

**EVALUATION OF MAJOR IRRIGATION  
PROJECTS - SOME CASE STUDIES - 1965**

**1. The Study**

The study was undertaken by the Programme Evaluation Organisation at the instance of Planning Commission. The study was launched to evaluate the agricultural and administrative aspects of major irrigation projects with a focus on the problems of execution vis-a-vis the cost, certain aspects of the design such as water courses and field channels, the creation and availability of potential, the growth of irrigation in the command areas and the assessment of benefits and cost thereof.

**2. Objectives**

- 1) To assess the extent of utilisation of the irrigation potential created by some of the major irrigation projects;
- ii) To examine the problems of utilisation of irrigation potential;
- iii) To assess the impact of irrigation on the command areas; and
- iv) To make a cost benefit appraisal of the projects.

**3. Sample Size/Criteria for Selection of Sample**

The projects were selected from nine different States. For each of the selected projects, the district which covered the major portion of the command area was selected for purpose of field investigations. Two blocks on a random basis were selected from the district covered under the Project. From each block, six villages and ten respondents from each village were selected on a random basis.

**4. Reference Period**

The data on various aspects were collected for the years 1949-50 to 1963-64.

## 5. Main Findings

1. The cost of levelling the land had been estimated to vary between Rs.150 and Rs.200 per acre. In some cases, adequate credit facilities were not available to the cultivators and in some other cases the cultivators were of the opinion that they were not financially in a position to incur the expenditure.

2. The tail-end problems were observed in all the projects studied. This problem was due to the carelessness of the cultivators in the upper reaches who let the water run waste which brought about a shortage of water for the cultivators having tail-end plots.

3. The problems of seepage and water logging were also observed for all the projects studied. The problem was acute particularly in the Hirakund area where Bahal lands were very seriously affected. In the Lower Bhawani Project area, the seepage of water from the canals had not only led to a serious depletion of the surplus flow, but also affected the dwelling houses in the village close to the canals.

4. The problem of co-ordination among the different Government departments operating at the same land and among different levels namely state, district, block and village was also observed. The general problem of co-ordination mainly related to the timely supply of water, equitable distribution of water, the imposition of irrigation dues and the timely and adequate supply of credit, fertilisers, etc.

## 6. Major Suggestions

1. Irrigation potential should be determined after taking into account the planned cropping pattern. The figures of irrigation potential should be built up separately for the rabi and kharif seasons and should be uniformly reported, both in gross and net terms.

2 It was necessary to have an integrated approach to the problem of utilisation of irrigation potential.

3. Coordination should be brought about among the different Government Departments operating at the same level as well as Departments operating at different levels. The functioning of the Coordination Committees generally existed at the State and District levels and sometimes found at the block level also should be

reviewed in order to find ways of bringing about a more integrated approach to the problems of irrigation and agriculture.

4. Some financial assistance should be provided to the cultivators for providing cross drainage work.