

## Chapter-1

### Developmental Schemes: A Perspective

During the colonial rule while the State was apathetic and even antagonistic there was a growing consciousness amongst the educated persons about colonial exploitation and the deteriorating condition of the masses. The need for taking up for the people, especially those living in the rural areas and disadvantaged sections like the Scheduled Castes, was accepted as the central issue very early during the freedom movement under Mahatma Gandhi. Consequently, no time was lost after Independence and the first major national program of Community Development was initiated concurrently with the formulation of the First Five-Year Plan.

#### The Development Schemes through Five-Year Plans

The community development programme was envisaged basically as a movement of the people supported, wherever necessary, by the State. The village community was expected to attain a state of self-sustained growth, dispensing with the need of outside support. The growth potential of the natural resources was expected to be fully developed by taking advantage of modern science and technology through a network of extension services which were established for the first time. A beginning was made in this regard with the establishment of **Gram Panchayat** as a part of the **community development administration**. It was envisaged that as we proceeded further and gained experience, these institutions would become stronger and assume increasingly higher responsibilities and finally graduate to the status of autonomous institutions, having under their purview all matters concerning the day-to-day political, social and economic life of the people. Thus, the **Panchayat, the cooperative and the school**, which represented three facets of life, would become three great pillars of community life in the village. The biggest achievement of the community development programme was the enthusiasm for development engendered throughout the country. People, for the first time, had the feel of an administration which was committed to serve them through its extension agency and a network of economic institutions, which was in striking contrast to the tradition of the administration established to rule them. The issues of poverty and rural development were too complex to be resolved within the frame of community development.

The community development movement itself with its original approach could not continue for long. Achievement of **physical targets** assumed **priority** and became an obsession **leading to the neglect** of sustained effort for engendering the spirit of self-reliance and developing capabilities for self-sustained growth. During the second Five-Year Plan and after there was emphasis on physical development in all sectors of the economy. The new strategy of the **Second Five-Year Plan** did help in building up a strong industrial sector, but the **rural economy** failed to pick up. The stagnating food production and growing deficits not only affected the rural people, but also created an imbalance in the whole national economy. It was clear that with a weak rural economy and growth even in the industrial sector could not be sustained beyond a point, let alone the finer

issues of equity and justice. Consequently, there was again a shift in emphasis in favour of **rural economy**. But the main concern during the phase was agricultural production rather than the overall development of rural areas. The severe droughts that occurred in the late 60's which affected the national economy so adversely that the country was constrained to take a 'plan holiday' for three long years.

The Fourth Five-Year Plan marks the beginning of a new phase in our development strategy. There were two facets of the poverty issue, viz., (i) regional area-specific problems and (ii) socio-economic growth related problems. That some regions suffered from certain inherent handicaps was clear from the recurring droughts and scarcity conditions. In such regions the overall production capability is not adequate to support the entire population at a reasonable level. Therefore, special programmes were necessary for augmenting the production potential itself. It was expected that once the overall potential improved, the weaker sections would also get a reasonable share in the fruits of that development. The first in the series of area-specific programs initiated during the Fourth Plan related to the drought prone areas. In **Fifth Plan hill areas and tribal** areas were also taken as separate categories for special attention. In the case of the tribal areas the issues were rather complex, having a mixture of both area-specific and socio-economic elements. In the Sixth Five-Year Plan **desert areas** were added to this list. In the meantime, the National Committee on the Development of Backward Areas examined the entire question of development of backward areas. They identified six basic categories of backward regions, viz., (i) Hill Areas, (ii) Tribal Areas, (iii) Drought-prone Areas, (iv) Desert Areas, (v) Chronically Flood-affected Areas and (vi) Areas affected by salinity.

The basic structure and working of the seventh, eighth and ninth plan models were relatively the same as far as rural development schemes are concerned. These plans assigned a key role to the growth of the agriculture sector. In addition to sectoral investments which would result in an expansion of employment opportunities through the process of growth over the plan period, the operation of several important employment/beneficiary oriented programmes such as National Rural Employment Programmes (NREP), Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), Rural Land-less Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP), Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM) etc. was also to be continued. In other words, the strategy was designed to **raise the rate of growth as well as increase income and purchasing power of the weaker segments** of population, especially **rural unorganized labour** (such as land-less labourers, small and marginal farmers, share croppers etc.) and thereby provide the demand support to the growth process.

