

BENCH MARK SURVEY REPORT- BATALA (PUNJAB), 1956

1. The Study

Considering the importance of detailed and precise assessment of the impact of development programmes, a series of special surveys was undertaken in all evaluation centres. Through this initial survey called the Bench-Mark Survey (BMS), the position regarding acceptance of sponsored practices and certain aspects of the rural economy related to the development programme were ascertained at the time of survey or for a given period immediately before it. From this base or 'Bench Mark, position, the changes occurring in the area during the course of operation of the projects were to be measured by means of repeat surveys undertaken at specified intervals.

2. Objectives

- i) To assess the extent of adoption of improved practices advocated by the Community Development and National Extension Programmes; and
- ii) To obtain insight into the impact of these programmes upon the economic and social life of the rural people.

3. Sample Size/Criteria for Selection of Sample

The Batala Block in which this survey was conducted consisted of 134 villages of which 116 villages were in the frame of selection. Stratified two stage random sampling technique was adopted. At the first stage, sampling unit was the village and at the second stage the household. In all 802 households from 6 villages of Batala Block were selected for the purpose of study. The six selected Bench Mark Survey villages were (1) Bahadur Hussain, (2) Dayalgarh, (3) Jaitu Sarja, (4) Qutbi Nangal (5) Saidpur and (6) Sonnaiya.

4. Reference Period

The survey was conducted between February and June 1954 and data were collected for the period May 1953 to January 1954.

5. Main Findings

1. The average size of the land holding was 10.7 acres for all villages. Largest number of holdings fall in 10 to 25 acre group which accounted for 42% of the total number of holdings and about 57% of the cultivated area.

2. Out of the 378 cultivating households, 362 owned 934 cattle. Thus, only about 4% cultivators were without plough cattle.

3. Irrigation facilities were adequate in these villages, about 86% of the area had been reported as irrigated. The acreages under improved varieties were all irrigated so far as major crops were concerned. Only in wheat; some area (about 8%) was still unirrigated.

4. Improved strains were introduced in respect of a dozen crops and covered about 38% of the cultivated area.

5. The relative proportion of the area under improved varieties was higher for the larger sized holdings in respect of wheat, but there was no such association in respect of sugarcane and other crops.

6. The use of manures and fertilizers was not very widespread in these villages.

7. The proportion of cultivating households using improved implements was very small i.e. 17.5 per cent only.

8. None of the methods sponsored by the project proved acceptable to the people on account of one difficulty or the other.

9. Road construction was the main activity which elicited the participation of about 60 per cent of the total number of households. The proportion of the households participating in other community activities ranged between 11 and 22 per cent.

10. About 84 per cent of houses were made of mud, bamboo, straw and reeds. About 14 per cent of the houses were semi-pucca having some bricks, cement and stone in their structure. But houses built entirely of bricks; cement and stones were almost negligible in proportion accounting for 2 per cent of the total.

11. About 61 per cent of the sample households were reported to be under debt.