CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

For the past three decades, livelihood debates dominate the third world discussions. Livelihood of the individual and social is a product of natural, social and economic environment and it is defined as an adequate stock and flow of food and cash to meet basic needs. Chamber and Conway’s definition of livelihood states that “a livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living: a livelihood is sustainable which can cope with and recover from stress and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation; and which contributes net benefits to other livelihoods at the local and global levels and in the long and short run” (Chamber and Conway’s, 1992:7-8). In rural India, agriculture is the predominant means of livelihood and serves as the only means for effective and relevant poverty reduction.

Three out of every four poor people in developing countries live in rural areas, and most of them depend directly or indirectly on agriculture for their livelihoods. Livelihood resources can be understood as the ‘capital base’, from which different productive streams are desired and constructed (Scoones, 1998) therefore livelihood is also disaggregated into a series of indicators. These indicators are identified based
on an understanding that ability to pursue different livelihood strategies is dependent on the basic economic, social, tangible and intangible assets that people have in their possession. Drawing on an economic metaphor, such livelihood resources may be seen as the ‘capital’ base from which different productive streams are derived from which livelihoods are constructed’ (Scoones, 1998:7). The capital base is further disaggregated into Natural capital, Financial capital, Physical capital, Human capital and Social capital. When the livelihoods are constructed and operationalised from these ‘capital bases’ the strategies are strained by risks and render the humans vulnerable. The five types of capital, the livelihoods that flow out of these capitals and the coping mechanism due to risks and threats are all mediated by the policy and institutional environment. This environment could influence the operationalisation of a particular livelihood strategy in multiple ways.

The approach enables us to map the present living conditions of the poor and the social and other environments within which the poor are living. Livelihood analysis has an expansive notion of poverty compared to the conventional framework of analysis of poverty. Poverty measurements using income and expenditure norms are rather restrictive. The capabilities of the people need to be considered in any understanding about their lives. A livelihood comprises of the capabilities, assets (both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living. It is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain
or enhance capabilities and assets both now and in the future, without undermining the natural resources base.

**Livelihood and poverty in India**

Efficient management of livelihood is considered as an effective means of eradicating poverty in the era of global world. Since, agriculture is the means of livelihoods for around two third of the work force in India it is recognized as a primary sector and therefore plays a pivotal role in the rural livelihoods even though it contributes only 17.2 percent to the Gross State Domestic Product\(^\text{13}\).

The land owners and agriculture wage labourers are dependent on income from agriculture however their education and health status are abnormally low and it seriously impedes their livelihood capabilities in the immediate present and in the future. Lack of skill is another reason for their poverty as they are unable to diversify into non-farm sectors. Seasonal migration out of the village, credit from various sources, child labour and disposal of livestock are some of the coping mechanisms of the poor. The majority of them are working in agriculture field while another sizable section is trying a foothold in other avenues of employment other than agriculture in India.
Rural Livelihood in Tamil Nadu

The state of Tamil Nadu is among the few in the country where landlessness is very high. The inequality in land distribution is also very high. The landless and marginal holders account for a majority in the rural population of the state. Landlessness seasonal variation in agrarian society renders them completely vulnerable. They have to depend entirely on their earnings from labour for their survival. When the real wages stagnate or fall with a decline in employment, it pushes this household into penury; the immediate result is lack of food leading to ill health. Other impediments arise in terms of accessing education and health infrastructure and thereby undermining the livelihoods of the next generation as well. The seed of penury for the next generation is thus sown now. Even if the state provides for easy access to education, health, sanitation etc., this basic lack of resources impairs their ability to access them. In rural Tamil Nadu, livelihoods are affected by seasonal variation, floods, unemployment, this leads to rural poverty and migration. So there has been a steady decline in the number of people living below poverty line in Tamil Nadu from 20.55 percent in rural and 22.11 in urban area in 1999-2000. However, there is an increasing trend in urban poverty compared to rural poverty, suspected to be caused by migration from the rural to the urban areas (Tamil Nadu Economic Appraisal, 1999-2000). Government of Tamil Nadu has been introducing various
Programme related to agriculture and allied activities through rural development programme such as Below Poverty Line (BPL) card, Housing support scheme, Sanitation support scheme, Integrated Child Development scheme, Annamarumalarchi, Namakku Naame Thittam etc. (Tamil Nadu Economic Appraisal, 1999-2000).

