

**STUDY ON EVALUATION OF CONSOLIDATION
OF HOLDINGS PROGRAMME - 1969**

1. The Study

The consolidation of holdings started in almost all the States during the First Plan Period. Consolidation measures were designed to remedy two distinct conditions prevailing in Indian agriculture, firstly, the division of land into under-sized units not suitable for proper cultivation and secondly, the excessive dispersal of parts of a single farm. An evaluation of the Consolidation of Holdings Programme. was taken up by the PEO at the instance of the Planning Commission in eight States where more than 4.05 lakh hectares of land were consolidated.

The report on the study was brought out into two parts. Part-I of the report highlighted some of the important aspects of the programme of consolidation of holdings by comparing the situation prevailing in the selected States, Part-II of the report brought out the special problems of consolidation in the States of Maharashtra, Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh.

2. Objectives

The main objective of the evaluation study were:

- i) To find out the extent to which the measures relating to the consolidation of holdings programme have had the desired effect and
- ii) To identify the directions in which improvements can be made.

3. Sample Size/Sample Selection

The sample consists of 18 districts 36 tehsils/talukas, 106 villages and about 1100 cultivators in 8 selected States where more than 4.05 hectares of land were consolidated. These states were Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Mysore, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

Districts had been taken as the primary sampling units. The requisite number of districts wereselected in each Statesystematically with probability proportional to the area consolidated from a stratified

list of districts arranged in the descending order of the area consolidated. From each selected district, two tehsils were selected with probability proportional to the area consolidated. From each of the selected tehsils, a sample of 3 villages was drawn with probability proportion to the area consolidated from each selected village, a sample of about 10 or 11 cultivators was drawn by the method of Systematic Sampling with equal probability.

4. **Period of Study**

The field study was conducted in 1967-68.

5. **Main Findings**

1. The amount of work expected of the staff was more than they could do. The staff, therefore, resorted to short cut methods in order to achieve targets in terms of time. The detailed attention that the work required could not be given.

2. Not only the staff in position was found inadequate but also no arrangements for training of the staff for consolidation existed in some States like Madhya Pradesh, Mysore and Gujarat.

3. The actual expenditure on administration was fairly below the amount allotted. Since in some states no arrangements or no adequate arrangements had been made; the shortfall in utilisation of finance to some extent impeded the progress of consolidation work.

4. In the Bijapur district of Mysore and the Ahmedabad district of Gujarat, 95 per cent and 80 per cent of the selected respondents did not feel the need for consolidation. In all other selected districts, there was an appreciable number of respondents who did not feel the need for consolidation.

5. Attitudes to consolidation were unfavourable and their existence was a reflection of the weak publicity work done before and during the consolidation operations.

6. In Gujarat and Maharashtra, the criterion of backwardness for selecting areas for consolidation had an adverse effect on the progress of the programme. This criterion was, therefore, revised in favour of more developed areas, areas under the watershed of major and medium irrigation works and areas covered by the intensive agricultural programmes.

7. In majority of selected areas, the record of rights was not upto date and the work involved *in* bringing them upto date was tremendous. The cultivators, in many cases being illiterate, were unable to **understand** the entries in the record of rights without assistance. As a result, in many cases the cultivators were *unable to* lodge their objections in time.

8. Future developmental requirements of the villages have not always been kept in mind while drawing up the scheme for consolidation. Besides, correct valuation of the land was an extremely *Intricate* problem because in certain cases, inferior lands were deliberately valued at higher rates so **that there was** a gain in the exchange of land. Another factor which led to incorrect valuation of the land was that of productivity of the soil taken into consideration while fixing the value of the land was the same that had been entered into records years earlier. No consideration was given to possible improvement that had increased productive capacity of the land.

6. Major Suggestions

1. It is not enough to provide for prevention of fragmentation in the Prevention of Fragmentation and consolidation of Holdings Acts of different States. A careful study has to be made of the relevant provisions of the consolidation of Holdings Acts and the Acts relating to Succession and the suitable amendments made wherever necessary to prevent the re-emergence of fragmentation.

2. The publicity work for consolidation should be directed at showing the advantages of consolidation and at pointing out the irrationality of attachment to a particular piece of land. For demonstrating the advantages of consolidation, organised publicity at official level is necessary and the organisational and administrative arrangements as well as the publicity media have to be carefully worked out.

3. In order to ensure the smooth and satisfactory progress of consolidation programme, the valuation of the land should be done by a high powered committee consisting of retired senior official of the Revenue department and two men of public importance. Whatever be the agency to value the land or to hear the appeals, the whole procedure should be streamlined and followed expeditiously.