the national development. The historical perspective corroborates this reality and sooner we correct ourselves to restructure IRDP the better we fall in line with Gandhi, whose main concern was for those who need bread and butter and a reasonable and decent status to live i.e the rural millions of India.
SUMMING UP:

On the basis of conclusions drawn above, based on the field study, supporting material and the extensive reasons already given, some policy implications suggested are summed up as below:-

- Adoption of 'Antyodaya Approach' will help in identifying the target groups more precisely and this can be done by taking up comprehensive resurvey with peoples' participation and by entrusting this work to specialised personnel to make the survey more systematic and scientific. Gram Sabhas are the best forum for this identification. This will help in minimizing wrong identification and benefits will percolate down to deserving target groups. This will also help in laying down priorities in the matter of assisting different types of target groups by way of designing specific packages for different beneficiaries.

- Redefining of poverty line is another necessity. It should include such other parameters in its ambit which must ensure holistic development instead of aiming at removing destitution only. This points to the necessity to bring economic, social and political needs into the programme content and to make the programme a concept of rural uplift in all its manifestations within the total perspective of national development. This requires policy changes and shift in priorities at the National level.

- Many primary sector activities can be started at cooperative level. This will give scope for adequate diversification in primary sector where skills and capacity for technology adoption are existing. There is a need to have greater diversification in primary sector. The need is also to diversify activities in secondary and tertiary sectors. These sectors have great potential for
giving both self employment and wage employment opportunities. More attention is needed to encourage target groups to select activities in these sectors. The coverage so far in these sectors is not quite satisfactory whereas these sectors are quite remunerative.

- There is also a need to redesign IRDP and include sustained wage employment throughout the year to poor along with self employment strategy. This will help in acquiring skills at a faster rate along with technology adoption and the beneficiaries will be able to take self-employment schemes in a much better way.

- The investment criteria can be determined at appropriate levels. The level of assistance has been pre-determined in the programme content of IRDP and is not based on any scientific calculation of unit cost per activity. So far the units cost calculations are done on static parameters. Determination of unit costs at local level and its constant and continuations adjustments with price escalations will make the schemes viable and a reasonable nexus will be established between viability of schemes and activities designed in the programme. This will give required flexibility in determination of investment levels and in choosing activities.

- Loan facilities be made available to poor with reasonable gestation period on less rate of interests but they must be made aware to pay their liability as early as possible.

- The subsidy element in the programme needs to be phased out over a period of time but as early as possible.

- Determination of a viable unit of decentralised authority is another necessity. District as a basic unit of development, can fulfill this objective. This will help in preparing resources, skill and infrastructure inventory
in a much better and exhaustive way. Planning of schemes, giving of activities to beneficiaries and their monitoring will become meaningful and easy to administer.

- 'District Unit' is quite sufficient to take up cluster approach, which will have advantages of technology adoption, transfer and its updation, economy of scales and ensuring quality of product for better marketing opportunities.

- The process of decentralization will lessen the centralized control, make decision making a quick process and will bring more flexibility into the programme content.

- The selection of activities and purchase of assets be left to beneficiary. He may be allowed even to change the activity. This needs greater degree of dedicated monitoring at personal level by the executive agency, proper guidance to the beneficiaries in making them aware about the marketing potential of the activities so that they can remunerative to the beneficiaries. This will help in taking such region specific and activity specific decisions which can exploit the full potential of the poor. The poor be educated to effectively contribute in production process and their dependence on government help be reduced in a planned but quick way.

- The inter-sectoral overlapping needs to be removed immediately particularly when district is made the primary unit of development and family the target, and all expertise is proposed to be shifted to it along with adequate but statutory legislative, administrative, financial and political authority.
- Strategies such as of Intensive Agriculture Development, target area, target group, employment generation, and direct attach on rural poverty can be submerged into one programme, notwithstanding any nomenclature. This can be done by making even IRDP a broad based and comprehensive tool of development. The aim should be total development of rural sector. By submerging other parallel programmes into the ambit of IRDP a greater degree of harmony and sectoral linkages will be achieved. This were improve execution, accountability and monitoring. Once this is done, then the submerged components under this 'Integrated Strategy' can be applied more meticulously to regions specific problems and conditions wherever necessary.