**Rural Development and Livelihoods**

The term ‘rural area’ is more than a mere geographical parameter; it is an economic and social entity which fulfils various public functions. Seven important characteristics of rural communities can be identified: (a) Primary occupation as agriculture and allied activities (b) Strong social capital and Environment friendly; (c) personal and mutual interaction with the members of the community; (d) Smaller in size wherein each one knows everybody – mutual knowledge; (e) Lesser density in population; (f) Greater homogeneity – common occupation, common traditions, common customs and common heritage; and (g) Very little social mobility.

Rural development has been understood by different people and organizations in different ways. A comprehensive summary of rural development is presented as “a strategy to enable a specific group of people, poor rural women and men, to gain for themselves and their children more of what they want and need. It
involves helping the poorest among those who seek a livelihood in the rural areas to demand and control more of the benefits for rural development. The group includes small scale farmers, tenants and the landless.\textsuperscript{4}

Rural development is therefore a democratic, dynamic and integrated process for improving the quality of life of rural communities by breaking out of the straight jacket of dependency syndrome and initiating a process of self-reliance through optimum mobilization of natural and human resources. As Robert Chambers says, “Human Resources – not capital, nor income, nor material resources – constitute the ultimate basis for the wealth of nations. Clearly, a country which is unable to develop the skills and knowledge of its people and utilize them, will be unable to develop anything else”\textsuperscript{4}. He rightly cuts the myth that rural people are empty vessels waiting to be filled and emphasizes on the need for the ‘professionals’ to learn from rural people.

The indefatigable reality, that ‘India lives in her villages’ is reaffirmed by the fact that there are 700,000 villages in India with about 80.0 percent rural population. According to the Census of India 1901, the rural population was 243 million (89.2 per cent) and the urban population 26 million (10.8 per cent). The Census 1991 reaffirms that the percentage of rural and urban population was 74.3 per cent and 25.7 per cent respectively. Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of the Nation, asserted the importance of
villages by saying, “I have believed and repeated times without number that India is
to be found not in its few cities but in its 700,000 villages. I would say that if the
village perishes, India will perish too”\textsuperscript{13}. The rural-urban dichotomy is visible
concretely in the susceptibility of rural people to socio-economic and cultural
exploitations for centuries. In general, negative indicators of development such as
poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition, standard of life below poverty line, and poor growth
of health conditions seem to be rampant in rural India.

Rural development programmes in India can be broadly classified into four
categories such as beneficiary/target-group oriented programmes, area-oriented
programmes, sectoral programmes and production-oriented programmes The original
strategies of these programmes were focused to transform the rural economy, reshape
the political life of rural people, establish an extensive network of all-round
development of rural areas, and promote small-scale and cottage industries in rural
areas and change the associational pattern of rural society.

**Rural Development under Government Auspices**

The primary function of the Planning Commission set up by the Government
of India in March 1950 was to outline a national plan of development by eradicating
poverty particularly the massive rural poverty. The First Five Year Plan - from April
1951 to March 1956 – was envisaged in triple phases with predominant emphasis on
agriculture and rural community development. In the First phase, pilot projects were launched in Etawah (Uttar Pradesh) in April 1952. In the Second phase, Community Development Programme was launched on 2\textsuperscript{nd} October 1952 covering 165 blocks in different states of the nation. In the Third phase, National Extension Service was launched on 2\textsuperscript{nd} October 1953 in 55 blocks – altogether covering 220 blocks, 21.5 million people living in 23,650 villages. It was stipulated that by the end of the First Five Year Plan in 1956, almost one-fourth of the entire rural population with a total of 74 million people living in 120,000 villages would benefit from these programmes\textsuperscript{4}.

