CHAPTER - X

SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF KBK DISTRICTS

A poor and backward state like Orissa having a substantial size of depressed population (nearly 40 per cent SC and ST population) and a backward subsistence-oriented agricultural economy has failed to bridge the development disparities that have long existed between the people and space at the inter-district level. Till 1992, the State was divided into 13 districts. Among the 13 old and undivided districts only the four coastal districts namely Cuttack, Puri, Baleswar and Ganjam and two districts from the highland region namely Sundargarh and Sambalpur may be characterised as developed or advanced according to the existing development position of the State's economy. Among the backward districts, further, the old and undivided districts namely, Kalahandi, Bolangir, Koraput and Phulbani in the highland region are found to be chronically backward and highly underdeveloped (Meher 1999 122). In recent years, three of the old and undivided backward districts namely, Kalahandi, Bolangir and Koraput in the southwestern part of Orissa have become vulnerable to recurring droughts and famine like situations, which lead to distress migration of the poor during non-agricultural season. They are also considered very backward districts in the country and are popularly known as KBK districts. Needless to say, in a poor and backward state like Orissa, the KBK region is the most backward and poverty stricken belt. The economic development of the State cannot be brought to the take off stage, unless this region gets special attention of the planners and policy makers in terms of sector specific investments and family centred poverty intervention measures. In the following sections, we thus make a modest attempt to provide a brief socio-economic sketch of the KBK districts and the ongoing process of economic development that has been affected by the built-in depressing forces of the state's polity and society. It may be noted that after the reorganisation of the old districts, the KBK region now consists of eight districts namely, Kalahandi and Nuapada forming part of undivided Kalahandi; Bolangir and Sonepur forming part of undivided Bolangir; and Koraput, Malkangiri, Nabarangpur and Rayagada forming part of undivided Koraput.

THE KBK REGION AND ITS TOPOGRAPHY

Geographically the undivided 13 districts of Orissa are classified into four geo-climatic regions. These are: (i) the Coastal Plains comprising four undivided districts, i.e., Baleswar, Cuttack, Puri and Ganjam; (ii) the Southwestern Plateau forming part of the great Deccan Plateau and Eastern Ghats region comprising three undivided districts, i.e., Koraput, Kalahandi and Phulbani, which are home to many primitive tribes like Khonds, Bondas, Koyas, etc.; (iii) the Central Table Land comprising three undivided districts, i.e., Bolangir, Sambalpur and Dhenkanal; and (iv) the Northern Plateau forming a part of the greater Chota Nagpur Plateau comprising three districts, i.e., Sundargarh, Kendujhar and Mayurbhanj. Like the Southwestern Plateau this region is predominantly resided by the tribal population such as Oraons, Kisans, Bhuinyas, Mundas, Santhals, Porajas, Kharias, Juangs and others. So, from geographical point of view the KBK region is not homogeneous, although in a broad sense of the term the districts popularly called KBK are all highland districts. However, culturally as well as linguistically also these are more or less similar to one another.

Kalahandi

The undivided Kalahandi has two distinct physiographic regions, the hilly-tracts and the plain lands. It has many magnificent scenic spots with towering hills and deep valleys. The plain forms around 50 per cent of the total land area and covers the entire Nuapada subdivision (the present Nuapada district) and then runs southward upto Bhawanipatna and westward upto Junagarh and Dharamgarh. The hilly tracts are mostly located in the western part of Nuapada subdivision and southwestern part of Bhawanipatna subdivision.

The entire hill regions of the district were once covered with dense forest and bamboos and timber were the major forest produce. However, the forest is now denuded of trees and the present forest area is reported to be 37.26 per cent of the total land area. Besides timber and bamboos, the forest of the district generates many important minor forest produces such as *tendu* or *kendu* leaf, *sabai* grass and *mahua*-flower. The Nuapada subdivision (the present Nuapada district) was once upon a time quite famous for its teak forest. But now this glory of the district is nearly lost on account of depredation and practice of shifting cultivation by the tribals. The hilly tracts contain huge deposits of minerals such as manganese, graphite and bauxite (Senapati and Kuanr 1980).

The principal rivers flowing in Kalahandi district are Tel, Indravati and Jonk. They are tributaries of major rivers like Mahanadi and Godavari. Besides, there are many perennial streams originating from the hills of the district. However, the rivers and streams in the open country seldom carry a large flow of water during winter and summer seasons and those are scarcely subjected to high floods. Winter and summer in the district is reported to be very harsh and the interior villages are subject to acute water scarcity during summer.

Bolangir

The district of undivided Bolangir is traversed by many hilly streams and is interspersed with green woodlands. The western part of the district is an undulating plain, rugged and isolated with hill ranges running in various directions. The Gandhamardan hill ranges form a natural boundary to the northwestern side of the district. The soil in this area is mostly light and sandy. The main forest area of the district stretches along the western boundary bordering Nuapada subdivision of undivided Kalahandi and the recent forest coverage of the district is reported to be only 21.98 per cent of the total land area. Poorly distributed rainfall, geological formation resistant to weathering, shallow, sandy and dry nature of land, and intensive shifting cultivation are the major factors, which have been responsible for the depletion of forests in this region (Senapati and Sahu 1968). Sonepur subdivision (the present Sonepur district) is the main plain lands tract of the district and this belt is found to be agriculturally better off slightly because of the Hirakud Canal system covering Binka and Dunguripali blocks.

The principal river of the district is Mahanadi, which flows through the central part of Sonepur subdivision from north to south. The other major rivers flowing in the district are Tel and its tributaries, Ang and Jira.

The district is famous for its rich variety of ores and minerals such as graphite, manganese, bauxite and the precious gemstones.

Koraput

The undivided Koraput is one of the largest districts in the country, which is home to many primitive and rare tribes such Bondas, Koyas and Saoras. The peculiar geographical setting of

this district has to a large extent made this region isolated from the mainland of Orissa. For this, it has still preserved many of its much varied and prolific wild flora and fauna unlike the other districts of Orissa. Due to its comparative isolation till date, its aboriginal inhabitants have not undergone any radical change in their culture and lifestyles through caste-tribe interactions. This is a land of geographical diversities with rich forest and rugged hills.

The entire undivided district of Koraput can be divided into four natural subdivisions separated by the natural barriers. Those are: (i) Rayagada and Gunpur subdivisions; (ii) the 3,000 feet plateau; (iii) the 2,000 feet plateau; and (iv) the Malkangiri subdivision (Senapati and Sahu 1966).

The Rayagada and Gunpur subdivisions are the most fertile belt of all the four subdivisions in the district. It has large tracts of forest in the Gunpur and Bisam-Cuttack tahasils containing some of the most valuable species of timber. Two major rivers such as Indravati, Jhanjabati and their tributaries drain this division.

