

**STUDY OF EVALUATION OF POST
STAGE-II C.D. BLOCKS, 1970**

1. The Study

The Community Development Programme was started with the primary objective of involving community participation as supplementary to Govt efforts in improving the social and economic conditions of the rural people. The programme was initiated in 55 community project areas all over India in October 1952. The programme was to be implemented in three phases viz. National Extension Service (NES), Community Development (C.D.) and Post Intensive phase. However, from April, 1958 the programme was implemented in two stages of 5 years each instead of existing 3 phases. After completing a period of 10 years and passing through Stage-I and Stage-II, a block entered into post-stage II phase when block expected to establish a permanent unit of planning and development funds through the block agency had also been well established.

In the year 1964, the Ministry of Community Development requested the P.E.O. to take up a study on the working of post stage-II Blocks with reference to (a) adequacy of funds, (b) routing of funds by departments through the block agency, (c) transfer of schemes to panchayat samitis for implementation, raising of local resources through taxes, etc. and (e) work-load of block staff. Accordingly, the P.E.O. initiated a comprehensive field study as a part of the programme for the year 1964-65 in 39 selected post-stage II blocks.

2. Objectives

- i) The nature and extent of development of the physical and human resources that had taken place in the Post Stage II Block areas (including coverage of areas and distribution of benefits);
- ii) The tempo of development activity achieved in the different stages of the block, the extent to which the schematic budget, the departmental funds and other resources had determined it, and the effect of conversion to. post-stage II on the tempo of work and the extension programme;

- iii) The adequacy of schemes and resources of the various development departments of the State Govts that were routed through block agency in the Post Stage II blocks with a view to ensuring maintenance of tempo of development already reached.
- iv) The impact of Panchayati Raj on the resources available for development in the block areas as well as on the block and development administration, with special reference to the efforts made for increasing agricultural production;
- v) The growth of community organisation and participation in planning and developmental activities in agriculture, rural industry, education, health, communications and other fields; and
- vi) The strength and weakness of the block organisation and personnel in the matter of area planning and extension work In the context of the annual plans and the Fourth Plan.

3. **Sample Size**

The study covered 12056 sample households in 286 sample villages in 39 selected post stage-II blocks of all the states excepting Nagaland, Haryane and of Himachal Pradesh.

4. **Period of Study**

The study was initiated in 1964-65 and record data were collected for the years 1953-54 and 1963-64.

5. **Main Findings**

1. The average size of a household showed, on the whole, an increasing trend over the period 1954-55 to 1964-65. ownership of holdings by economic classifications of owner i.e. cultivators, agricultural labourers, artisans and transport workers also showed an increasing trend during the period. Percentage of persons offering themselves for wage employment other than in non-cultivating sector also followed the same trend. Net operational size of holdings, however, decreased from 6.6 hectares in 1954-55 to 5.7 hectares in 1964-65.

2. Cooperatives made an impressive progress in their coverage both in respect of villages and households during the period under study. The average membership per society at different points of time showed an increasing trend. It was observed that 46.8 percent of the selected cultivators, households reported as members of one or other cooperative society. To enable them to get timely supplies of seeds and fertilizers and for constructing godowns, the cooperative societies in the blocks were provided with loans and subsidies. For improvements of rural arts and crafts, loans were given by cooperative societies for the purchase of improved tools and raw materials.

3. The Panchayats played an important role in mobilizing local resources and public participation for execution of community works. These institutions levied a number of taxes on property, profession, cattle, vehicles etc, collected levies on land revenue or rent, shops, drainage, light, water and octroi etc where services were provided by gram panchayats. The total expenditure of panchayats increased by 6 times in the last year of Stage II period and more than 17 times during the post Stage II period, compared to the expenditure incurred in the first year of stage I period.

4. It was observed that the Block **level** officers, namely BD0s and AE0s, were technically competent, devoted to duty and had initiative in work. They were willing to shoulder responsibility and had capacity to win the confidence of public. By and large the officers were usually good in execution of production plans.

5. Majority of the VLWs were of the opinion that, while their conditions of service were unsatisfactory with limited chances of promotion and of facilities of housing, education etc., the work was heavy and taxing.

6. In the absence of flow of funds, the burden of maintaining the community development programme proved too heavy on the State Govts. The Panchayati Raj was hardly able to add to the resources of the blocks funds which were inadequate for, carrying on development activities. In some blocks the jeep was withdrawn creating difficulties for the field work.

7. The net sown area increased by 3 per cent between first and last stages of study. Area under double and multiple cropping also increased by 3 % and the intensity of cropping increased by 2 % during the period under study.

8. Percentage of area irrigated by tubewells, wells and tanks in selected villages showed considerable increase (from 9.5 per cent to 23.8 per cent of **total** irrigated areas) in the post stage-II period as compared to the first year of the blocks. **But similar percentage** for canal irrigation recorded a fall from 43.7 per cent to 32.1 per cent of total irrigated areas.

9. out of 710 leaders interviewed from selected villages in 39 blocks, about 44% of leaders possessed mechanical appliances of which 10% undertook land improvement measures like soil conservation/land reclamation. Recommended varieties of seeds found ready acceptance with about 70% of the leaders growing **paddy**, wheat, maize, cotton and groundnut.

10. The analysis of adoption indicated a very high level of use of improved seeds for irrigated paddy, irrigated wheat, sugarcane and cotton on increasingly larger proportion of crop area of the growers. The use of treated seed was found to be somewhat restricted in the case of paddy both irrigated and unirrigated, irrigated wheat and maize.

11. Chemical fertilisers were found to be used by larger proportion of wheat, paddy, jowar and sugarcane. cultivators and they mostly preferred nitrogenous fertilisers. Phosphatic fertilisers had a second place in the order of preference of the cultivating class with least preference for potassic fertilisers.

12. It was observed that the percentage of the gainfully occupied persons with artisanship as the principal occupation increased from 2.5 in 1954-55 to 5.4 in 1964-65. The wages per annum for an artisan household during the period of 10 years witnessed substantial increase in all the selected blocks.

13. The number of households taking loan and the amount of loan were very much higher during stage-II period than the other period.

14. The overall coverage of the special programme for weaker sections of the population was not at all satisfactory. But untouchability and other discriminatory practices imposed on the Harijans were found to be diminishing significantly in the selected blocks.

6. Major Suggestions

1. Building up of some constraints which would tend to curb the play of personality factor in official and non-official relations, evolving some conventions by which the initiative and drive of the block staff were not dwarfed, and a feeling of community consciousness designed to foster a common cause viz development of the country and the people, were the prime needs of hour.

2. The experience of community development as revealed in this study brings into focus certain issues for further consideration. Firstly, a more flexible budget and staff structure to area needs would have undoubtedly resulted in well tailored schemes to fulfil local aspirations better than what was observed in this study. Secondly, the expectation that the departments would route their funds through the blocks did not materialise in most areas due to keenness of regular departments to maintain their individuality in programme accomplishment. Thirdly, the coverage of the country with community development blocks is a fait accompli, but a slower rate of speed might have substantially added to the record of achievements.

3. Problems of post stage-II blocks were numerous, the solution to which lay in; i) augmenting the resources of Panchayati Raj bodies, ii) giving more unconditional grants-in-aid to Panchayats and giving certain amount of flexibility. to these bodies; iii) simplifying the procedures for giving grants and loans impartially to needy individuals; iv) giving appropriate support for making post stage-II blocks somewhat self reliant.

**List of officers who provided valuable assistance in the
preparation of the Volume -I**

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