Both Community Development Programme and National Extension Service were implemented in 5 stages: (i) Conception (3 months); (ii) Initiation (6 months); (iii) Operation (18 months); (iv) Consolidation (6 months); and (v) Finalisation (3 months). Agriculture, Communication and Transport, Education, Health, Training, Social Welfare, Supplementary Employment and Housing were the areas covered under these programmes. The First Five Year Plan provided a sum of Rs.101.0 crores for expenses connected with community development works that were carried out in partnership with the central and state governments and the rural community. It was planned in such a meticulous manner that by 1961, the entire country will be covered by either Community Development Programme or National Extension Service. And they were considered as social processes of development that fostered democratic spirit and people’s participation at different levels. The allocation of the First Five
Year Plan (1952-1956) elucidates clearly the priorities of the policies and programmes of the Government of India:

- Irrigation and Power: 27.2%
- Transport and Communication: 24.0%
- Agriculture and Community Development: 17.4%
- Social Services: 16.6%
- Others: 14.8%

The consecutive Five Year Plans emphasized on policies and programmes focused towards rural development. The Sixth Five Year Plan in India (1980-1985) envisaged a three-pronged strategy to increase the income of the rural poor through self-employment opportunities, to develop ecologically backward areas and to provide minimum materials and facilities to the poor. Integrated Rural Development Programme was launched in 1979 in 2300 selected blocks in India and this was further extended to the entire nation from 2nd October 1980. Meaningful solutions to the problems poverty, under-employment and unemployment can only be found within the framework of a rapidly expanding economy and to that end, every effort was made to achieve a planned growth rate of 5.2 per cent in the Sixth Plan.
However there was also an explicit recognition that even this rate of growth will have to be supplemented by more direct means of reducing the incidence of poverty, especially in the rural areas. Programmes of direct productive benefit to the poor involving the transfer of assets, the provision of inputs, credit, training and services, the generation of wage employment through the National Rural Employment Programme and the provision of social services through the Minimum Needs and other programmes, were sought to be drawn together so that they focus upon the level of the individual household, and raise at least 3000 of the poorest households above the poverty line in each block during the Plan. Necessary changes in the extension and delivery services were given the highest priority. Simultaneously, every effort was made to secure voluntary adoption of the small family norm. In the ultimate analysis the success of the efforts in eliminating poverty and unemployment depended on reducing the rate of population growth.

In the 7th Plan (1985-1990) 70 percent of the total budgetary support to the Central Ministries went to social, infrastructure and agriculture sectors but agriculture had to keep growing under the constraint of limited availability of land, for which non-agricultural demands were also increasing to improve their rural livelihoods.

Public sector outlay for the Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-1997) was of Rs.4,34,100 crores of which proposed outlay for rural development was Rs.33,386 crores 81.7%. The investment in agriculture had been declining as a proportion to the
total investment. In the Ninth Five Year Plan period from 1997 to 2002, the recorded rate of growth was merely 5.35%. However, this economic growth rate is a percentage point lesser than the GDP growth of 6.5% targeted during this period (National Account Statistics 2008).¹³

### TABLE 1.1

**Average GDP Growth Rates—Overall and in Agriculture**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Total Economy</th>
<th>Allied Sectors</th>
<th>Crops Livestock</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pre-green revolution 1951–52 to 1967–68</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>2.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Green revolution period 1968–69 to 1980–81</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>2.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Wider technology dissemination period 1981–82 to 1990–91</td>
<td>5.40</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>3.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Early reforms period 1991–92 to 1996–97</td>
<td>5.69</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>3.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ninth Plan 1997–98 to 2001–02</td>
<td>5.52</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>2.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Tenth Plan period 2002–03 to 2006–07</td>
<td>7.77</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>2.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>of which 2002–03 to 2004–05</td>
<td>6.60</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2005–06 to 2006–07</td>
<td>9.51</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>4.96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 1.2