The 3,000 feet plateau area is now mostly denuded of forest. Here the hills are either covered with low shrubs or bared with disfigured patches of barren land spoiled due to shifting cultivation. It is drained westward by the rivers Indravati, Kolab and southward by the Machkund towards the Godavari valley.

The 2,000 feet plateau covers almost the entire extent of Nabarangpur subdivision (the present Nabarangpur district). It extends far to the west in Bastar and in the north into the district of Raipur of present Chhattisgarh State. It is the main flat country except for the forests in the west of Jeypore tahasil, where there are low hills. Elsewhere the plains are only broken by a few isolated hills. The plateau is full of *sal* and other timbers due to heavy rainfall during southwest monsoon. However the northeast monsoon scarcely affects the plateau. As a result, the Nabarangpur and Umarkote tahasils become dry and water scarce during summer. This plateau is considered as the principal granary of Koraput district, because the land is fertile and thinly populated. Besides, paddy, wheat, sugarcane and vegetables are grown here in fair quantity.

The Malkangiri subdivision forms the fourth natural division of the old Koraput district. A strip along the eastern boundary takes in the Ghats, which uphold the 3,000 feet plateau and the valley of the Machkund. This region is very thinly populated. It is home to many primitive tribes such as Bondas, Porajas, Didayis and Koyas. Almost the whole of the subdivision is covered with dense forests. During the rainy season it becomes impassably swampy and heavy floods isolate the entire region from the outer world. The summer is equally hard. The whole plain is parched in the extreme and there is acute water scarcity. Added to this, the entire belt is reported to be malaria prone and the soil condition is too poor to make this agriculturally prosperous.

The undivided Koraput district has many rivers and perennial streams. Notable among them are the Vansadhara and the Nagavali in present Rayagada district and the Indravati, the Kolab and the Machkund flowing in the present Nabarangpur, Koraput and Malkangiri districts.

The district is reported to be rich in mineral deposits. The important mineral ores found in the district are china clay, gold, graphite, limestone, manganese, mica, bauxite, etc. It is needless to mention that in the past the dense forests with rich varieties of flora and fauna covered the district. The total forest area of the district was reported to be around 70 per cent of the total land area in the 1960s. However, at the end of December 1997 the total forest area was only 36.38 per cent of the total geographical area.

Thus, from our brief analysis of the topography of the KBK districts, it is revealed that the region is mainly hilly and barren. Agriculture in this region is not productive and high yielding because of its undulating landscape, poor quality of the soil, dry nature of the land and scarce water resources. The backwardness of the region, further, gets manifested when the different socio-economic development indicators of the three old and undivided districts are analysed in greater detail.

DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES

The KBK districts are predominantly resided by the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes. According to 1991 census, the S.C and S.T population in the State taken together constituted 38.41 per cent of the total population. As against this, the respective percentage shares of SC

and ST populations in the undivided Kalahandi, Bolangir and Koraput districts were 46.82, 35.82 and 69.31 of the total population of these districts respectively. The three KBK districts together had 54.55 per cent S.C and S.T population. It may be mentioned that the KBK districts together share 30.60 per cent of the total geographical area in Orissa with a population share of only 19.96 per cent.

It is found from Table 10.1 that the entire KBK region is predominantly rural in character with more than 90 per cent of its population residing in rural areas as against 86.62 per cent at the State level during 1991. In this scenario, interestingly two of the KBK districts namely, the undivided Kalahandi and Bolangir have registered lower growth in population during 1981-91 decade and the region's decadal growth rate of population is found to be 20.10 per cent as against 19.50 per cent at the State level. Added to this, all the KBK districts and the region as a whole show a very unusually favourable sex ratio. It may be noted that according to 1991 census the number of females per 1000 males at the all-India level was 927 and that for the State was 971. Among the Indian states only Kerala with highest level of literacy, lowest infant mortality rate and highest life expectancy rate in the country showed a favourable sex ratio of 1036 females per 1000 males in 1991. However, in a backward State like Orissa with low birth rate and high death rate as compared to the country's growth trend, favourable sex ratio may be due to increasing out migration of male members to other States. Similarly, the more favourable sex ratio of the KBK districts vis-a-vis the State figure clearly shows that the region is afflicted with the problems of increasing male migration during lean season. Several field studies in the villages of KBK districts show that due to poor economic condition, seasonal migration of males to the bordering districts of Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh is a regular phenomenon. This starts from October and continues till June every year. Since the population census takes place during February and March, it is obvious that the migrant males get enumerated in their place of migration. As a result, these backward KBK districts show an unusually favourable ratio of female population per 1,000 males. So, the favourable sex ratio of the KBK districts is not a reflection of demographic transition and economic development of the region. On the contrary, it is a reflection of economic backwardness and distress outmigration of the able bodied male members.

Table - 10.1

Demographic Features of Undivided KBK Districts
According to 1991 Census

Sl. No.	Features Region	Kalahandi	Bolangir	Koraput	KBK	Orissa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	Geographical Area (in sq. km)	11772 (7.56)	8913 (5.74)	26961 (17.32)	47646 (30.60)	155707 (100.00)
2.	Total Population	1600385 (5.05)	1707753 (5.39)	3012546 (9.52)	6320684 (19.96)	31659736 (100.00)
3.	Sex Ratio	1000	980	994	992	971
4.	% of Rural Population	93.50	90.38	88.79	90.41	86.62
5.	% of S.C. Population	15.86	17.27	15.00	15.81	16.20
6.	% of S.T. Population	30.96	18.55	54.31	38.74	22.21
7.	% of Literacy	29.98	39.74	22.66	29.13	49.08
8.	Decadal growth rate of population (1981-91)	18.88	16.77	22.77	20.10	19.50

N.B. :   Figures in parentheses refer to the percentage.

Source : Government of Orissa (1996). *Statistical Abstract of Orissa*, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Bhubaneswar.

Apart from that the spread of literacy in the KBK districts in 1991 was found to be much lower than the State's figure (Table 10.1). The same trend continued during 1991-2001 decade also. It has been found that during 1991-2001, the State could make remarkable progress in the literacy level. This increased from 49.01 per cent in 1991 to 63.61 per cent in 2001, whereas at the all-India level the literacy level of the population increased from 52.11 per cent in 1991 to 65.38 per cent in 2001. As against this, the progress made by the KBK districts in the front of literacy in 2001 census is found to be highly disappointing. At the time of 1991 census the literacy level of population in the KBK region was only 29.13 per cent and the gap between the all-Orissa figure and the KBK figure was 19.88 points. However, in 2001 census, despite

intensification of the activities of National Literacy Mission in the region, the literacy rate could reach to only 43.36 per cent and the literacy gap of the region as compared to the all-Orissa figure has further widened to 20.25 points. As discussed earlier in the 'Social Sector Development' chapter, although Orissa, as such, is lagging behind the macro literacy scenario at the all-India level, the State on the whole has been able to make rapid progress in the literacy front. The gap has been reduced over the years. However, the ever-widening gap of literacy between the State and the KBK districts clearly speaks of chronic backwardness and neglect of the region. Hence, huge investment is required to be made on primary education in order to develop the human capital of the region and to bridge the literacy gap at the State level.

