

Analysis of Social Sector Programmes on Rural Poverty Alleviation

Introduction

One of the most crucial challenges confronting the country has been the eradication of poverty. The magnitude of the problem has still been quite staggering and it has been estimated that about thirty six per cent of the total population has still been languishing below the poverty line (BPL) in 1993-94. Though the incidence of poverty has declined, as various studies suggest, from 54.9 per cent in 1973-74 to about 36 per cent in 1993-94 and most recently reported, its absolute number has not declined significantly over the same period.

The main determinants of poverty has been identified to be, the lack of income and purchasing power due to lack of productive employment opportunities; continuous increase in the prices of food grains and inadequate social infra-structure which affected the people and the quality alike and their employability (Ninth Five Year Plan, 1997-2002).

Though economic growth has been accepted to be an important component of development because it creates more resources and more space for the people's involvement. However, the poor people's involvement depends on the sources of growth and the nature of growth. Recognizing this, the government has identified certain services, as essential, to human development and have included them in the list of minimum basic needs programmes. Further, it has also been recognized that poverty can, effectively, be tackled only when the poor start contributing to the growth by their active involvement in the growth process. Therefore, the implementation of

programmes should increasingly be based on the approaches and methods that involve the poor in the process of poverty eradication and economic growth.

The social sector programmes covered, under the poverty alleviation in the study are:

(i) Indira Avas Yojana (IAY), (ii) Employment Assurance Scheme/Jawahar Rojgar Yojana (EAS/JRY), (iii) Scheme for Rural Sanitation, and (iv) National Improved/Smokeless Chulha Scheme.

Incidentally, rural development department has been the sponsoring agency for all these schemes. The analysis of the scheme has been made on the basis of their performances and involvement of beneficiaries.

5.1.1 Indira Awas Yojana

Indira Awas Yojana (IAY) has been one of the most important rural housing schemes. Its genesis could be traced to the rural employment programme like National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) and Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLGEP) in which construction of houses was a major activity. Since January 1996, with the restructuring of Jawahar Rojgar Yojana (JRY), IAY has become an independent centrally sponsored scheme for providing shelter to the rural poor with resources being shared on 80:20 ratio between the centre and the states.

The main objective of the scheme has been to construct dwelling units free of cost to the target group of people, living below the poverty line, which comprises SC/ST, free bonded labourers and also non SC/ST families. The cost norms, under the IAY, have been periodically revised upward and in its latest upward revision, the maximum ceiling of assistance admissible under IAY has been raised from Rs. 14,000 to Rs. 20,000 in plan areas and from Rs. 15,800 to Rs. 22,000 for the hilly/difficult areas (Ninth Five Year Plan, 1997-2002 Vol. II).

In its existing form IAY had a limited purpose viz. construction of new houses, however, realizing the urgent need of upgradation of kutcha houses, it has now been

proposed, to modify IAY format, to include the upgradation of kutchha and unserviceable houses, besides the construction of new houses.

Performance

The study covers a total of 31 beneficiaries randomly selected of which, 13 beneficiaries, accounting to over 41 percent belonged to Varanasi district and the remaining 59 percent to Saharanpur district. The gender wise classification shows that over 84 percent in Varanasi and over 77 percent in Saharanpur district were male. An overwhelming majority of beneficiaries (over 61 percent in Varanasi and over 55 percent in Saharanpur) were engaged as non-agricultural labourers followed by agricultural labourers and artisans. Similarly, the caste wise composition of beneficiaries shows that over 53 percent of them in Varanasi and over 66 percent in Saharanpur belonged to scheduled caste group followed by OBC and a small minority of general castes. About 69.2 percent of beneficiaries in Varanasi and over 53 percent in Saharanpur district agreed that the criteria for the selection of beneficiaries, was being followed whereas about 15 percent in Varanasi and over 39 percent felt that some element of discrepancy also governed the selection procedure. The perusal of selection pattern, however, shows that the guidelines have, by and large, been followed.

The study, further, shows that over 76 percent of the houses constructed in Varanasi and over 55 percent in Saharanpur were the new ones and about 23.1 percent and 44.4 percent of the other houses in Varanasi and Saharanpur districts were renovated, which was also, on lines, with the norms. The high percentage of beneficiaries over 92 percent in Varanasi and 84 percent in Saharanpur, expressing satisfaction with the construction, only confirms the programmes good performance. All of these houses had one living room and a sizeable of them, over 38 percent, in Varanasi and 27 percent in Saharanpur district even had a separate kitchen with a majority of them also having toilet facility. However, its use was, relatively low, in both sample district and needs to motivate the beneficiaries.