Annual Average Growth Rates (%)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.no</th>
<th>Five Year Plan</th>
<th>Agricultural Growth Rate (Including Allied Sectors)</th>
<th>Over all Growth Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Seventh plan (1985-1990)</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Annual plan (1990-92)</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Eighth plan (1992-97)</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ninth plan (1997-2002)</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tenth plan (2002-05)</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CSO and DES

Plan outlay of Rs. 13200.00 crore was approved for the Department of Agriculture & Cooperation (DAC) for the Tenth Five Year Plan as against an outlay of Rs. 9153.80 crore in the Ninth Five Year Plan. This implied an increase of 44.20 percent in the plan allocation. During the first three years of the Tenth Plan, Department utilized 99.39% of its Revised outlay of Rs. 1667.00 crore in 2002-03, 97% of Rs. 2120.00 crore in 2003-04 and 90.18% of Rs. 2945.00 crore in 2004-05. In the Annual Plan 2005-06, an outlay of Rs. 4179.32 crore had been approved. The thrust areas, inter-alia, included increase in the production and productivity of various crops including oilseeds and pulses; diversification to the high value crops; strengthening of agriculture marketing infrastructure; promotion of agriculture extension; promotion of water and soil conservation through watershed approach under natural resources management; and extended insurance scheme for risk
management. In addition, an outlay of Rs. 30.00 crore was provided for State Plan Scheme Watershed Development in Shifting Cultivations Area in North Eastern State.

Growth of agricultural GDP decelerated from over 3.5% per year during 1981–82 and 1996–97 to only around 2% during 1997–98 and 2004–05. This deceleration, although most marked in rainfed areas, occurred in almost all States and covered almost all major sub-sectors, including those such as horticulture, livestock, and fisheries where growth was expected to be high. Consequently growth of agricultural GDP was well below the target of 4% set in both Ninth and Tenth Plans.

**Declines of Agriculture and Allied activities**

This decline of agriculture and allied activities directly translated in terms of loss of output, problem of food insecurity and more importantly loss of employment. The problem got compounded further with recurrent droughts in recent times. Depletion of ground water, the major sources of irrigation in the state, thanks to reckless water mining towards sustaining an unsustainable crop mix and crop pattern, is an important reason for the decline in GCA (Gross crop areas). Other factors that like the decline in the capacities of traditional irrigation sources like tanks due to non-maintenance, breakdown of the community maintenance of tanks, disappearance of crop mixes that were suitable for dry land, practices of integrated farming exploiting the symbiotic relations have all contributed to the decline in agriculture. Agricultural
practices were so diverse that suited varying resource conditions and ensured a sustained agriculture was lost. It proved completely unsustainable. Vast tracts of lands were to be abandoned for lack of water.

It is important to note that there is a substantial section of rural households that operate small and marginal holdings. An equal number of people, if not more, depend on employment in these farms for their livelihoods. If production is ensured in these holdings, the immediate problem of food security and the intensity of poverty can be successfully negotiated. Rejuvenated agriculture can have significant immediate results.

Tamil Nadu has experienced diversification of the occupation profile of its population. In fact, it is one of the highly diversified economies in the country. The range of non-farm activities that are taking place is amazing. The income from such employment is significant for many households in the rural areas. However, only the non-poor have benefited much out of the new opportunity as compared to the poor. The resource crunch and lack of skills and social capital seriously hinder the poor from entering the non-farm sector. But it provides a good scope for the poor provided that they acquire marketable skills or have adequate resources to take advantage of the emerging scenario. Thereby over-burdened agricultural sector can be eased of some pressure.
If agriculture can empower and enable the poor to take advantage of the diversification process, it can attain its objective of reducing poverty. Apart from micro-enterprises, it should have equal emphasis of skill formation for non-farm employment. The effort would be more balanced, objective and take advantage of the prevailing conditions. The share of agricultural workers in total employment had declined from 53.2 percent in 1987-88 to 49.8 percent in 1999-2000.³