WORKFORCE STRUCTURE

The workforce structure of the KBK districts as seen from Table 10.2 clearly reveals that all along since 1971, the region has higher work participation rate as compared to the all-Orissa level. In this situation, it is, further, observed that all the KBK districts have fairly higher percentage of workers engaged in primary sector occupations. Interestingly, in the case of Koraput district the percentage of workers engaged in the primary sector occupations has increased over the years. Similarly, while at the State level there has been a marked shift of the workers from the primary sector occupations to tertiary sector occupations in recent years, the KBK districts continue to show all the symptoms of economic backwardness with little occupational diversification taking place in the region. Among the three undivided KBK districts only Bolangir has relatively higher percentage of workers engaged in secondary sector and this is mainly due to higher concentration of handloom workers in the household industry of the district.

Table - 10.2

Workforce Structure of KBK Districts during 1971-91

Sl. No.	Districts	Total Main Workers			Primary Sector		
		1971	1981	1991	1971	1981	1991
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Kalahandi	32.73	35.94	37.47	87.03	87.50	85.63
2.	Bolangir	33.59	34.90	35.02	84.71	83.95	81.93
3.	Koraput	35.09	38.85	39.95	84.41	84.40	84.99
4.	KBK Region	34.05	37.02	37.99	85.15	85.05	84.38
5.	Orissa State	31.22	32.75	32.78	80.35	77.93	75.83

Contd...

Sl. No.	Districts	Secondary Sector			Tertiary Sector		
		1971	1981	1991	1971	1981	1991
1	2	9	10	11	12	13	14
1.	Kalahandi	4.07	5.00	4.55	8.90	7.50	9.82
2.	Bolangir	6.22	6.57	6.70	9.07	9.48	9.35
3.	Koraput	4.52	5.20	4.14	11.07	10.40	10.87
4.	KBK Region	4.88	5.54	4.89	9.97	9.41	10.73
5.	Orissa State	6.47	8.04	7.51	13.18	14.03	16.66

Source; Census of India (1971,1981 &1991). *General Economic Tables, Part-III (A&B),* Series-16, Orissa, Directorate of Census Operations, Bhubaneswar.

DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO

Different development indicators relating to agriculture, industry and basic infrastructure and services of the KBK districts clearly show that this is the most backward region in Orissa. Meher's study relating to inter-district level development disparity in Orissa by the deprivation method shows that the rank positions of three undivided KBK districts in 1990 among the 13 districts of the State were much lower. His findings revealed that in between 1970-90, the inter-district level development disparity in Orissa reduced marginally from 42.68 per cent in 1970s to only 40.24 per cent in the early 1990s according to the Co-efficient of Variation (C.V.) value (Meher, 1999). The composite development index values of the three KBK districts and their respective rank positions from 1970s - 1990s are shown in Table 10.3. It is seen from the Table that during 1970-90, the rank position of Bolangir among the 13 districts of Orissa deteriorated from 6 to 8 and the CDI values from 0.312 to 0.292. In the case of undivided Kalahandi the respective fall in rank position and CDI values during the period were from 9 to

11 and from 0.209 to 0.195. Similarly, in the case of undivided Koraput the rank position of the district fell down from 11 to 13 and the CDI value from 0.192 to 0.163 during 1970-90. This clearly reveals that the economic condition of the people in KBK districts vis-a-vis other districts of Orissa has worsened over the years.

It may be mentioned here that use of the deprivation method to measure development disparity is done according to the methodology adopted by the Human Development Report, 1990 prepared by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). According to this method, the composite development index (CDI) is constructed in three steps. The first step is to define a measure of deprivation that a district suffers from with respect to all the chosen variables of agriculture, industry and basic infrastructure and services vis-a-vis other districts of Orissa. According to the actual values of the different variables in the 13 undivided districts of the State, a maximum and a minimum value of the selected variable is determined.

Table - 10.3

**Aggregate Development Ranking of Undivided Districts
in Orissa by Deprivation Method**

Sl. No.	District	1970s		1980s		1990s	
		CDI	Rank Value	CDI	Rank Value	CDI	Rank Value
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Baleswar	0.297	7	0.304	6	0.322	6
2.	Bolangir*	0.312	6	0.233	8	0.292	8
3.	Cuttack	0.443	2	0.456	3	0.445	3
4.	Dhenkanal	0.231	8	0.227	9	0.314	7
5.	Ganjam	0.402	5	0.353	5	0.337	5
6.	Kalahandi*	0.209	9	0.206	11	0.195	11
7.	Kendujhar	0.178	12	0.216	10	0.267	10
8.	Koraput*	0.192	11	0.200	13	0.163	13
9.	Mayurbhanj	0.202	10	0.264	7	0.273	9
10.	Phulbani	0.177	13	0.201	12	0.177	12
11.	Puri	0.418	3	0.476	2	0.473	2
12.	Sambalpur	0.411	4	0.415	4	0.407	4
13.	Sundargarh	0.646	1	0.620	1	0.671	1
	C. V. Value (in %)	42.68	-	40.07	-	40.24	-

* Refers to KBK Districts.

Source : Meher, R.K. (1999). *Development Disparities in a Backward Region,* APH Publishing Corporation, New Delhi, P.114.

The highest of particular variable for a particular indicator among the 13 districts of the State is assigned the value of one and the lowest is assigned zero. The deprivation measure places a district in the range of zero to one as defined by the difference between the maximum and the minimum for each of the selected indicator. Thus, I_{ij} is the deprivation indicator for the jth district with respect to the ith variable and it is defined as :

$$I_{ij} = \frac{(\max_i X_{ij} - X_{ij})}{(\max_i X_{ij} - \min_i X_{ij})}$$

The second step is to define an average deprivation indicator (I_j). This is done by taking a simple average of the selected indicators:

$$I_j = \sum_{i=1}^{n} I_{ij}$$

The third step is to measure the CDI value of each district by deducting the value of average deprivation index from one. This is algebraically expressed as :

$$CDI = (I - I_j)$$

Based on this calculation if the score point of CDI is 0.8 and above, it is classified as highly developed. If it is in between 0.8 to 0.5 it is considered medium developed and below 0.5, lowly developed or backward.

