

**FOURTH EVALUATION REPORT ON WORKING OF COMMUNITY
PROJECTS AND NES BLOCKS, VOL.I & VOL.II, 1957**

1. The Study

This report was based primarily on observations made in the field and detailed investigations by the Project Evaluation officers in their respective Evaluation Centres. These- were supplemented by studies of some 2 to 4 additional blocks by the PEOs in their respective states.

In addition, assessment had also been made specifically on two special studies initiated for the purpose by the Programme Evaluation Organisation. The first of these studies, involving a quick survey of a large sample of villages (15 to 20 per cent) in the project areas was designed to observe the physical accomplishments of the programme in these villages and determine their current status. The second study was based on a much smaller number of villages (3 in each project area) but involved intensive and qualitative observations designed to throw light on some aspects of the social and economic change in these villages resulting from the programme.

The report is divided into two volumes and each volume has two parts. Part I of the volume I contains general assessment of the Community Development Programme, review of the problems it raises and some suggestions for dealing with the same. Part II contains detailed statement of some aspects of the Community Development programme together with a chapter on results on the coverage of study. Volume II in its first part contains more detailed statement on the results of the coverage of study with statistical tables and with second part, a selected number of PEO reports on Social & Economic change in their areas.

2. Objectives

- i) To assess the achievement, both in physical terms and in terms of behaviours and attitudes of the completed community projects.

- ii) To ascertain permanent results achieved and the impact of the programme on change, growth and development in India's rural economy.
- iii) To get acquainted with the problems of transition from intensive development to normalisation.

.Sample Size/Criteria for Selection of Sample

The study was conducted in 17 evaluation centres. The total number of villages covered in the enquiry was 702 which was about 16 per cent of the total number of villages in these Evaluation Centres. For the purpose of selection of sample, the villages of a block/project were divided into three strata:

Stratum 'A' Gram Sewak headquarters villages.

Stratum 'B' Non-Gram Sewak headquarters villages, which were easily accessible.

Stratum 'C' Non-Gram Sewak headquarters villages which were poorly accessible.

From the first stratum, 20% of the villages and from the second and third stratum 15% of the villages were selected with the restriction that at least two villages from each stratum in each block should be selected. The villages were selected with probability proportion to size, size being the population as per 1951 census.

4. Reference Period

The study was conducted between September-December, 1956.

5. Main Findings

1. Almost all villages were covered by one or more items in the programme.

2. Items involving physical change, especially construction and irrigation activity, were widespread.

3. Items involving change in production attitudes in agriculture and animal husbandry were comparatively successful. The programmes concerning cottage industries were neither widespread nor successful.

4. Items involving changes in standards or norms of living especially in regard to primary education and drinking water~ were comparatively successful, while those concerning adult literacy and personal and environmental hygiene were not equally successful.

5. Items involving change in social attitudes such as readiness to maintain community centres, youth clubs and women organisations were generally not particularly successful.

6. Items involving change in organisational attitudes in the economic field such as readiness to make use of co-operative societies for purposes other than credit i.e. production and marketing were unsuccessful.

7. Items involving change in organisational attitudes in the political field such as readiness to use panchayats for planning and excluding development programmes were not successful.

8. The objective of inducing public participation and positive support in the case of construction programmes were successful.

9. There was wide disparity in the distribution of the achievement of the benefits of community project **programmes between different** blocks in the project areas. Within the blocks , it existed as between the headquarter villages of Gram Sevaks, the villages easily accessible to them and the villages not so easily accessible. within the villages, it existed between cultivators and noncultivators and within the cultivating classes, between cultivators of bigger holdings and larger financial resources and those of smaller holdings and lesser financial resources.

10. There was definite evidence that rural **adults were** not particularly keen about literacy. Community centres were established in a majority of the project areas as construction of such community centre buildings had been a popular programme. The running of the recreation centres was also satisfactory.

11. There was no doubt that the C.D and N.E.S. programmes had created material conditions that were favourable for the expansion of the cooperative movement in their areas. But the impact of the programme on the cooperative movement was quite uneven.

12. Community projects and blocks, although **included promotion** of cottage industries and attention to the needs of the artisan classes as part of their programme, but did not have comprehensive programmes for the artisans class on the lines of those for the cultivating classes, either in terms of extension or of supplies.

13. In the community projects of the 1952-53 series, adequate provision was made for loans. The project loans greatly increased the loan funds available for development purposes in these areas . In several cases, project loans were reported to have competed with the cooperative loans, as these were available on more favourable terms.

6. **Main Suggestions**

1. The transition from community project to the Post Intensive Phase (P.I.P.) pattern had created a number of important problems of maintenance of facilities, satisfaction of demands and activising of project staff. These needed to be served urgently if we were to activise both the project staff and the population of the project blocks which were now passing into post -intensive phase. Only then could economic and social development of a self sustaining character be made possible for these areas.

2. Several problems arise from the transition from the. C.D.P. to the P.I.P programme. First there was the problem of maintenance of facilities created during the project period. In most projects, arrangements in case of facilities like hospitals which were to be the State Departments or District local-Boards had been finalised. But in several cases, all the problems connected with the change had not yet been resolved. Long term maintenance of these facilities had to be the responsibility of the village panchayats. A part of the unwillingness of the panchayats to undertake this work was- due to the fact that the original construction programmes were undertaken without their being consulted and that these programmes benefited only either individuals or special groups of individuals and not the village community as such. The current problem was that of maintenance of village facilities in the transitional period. The project staff should have some ,responsibility in this matter and it was also necessary that a small financial provision was made for the purpose in the schematic budget of the post intensive blocks.

3. As development was the major activity of Government and the C.D.; N.E.S. and P.I.P. programmes were expected to cover the entire country within the next four years, the primary function of the administrative head of the district should be recognized as developmental and he should be given special assistants for dealing with law and order and revenue functions rather than the other way about.

4. More attention needed to be paid to the whole problem of training of block staff and orientation of the specialist staff.

5. The current tendency to establish a standard programme of activities in all States and projects should be replaced by greater variation in the major contents of the programme and in individual items of content so as to suit the wide variety of social, economic and cultural conditions in different parts of the country. Adaptation to local cultural and social life is more important in this than in perhaps any other field of project activity.

6. A long and persistent process of education was required for success in cooperation and it would be a tragedy if this were to be ignored in an attempt to achieve targets by showing a large number of industrial cooperatives within a given period. It was important to take due note from the very beginning of the role of the village industries organiser as an extension worker.

7. Special care should be taken in the selection of trainees as well as in the choice of the crafts in which training is to be given . There was no use giving training to persons who were not going to take up the occupation concerned or in crafts, the products of which have no market in the rural areas.