The increase in number of workers in manufacturing sector from 50.5 lakhs to 53 lakhs took the relative share from 17.7 percent in 1993.94 to 18.3 percent in 1999-2000 (Tamil Nadu Economic Appraisal, 1999-2000).³ Hence, decline in the agriculture production over the years leading to high unemployment has significant impact on the livelihood of the rural people. People pursue different livelihood strategies under varying socio-economic and cultural conditions. As the problem persists and continues to be prolonged, it creates major negative changes like increased migration, occupational mobility, unemployment, declining gross cultivable area, low productivity, food insecurity, health problems and people shifting land use either sowing or permitting Velikaruvel (prosopis juliflora) etc, within the agrarian society.
Agriculture allied activities like dairy development offer substantial livelihood opportunities in rural areas. The long-term trend shows decline in cattle and buffalow population from 108 lakhs in 1977 to 93.63 lakhs in 1997 and 30.78 lakhs to 27.17 lakhs respectively in the year 1999 to 2000. The per capita availability of milk of 203gm falls short of the optimum ICMR (Indian council for Medical Research) requirement of 220gm per day.

The present study is focused on the livelihoods aspects such as agriculture, wage labour, fire wood making process of prosopis juliflora (Velikaruvel) and livestock. The importance of this study lies in understanding the vital role of agriculture in sustainable development and its importance in achieving the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 so as to put to an end to hunger and poverty (World Bank Report 2008).\(^5\)

In a situation of widespread poverty and subsistence by rural communities on natural resources, it is essential to be able to find a balance between poverty alleviation and the conservation of natural resources, poverty whilst being maintained in their own right.
Various Water Resources for Agriculture

Tamil Nadu is not blessed with any perennial source of water. Tanks are native structures that capture the run off in a local area. It was the major source of irrigation in the past. Breakdown of community maintenance, spread of borewell technology, widespread availability of electricity, free power supply have all combined to reduce the area under tank irrigation and increase the area under well irrigation. Well irrigation, particularly deep bore well irrigation, became a source of water mining leading to rapid depletion of ground water. Many places experienced complete drying up of bore wells seriously impairing the production process. Tanks lost incrementally their capacity to hold water. Consequently, not only that water was not available for irrigation, but even ground water recharge was not to the required level. Thus, agricultural production got reduced rendering the agricultural labourers jobless.

Bore well technology also led to the spread of certain crops at the cost of other crops. Commercial crops like paddy, chilly and sesame. Farmers in dry land had evolved an integrated agriculture dovetailing the crop seasons. But with the advent of borewells, paddy, chilly, cotton and sesame were raised even in water-starved areas by resorting to water mining. Within a span of three decades, the unsustainability of such a crop mix in the dry tracts that involved enormous human and financial cost has
been proved. Wells and lands were abandoned and the labour has lost livelihood nearly forever. This is another reason for the decline in the demand for labour and lack of water.

Another section of the poor who have become very vulnerable due to the persistent natural and man made drought conditions are the large number of marginal holders in the state. Tamil Nadu has been experiencing a persistent increase in the number of marginal holdings over time. Access to irrigation among the marginal holdings is already very low. With recurrent drought condition, the livelihoods of the marginal farmers remain severely eroded. Whatever little capital they had has been lost due to repeated crop failures. On the one hand, cost of inputs have increased manifold over time whereas water availability for cultivation is quite uncertain. Even if they manage a good crop, the levels of return are very low, as the terms of trade has turned against agriculture in the recent past. Institutional credit for agriculture has dried up and they are forced to get credit either from moneylenders or from merchants and the major vulnerability faced by them has been the decline in agricultural employment as well as fluctuations in agricultural employment. This in turn involves higher cost (both in terms of interest as well as the lower price for their output). Repeated failures had forced landholders to abandon cultivation and join the labour force and look for some employment for their survival.⁴
To summarize, Indian farmers have helped the country in achieving self-sufficiency in food, milk, poultry, aqua and other areas. However, Indian agriculture requires special attention to confront the global challenges from a highly technologically advanced and subsidized European and American farmers. The intricate Indian agriculture needs an admixture of innovative policies, partnerships, strategies, training and resources, to build it to global standards of their livelihoods. The latest trend and other policy are promoted livelihood to poor people of eradicating poverty in the era of global world. Hence, India and Singapore have signed Comprehensive Economic cooperation Agreement (CECA). According to this Agreement, Singapore has agreed to bind its 0 percent duty in respect of agricultural products also. Singapore is an importer of agricultural products. This agreement should lead to increase in export of agricultural products from India to Singapore by providing a stable international trade regime.\(^6\)