In order to calculate the development disparity among the 13 undivided districts of the State, Meher (1999) in his study has taken seven development indicators for agriculture; four development indicators for industry; and 16 development indicators relating to basic infrastructure and services (BIS). The selected indicators are as follows:

1. Indicators of Agricultural Development:

(i)   Percentage of cultivable land to total land area;
(ii)   Percentage of area sown to total cultivable area;
(iii)   Percentage of irrigated area to net area sown;
(iv)   Number of electric/diesel pump per 1,000 hectares of area sown;
(v)   Number of tractors per 1,000 hectares of area sown;
(vi)   Cropping intensity;
(vii)   Average yields of food grains per hectare;

2.   Indicators of Industrial Development:

(i)   Percentage of secondary sector workers;
(ii)   Percentage of registered factory workers;
(iii)   Per capita value of industrial output;
(iv)   Per capita value added by manufacture

3.   Indicators of Basic Infrastructure and Services (BIS):

(i)   Percentage of literate population;
(ii)   Percentage of urban population;
(iii)   Percentage of tertiary sector workers;
(iv)   Number of primary and middle schools per 10,000 population;
(v)   Number of high schools per 10,000 population;
(vi)   Number of general colleges per lakh population;
(vii)   Number of hospitals/dispensaries per 10,000 population;
(viii)   Number of medical beds per 10,000 population;
(ix)   Infant mortality per 1,000 life births;
(x)   Road length per 100 sq. km. Area;
(xi)   Road length per lakh population;
(xii)   Percentage of villages electrified;
(xiii)   Per capita consumption of electricity;
(xiv)   Number of post offices per 10,000 population;
(xv)   Number of banks per lakh population;
(xvi)   Number of co-operative societies per 10,000 population.

In the year 1992, the old 13 districts of Orissa were reorganised into 30 districts by the State Government. The reorganisation of the districts was done with a view to strengthening and accelerating the process of economic development in the state. It was assumed that smaller districts would be easier to administer and the resources could be more productively utilised at the grassroots level through decentralised administration. Accordingly the three undivided KBK districts now comprise eight districts such as (i) Kalahandi and (ii) Nuapada of undivided Kalahandi; (iii) Bolangir and (iv) Sonepur of undivided Bolangir; and (v) Koraput, (vi) Nabarangpur, (vii) Malkangiri and (viii) Rayagada of undivided Koraput.

By using the latest available data relating to selective socio-economic development indicators of the newly reorganised KBK districts and while comparing them with the average all Orissa figures in the mid 1990s, it is further, found that the old KBK districts are unevenly developed at the intra-district level. It may be mentioned that development does not merely imply to progressive increase in income at the national or regional level. It includes "quality of life" such as health, education, degree of access to basic amenities and infrastructure such as surface

roads, railways, water, electricity, urban centres, institutional finance and the like. The Third Five Year Plan document of India (Chapter-IX) mentions that for assessing levels of development in different regions/districts indicators of development based on agricultural production, industrial production, investment, unemployment, electricity consumption, irrigated area, value of output by commodity producing sectors, level of consumption expenditure, road mileage, primary and secondary education and occupational distribution of population are useful. So, depending upon our data accessibility and their availability at the district level for the newly organised districts of KBK region, we have selected 16 development indicators for the mid 1990s and have compared them with that of Orissa in order to get a clear picture of development in KBK region vis-a-vis the state's average picture of development.

Needless to say, Orissa is a very backward and poor state and its development position among the 15 major states of the country is much lower. In such a situation, when we focus on the average development picture of the reorganised KBK districts and compare them with the average development picture of the state, it is found that the majority of them are chronically backward. By using equal weightage index method we have converted 16 development indicators of the reorganised KBK districts into a common base of the state level indicator as 100 in Table 10.4. On this basis we have computed the index values of the districts for different development indicators and have combined them together to find out the CDI value of the concerned district by dividing the aggregated value with 16. According to this, among the eight newly formed districts in the KBK region, Rayagada with a CDI value of 102 may be placed at par with the state's average development picture. Besides, Sonepur district of undivided Bolangir and the present Koraput district of the undivided Koraput with respective CDI values of 99 and 97 may be classified under the category of marginally backward. Otherwise, the rest other reorganised districts of KBK are found to be chronically backward in all respects and it will require special sector specific investment on different heads to bring them at par with the average development scenario of the state economy. It is, further, found that among the present eight districts of KBK region, Malkangiri is most backward followed by Kalahandi, Nabarangpur, Nuapada, Bolangir, Koraput and Sonepur in descending order.

When we look at the district-wise as well as indicator-wise computed index values of different indicators responsible for the development of agriculture, industry and BIS sector in the region

from Table 10.4, it is revealed that none of the KBK districts is well-endowed to promote harmonious relationship between agriculture and industry, so as to accelerate the pace of economic development in the region. It may be observed from the Table that Sonepur, Malkangiri and Rayagada are agriculturally better developed than the other KBK districts. But the districts like Malkangiri and Sonepur are industrially highly underdeveloped with poor spread of basic infrastructure like urban centres, literacy level, railways, road infrastructure and banking services. Added to this, Malkangiri is, further, observed to be worse in respect of rural electrification, medical amenities and higher concentration of depressed category population. Similarly, in the case of Rayagada it is observed that the district suffers from the problem of enclave form of industrialisation confined to the urban boundary and the periphery of Rayagada town only. The district has a very high percentage of depressed population with lower level of literacy, imbalanced urban growth, poor health facility, poor road networks and low level coverage of villages under rural electrification programme. Like Rayagada although the present Koraput after reorganisation seems to be relatively better off both industrially as well as agriculturally than many other KBK districts, it has equally a very high percentage of depressed population, low literacy level, poor health facility and also poor banking, road as well as rural electrification networks. Apart from all this, when we peruse the different development indicators of all the KBK districts, it becomes clear to all of us that they are chronically backward districts. The relatively higher computed values of CDI in the case of Rayagada, Sonepur and Koraput according to the equal weightage index method, in fact, reveals the imbalanced and disproportional nature of development of certain indicators. But it is observed that the field scenario is totally different. In an earlier study relating to development disparities in Orissa's districts Meher (1999(a)) has shown how different development indicators and the formation of composite development index based on the use of secondary data at the district level do not give a correct picture of development. Similarly, in the case of these KBK districts it is observed that existence of certain basic infrastructure and amenities at the district level aggregation does not reveal their actual availability and accessibility across space and people.

