

**FIELD REPORTING ON THE WORKING OF
SOCIAL WELFARE SCHEMES - 1970**

1. The Study

Since independence, there had been an impressive increase in the number of Social Welfare Schemes which were intended to better the living conditions of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other socially and physically handicapped persons. On the basis of the extent of participation of the Centre and the States, welfare programmes were categorised into three i.e. centrally operated, centrally sponsored and centrally aided. The first category were planned and executed by the Department of Social Welfare at the Centre whereas the second type were formulated and financed by the Centre, but executed by the States. The centrally aided programmes were incorporated in the development plans of the State Governments and the expenditure thereon was shared between the Centre and the States in the ratio of 60:40. The expenditure on welfare programmes had been increasing over the plans and during the first 18 years of planning, a cumulative expenditure of about Rs.277 crores was incurred on special plan programmes, besides the committed non-plan budget expenditures by the State Governments.

A detailed study of 'Development staff at the District and Lower Levels' conducted in 1968 revealed wide disparities in organisational structures, overlapping of functions and uncoordinated implementation of the programmes in the Social Service Sector. It was, therefore, felt that a further probe into some of the important programmes could be undertaken; social welfare programmes being one among them. The study of social welfare programmes was taken up by the Programme Evaluation Organisation under its programme of 'periodical field reporting'. The field work of the study was initiated in September, 1969 and completed in May, 1970.

2. Objectives

- i) To have a census of all the schemes at the district level run by the Centre, States, autonomous bodies, etc;

- ii) To collect for each of the scheme its objectives, background, brief history and staffing pattern;
- iii) To study the achievements of the schemes so far including physical, financial and other aspects; and
- iv) To study the areas and nature of duplication, overlapping and difficulties in the execution of the schemes and problems of coordination.

3. Sample Size/Criteria for Selection of Sample

The study taken up in 16 States and one Union Territory, covered all the 38 districts where the Programme Evaluation Organisation offices were located. From each district one block with the maximum number of Social Welfare Schemes in operation was selected. In case of more than one block having the maximum number of Social Welfare Schemes in operation, the one having larger Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe population was selected.

4. Reference Period

Data were collected for the first 18 years of planning, from 1950-51 to 1968-69.

5. Main Findings

1. The population of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes was about 17.6% of the total population of the district covered by the Study.

2. There were 1256 Social Welfare Schemes in operation in 38 districts studied. Of these 862 (68.6%) were State Sponsored Schemes and the rest were either Centrally aided, State aided or voluntary agencies' own schemes. Of the total, 384 schemes were introduced during the pre-plan and First Plan period, 715 during the Second and Third Plans and the remaining 157, during the Annual Plan Period (1966-69).

3. Of the 406 schemes initiated in blocks, 51 were initiated during the First Plan, 298 during the Second and Third Plans and the remaining 57 during the Annual Plan Period. Of these, 272 were State Schemes, 78 were Centrally Sponsored and the rest were Centrally aided, State aided, agencies' own and of local bodies.

4. The departmental agencies entrusted with Centrally Sponsored, Centrally aided and State Schemes were the Department of Social Welfare of the Government of India, Central Social Welfare Board of the Government of India and State Social Advisory Board respectively.

5. The total expenditure in 38 districts on the Social Welfare Programmes implemented so far since their inception was Rs.23.1 crores. Similar expenditure by the voluntary agencies was Rs.2.26 crores. The average expenditure per scheme per district studied was Rs.1.80 lakhs, whereas it was Rs.0.29 lakhs at the block level. At the district level, this average was the highest (Rs.3.30 lakhs) in Tamil Nadu and the lowest (Rs.0.39 lakhs) in Himachal Pradesh. At the block level, it was the highest (Rs.0.90 lakhs) in Assam and the lowest (Rs.0.10 lakhs) in Madhya Pradesh. Percentage expenditure on establishment to total expenditure per district was the highest in Jammu & Kashmir (27.7%) and the lowest in Mysore (2.6%). No specific reason could be ascribed to these wide variations.

6. The expenditure on education of backward classes was 46.6% of the total expenditure on all social welfare schemes. The sector of health, housing, recreation and extension bagged a share of 40.7% of the total.

7. In 12 out of the 16 States studied, the actual expenditure on the schemes exceeded the budgeted expenditure.

8. Of the total staff of 7,418 employed on these programmes at the district level, 4282 were technical staff and 3136 administrative staff. 88.3% of them were paid below Rs.200 per month. At the block level, a total of 1032 persons were employed on 406 schemes which worked out to an All-India average of 2.5 persons per scheme at the block level.

9. The deficiencies like the lack of co-operation between different departments and the absence of co-ordination among the agencies implementing the schemes were reported from many States. In some States, the block authorities were not associated with implementation of the programmes.

6. **Major Suggestions**

1. A co-ordinating machinery may be set up at the district level under the District Collector in order to streamline the programmes and provide guidance to different official and non-official agencies.

2. A co-ordinated approach should be built up in giving grants-in-aid to welfare institutions.

3. Decision must be taken regarding the involvement of Block Development Officers in the programme implementation.