For developing countries like India, with a large and mainly subsistence agricultural sector, the outcome of the negotiations in agriculture is of vital importance. India expects that during this round, the trade distorting practices followed in developed countries in the agriculture sector will be largely contained and eliminated. This includes a substantial and real reduction in trade distorting domestic support, reduction in tariff and other barriers on products of export interest to developing countries, elimination of export subsidies and a meaningful special and
differential treatment for developing countries to enable them to achieve the goals of food security, livelihood security and rural development.\(^6\)

**Holistic Understanding of Livelihoods**

Livelihood is never just a matter of finding or making shelter, transacting money, getting food to put on the family table or to exchange on the market place. It is a matter of ownership and circulation of information, the management of skills and relationships and the affirmation of personal significance . . . and group identity. The tasks of meeting obligations, of security, identity and status, and organizing time are as crucial to livelihood as bread and shelter.

This is not to say that livelihood is not a matter of material well-being, but rather that it also includes non-material aspects of well-being. “Livelihood should be seen as a dynamic and holistic concept” (Bebbington’ 1999: 2022).\(^7\) “A person’s assets, such as land, are not merely means with which he or she makes a living; they also give meaning to that person’s world. Assets are not simply resources that people use in building livelihoods: they are assets that give them the capability to be and to act. Assets should not be understood only as things that allow survival, adaptation and poverty alleviation: they are also the basis of agents’ power to act and to reproduce, challenge or change the rules that govern the control, use and transformation of resources”. (Leo de Haan and Annelies Zoomers).\(^10\)
The improved understanding of the holistic meaning of livelihood and poverty is an important achievement of the livelihoods approach. It reveals itself not only in its view the livelihood outcomes, but also in its attention to a variety of capitals upon which the poor draw to shape their livelihoods. Besides conventional assets like land, livestock or equipment, these include various elements of human capital and social capital. The emphasis is on the flexible combinations of, and trade-offs between, different capitals. For instance, if a rural woman does not have land to cultivate, she will try to acquire a plot through her network of social relations, or social capital; similarly, labour — human capital — is converted into physical capital once it has been used to construct an irrigation canal.

However, two layers of critique can be formulated at this point. The first level of criticism is that, in the inventive focus on trade-off of capitals, authors often do not know how to go beyond material motives and aims. Arce (2003: 205–6) commented that the reduction of ‘livelihood to the mobilization and deployment of social and organizational resources for the pursuit of economic and environmental goals’ is questionable. Below this, in a second layer of criticism, is the fundamental question of the flexibility of these interchanges of capitals. They are still bound by property relations and configurations of power which play such a major role in inducing poverty in the first place. Although transforming structures, mediating processes, institutions and organizations appear in all livelihood frameworks, there is a tendency within livelihoods studies to downplay these structural features and to focus on
capitals and activities. Further, we understand that there are several factors such as migration, development programme sponsored by government, land use land tenure pattern and seasonal/climate changes that affect the livelihoods. A comprehensive understanding of all these factors influencing each other reveals to us the complex structure of rural livelihoods.