Involvement of Beneficiaries

The study also shows that over 52 percent of beneficiaries in Varanasi and 17 percent in Saharanpur had expressed satisfaction over the amount provided under the scheme and the remaining amount was being largely met by sources by the beneficiaries like borrowings from relatives, own savings and at times loans from money lenders. It was also found that cent percent of the beneficiaries in Varanasi and over 88 percent in Saharanpur had also taken possession of their household which reflects their involvement level. Thus, the performance could be called to be a good one if one evaluates it on the basis of norms and criteria. However, the programmes also has a flip side which, probably, is not a reflection, so much on the performance, but on the norms that stipulates that only a fixed number of beneficiaries be covered. The subsequent large number of focus group of households, thus engage in seeking the favour of functionaries are ready to oblige them, substantiates the point. The incidence of households, indulgence in grafting, was over 30 percent in Varanasi and over 66 percent in Saharanpur district respectively. The other probable factors that prompt this unsavory action has been the mismatch between the proportion of beneficiaries recommended by panchayats and figures provided by blocks. Political proximity and influence of pradhan and village level officers also many a time triggers off this reaction. The study team also encountered many other focus group of household who did not get the benefit of the schemes and were thus in 'non-beneficiaries' category. The study team randomly selected twenty eight of them, sixteen in Varanasi and remaining twelve in Saharanpur, to record their views on the performance of programme and reason for their non-selection. It may, further, be pointed that socio-economic status of this group, for all practical purpose, was similar to that of the beneficiaries.

On the question of their non-participation, a majority of them pleaded ignorance, and many accused the gram pradhans, the village level functionaries. The presence of non-beneficiaries in high volume only confirms that the magnitude of

the problem to be high which the current target based approach was not able to realise.

Involvement of Functionaries

Functionaries form an important but integral part in the execution of programme. Their involvement in the programme decides its out come to be good or bad. The study of the perception of project functionaries shows that over fifty percent in both the districts were newly appointed in the district and were working in the post for less than a year. Their lack of training, supplemented with non-familiarity with the complexity of the problem like the difficulties faced in the selection of beneficiaries, their over burden routine work, inability to check wrongful selection of beneficiaries was acting as a big handicap in the functioning of most of them which was also manifested in their statement when a majority of them supported the idea of the training to be given, in all major aspects of programme before being posted in the field like project management, in evaluation and monitoring aspect, survey methodology etc. All this, naturally lowered the level of involvement and was contributing to the performance of the programme (Table - 5.1, Annexure 5.1a, Annexure 5.1b)

**Table – 5.1
Profile of Beneficiary in Indira Awas Yojana**

Particulars	Varanasi		Saharanpur	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Gender status				
Male	11	84.6	14	77.8
Female	2	15.4	4	22.2
Marital status				
Married	11	84.6	15	83.3
Widow	2	15.4	3	16.7
Social status				
SC	7	53.8	12	66.7
OBC	5	38.5	3	16.7
General	1	7.7	3	16.7
Total	13	100.0	18	100.0

