



CRITICAL EVALUATION OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMS (A CASE OF BIHAR, INDIA)

Dr. Ankita **Parihar**

Economics, B.N.M.U. Madhepura, Bihar

Introduction :

In India the concept of rural development was born in the context of agriculture and it remained for a long time continuous with agricultural development.

The objectives of rural development, according to the world Bank, are not restricted to any single department but spread over several and the resultant mix serves to raise agricultural out-put, create new employment improve health and education etc. Rural Development encompasses all sectors of rural life. In its widest sense. It implies development of every aspect of rural life.

Rural development involves

1. Improvement in levels of weaker sections of the rural populations as indicated by income, productivity, employment, literacy rate, health and nutrition.
2. Decreasing the inequality in distribution of rural wealth and incomes.
3. Capacity of the rural sector to sustain and accelerate the pace of the above mentioned improvement over time.

Summary :

The Rural Development sector policy paper of the World Bank (1975) observes that “rural development is a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of a specific group of people the rural poor. It involves the extensions of the benefits of development to the poorest among those who seek a livelihood in the rural areas.

Again a world Bank publication defines rural development as “improving the living standard of the low income population residing in rural areas and making the process of



their development self-sustaining.” It consists of development of villages in to healthy, self-sufficeint and prosperous units of living and provides the basic requirements for a healthy and comfortable living.

In a seminar on approachs to Rural development in Asia, disussion wre centered around a definition of rural development as a process which lead to a continous rise in the capacity of the rural people to control their environment, accompaigned by a wider distribution of benefits resulting from such control “This definition is composed of three important elements :

- (1) Rural development must be viewed as a process of raising the capacity of the rural people to control their enviroment. Environment does not mean only agricultural or economic development it includes all aspects of rural life social economic, cultural and political.
- (2) Rural development as a process should continuously raise the capacity of the rural people to influence their total environment, enabling them to become initiators and controllers of change in their environment rather than being meraly the passive objects of external manipulation and control.
- (3) Rural deveelopment must result in wider distribution of benefits aquiring from technical developments and the participation of weaker sections of the rural population in the process of development._1

A critical appraisal of various welfare programs and project have revealed various types of limitations and constraints in the implementation process. Jain, L.S. (1985) after conducting a comprehensive study of various programs in various block across the country have found out various constraints in relation to IRDP (1980-81 to 1983) which need improvement such as proper identification of beneficiaries need to be there, removal of deficiency in administrative infrastructure, involvement of people



representatives, initiation of activities in support of the IRDP beneficiaries and required detailed evaluation.

Impact and Review :

A number of authors, researchers and reviewers have come to the conclusion that various projects and programs designed for rural development programs have not succeeded to the desired extent. The review and analysis of various studies revealed that the lack of interest in problems connected with rural community followed by lack of community feelings and welfare, lack of co-ordination among village, schools, village panchayats and village co-operatives, caste, region and religion based factionalism, lack of village plans, lack of co-ordination from the centers to the block level, multiplicity of responsibilities of development functionaries cornering of poor people's money, paying of two wages to the rural poor and frequent transfers of specialists and other officers adversely affected the rural development programs. _2.

Muley (1987) painted out that rural development has remained one of the constant and increasingly conscious goals of our five year plans from their inception, but unfortunately this goal has eluded us all the time. Devashayam (1988) rightly observed that.

"As we became a free country, we vowed to banish poverty from the face of this nation, we heped many plans including 20 points programs. Now after 63 years and many development programs vast population still lives below the poverty line- a number equal to combined popluation of europe and USA. Today, rural areas are being sought to be developed and poverty removed by dishing out doles through loan meals organized in feudal style. Development programs in reality have only helped a microscopic minority to reap all benefits in the name of concessions and reservations for the majority of the condemned it is an endless life of misery and squalor. The noted Indian jurist palkivala (1986:5) observed that. "The dangers of the mass loaning programs meant for needy



people including rural youth should be clear even to the purblind in a country where the family comes first, the caste second the party third, and the nation is hardly relevant at all". Similarly, the public accounts committee of the Indian parliament in its 90th the report (1980-81) has drawn attention to the fact that in implementing the National Rural Employment program meant for rural people and rural youth, there were serious irregularities on the part of almost all state governments- corruption, misappropriation, false debits in accounts and diversion of food grains.

