

## **EVALUATION REPORT ON FIRST YEARS' WORKING OF COMKUNITY PROJECTS, 1954**

### **The Study**

This report was an attempt to convey an overall picture of the manner in which the developmental programmes were proceeding and highlighted the strong and weak points in the organisation and methods employed for the purpose of development. Its attempt was to underline general rather than local features. Therefore, this report gave an appraisal of trends and was not an investigational report on particular projects which were chosen to represent the working of developmental programmes of different types in different conditions. This report was based on reports made by Development Commissioners and by Evaluation officers as well as on personal observations by the higher PEO staff.

### **2. Objectives**

To determine the initial impact of the developmental programme on the life of rural people by ascertaining their knowledge of the Programme- its objectives and activities, its staff especially the VLW and their reactions to different methods of approach.

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

For the purposes of ascertaining facts and arriving at conclusions regarding working of the community development programmes, it was neither necessary nor feasible to cover every project unit. It was, therefore, decided to locate in the beginning, one evaluation centre in most of the States. Accordingly, 19 centres were chosen from among the Community Projects working under the Community Projects Administration and Pilot Extension Projects working under the general direction of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture as these were the two principal types of rural development projects in existence at the time. The choice of particular centres was guided by the objective of obtaining areas representative of the different environmental, agricultural and economic conditions in different regions of the country, so that the working of the rural development programme may be studied under varying conditions. Of the 19 selected evaluation centres, 14 were community projects and 5 pilot extension projects.

#### 4. *Reference Period*

The first of these surveys was started in May 1953 and was completed in September. 1953. The data was collected for the period October 1952 to September 1953.

#### 5. *Main Findings*

1. In contrast with the basic objective of Community Development Projects, the emphasis was on agricultural extension in these projects. other development activities which include-education. health and sanitation, communications etc. were to be carried out by the departments concerned in the normal way.

2. Except for the fact that-there was no staff for activities other than agriculture and there was no full time project Executive Officer, the staffing pattern of these projects was similar to that of community projects. There was a VLW for five or six villages and suitable supervisory/specialist staff. While the working of these projects demonstrated the essential soundness of this organisational pattern, it was brought out that a full time project officer was essential for the successful working.

3. Except a very brief initial period of scepticism, the rural people in most parts had exhibited, not only a readiness but an actual eagerness to move with the times. New methods of cultivation , artificial insemination and education for children were being accepted and pursued with alacrity. The example of successful extension activity in these respects in particular areas was spreading almost naturally to surrounding areas, where a demand to have a community project started growing in strength. Old habits of thoughts and action were being discarded with an unsuspected ease.

4. With the growing popularity of extension methods with increased supplies of improved seeds, fertilizers and implements and assured supply of water, the objective of increasing production was being steadily attained. The overall rural economy would be more and more adequately equipped to meet Ills like droughts, floods, famines, etc. in future.

5. The data revealed that the programme of paddy seed distribution was taken up in 11 out of 18 centres. Judged by the achievements,-the seed programme in PEPSU and Madhya Pradesh in respect of cotton and in Uttar-

Pradesh and Punjab in respect of wheat achieved an outstanding success. The introduction of chemical fertilisers formed an important programme in almost all places. In the sphere of irrigation, the programme of constructing new wells and repairing old wells appeared to be common to almost all the project areas. However, the progress in respect of tube-wells was not very satisfactory as revealed by the available information. In respect of land reclamation PEPSU and Assam achieved outstanding results.

Inoculation and vaccination against cholera and small-pox and to some extent against tuberculosis in **shape** of B.C.G. vaccines had been done. The programme for providing facilities for drinking water were taken up in several project areas. Except in the case of **Hyderabad and** Assam, the programme of latrine and soakage pits construction did not achieve satisfactory success as compared to the overall targets.

With regard to education, while Saurashtra and Madhya Pradesh started a number of dew schools, Bihar, Orissa and Punjab opened basic schools. Madhya Pradesh had both types of programmes.

In the sphere of social education, starting adult education centres and to some extent also the sports and recreation centres were the main activity in the project areas. An effort towards organising farmer clubs and youth clubs was also made and Mysore and PEPSU achieved good progress in this field. In some states libraries were also organised.

In the field of construction and repair of kutch **roads and earth** work on pucca roads, the accomplishments of the Punjab and Bihar was outstanding. As regards provision of culverts or bridges for roads, little had been done except in Assam, Travancore - Cochin and the Punjab.

## 6. **Major Suggestions**

Community projects and national extension can, no doubt, make a direct contribution to the solution of the problem of unemployment in the country. The augmentation of total resources and the inculcation of progressive outlook which the Community Development Schemes are achieving will strengthen the movement of social and economic change which will spell an overall adjustment between resources and employment. Past experience and future hopes suggest the need for timely re-orientation so as to ensure that the urge to progress, instead of being put into an individualist or bureaucratic mould is guided into democratic channels of mutual co-operation.