

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*We are grateful to the authorities of the Planning Commission, Government of India, who have funded for this project and offered timely instructions to carry out the study. We particularly acknowledge the services of **Shri. P.N. Nigam** (Dy. Adviser - SER) and **Shri P.K. Aggarwal** (Senior Research Officer, SER), who have processed our papers and gave instructions without any delay.*

*We thank the University authorities **Dr. L.B. Venkatrangan** (Vice Chancellor), **Dr. P.V. Vaidyanathan** (Former Vice Chancellor), **Dr. M. Rathinasabapathy** (Registrar), **Shri Natarajan** (Finance Officer), **Prof.G. Ambalavanan** (Former Director Planning), **Shri. S. Manivasagam** (Development Officer), **Smt. R. Chandra** (Sr. Superintendent) and **Shri M. Ramanathan** (Assistant) who offered critical administrative support and managerial services in carrying out the study.*

*The Principal Investigator is indebted to **Dr. N.J. Kurian** (Adviser), Planning Commission, Government of India, who encouraged him to do policy research and publish papers in the peer-reviewed journals. He was the source of inspiration and motivation during his tenure in the Ministry of Rural Development, where the latter was the Director.*

*The Principal Investigator is grateful to his colleague **Dr.N. Ramagopal**, Reader, Department of Economics, Annamalai University, whose deep involvement in teaching in Environmental Economics for several years, has helped us to resolve many technical questions, in prosecuting the project. In particular, I acknowledge his views on the assessment of externalities helped our work substantially.*

*Many officials were consulted during the study carried out in the State Tamil Nadu who provided invaluable advice, information and materials relevant to the project. Lack of space precludes mentioning the name of every one here, but we would like to greatly recognise the co-operations of **Shri N. Govindan**, Secretary (RD), **Shri. Ko. Iyer**, Director (RD), **Shri Radha** (ARD), **Shri Chandrasekaran** (ARD), **Shri Sattanathan** (ARD) and **Shri. Rajasekar** (ARD). We thank all of them for their help and support.*

We are indebted to the District Level Officers of all DRDAs, who helped identify the study villages, giving their opinions and suggestions for better implementation of the Rural Development

Programmes in the State. We would like to specifically record the services of DRDAs of Thanjavur, Villupuram, Dharmapuri, Erode, Nilgiris, Ramanathapuram and Kanyakumari.

In Rural Development Administration, Block Development Officers have more executing powers in plan formulation and implementation. The study team received a continuous help from the block level officials in conducting field survey during the months of October and November 2001. We are grateful to the officials of the seven blocks viz. Kumbakonam, Vikravandi, Pappireddipatti, Bhavani, Coonoor, Tiruppulani, and Killiyur.

*We have received overwhelming response and co-operation from the elected members of the local bodies and the people of the seven study villages. Without their full co-operation, the study would have not been completed. We appreciate their sincerity and dedication in carrying out the task at the panchayat level. In particular, we warmly thank the following presidents of the seven-panchayat villages. They are: **Thiru S. Ramachandran** – Patteeswaram, **Thiru M.Ravi** – Ayyur Akaram, **Tmt. S. Sumathi** – Odathurai, **Tmt. T. Santhi** – B.Pallipatti, **Thiru V. Mathivakanan** – Hubathalai, **Thiru. Athithan** – Kanjirangudi and **Tmt. Prabha** - Mullanginavillai.*

*We thank sincerely the faculty, and non-teaching staff of the Department of Economics, Annamalai University, who extended all necessary timely help in completion of the project. We are grateful to **Dr. D.Namasivayam** (Professor of Economics, DDE), **Dr. J. Vasanthakumar** (Professor and Head, Dept of Agricultural Extension, Annamalai University) and **Mr. K. Ramu** (Lecturer in Economics) came forward and trained the project officials, particularly in building the skills of the research team to gather primary and secondary data.*

*We thank **Mr. E. Kanagaraj**, Ph.D. Research Scholar in Economics, who has involved himself in each and every stage of the project work, particularly in the technical tasks of data storage, data retrieval, tabulation and statistical analysis.*

*We extended our thanks to our M.Phil. scholars, who have co-operated and assisted in all the stages of the project work. They worked without any time constraints even during late hours at night. We specifically thank **Mr. K. Dhamodaran**, **Mr. S. Sankar Ganesh** and **Mr. G. Sasikumar** for their assistance. In view of the large sample size and urgency in submission of the report, we have utilized the services of some of the P.G students of the Department of Economics, apart from the services of paid employees of the project. We specifically appreciate the students, **Mr. V. Nagaraj**, **Mr.V. Sridarakannan**, **Mr. M. Murugasamy**, **Mr. R. Sampath** and **Mr. J. Subash Chandra Bose**, who have worked with us in the process of data storage.*