

**EVALUATION REPORT ON WORKING OF COMMUNITY
PROJECTS AND N.E.S. BLOCKS, 1956**

The Study

The study was undertaken to review the progress of the community development programme in terms of its objectives, with special emphasis on reviewing the situations and problems that arose during the year of study. The deficiencies noted earlier and the remedial measures taken were also highlighted. Besides, the detailed account of progress in only two projects

Sonepat (Punjab) in the north and Morsi (Madhya Pradesh) in the central part of the country was also presented in this report. These two were among the better projects, both in terms of the economic standards of the people and physical accomplishments by the project agency. Both these projects had been purposely selected because their experience facilitated understanding of the potentialities of the Community Development approach and the kinds of problems which would have to be faced after community projects phase.

2. Objectives

- i) To **study the impact** of the programme upon the people and their response to the programme;
- ii) To know the effects of the programme in the project areas upon production, income, levels of living of the people.
- iii) To study the change in people's ways of thinking and doing things
- iv) To know the directions in which further changes in the programme were needed;
- v) To assess the specific deficiencies in the programme in meeting its declared objectives.

3. Reference Period

1952-53 to 1955-56 (upto September 56).

4. Main Findings

1. Among the more successful community projects, a distinct advance was made during the project period in terms of provision of basic amenities needed by the people i.e. education, health and sanitation, water supplies & communications. The people demonstrated their desire for progress and their willingness not only to adopt but also to contribute towards any measure about whose utility they are convinced. more and more villages had been coming forward to take up the development programme.

2. The limitations of project programme in some fields, notably co-operation, cottage industries and housing and the project's inability to provide the special assistance needed by the artisans, the landless labourers or other under privileged groups or to develop adequate programmes for women and youth were recognised and special programmes for meeting some of them (e.g. in village industries) had been started.

3. The main contribution of these three years' work in community projects had not been so much in the physical improvement, as in the change in the outlook both among the officials and the people.

4, The rate of progress was not uniform in different areas. In many backward areas where the basic facilities were completely lacking, the programme was greeted with tremendous enthusiasm. On the other hand, in parts where such facilities were already well developed and there was not enough in the content of the programme to meet the most urgent needs of the people, it did not evoke any particular enthusiasm and had proceeded like any ordinary government programme.

5. The importance of building up popular institutions - Co-operatives in the economic and panchayats in the civic, judicial and political fields -had become an accepted objective of policy, and concrete programmes of strengthening both of these institutions were being drawn up for the period of the Second Five Year Plan.

6. In a number of States, especially in the North, the collectors had not been actively brought into the picture. Also in many areas, the collectors, inspite of their best efforts, could not give sufficient time to development programmes.

7. The actual role of the Gram Sewaks, varied considerably in different projects depending upon their particular circumstances. In many projects, a considerable proportion of the Gram Sewak's time had been taken up in physical distribution of seed, fertilizers etc. and in arranging for loans for these things. Also, as the emphasis of the programme had gradually shifted to construction activities, these had taken an increasing proportion of the Gram Sewak's time. Thus, a gap between what the Gram Sewak was supposed to do and what he actually had done in the field had existed and that had led to some misunderstanding between the field and the training men.

8. In the field of Animal Husbandary, most of the work done till then had been on the veterinary as distinct from the animal husbandary side. Considerable progress had been made in most areas in treatment of diseases and control of epidemics.

9. The targets in respect of medical facilities were achieved in most projects.

10. The tempo of work in social education had recorded a marked improvement in almost all projects during the past years and there had also been increasing appreciation of the work being done.

11. Irrigation continued to claim a large share in the budgets of most projects. But the experience with the construction of even small irrigation works by the Project agency had not been very encouraging and **very** limited technical skills and organisation was available with the project agency.

5. **Major suggestions**

1. The three steps which appear to be of greatest significance for the future progress of the programme are : (i) strengthening the technical departments; (ii) development of popular institutions ; and (iii) providing suitable administrative arrangements for co-ordination between the extension agency on the one hand and the technical departments and popular institutions on the other.

2. In order that the departments may be able to meet the increasing demands of the extension agency, and also that the expansion of the N.E.S. and C.D. programme itself may yield its fullest benefits, a rapid and major strengthening of the technical departments is essential in all branches and at all levels.

3. **Besides, general** expansion of research facilities, strengthening of research units nearer to the field is needed. Having a research unit at the headquarters of every district may be one feasible step.

4. The role of the B.D.O., has to be perceived as that of an 'area specialist,, who unlike the technical officers was concerned not with any particular aspect of the development programme but with all aspects in a particular area. To succeed in this role, **both** his training and background should equip him suitably for this role.

5. in considering any steps about the functions of the Gram Sewak, his primary role of an extension agent should not be lost sight of.

6. Success in agriculture extension should not be measured in terms merely of physical accomplishments. It has to be judged much more by the preparedness of the people to continue the adoption of the improved practices without further persuasion.

7. The project agency has a valuable extension role in the field of irrigation which could be attended to much more actively than has been done so far.

8. Maintenance of kutchra roads is the most difficult problem in this field. In view of the key role which communications play in progress of rural areas, help in maintenance of these roads should continue to be provided, and this should be one of the main functions of the Gram Sewaks in the post-project phase.