Table - 10.4

Socio Economic Development Indicators of Orissa and the Reorganised KBK Districts in Mid- 1990s

Sl.No	District/state	% of net irrigated area to net area sown (1994-95)	Avg. yield rate of paddy per hect. in qtls (1996-97)	% of NFS workers (1991)	Regd. Factory workers per 1,000 pop. (1993-94)	Per capita ind. Value added(inRs) (1993-94)	% of urban pop (1991)	% of non-depress ed pop. (1991)	% of literacy (1991)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.	Kalahandi	18.50 (70.53)	7.49 (75.43)	16.11 (59.67)	0.52 (9.09)	12 (2.26)	6.91 (51.64)	54.11 (87.85)	31.08 (63.31)
2.	Nuapada	13.16 (50.17)	6.74 (67.87)	14.10 (52.22)	0.61 (10.66)	31 (5.85)	5.49 (41.03)	50.96 (82.74)	27.52 (56.06)
3.	Bolangir	8.37 (31.91)	3.55 (35.75)	20.01 (74.11)	2.92 (51.05)	14 (2.64)	10.51 (78.55)	62.55 (101.56)	38.63 (78.69)
4.	Sonepur	59.85 (228.17)	16.37 (164.85)	17.73 (65.67)	2.23 (38.99)	24 (4.53)	7.30 (54.56)	68.40 (111.06)	42.62 (86.82)
5.	Koraput	19.70 (75.10)	14.22 (143.20)	20.59 (76.26)	3.25 (56.82)	851 (160.57)	16.67 (124.59)	35.92 (58.32)	24.64 (50.19)
6.	Nabarangpur	6.26 (23.87)	14.82 (149.24)	12.11 (44.85)	0.70 (12.24)	169 (31.89)	4.97 (37.14)	29.64 (48.12)	18.62 (37.93)
7.	Malkangiri	34.16 (130.23)	13.37 (134.64)	9.89 (36.63)	0	0	8.16 (60.99)	21.69 (35.22)	20.04 (40.82)
8.	Rayagada	27.49 (104.80)	11.27 (113.49)	18.67 (69.15)	6.30 (110.14)	1248 (235.97)	12.51 (93.50)	29.68 (48.19)	26.01 (52.98)
	Orissa	26.23 (100.00)	9.93 (100.00)	27.00 (100.00)	5.72 (100.00)	530 (100.00)	13.38 (100.00)	61.59 (100.00)	49.09 (100.00)

Sl. No	District/ state	No. of Med. Centres per 10,000 pop. (1995-96)	No. of Med. Centres per 100 sq. km area (1995-96)	Rly. Route length per 100 sq. km (1995-96)	Road length per 10,000 pop (1997)	Road length per 100 sq. km (1997)	% of villages electrified (1995-96)	No. of banks per 10,000 pop (1995-96)	Credit deposit ratio (1996-97)	CDI
1	2	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
1.	Kalahandi	0.54 (105.88)	0.73 (69.52)	0.45 (31.91)	107.49 (155.67)	145.33 (103.43)	55.63 (79.47)	0.68 (100.00)	69.45 (141.71)	75
2.	Nuapada	0.49 (96.08)	0.67 (63.81)	0.93 (65.96)	144.07 (208.65)	198.47 (141.35)	65.32 (93.31)	0.60 (88.24)	67.55 (137.83)	82
3.	Bolangir	0.48 (94.12)	0.90 (85.71)	2.68 (190.07)	67.59 (97.89)	126.66 (90.21)	82.17 (117.39)	0.58 (85.29)	58.26 (118.87)	83
4.	Sonepur	0.55 (107.84)	1.11 (105.71)	0	80.62 (116.76)	163.99 (116.79)	75.49 (107.89)	0.59 (86.76)	90.16 (183.96)	99
5.	Koraput	0.54 (105.88)	0.71 (67.62)	3.19 (226.24)	72.06 (104.36)	93.98 (66.93)	49.76 (71.09)	0.58 (85.29)	39.86 (81.33)	97
6.	Nabarangpur	0.58 (113.73)	0.93 (88.57)	0	161.01 (233.18)	142.63 (101.58)	71.32 (101.89)	0.34 (50.00)	79.76 (162.74)	77
7.	Malkangiri	0.81 158.82)	0.55 (52.38)	0	104.76 (151.72)	71.40 (50.85)	37.34 (54.06)	0.45 (66.18)	37.37 (76.25)	66
8.	Rayagada	0.67 (131.67)	0.63 (60.00)	2.73 (193.62)	88.59 (128.30)	83.44 (59.43)	36.97 (52.81)	0.66 (97.06)	43.05 (87.84)	102
	Orissa	0.51 (100.00)	1.05 (100.00)	1.41 (100.00)	69.05 (100.00)	140.41 (100.00)	70.00 (100.00)	0.68 (100.00)	49.01 (100.00)	100

N.B. : Figures in parentheses indicate the index value of the development Parameter,
(ii) CDI refers to composite development index and NFS stands for Non-farm sector.
Source : (i) Government of Orissa. *District Statistical Hand Book* (Different years for different districts).
(ii) Census of India, 1991.

It is found that in the KBK region there are primary schools within a radius of 1 to 2 km of human settlement as per the record. However, the teachers either do not exist or they do not run the school on regular basis so as to make the primary education programme effective in the region. Similarly, there are medical centres/dispensaries on record, but without any doctor. Of late, there is also a better spread of banking services in the region. But it is distressing to note that they are not useful for the poor because of their clumsy procedures and non-co-operative attitude of the bank officials. The private money lending and usury is still prevalent in the region and the poor are not free from the clutches of moneylenders.

POVERTY IN KBK DISTRICTS

It is needless to mention that socio-economic backwardness of a region is the root cause of mass poverty. As such the incidence of rural poverty in Orissa is found to be highest in India. In such scenario, it is, further, observed that the incidence of rural poverty in the KBK districts of Orissa is found to be more acute. This is clearly revealed from the poverty survey of the rural households conducted by the Panchayati Raj Department, Government of Orissa in 1992.

In the year 1992 for the purpose of survey of BPL (Below Poverty Line) households in rural areas the Government of Orissa had fixed up the maximum annual income of a family at Rs.11,000/-. On this basis, the BPL survey conducted in the state revealed that 79.10 per cent rural families in Orissa lived under poverty. However, when we compare the poverty scenario of undivided KBK districts with that of Orissa at the aggregate level, it is found from Tables 10.5 and 10.6 that the KBK region has much higher incidence of rural poverty. According to the survey the undivided KBK districts reported 86.65 per cent BPL families in Kalahandi, 84.54 per cent in Bolangir and as high as 91.66 per cent in Koraput.

Thus, the KBK region as a whole had 24.31 per cent BPL families in the state, although the percentage of rural families in these districts constituted only 21.41of the total rural families in Orissa. Further, it is interesting to observe in Table 10.5 that the percentage of depressed category BPL families (S.C. & S.T.) in these districts are much higher than their actual share of the such category of families in the KBK region.