International institute of transparency has identified India as one of the leading corrupt countries in the world. Former director of central Bureau of Investigation. Mr. K. Madhavan has estimated that annually an amount of rupees 10,000 crores is siphoned off through corrupt means out of the welfare programs meant for the poor people. The crores of rupees have been spent on celebrating the completion of half a century of Indian self-rule. For example, the government will provide the mostly hungry and want driven people of Delhi with a laser show costing the tax payer Rs. 10 crores people have experienced 63 distressing years of sterile politics, stagnant economy and a diminishing cultural identity. That India is rated low among even the developing countries in terms of skills and manpower quality. The India's trade is reported to have decreased by over a third of even the one percent of world trade it enjoyed sixty years ago. In decisions, vacillation, timidity, corruption, and red tapism have characterized and continue to characterise India's governance (puri 1997)_3.

The famous sociologist James H crops has defamed rural development as a process through collective efforts, aimed at improving the well being and self realization of people living outside the urbanized area. He further contends that the alternate forget of rural development is people and not infrastructure and according to him, one of the objectives of rural development should be to widen people range of choice.



Mishra nad Sunderam defined mal development as not merely development of rural areas but alos the development of quality of life the rural massed in to self reliant and self -sustaining modem little communities. Rural development is therefore development of rural areas in such a way that each component of rural life changes in a desired direction. Another scholar, lassay emphasizes that the focus of rural development should be on.

1. Preservation of ecological Integrity with a view to provide a continuous supply of life supporting resources.
2. Extend and appropriate land use.
3. Healthy living conditions.
4. An aesthetically pleasing environment
5. Effective socio-economic and Environmental institutions
6. Improved human welfare in terms of minimum economic and social level.
7. Physical structures adopted and landscape of pleasing desing and
8. Comprehensiveness, that is the full range of physical biological and factors in ruins.

The Ashridge confrence on soical development defined rural development as a movement designed to promote better living for all in the whole community with the active participation and initiative of the community 'According to UN Report" rural development has come into international usages to cannote the process by which the efforts of people themselves are united to those governmental authorities to improve the economic, social and cultural conditions in the life of the nation and to relate them to contribute fully to national."

In the words of Robert chambers, "rural development is a strategy to enable a specific group of people, poor rural women and men to gain for themselves and their children more of what they want and need. It involves helping the poorest among those



who seek a livelihood in the rural areas to demand and control more of the benefits of rural development. The group includes small- scale farmers, tenants and landless.

Thus rural development is a multi dimensional process which includes the development of socio-economic conditions of the people living in the rural areas and ensures their participation in the process of development for complete utilization of physical and human resources for better living conditions. It extends the benefits of development to the weaker and poorer sections of rural society. It also enhances both the coapacity and capability of administrative and socio-economic development agencies and agricultural marketing units working in the rural areas.

Rural Development during the British Rule :

Since time immemorial, India has been predominantly a rural country, thus rural development has always been in the priority concern of national development. In those days, our villages were self-sufficient and self-sustained and the respective rulers made any efforts for the betterment in their conditions. But during the British rule, they were not concerned with the socio-economic development of India and thus our rural economy was severely damaged resulting in the miserable conditions of the rural. It was the famine of 1899, which forced the British Government to think about the people of India who were dying of hunger. The recurrent famines forced the state Administrators to seize the food grains and arrange for distribution among the famine affected people. All was done without any apparent legal sanction, motivated as the action purely was by determination to control profiteering and alleviate rural suffering.

Later with the recommendation of Famine commissions of 1866 and 1880 and with the initiative of Lord Curzon, Provincial Department of Agriculture with Agricultural College Provincial Research Institute were established in 1906 the Indian Agricultural Service was constituted.



A number of British officers according to their interest and inclination tried out a few experiments in rural reconstruction. The spread of such programs were thin and only small financial outlays could be made for them. They were not pursued with any noticeable sense of urgency. The primary concern of the administrations as maintenance of law and order and collection of revenue, not development. Thus, colonial interest were the primary objectives and rural development was secondary.