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Particulars	Varanasi		Saharanpur	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Households occupation				
Cultivator	-	-	2	11.1
Agricultural labour	2	15.4	4	22.2
Wages	8	61.5	10	55.5
Small Shop	-	-	1	5.5
Artisan	3	23.1	-	-
Others	-	-	1	5.5
Whether priority was ignored during the selection of beneficiary				
Yes	2	15.4	7	38.9
No	9	69.2	10	55.6
Do not know	2	15.4	1	5.5
Ownership of house				
Wife of Head of the households	2	15.4	2	11.1
Husband	10	76.9	12	66.7
Other male member in family	1	7.7	2	11.1
Other female member in family	-	-	2	11.1
Location of constructed house				
Own land of beneficiary in main inhabitation	7	53.8	18	100.0
Own land of beneficiary out of inhabitation	2	15.4	-	-
Cluster	4	30.8	-	-
Nature of construction				
Newly Constructed	10	76.9	10	55.6
Destroy of old house	3	23.1	6	33.3
Modification of old house	-	-	2	11.1
Possession of beneficiary in newly constructed house				
Yes	13	100.0	16	88.9
No	-	-	2	11.1
Facility in constructed house				
Bedroom	13	100.0	18	100.0
Kitchen	5	38.5	5	27.8
Toilet	12	92.3	15	83.3
Smokeless Chulha	9	69.2	-	-
Use of Toilet				
In use	5	38.5	11	55.6
Not use	7	53.8	4	22.2
Source of water near the house				
Hand-pump	8	61.5	18	100.0
Community village wall	4	30.8	-	-
Hand-pump is not in the running position	1	7.7	-	-
Is beneficiary satisfy with the constructed house				
Yes	12	92.3	17	94.4
No	1	7.7	1	5.6
Sanctioned amount				
Rs. Below 14,500.00	7	53.8	7	38.9
Rs. 17,500.00	1	7.7	3	16.7
Rs. 20,000.00	5	38.5	8	44.4
Types of sanctioned				
Cash	5	38.5	11	61.1
Material	-	-	2	11.1
Cash and Material	-	-	2	11.1
Cheques	8	61.5	3	16.7
Total	13	100.0	18	100.0

Contd...

Particulars	Varanasi		Saharanpur	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Whether the sanctioned amount was sufficient comparatively expenditure				
Sufficient	7	53.8	3	16.7
Debt by friend	-	-	1	5.6
Debt by relatives	2	15.4	4	22.2
Self saving	3	23.1	4	22.2
Debt by money lender	1	7.7	4	22.2
Others	-	-	2	11.1
Amount the programme beneficiary spent the money as bribe				
Rs. 500.00 to 999.00	4	30.8	-	-
Rs. 1,000.00 to 1999.00	-	-	3	16.7
Rs. 2,000.00 and above	-	-	9	50.0
Not spent in bribe	9	69.2	6	33.3
Who had taken bribe				
VLW/Block staffs	2	15.4	9	50.0
Pradhan	2	15.4	1	5.6
Bank and Block	-	-	2	11.1
Availability of sanctioned amount				
Available for requirement	6	46.2	5	27.8
Irregular payment	7	53.8	13	72.2
Problems comforted in receiving the payment				
Delayed payment	5	38.5	2	11.1
Many times to approach the block	2	15.4	5	27.8
Provide bribe	4	30.8	12	66.7
Less sanctioned amount	6	46.2	15	83.3
Installment not available timely	7	53.8	13	72.2
No problem	6	46.8	3	16.7
Suggestion on improving the performance of the programme				
To provide real person	3	23.1	4	22.2
Honest employee	5	38.5	12	66.7
Immediate payment after sanction	8	61.5	7	38.9
Necessary work done by block	4	30.8	3	16.7
Amount should be increased	6	46.2	13	72.2
Installment of amount should be payment timely	7	53.8	10	55.6
Selection of beneficiary should be local camp	4	30.8	7	38.9
Payment should be in one time	3	23.1	8	44.4
All sanctioned amount should be payment	4	30.8	9	50.0
Total	13	100.0	18	100.0

Source: Field Survey.

5.1.2 Employment Assurance Scheme/Jawahar Rojgar Yojana

Jawahar Rojgar Yojana was launched as a centrally sponsored scheme in 1989 by merging the National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) and the Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP). The main objective of the programme was to provide gainful employment for unemployed and under employed persons, both male and female, in the rural areas, through creation of rural economic infrastructure, community and social assets with the aim to improve the quality of life

of rural poor. The programme targeted the people living below the poverty line with preference to be given to Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribes and free bonded labourers. After three year of its implementation, review and concurrent evaluation revealed certain inadequacies in the programme. In a comprehensive restructuring of the programme in 1996, JRY was further streamlined and the second stream of JRY was merged with Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) which was introduced in 1775 selected blocks of the country in 1993-94. However, the third stream of JRY was continued in two parts viz. JRY (Main); and Special and Innovative Project.

However, our research team has analyzed the Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) which has replaced JRY in both sample districts. The brief detail of the scheme is as follows:

Employment Assurance Scheme

The Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) was launched on October 2, 1993 in 1775 identified backward blocks situated in draught prone, desert, tribal and hill areas, in which the revamped public distribution system was in operation. The scheme was subsequently extended to additional blocks and ultimately universalized to cover all rural blocks in the country from 1997. It is a centrally sponsored scheme.