Table - 10.5
Below Poverty Line (BPL) Families in Undivided KBK Districts and Orissa, 1992

Sl. No.	District	Total No. of rural families	No. of BPL families	% of BPL families by ethnic group		
				S.C.	S.T.	Others
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	Kalahandi	3,22,014	2,79,033 (86.65)	28.16	47.80	24.04
2.	Bolangir	2,81,999	2,38,399 (84.54)	15.78	35.10	49.12
3.	Koraput	5,29,695	4,81,851 (91.66)	19.58	54.01	26.41
	Orissa	52,96,264	41,10,434 (79.10)	21.90	29.79	48.31

N.B. :   Figures in parentheses indicate the percentage.
Source : **Socio-Economic Survey of Rural Households, 1992,** Government of Orissa, Panchayati Raj Department, Bhubaneswar.

Table - 10.6
Distribution of BPL Families in Orissa and KBK Districts by Income Group, 1992

Sl. No.	Income Group (Rs.)	Orissa	Kalahandi	Bolangir	Koraput
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Upto 4,000	13,521,79 (26.02)	86,691 (26.92)	74,434 (26.40)	1,59,694 (30.38)
2.	4,001 – 6,000	15,67,662 (30.17)	1,11,849 (34.73)	89,177 (31.62)	1,85,646 (35.31)
3.	6,001 – 8,500	8,12,415 (15.63)	57,696 (17.92)	52,507 (18.62)	96,821 (18.42)
4.	8,501 – 11,000	3,78,178 (7.28)	22,797 (7.08)	22,281 (7.90)	39,690 (7.55)
	Total	41,10,434 (79.10)	2,79,033 (86.65)	2,38,399 (84.54)	4,81,851 (91.66)

N.B. : Figures in parentheses refer to percentage.
Source: Same as Table 10.5.

Apart from that Table 10.6 clearly shows that all the three undivided KBK districts had fairly higher percentage of BPL families with income level of less than Rs.6,000/- per annum. As against 56.19 per cent of BPL families at such income level in the state, Kalahandi had 61.65 per cent BPL families with income level of less than Rs.6,000/- per annum; Bolangir had 58.02

per cent of such families and in the case of Koraput this was found to be as high as 65.69 per cent. This means KBK region as such has many ultra poor BPL household. And, in order to enable these families to cross the poverty line, there is a need for special efforts and special policy measures apart from the ongoing anti-poverty programmes being implemented all over the State and the country.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ANTI-POVERTY PROGRAMMES

Since the day of commencement of the planning era the Government in post independent India has launched many area and beneficiary oriented anti-poverty schemes all over the country in order to overcome socio-economic backwardness and acute form of mass poverty of its population. Particularly since 1980s the government has put more emphasis on sustainable type of anti-poverty programmes such as the IRDP, TRYSEM, DWCRA in the self-employment category and JRY, IAY, MWS, EAS, etc. in the wage employment category. These self-employment and wage employment programmes are presently being implemented more rigorously and these are broadly rechristened as SGSY (Swarnajayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana) and JGSY (Jawahar Gram Samruddhi Yojana). Apart from this, there are other poverty alleviation schemes such as DPAP (Drought Prone Area Programme), SFPP (Special Food-grain Production Programme) and ASMF (Assistance to Small and Marginal Farmers) confined to the development of certain specific areas worst hit by the problem of uncertain agriculture. Since KBK region is one of the most backward regions in the country, it is needless to mention that these anti-poverty programmes are being implemented in all the KBK districts at present. However, how far these programmes are successful in checking the proliferation of poverty and whether the amount spent on different programmes are adequate to reduce the magnitude of poverty in the region is in fact a big unanswerable question. Nonetheless, in order to focus on the degree and intensity of coverage of IRDP and other important anti-poverty programmes like JRY and EAS in the KBK region vis-a-vis Orissa, in the present section we make an attempt to analyse the efficacy aspect of implementation of these three schemes on the basis of the aggregate district and State level secondary data made available to us from 1992-93 to 1997-98.

Among all the anti-poverty programmes, IRDP is recognised as a most important beneficiary oriented programme designed for amelioration of poverty in rural areas.

The programme is being implemented in all parts of the country including Orissa since its inception in 1979-80. The objective underlying the programme is to enable identified poor families to cross the poverty line through the provision of financial assistance in terms of bank credit and government subsidies for acquisition of productive assets. Further, to supplement this and to generate multiple effects in the rural economy through the creation of economic infrastructure and community assets, two major wage employment programmes namely, JRY and EAS are being implemented in the state including the KBK region. These two programmers seek to provide employment to the rural poor in the form of casual manual work during the lean agricultural season. While JRY is being implemented for taking up small works according to the felt needs of the people, EAS is implemented as a demand driven scheme under which public works are being taken up for generation of assured employment upto 100 days to the target group during lean agricultural season.

However, when we look at the statistical figures relating to the number of poor families covered under the IRDP since its inception in Orissa and the magnitude of assistance provided to them every year, they give a pessimistic picture of implementation of the programme in the state. This is further, found to be more disappointing in the case of KBK region. The amount spent on JRY and EAS and total mandays of employment generated during the year equally gives a bleak picture and efficacy of the programmes in the hardcore backward region like the KBK. It may be mentioned that since the inception of IRDP in 1979-80 to 1991-92 as high as 23.90 lakh rural families in Orissa were provided financial assistance under the scheme and the average amount of assistance made available to a family during the said period was Rs.2,806.00 at the then current prices. To express more explicitly, upto the end of Sixth Plan around 10.30 lakh families in the State were assisted under the programme and the average amount of assistance received by a beneficiary family during the period was Rs.2,258.00 only. During Seventh Plan altogether 10.98 lakh poor families were covered and the average amount of assistance received per beneficiary family was Rs.2,765.00 only. During 1990-91, 0.50 lakh families were covered and the average amount of assistance given to a beneficiary family was Rs.4,232.00. In the year 1991-92, 0.47 lakh families were covered under the programme and the average amount of assistance given per beneficiary family was Rs.6,354 only. Then in the year 1992, the Government of Orissa, Panchayati Raj Department carried out BPL survey of rural households all over the state. According to this all-total 41,10,434 rural

families in the state were identified to be living below the poverty line. Thus, taking this figure into account the number of BPL families covered under the IRDP since 1992-93 to 1997-98 is found to be only 6.80 lakh or 16.55 per cent of the identified BPL families in Orissa according to 1992 BPL survey. However, if we include all the IRDP assisted families in the state since the inception of the programme in 1979-80, then by the year ending 1997-98, 3.07 lakh families have been covered at the all-Orissa level with per family investment of Rs.4,464.00 at current prices. According to this, thus, a total of 74.70 per cent identified BPL families of 1992 have been covered under the IRDP programme till 1997-98. Hence, statistically this can be regarded as a remarkable achievement of the Government (Government of Orissa, 1999: ANX 44). But, the 1992 BPL survey clearly shows that families assisted under the programme in the previous years had very little success. As a result, as high as 79.10 per cent rural families in the state were identified as poor during 1992 survey. Further, out of this as high as 56.19 per cent were hardcore families with an income level of less than Rs.6,000/- per annum, 15.63 per cent with annual income range of Rs.6,000-8,500/- and only 7.28 per cent with annual income range of Rs.8,500-11,000/- at the all-Orissa level.