- Public health, sanitation, primary and secondary education, drinking water supply, public works, rural housing, textile manufactures, shoe making, dairy/poultry/fisheries development, traditional cottage and village industries, specified industries including domestic industries and some modern industries based on agriculture and other agro-based products can be exclusively reserved for rural sector through appropriate legislation. In such a way local skills, local resources, local technologies and personnel can be utilized in a fruitful way and the process of development can be made faster.

- Infrastructure development which is a continuous parameter, can be identified and priorities can be fixed to develop required infrastructure on priority basis. This will help in taking the production centres near to the villages which in turn will absorb rural poor in self employment pursuits and also give them additional employment. Markets will also develop in nearby areas as a sequel to it and will help in absorbing increasing production.
The crux of the analysis suggests that concerted efforts be made in pursuing policies of developing agriculture and allied sectors and to establish sectoral linkages with other programmes of rural development, so as to establish harmony with total development strategy of the country. The need is to achieve an optimal balance between the different strategies so that economic base can be enlarged on rural foundations, sectoral policies integrated in a purposeful way keeping pace with the country specific infrastructure, and coordination, implementation and monitoring be made effective. The specific problems of the economy need to be tackled with nation, region and local specific strategies so as to prepare a truly integrated package of policy and strategy which can help to hasten the process of rural development and overall development of the economy which can help in shifting the benefits of development to the poor of the country.

For this the solutions are not easy and readymade. It needs a long term scale policy and a multiprong attack on the problems of rural poverty viz-a-viz rural development. This can be possible when the government is committed and fully involved. The government commitment to poverty alleviation should be backed up by adequate resource allocation because longterm growth needs durable solution. Beneficiary centred programmes require large outlays, in the rural sector, if they are to have significant impact in providing gainful-self employment and wage employment to the poor. This necessarily implies a drastic shift in plan priorities. Care must be taken that these concerted efforts should not be used as a means of welfarism to achieve cheap political popularity for the government but the aim should be formidable commitment to assist the poor in a meaningful way to help them stand on their feet and to enable them to become productive partners in the total development process in the country. This will make the rural people self sufficient, self independent and self reliant.
Gandhi advocated, in the context of India, the largest rural democracy of the world, to adopt indigenous remedies for dealing with the problems of rural development and poverty. As a concept, the policy of rural uplift must take into its ambit the overall perspective of total development including social, political and economic transformation of the country and the society. This needs a truly holistic and integrated approach which can bring a balanced, equitable and just development to the millions rural poor who are waiting for the fruits of development to reach them. Unless we develop the rural sector first, no strategy can achieve social justice, reduce disparities and bring economic betterment to the majority poor rural classes and the co-existence of poverty with development will continue to haunt the nation. Our study, therefore, suggests that the above policy measures must be adopted to develop the rural sector, break the shackles of poverty which is persisting dominantly in this sector and only then we may be able to achieve the desired results and can do justice to our rural masses.

Rural sector has tremendous potential and sooner it is recognised as the first systematic step to the road of prosperity the better it will be for the entire nation. Rural sector, therefore, must play and must be allowed to play a dominant role for the development of rural as well as national economy. The need is, therefore, to adopt again a multi-dimensional strategy of rural development. In retrospect, we may recall the spirit, the dedication and the enthusiasm when Community Development Programme was launched. We now have a vast variety of infrastructure but unfortunately that dedication is missing. Today, we need such holistic approach and dedicated personnel, to execute the programmes of rural development. Adoption of such a comprehensively Integrated holistic strategy of rural development will come near to Gandhian concept of 'Integrated Development' which necessarily implies, economic, social, political and moral development of man and society.