The main objective of EAS is to provide about 100 days of assured casual manual employment during the lean agricultural season, at statutory minimum wages, to all persons between the age group of 18 years 60 years who are productive and labour-intensive social and community workers. The village panchayats are involved in the registration of persons seeking employment and the panchayats maintain those registrations. They also coordinate and monitor the work. A maximum of two adults per family is to be provided employment under the scheme. The applicants, who register themselves for employment under the EAS, are issued family cards in which the number of days of employment are entered as and when such employment is given to them (Ninth Five Year Plan : Ibid).

Profile of the Sample

The study covered a total of twenty-five beneficiaries from each of the two sample districts, which were selected randomly. The social classification of the beneficiaries shows that about 52 percent in Varanasi and 84 percent in Saharanpur belonged to the SC group, OBC with 44 percent and 12 percent respectively were the second largest group. The proportion of others including the minorities was 4 percent each in the two samples. The occupational classification shows that the sample contained in overwhelming 64 percent of non-agricultural labourers each in the two district followed by agricultural labourers.

Performance of the Programme

Though the programme provides assistance in the form of gainful employment to households living below the poverty line, the perusal of beneficiaries profile shows that the sample also contained those set of beneficiaries that were recommended either by the members of village council, or block officials or brokers or middlemen etc. This undermines the spirit of selection. The study of annual income pattern of the selected beneficiaries shows that 32 percent in Varanasi and 40 percent in Saharanpur had income level of over Rs. 11000 which qualified them to the above poverty line category. Similarly on the question of how many days these beneficiaries were provided employment, the programme cuts a very disappointing picture as none of them could be given employment for 100 days, as stipulated in the preamble of the programme. The only gainful employment the beneficiaries got, under the programme was upto 60 days and that too only in Saharanpur district where hardly 16 percent of them benefited. However, in other lesser categories viz. between 30 to 60 days and less than 30 days, their properties was worked out to be 44 percent and 50 percent in Varanasi district and 52 percent and 32 percent in Saharanpur district respectively. The programmes inability to provide gainful employment over sustained period of 100 days only undermines its poor

performance. Further, the study also showed that regular checking of master register was not being carried out, as per the guidelines as about 64 percent of beneficiaries in Varanasi and 84 percent in Saharanpur district agreed on checking of maser register while over 36 percent in Varanasi and 16 percent in Saharanpur district either stated is negative were not aware of it. Over 96 percent of beneficiaries in Varanasi and 88 percent in Saharanpur, only one person was given the employment against the norm of two and over 56 percent of the beneficiaries in Varanasi reported that payment day for wages was quite uncertain while 44 percent reported the payment period to be daily and weekly, whereas 96 percent beneficiaries in Saharanpur were receiving weekly payment under the scheme. The beneficiaries also experience cut in their wage bills which was in contravention to the provision in the scheme and this incidence was reported to be higher viz. 28 percent in Varanasi district against 8 percent in Saharanpur district. Likewise, it was also shocking to learn that about 80 percent of the beneficiaries in Varanasi and 20 percent in Saharanpur were reported to be paid the wage rates, not at par with the government rates but much below it, which was against the provisions of the schemes. All these events lowered the performance of the scheme in the eyes of beneficiaries as well as public.

Involvement of Beneficiaries

The poor performance of programme, in turn, also affects the involvement levels of beneficiaries as was manifested later when 84 percent of beneficiaries in Varanasi and 88 percent in Saharanpur district confessed that they saw no improvement in their socio-economic conditions. A sizeable of them (over 28 percent in Varanasi and 20 percent in Saharanpur also expressed their disappointment over the quality of raw materials provided to them, under the scheme, for construction activity. Over 28 percent of the beneficiaries in Varanasi and 49 percent in Saharanpur reported that the scheme has, so far, failed to make any significant impact in the socio-economic conditions of their households. However about 72

percent of beneficiary in Varanasi and 52 percent in Saharanpur also admitted that there has been an improvement in the physical conditions or infrastructure of the village during the last five years, which reflects the limited impact of the scheme. But the lower level of payment to beneficiaries supplemented with cut in wage bills and uncertainty in the disbursement of payment naturally affected the level of involvement of beneficiaries also.