In this situation, when we look at the poverty scenario in the KBK districts it is found to be very acute. It is seen from Table 10.7 that during 1992-93 to 1997-98 financial years altogether 6.80 lakh (16.55%) BPL families in Orissa were covered under the IRDP and the per family investment is found to be Rs.11,190.82 at current prices. This means during the period only 16.55 per cent of the identified BPL families in the State were covered under the programme. As against this in the case of the KBK districts the percentage of BPL families covered under the programme was found to be much less than the State figure except in the case of Koraput and Rayagada districts. Further, in the entire KBK region only 15.90 per cent BPL families were given financial assistance as against 16.55 per cent at the all-Orissa level during 1992-93 to 1997-98. This means poverty alleviation programme particularly IRDP in the KBK districts has failed to receive serious attention of the government machinery in the past.

Table - 10.7

Implementation of Anti-Poverty Programmes in The KBK Districts of Orissa during 1992 to 1998

Sl. No.	District	No.of BPL Families (1992)	Average No. of families covered/mandays of employment generated per annum during 1992-98 under different schemes					
			IRDP No.of Families Covered	Avg. Invest-ment (Rs.)	JRY Avg. Invest-ment (Rs.in lakh) (1996-97 & 1997-1998)	Total man-days employ-ment (1996-97 & 1997-1998)	Avg. Invest-ment (Rs.) (1994 - 1997)	EAS Total Mandays of employ-ment (estimated) (in lakh)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.	Kalahandi	205756	30204 (14.68)	N.A.	601.66 (46.68)	12.89 (6.26)	803.94	17.22 (8.37)
2.	Nuapada	78530	11458 (14.59)	N.A	460.04 (47.57)	9.67 (12.31)	N.A.	-
3.	Bolangir	181149	24258 13.39)	N.A.	438.48 (48.24)	9.09 (5.02)	942.62	19.54 (10.79)
4.	Sonepur	57250	8974 (15.68)	N.A	263.99 (49.34)	5.35 (9.34)	189.93	3.85 (6.72)
5.	Koraput	162931	30366 (18.64)	N.A.	820.83 (49.21)	16.68 (10.24)	1089.59	22.14 (13.59)
6.	Nawa-Rangpur	137504	21918 (15.94)	N.A.	834.16 (50.93)	16.38 (11.91)	669.64	13.15 (9.56)
7.	Malkangiri	71918	11726 (16.30)	N.A.	592.60 (47.22)	12.56 (17.46	397.87	8.43 (11.72)
8.	Rayagada	109498	20836 (19.03)	N.A.	765.40 (48.08)	15.92 (14.54)	574.95	11.96 (10.92)
	Orissa	4110434	680324 (16.55)	11190.82	14750. 18 (48.04)	307.01	14853.96	309.20 (7.52)

N.B. : Figures in parentheses at column '4' refer to percentage of BPL families covered under IRDP, at column '6' amount spent to generate one manday of employment and at columns '7' and '9' average number of mandays of employment generated per annum per BPL family.

Source : (i) Government of Orissa, *Economic Survey* (different years), Planning and Co-ordination Department, Bhubaneswar.

(ii) Government of Orissa, *District Statistical Handbook*, (Different Districts), Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Bhubaneswar.

(iii) Government of Orissa, Panchayati Raj Department, Bhubaneswar.

Similarly, it is found from Table 10.7 that although the average mandays of employment generated per annum through the popular wage employment programmes like JRY and EAS in some of the KBK districts has been relatively higher than the all-Orissa figure, it is not so high so as to make a frontal attack on the acute form of poverty existing in the region. It may be mentioned that in the Table we have worked out the average amount of investment required to generate one manday of employment under the JRY in different KBK districts as well as at all-Orissa level at column'4'. In the absence of the employment figures of the EAS, we have made estimation of the total mandays of employment generated per year under the EAS by taking into account the amount required for generation of one manday of employment under the JRY programme both at the concerned KBK district and State level. From this Table it is clear that under these two major wage employment programmes only around 15 to 29 mandays of employment is generated for each of the BPL families in the KBK districts. That means with a minimum government fixed wage rate of Rs.25.00 per day per person till 1997-98, a family in the KBK districts might have earned a wage income of only Rs.375.00 at the minimum and Rs.725.00 at the maximum per annum.

It is to be noted that the market wage rate for the manual work in the KBK region is as low as Rs.15.00 to Rs.20.00 per day. Further, conventionally there is a difference in the wage rate of male and female. Since the region is agricultural to the core and there is hardly any industry, the maximum number of days of wage employment generated for an earner in the private sector is around 100 days per annum. One poor family in the region on an average consists of 1.5 earners. Based on this estimate we may say that the private sector wage income of a household in the KBK region on an average comes to Rs.3000/- per annum. The wage income through government sponsored wage employment programme shall not be more than Rs.500/- per annum. Besides this, a poor household in this region earns around Rs.1000/- per annum by depending on sale of minor forest produces such as *kendu* leaf, *sal* seeds, *mahua* flower, tamarind, etc. Also, above all it is, further, found that the average size of operational holding of agricultural land in the three undivided KBK districts is 1.9 hectares in the case of Kalahandi, 1.6 hectares in the case of Bolangir and 1.7 hectares in the case of Koraput as against 1.3 hectares at the all-Orissa level according to the recent Agricultural Census, 1990-91. However, the region is agriculturally much backward than any other parts of Orissa. As

the average yield rate of paddy per hectare in this region is far below than the all-Orissa average of 9.93 quintals per hectare during 1996-97, we may estimate that the total production value of paddy of an average farmer in these three undivided districts will be around 8 quintals per hectare. Based on this estimate, thus, we may say that a farmer's production value of paddy during 1996-97 might have been Rs.7695.00 in the case of Kalahandi; Rs.5760.00 in the case of Bolangir; and Rs.6120.00 in the case of Koraput. Further, if we deduct 30 per cent as inputs cost from the production value of paddy, the actual income will be much less. In this situation, it will not be unfair on our part to infer that the average income of an average category farmer in the KBK district is around Rs.7000 to Rs.8000/- per annum and for the landless poor family, it is around Rs.5000 to Rs.6000/- per annum. This means, in this environment, the IRDP/SGSY funding in the KBK district needs to be made in such a manner that the adopted schemes will generate at least Rs.5,000 to Rs.6,000/- additional income per annum for the poor beneficiary families in order to enable them to cross the poverty level annual income of Rs.11,000/- per family at 1992 prices.