Rural Development during the pre-independence period :

In the Pre-Independence period, a number of rural development programs were started by the Nationalists and social reformers, some of these programs gradually disappeared or some were merged with Government sponsored schemes later. This is because of various reasons like lack of encouragement of the Government lack of financial support, inadequate, inexperienced and untrained staff. The other reasons are lop-sided approach to different aspects of development, absence of needed supplies and services, inadequate co-ordination and from other departments and agencies. There are many efforts. i.e. Gandhian approach in Rural Development in Champaran, Bihar (1917), Gandhian experiment in Rural Reconstruction (1920), Sriniketan project (1921) of poet Rabinder Nath Tagore, Rural Reconstruction Movement (1932) - V.T. Krishnamchari, Sevagram (1936). But the most important rural development efforts during the pre independence era were-

1. Rural Reconstruction programme by Mahatma Gandhi
2. The Sriniketan Experiment
3. The Martandam Experiment
4. The Gurgaon Experiment
5. Rural Reconstruction programs in Baroda and
6. The Fikra Development scheme.



Rural Development since Independence :

Immediately after the attainment of independence and before the commencement of planned economic development through five year plans, three important programs of rural reconstructions were introduced in India. They were

1. The Etawah pilot project
2. The Nilokherei Experiment
3. The Bhoodan Movement

The Etawah Pilot Project :

In 1948, Albert Mayor started the Etawah pilot project for the development of the rural uareas of Etawah District in U.P. The main objective of the project was to seed what degree of productive and social imporvement as well as initiaive, self confidence and co-operatiion can be developed. The problem was to ascertain how quickly these result may be attained and remain permanately a part of the people's mental, spiritual, technical equipment and outlook after the special pressure is lifted.:

The other important features were production intensity, people's co-operation, development of appropriate attitudes, careful selection of personnel self reliance, local resources and supply and development of village leadership.

The effort was made to introduce the concept of Decentralized economy leading to Agro-Industrial Economy which in turn led to the development of agriculture, horticulture poultry piggery, fishery and other forms as animal husbandry."

The Nilokheri Experiment :

S.K. Dey, the former Minister of community development and cooperation was the founder of the Nilokhri Experiment in 1948, when nearly 7000 displaced persons were rehabilitated in Nilokheri town after Independence. The scheme was also known as "Mazdoor Manzil" because of its principle he who will not work, neither shall he eat. under this programme, the main activities were a vocational training centre run on co-



operative lines and the colony had its own dairy, poultry, piggery, printing press, tannery and bone meal factory.

People were give vocational training of their choice to run these co-operative enterprises Rights for eduction and medical care for the sick were also guaranteed.

The Bhoodan Movement :

Aacharya Binowa Bhave, one of the earlier social reformers of India is the profounder of Bhoodan movements. In the words of Vinoba Bhave, Bhoodan Yojana is an all comprehensive movement directed to the reforms in all walks of life. Today every one think of himself alone and feels for self only. But Bhoodan makes the people think and do just the opposite of what they do now. It makes the people first think of their neighbours and if he has no land.

The money squandering syndrome can be gauzed from the fact that since 1951, 246 big surface irrigation projects have been initaited only 65 out of these have been completed. Almost no benefits has come to the people from these projects. Investment in major irrigation projects rose from around rupees 7500 crores in the sixth plan to over Rupees 1100 crore in the seventh plan and are expected to touch Rupees 25000 crore in the eighth plan many touch Rupees 50,000 crore in the 9th plan (Vohra 1996 p13)_4

Conclusion :

The present study has revealed various factors about the management of rural development programmes which are required to be modified and changed for achivement of tis objectives for inclusive growth in India. The following suggestions are recomended for making these organization more effective.

1. The structure is an integral component of the organization. It provides guidelines on divison of work and linkage between various functions. The study reveals that less than half employees have the knowledge about the hierarhical structure of the organization in the context of government rural interventions but the employee



about the hierarchical structure of the organization. There is need to explain the structure and objective to all the people involved in the process of rural development similarly the employees from non government organization.

2. For better implementation of the organization objectives it is imperative to have smooth and quick decision making. the hierarchy of the organization in rural interventions are hindrance to decision making and it is suggested that the autonomy of decision making of the programme should be more with the lower level of the structure.
3. The coverage areas of the rural intervention programmes are satisfactory, but it is required to review with the advent of time and context.
4. Job responsibilities are not taken with accountability it is suggested that more accountability and performance oriented policies should be made in these organizations.

References :

1. Online search.
2. Jain L.C. (1985) Grass without roots : Rural Development under Government Ausices, sage publication, New Delhi.
3. Puri Rakshat (1997) only sadness to celebrate The Hindustan Times New Delhi July 23 (1977)
4. Femine commission of 1866 and 1880 and with the initiative of lord curzon, provinical department of Agriculture with agricultural college.