Further, the study team also confronted many other group households who were not availing the facility of scheme though their socio-economic conditions was very much like that of focus group of households. These thirty four non-beneficiaries households were also randomly selected of which 55.9 percent belonged to Varanasi and 44.1 percent to Saharanpur district respectively. Their views on various aspects of the programme were also recorded. A majority of these households were SCs and OBCs and over 73 percent in Varanasi and 46 percent in Saharanpur were below the poverty line. A good proportion of them also had information about the scheme and they also had applied for it but could not get selected. Majority of the non-beneficiaries did not possess the card for which they blamed and the village pradhan and village level functionaries and some also criticized the involvement of contractors in messing up the issue of card business. All this forced a majority of them to move to nearby town/urban area for employment where they also worked as rickshaw pullers or worked in miscellaneous daily wage activity.

The analysis shows that the sample contained high proportion of non-beneficiaries which points to out to the prevalence high incidence of poverty in both the sample districts, which the programme has, so far, failed to address effectively. The lacunae observed in selection procedure, wage bill payments and inability of the programme to live up to the expectation has also affected the performance level as well as involvement level of the beneficiaries and of other focus group of households.

Involvement of Functionaries

The functionaries, coordinating the programme, were, by and large, the same set of people looking after all the schemes that were being sponsored by the rural development department. They either belonged to the district or were from block levels. They were largely drawn from rural development department, social welfare department, education, health and supply departments. As stated earlier, a majority of them were new entrants to the field with new posting and therefore lacked necessary administrative skills and field experience.

The presence of high proportion of non-beneficiaries household in both sample districts also has been due to the fact they have not been, deliberately, provided the registration card by the village level functionaries despite their repeated pleas to authorities/programme functionaries and some even went to the extent of obliging them monetarily. The subsequent detail investigation revealed that according to the rule, once the focus groups of households were provided the registration cards and if a group of twenty of them approached the block development functionaries, demanding work, during the lean period, than it becomes mandatory for the block level functionaries to make provision of work for these card holders within a fortnight. Thus, the functionaries did not want because it would then entail unnecessary additional work for them. This indifference, towards duties, on part of functionaries may be attributed to be on account of lack of training and also projects their low level of involvement largely, on account of the fact, that they were also tied up with a variety of their own departmental work (Table - 5.2, Annexure 5.2a).

Table – 5.2
Distribution of Beneficiaries under EAS

Particulars	Varanasi		Saharanpur	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Caste Status				
SC	13	52.0	21	84.0
OBC	11	44.0	3	12.0
Others	1	4.0	1	4.0
Occupation				
Agriculture labour	4	16.0	9	36.0
Wages	16	64.0	16	64.0
Artisan	1	4.0	-	-
Others	4	16.0	-	-
Total	25	100.0	25	100.0
Income per years in Rs.				
Below 8,000.00	2	8.0	2	8.0
8,000.00 to 10,999.00	15	60.0	13	52.0
11,000 to 14,999.00	5	20.0	5	20.0
15,000.00 and Above	3	12.0	5	20.0
Mode of Selection				
Basis of poverty	10	40.0	7	28.0
By the member of gram sabha	4	16.0	3	12.0
By block officials	6	24.0	8	32.0
Contractor	1	4.0	-	-
Others	4	16.0	7	28.0
Number of days worked				
Below 30 days	14	56.0	8	32.0
30 to 60 days	11	44.0	13	52.0
Above 60 days	-	-	4	16.0
Checking of master register				
Yes	16	64.0	21	84.0
No	6	24.0	3	12.0
No response	3	12.0	1	4.0
Payment of wages				
Daily	1	4.0	-	-
Weakly	10	40.0	24	96.0
Fortnightly	-	-	1	4.0
Not certain	14	56.0	-	-
Deduction in wages				
Below 10%	6	24.0	-	-
10% to 20%	1	4.0	2	8.0
Who decides of work in village				
Members of village panchayat	18	72.0	8	32.0
Block officials	7	28.0	13	52.0
Others	-	-	4	16.0
Is the decision of Gram Sabha accepted on the block				
Yes	16	64.0	16	64.0
No	-	-	-	-
Do not know	9	36	9	36.0

Contd.....