CONCLUSION

It is needless to mention that notwithstanding its rich natural resource potential, Orissa has lagged behind many other major States of the country although the indicating planning in post independent years till 1990 under the guidance of the State put emphasis on balanced development and reduction of socio-economic inequalities across space and people. In such a development scenario, it is further distressing to note that the economic development position of Orissa has worsened in the recent years. It is now ranked as the most poverty stricken State of India. In this backdrop of the State economy and society the KBK districts furnish a picture of chronic backwardness as compared to all other districts of Orissa. Our analysis of different development indicators of KBK districts and their comparison with other districts as well as average development picture of the State clearly shows that the region has been worsened over the years. The existing social and economic infrastructures are highly inadequate to make a frontal attack on poverty and economic backwardness of the region. It is found that the development of economic infrastructure like irrigation, electrification, banking and communication, which could have generated direct economic benefit to the people for sustainable form of livelihood in these districts has not been followed up in a right perspective all through the era of state centred planning. Agriculture, which is the mainstay of the

population in the region has not yet been modernised to enable the people to pursue a gainful livelihood. On the contrary, in the absence of development of a rural non-farm sector economy, the dependence of population on subsistence and uncertain agriculture instead of showing a diminishing trend has started rising in the recent years. As a result, the majority of the people in the region are now forced to live a life of below subsistence level earning. It may be noted that in recent years the KBK districts are surmounted with the problems of recurring droughts and erratic rainfall due to increasing deforestation of the region. Excluding a very few blocks of Malkangiri, Koraput and Sonepur districts the region does not have any irrigation infrastructure of even protective nature to work as shock absorber for the farmers in the case of failure of the monsoon. The tribals and other downtrodden sections of population such as the scheduled castes and other backward and landless castes, who were earlier depending upon the forest resources of the region to supplement their low earnings derived from primary agriculture based occupations become the worst sufferers when the monsoon fails. It is they who form the stream of distressed migrants and seasonal migrant population of the region, be it a normal agricultural year or the drought year.

So, under the prevailing circumstances in order to check distress migration, there is a greater need for the creation of adequate wage work in the short run. As shown earlier, creation of wage employment for the poor under different poverty alleviation programmes like JRY, EAS or the present JGSY in the region is too less as compared to the numbers of wage seekers to satiate their needs. The poor wage seekers of KBK region require at least 100 days of government sponsored wage work to bail out them from the clutches of destituteness. Also, as a medium term solution of the problem there is a need for the strengthening of subsistence agriculture by creating watersheds, water harvesting structures, check dams, etc on the small streams, rivulets and ponds found in the region. No doubt renovation and proper harnessing of the existing water resources through the government sponsored wage work would not only solve the problem of lack of wage work among the distress wage seekers in the short run, but also this would help in creation of irrigation infrastructure in the region.

Added to this, creation of more wage employment in the region would help in afforestation of the deserted and denuded forest area, development of road and communication networks and above all proper maintenance of the existing socio-economic infrastructures as well as the

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creation of new infrastructures such as school buildings, community centres, health centre buildings and the like to create opportunities for social and economic modernization of the region. It is observed that presently the KBK region in general and the undivided Koraput district in particular has a very low level of literacy as compared to the State's achievement level. The region has equally been discriminated in the delivery of public health services due to its difficult accessibility and poor infrastructure. It is revealed from the 1991 census data that due to high morbidity rate and poor living condition of the people, the KBK districts in general furnish a picture of much lower percentage of population in the 60 plus age group as compared to the State average. These districts have comparatively higher infant mortality rates of new born population and also higher death rates of population in different age groups due to endemic diseases like malaria, yellow fever, tuberculosis, etc. To tackle these problems and to bridge the literacy gap, there is a need for greater investment on the social sector such as health, education and other welfare-oriented programmes.

Removal of regional disparities has been one of the important planks of the development strategies adopted by Government of India as well as the State Government during successive Five Year Plans. However, due to several economic, social and institutional obstacles, this region in Orissa has not shared gains of development in an equitable manner and continues to languish in abject poverty. Heavy incidence and persistence of poverty in this region has been a cause of concern for the State Government as well as the Government of India. Therefore, in consultation with the Government of India, State Government have adopted a *special area development approach* for this region with a view to focus attention on it and to accelerate development. In order to address severe problems of underdevelopment and regional disparities, the State Government in consultation with Government of India have formulated the **Long Term Action Plan (LTAP) and Revised Long Term Action Plan (RLTAP) for the KBK districts**.

A revised Long Term Action Plan (RLTAP) of the KBK districts was submitted to Government of India on their advice in 1998. The project was prepared in **sub-plan mode** to address the peculiar socio-economic problems of this chronically poor region, which is also geographically contiguous. This project envisages an integrated approach for speeding up the socio-economic development of this region by synergizing effectively the various developmental activities and

schemes under implementation both in Central as well as State sectors. The critical gaps in the development efforts as well as resources are sought to be bridged through Additional Central Assistance (ACA) / Special Central Assistance (SCA) as a special dispensation. Therefore, there has to be pooling of resources from different sources like: (i) normal flow of funds to KBK districts under Central Plan (CP) and Centrally Sponsored Plan (CSP) schemes. (ii) additional funds received from Government of India exclusively for programmes in KBK districts as agreed by the Planning Commission; and (iii) Central assistance under programmes of Government of India to be implemented in KBK districts with some relaxation in norms such as Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP) for earmarked irrigation projects. A total outlay of funds to the tune of Rs.6,251.08 crore over a project period of 9 years form 1998-99 to 2006-07 is envisaged under the revised project. However, the State Government have been receiving *ad hoc* assistance from the Central Government to bridge gaps in resources available for critical sectors on year to year basis. During the first four year RLTAP, i.e. from 1998-99 to 2001-02, the Government of India have released funds to the extent of Rs.1393.99 crore. This just constitutes 22.30 per cent of the plan outlay earmarked under the RLTAP of KBK region for the period 1998-99 to 2006-07. Also it is found that the State Government has failed to utilize the funds released by the Centre possibly due to several constraints. Against the Central release of Rs.1393.39 crore during 1998-99 to 2001-02, the State Government has been able to spend Rs.1042.44 crore (74.78%) only according the information available from the Planning and Coordination Department, Government of Orissa.

No doubt the State Government have taken several initiative to improve governance and to monitor the implementation of RLTAP programmes in KBK districts. A very senior IAS officer has been posted as the Chief Administrator, Special Area Development (KBK) Project with headquarters **at Koraput.** The Revenue Divisional Commissioner (Southern Division) has also been given additional responsibility to act as Deputy Chief Administrator, KBK and to assist the Chief Administrator, KBK. They are responsible for effective monitoring and supervising the implementation of various programmes. Their tour notes, field observations and suggestions are receiving due attention of the Government. However, all the same there is a need for effective grassroots level planning, awareness generation, community level sensitization for sustainable development of the region.

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