A review of strategies suggests that the modalities of tackling the unemployment problem seem to have undergone changes over time consequent upon improvements in the method of measuring and defining the problem. In earlier Plans, the data for measuring employment was limited. Consequently or otherwise, unemployment among educated (or the organized sector) was accorded greater attention in those Plans. In the latter Plans, employment has been dealt with in terms of characteristics such as **sex, age, rural-urban residence, status/class** of worker and the emphasis has shifted to unemployment amongst the weaker sections of the population.

In short, the evolution seems to be from a strategy in which plan investments were expected to provide direct employment, to one in which output, growth and direct employment generation programmes are both expected to play an important role.

The direct employment generation programmes have sought to provide employment to the less privileged as a part of the strategy of income distribution in the latter Plans. These special schemes have assumed importance especially since the Sixth Plan. Programmes such as NREP, RLEGP and IRDP, which were referred to in the earlier plans have witnessed an increasing share of the plan outlay. It may be mentioned, however, that **programmes for Social Services** (education, health, housing, water supply, family welfare, backward class development, etc.) have **continued to command 12 to 14 per cent** of total outlays through the Plans.

The various developmental schemes have been particularly initiated with the intention of ameliorating the conditions of rural poor for effective implementation of these schemes in each village, block and district offices have been set up and functionaries were appointed. The purpose was to keep continuous communication and interaction. **Panchayati Raj system** has been introduced to **elicit participation** of people at the **grass-roots** level. After several Five-Year plans a large section of population particularly in rural areas **still experience** acute oppression, exploitation and deprivation. States like **Bihar, Rajasthan, M.P., Orissa and Uttar Pradesh** still represent high level backwardness. In these States, the workers are living and working in precarious conditions which can be called inhuman. With respect to agricultural development, we have not achieved even half of what was envisaged. The socio-cultural aspects of development were overlooked. The experience shows that the **people are quite indifferent, uninformed and naïve about schemes**. They are **totally unaware** about **ways and means to approach the development schemes and get access to the benefits (specially designed for them)** at local, district, and State Government level. The functionaries keep themselves engaged in **target fulfillment** every year. In several States and districts **three-fourth to half** of the **total fund allocated** for development **schemes are not properly utilized**. Most of the functionaries do not realise that the **information** is a **crucial factor** for all developmental activities. It is also talked that the development schemes in rural areas have benefited the upper class people more than the target group for whom the scheme were developed. There are various reasons for the programmes not reaching to the target group. Number of poor is rising over the years. Only late, in eighth and ninth Five-Year Plans the approach of government has changed **from welfare to development**.

### **Need for the Present Study**

The present study is an attempt to understand **micro realities** at the **village** and block level and successful or unsuccessful implementation of development schemes. The study will help in **understanding salient features** of **various development schemes** and will provide feedback to policy makers to enhance **efficacy** of these schemes at grass-roots level.

A **major objective** of the study is to find **ground-realities** and have **perceptions** and **understanding** of development schemes which can **contribute** in making

them **more efficacious, meaningful** to the people. However, the specific **objectives** of the study are :

1. To identify the factors which affect the implementation of development schemes in concrete terms.
2. To see that benefits of which of the schemes are percolating down to the target groups. And to understand the pattern of success of these schemes whether distributed uniformly over larger area in the region or not, and the reasons their of.
3. To assess the extent of impact of development schemes concretely (as improvement in quantitative terms).
4. To understand what are actual bottlenecks from the first step to the last step, which result in failure or ineffectiveness of the respective schemes.
5. To suggest possible alterations that could be made to remove the bottlenecks observed, so as to get the desired results of percolating the benefits (of increased national income and access to scarce resources) down to the masses through the development schemes.

To achieve these specific objectives the methodologies followed in the present study are reported in Chapter 2.