**The Impact of Migration on Rural Livelihoods**

The strong and strengthening rural-urban linkages and the decelerating urban growth in the seventies and the eighties in the state were associated with significant changes in the patterns of migration or mobility in the state. The sharp decline in the rate of urban growth in the seventies and the eighties after a decade of rapid urban growth in the sixties was accompanied by a significant decline in the net urban-ward migration in the state.

The forms of migration, including international, rural-rural, rural-urban, ‘economic’, ‘forced’, and ‘development-induced’ migration and the often overlooked dynamic interaction between forms of movement. We will touch briefly on the pastoralist literature - to indicate the variety of population movements - although generally migration researchers have not included pastoral or nomadic movements in their sphere of interest (De Hann.A (1997)\(^\text{10}\)).
Rural Development Programmes and Government interventions

Within the livelihoods framework, researchers predominantly adopted a people-centred and agency-led perspective and subsequently tried to come to terms with the structure of constraints that (partly) condition people's livelihoods. In the governance-oriented studies, on the other hand, researchers usually started out from renewed forms of governing in the era of globalisation and sought to elucidate how these reforms affected people's livelihoods and generated individual and collective responses. The current programme aims to further our understanding of livelihoods and governance dynamics while recognizing the close links that exist between the two perspectives. These are defined as the regular patterns of social behaviour guided by a set of mutually accepted norms and rules. Although institutions provide a degree of stability and predictability to human interaction, they are not set in stone and evolve, adapt and dissolve in response to changing circumstances. Institutions, therefore, not only mediate between people and the outside world (global-local interactions), but also between the concern for structure and agency.

A major part of the research within the programme will be directed at specific geographical contexts, (marginal dry lands, poor urban agglomerations, risk-prone zones of interaction between land and large water bodies), with a special, albeit not exclusive, focus on Southern contexts. Furthermore, a common concern of most
projects within the programme will be with the people-environment interface from a development perspective.

The programme strives towards a coherent research approach in which livelihood research is linked with environmental issues and governance practices (and discourses), using an institutional analytical framework, with attention to how ‘geography matters’. Geography matters both in terms of place difference (the uniqueness of localities as a result of a distinct constellation of physical qualities, built environment, and socio-cultural and demographic features that explains why globalization produces different outcomes in specific locations), space-society interaction (considering space as socially constructed; with such spaces in turn enabling, constraining and altering those social practices and processes), and the multi-scalar nature of social life (the awareness of interacting and overlapping spaces, and the importance of cross-scale relations).

Livelihood activities usually demand the mobilization of several assets simultaneously, to spread risks and to shield against sudden shocks. Furthermore, progress with regard to one asset does not mean improvements in other assets as well. Livelihood studies need to apply a multi-sectoral approach, but how can this be done? Many critiques are concerned with the focus within livelihood studies at the micro-level of households. Studies of the multi-level character of livelihoods are still rather scarce and present a new challenge, which will partly be taken up in research
programme. Another flaw in the livelihoods approach is that conventional definitions of households imply a single location criterion. Current livelihood findings, however, acknowledge the multi-locality of households ("multi-spatial livelihoods") and the importance of larger social and family networks, including transnational networks. How are these networks constructed, how do they evolve, develop and/or dissolve, how are goods, services and ideas exchanged through these networks.

Livelihood approaches emphasize the agency of poor people to sustain or change their situation and therefore complement those approaches that focus more narrowly on structural factors as determining the opportunities of the poor. However, scholars are criticized for underestimating and underexposing structural factors affecting the lives of poor people. One question is whether the livelihood approach is suitable for tackling 'structure', for instance by analysing institutions and social exclusion more explicitly? Another is what the value can be of linking up livelihood analysis with structural aspects of the globalisation debates?

**Rural Livelihood in Future**

The major problem that poor encounter in their everyday life is the security of their livelihood. Stresses and shocks abound their livelihoods resulting in serious undermining of their very sustenance. They have very many ingenious ways of circumventing these shocks and stresses. But such methods are seriously limited by
several constraints imposed by natural and social environment. Repeated shocks and stresses aggravate their poverty and deprivation. There are certain shocks and stresses that they can manage on their own but there are very many others that they are ill equipped to negotiate to analyses the vulnerability and the coping mechanisms of the poor among the people.

