

**RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMME FOR LANDLESS AGRICULTURAL  
LABOURERS - CASE STUDIES OF SELECTED COLONIES, 1968.**

**1 . The Study**

Resettlement programmes which had been undertaken during all the Plans, received pointed emphasis with the Centrally Sponsored Schemes initiated during the Third Plan with a view to study the problems of re-settlement and its impacts. The Programme Evaluation Organisation, at the instance of Planning Commission took-up a Study of Resettlement of Agricultural Labourers in 1966. The said study was confined to only colonisation settlements and was undertaken in Seven districts located in as many States.

**2. Objectives**

- i) To examine the working of the resettlement programme implementation
- ii) To assess to limited extent its impact on the beneficiaries.

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

The study was confined to only colonisation settlements and was undertaken in only seven districts located in as many States which were selected on the basis of data about colonisation for resettlement of landless agricultural labourers. In each State one district was selected where colonization settlements, mainly for the landless agricultural labour family, had been in operation for a period of at least 2 years. An exception, however, was made in case of Gujarat where it commenced only in 1965-66. In 5 out of 7 States each selected district had only one colonization Scheme in operation and hence these got selected. In Bihar, the selected district had 2 colonies and both of these were selected. In Madhya Pradesh, 13 of the 14 colonies in Guana District were selected. 13 Schemes were classified, in terms of their working, as good, average and below average. A sample of 6 colonies including one from the good category, 3 from the average category and two from the below average category were selected systematically arranging the colonies in each category according to the number of families settled.

For the selection of settlers in each selected colony respondents was selected by the method of systematic sampling with a random start. The sampling fraction varied from colony to colony depending upon the number of settlers in the colony. Where there was only one colony the sampling fraction was so fixed as to select about 25 to 30 respondents and where there were 2 colonies or more the said fraction was fixed to provide an over all sample of 50 to 60 families.

#### 4. Reference Period

The study was conducted in 1966 and the data was collected for the years 1958-59 to 1965-66.

#### 5. Main Findings

1. In 6 of the 7 selected States, colonisation schemes studied pertained to the settlements organised on Govt. land while in case of Bihar, it were the Bhoodan Colonies that were studied. In Gujarat and Bihar, the settlers had organised themselves into Joint Farming Societies while in all other cases, the allotments were made on individual basis.

2. In most of the selected colonies, it was found that majority of the settlers belonged to backward classes. All the original settlers in the selected colonies of M.P, Madras and Kerala, were reported to be continuing while in the selected colonies of other States, there had been some desertion. This number was quite small in Bihar (6 out of 49) and UP (60 out of 511). In Gujarat, though the number having left is only 6 but it meant about 25 per cent of original settlers. In Assam, it was found that only 634 of the original 1493 settlers were continuing at the time of study. Desertion from Bihar colonies were due to the fact that the settlers found the land allotted uneconomic while in U.P desertions were forced by the stipulated rules and conditions.

3. A variety of settlement schemes had been taken up in the different States and their respective schemes had differing eligibility and priority criteria pattern of assistance, unit of allotment, etc. Difference among the States were noticed in case of administrative arrangements as well as in respect of roles of the various deptts.

4. In Pilibhit (UP) and Kaki - Nowgong (**Assam**) and Attur(**Madras**) reclamation was done on Govt Account and settlers were allotted reclaimed lands. In UP, no charges were recovered except a nominal development levey

and that also only from **one category** of settlers, i.e., educated unemployed. While *in Assam, colony* premium was to be charged but the recovery of the same had not been made till the time of the study. In case of Attur colony (Madras) reclamation was done by Govt. and the total cost incurred would be ultimately recovered from the settlers as loan. In case of other selected colonies, reclamation was done by the settlers themselves for which financial assistance had been provided,

5. The progress of reclamation had been quite slow in most of the colonies. However, most of the reclaimed land had been brought under cultivation. As regards adoption of improved practices, the position had not been encouraging in most of the colonies.

6. The assistance provided to the settlers in different colonies had not been uniform. Except Kaki, (Assam) all other areas under study were at various stages of completion and the point of optimum utilisation of land was yet to be reached. **As regards income** level, there had been marginal improvement in Bihar, Gujarat and Kerala colonies while in case of selected *colonies of Assam, MP, Madras and U.P.* the position was comparatively better, mainly due to the fertile land and sowing of sugarcane crop. In terms of assets as prior to settlement and in Sept., 1966, it was found that the position was more encouraging except for the colony in

7. In some States, there were more than one Deptt. looking after the different aspects of settlement schemes. For implementation of the colonisation project, specific field level agencies were found to be existing in Pilibhit (UP) and Attur (Madras). In the two Bhoodan colonies of Bihar, cooperative farming societies were provided their managers by the State Bhoodan Board.

## 6. **Major Suggestions**

1. It is necessary to prescribe some minimum limit in respect of number of settlers as well as the area for settlement to be covered as a colonisation scheme to make the scheme viable one .

2. In case of Jethi (Gujarat), the cost of reclamation worked out to be only about Rs.15/- per acre while under the centrally sponsored schemes, Rs.30,000/were given to the Farming Society for development of 100 acres of land. It is, therefore, felt that the pattern of assistance should be flexible enough to take care of such local variation.

3. Since agricultural colonisation' means new habitations, it is necessary to provide minimum basic amenities to all such settlements.

4. In some states there were more than one Deptt. looking after different aspects of settlement schemes. For purpose of effective coordination, it would be useful if a single agency was made responsible at least for **coordination** of the programme.

.5. Problems of delays in execution, lack of coordination, duplication of agencies, wrong selection of settlers, under utilisation of resources etc. were some of the defects noticed in the colonisation scheme and should be removed on an urgent basis in order to make the programme a success.