Understanding the degree in which a community is vulnerable at certain times or in particular circumstances is a key part of a sustainable livelihoods assessment, as is understanding the likelihood of shocks that may occur seasonally or temporally. Ultimately, the more vulnerable a community is, the more at risk they are from external influences or shocks and the more likely they are to be in an unsustainable position, potentially unable to maintain their asset base or their relationships. To perceive them to be increasingly vulnerable to threats, particularly in periods when they struggle to bring together sufficient incomes to guarantee their own food security. At the time of research, they had lost their market to sell food item. Without that income stream and with little else to replace it on that level, the villages are in an increasingly vulnerable position.

Information was gathered related to changing circumstances over the course of the year and how these circumstances impacted on whether respondents felt a particular month was a relatively difficult or an easy time. Understanding whether a period is difficult or not, and the reasons why, help illustrate the vulnerable periods,
times when people may feel their survival is threatened and may respond by increasing the level of dependence on their natural assets or on local or external support.

People are highly dependent on the climate for their livelihood activities and highly vulnerable to extremes in climatic seasonality. Lack of rain means there is no new field for livestock or water for crops. Too much rain causes floods and has a similarly negative effect. The non-equilibrium environment in which they live is highly unpredictable and usually temperamental, encouraging a fatalistic viewpoint. People are telling like, ‘the rain is sent by God, how we can know when it is coming?’

**Challenges and Threats**

Challenges and threats to livelihoods are complex and numerous, especially in a situation where the communities live in basic conditions, have few capital reserves and thus rely extensively on their surrounding natural resources, some of which are seasonal and affected by climatic variability. The R.S.Mangalam block areas are also vulnerable to shocks such as political change, natural disasters, disease, drought and famine. This means with ever more regularity, dependence on natural resources, for survival, or profit, or both, is increased and thus social and economic costs also become ecological costs.
Modern livelihoods studies found their intellectual inspiration in the general understanding of the lives of poor people advocated by Gordon Conway and Robert Chambers in an IDS (Institute of Development Studies) discussion paper in 1992. In their interpretation, a livelihood refers to the means of gaining a living, including livelihood capabilities, tangible assets, such as stores and resources, and intangible assets, such as claims and access (Chambers and Conway, 1992: 9–12).¹

Become more powerful analytically by improving its theoretical depth through incorporating valuable elements from development sociology and gender studies, notably those concerning the issues of sovereignty and power. Second, there is the question of access to livelihood opportunities in relation to decision-making. In this context, we review various relevant concepts, such as livelihood strategies and styles, in order to operationalize the improved theoretical depth. We then propose livelihood trajectories as an appropriate methodology for examining these issues. In so doing, this article also sets the agenda for future livelihoods research.

With this background, this present study aims to understand the various attributes of rural livelihoods in Tamil Nadu. This study reveals the various important factors of livelihood framework analysis, land use pattern, migration and development programmes that are directly and indirectly benefit and affect the rural livelihoods system and tries to find out the future prospect and challenges of rural livelihoods in general and in particular in Tamil Nadu.
Chapter 1 begins with background and development of the research, and introduction of context, which has had significant influence on implementation and objective of this research. This introduction leads into rural livelihoods concepts.

Chapter 2 the main focus is on the review of exiting research, and different national livelihoods.

Chapter 3 discusses the methodology adopted in the study, scope, objectives, hypothesis, research design and difficulties encountered in the data collection.

Chapter 4 deals theoretical frame work of livelihood analysis.

Chapter 5 contains the analysis and interpretation of the data collection. Frequency and percentage tables generated and the result interpreted through percentage analysis.

Finally, chapter 5 deals with the summary, conclusion and recommendation of the thesis, the researcher’s conclusion and suggestion for the improvement of livelihoods pattern.
NOTS AND REFERENCES


13. Census of India 1991