Particulars	Varanasi		Saharanpur	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Physical structure of village in last five years				
Improvement	18	72.0	13	52.0
Down fall	6	24.0	-	-
No differences	1	4.0	12	48.0
Labourers paid at the government wage rate				
Yes	2	8.0	20	80.0
No	22	88.0	5	20.0
Do not know	1	4.0	-	-
The use of raw materials for construction- in reference of quality				
Good	7	28.0	5	20.0
Bad	3	12.0	4	16.0
Very bad	4	16.0	1	4.0
General	11	44.0	15	60.0
Total	25	100.0	25	100.0
Have any improvement in your status after benefited the programme				
Yes	3	12.0	2	8.0
No	21	84.0	22	88.0
Can not say	1	4.0	1	4.0
Suggestion for better performance of programme				
Selection of real person/established small scale industry	2	8.0	6	24.0
Right of programme distribution provide to pradhan	1	4.0	1	4.0
The interference of pradhan in the programme should be banned	1	4.0	-	-
Debar of corruption	2	8.0	2	8.0
Training of awareness	3	12.0	1	4.0
Provide wage @ government	4	16.0	-	-
Increased man-days	5	20.0	10	40.0
Direction of programme on the basis of guide line	4	16.0	1	4.0
Increased wage rate	2	12.0	4	16.0
Selection procedure of the labours				
Personal approach	6	24.0	-	-
Caste	1	4.0	7	28.0
Healthy personality	4	16.0	6	24.0
Interference of block officials	2	8.0	7	28.0
Interference of contractor	3	12.0	2	8.0
Interference of Pradhan	16	64.0	18	72.0
Interference of Panchayat	2	8.0	-	-
Others	-	-	2	8.0
Total	25	100.0	25	100.0

Source: Field Survey.

5.1.3 Rural Sanitation Programme

While the elimination of manual scavenging has become a mandatory requirement in the urban areas; in the rural areas, on the other hand, a demand driven low cost sanitation approach have been increasingly adopted in preference to a supply driven approach. A network of production centres and rural sanitary marts

have to be integral components of the new approach to reach out the self-sustained and people centered sanitation programmes.

As per the existing policy, the subsidy under the rural sanitation programme, is given to the people below the poverty line for construction of individual household latrines into sanitary latrines. Subsidy is extended to the Panchayats for exclusive sanitation complexes for women, in areas, where adequate space is not available for individual household latrines and other sanitation facilities in village/habitations. Interest free loans are provided to entrepreneurs/panchayats to set up sanitary marts and link them to production centres for facilitating easy availability of materials required for sanitation programmes.

The programme was to be implemented by panchayatiraj institutions (PRIs) and NGOs, who would be involved in the creation of demand, IEC, training implementation, including the setting up of production centre and sanitary marts.

Profile of beneficiaries

The study covers a total of twenty-five beneficiaries of which 12 or 48 percent belonged to Varanasi and remaining 52 percent to Saharanpur district respectively. The gender wise comparison shows that over 83 percent in Varanasi and over 76 percent were male. The proportion of SCs was over 41 percent in Varanasi while it was 62 percent in Saharanpur district followed by OBCs. Over 41 percent of the beneficiaries in Varanasi and 61 percent in Saharanpur were from non-agricultural sector whereas the contribution of agriculture sector was worked out to be 25 percent and 23.1 percent respectively in Varanasi and Saharanpur districts. It was also surprising to find out that about 84 percent of beneficiaries in Varanasi and 92 percent in Saharanpur district had pucca houses. Over 83 percent of the beneficiaries in Varanasi had constructed it with the help from government while its ratio was worked out to be 31 percent in Saharanpur district. The plausible factor for this may be attributed to the higher 'incidence of poverty' in Varanasi district.

Performance of the programme

The study shows that all the beneficiaries had sanitary latrines in both the sample districts. However, the perusal of other facilities like drinking water, drains etc. shows that the houses in Saharanpur districts were better equipped with it than those in Varanasi district.

Though a majority of the beneficiaries felt the necessity of toilet in both sample district, yet hardly 50 percent of them were using it in Varanasi though its percentage was significantly higher (over 84 percent) in Saharanpur district. Among the plausible factors attributing for its sparing use in Varanasi was its incomplete construction, not used to it and its being currently in defunct state. All the beneficiaries in both sample districts were going in the open to attend the natures call prior to the construction of sanitary latrines. The study further shows that a majority of beneficiaries had taken proper care of attending the problem of water logging, which was certainly a sign of good sanitation. It was also observed that a majority of sanitary toilets had been constructed under IAY and the prime reason for seeking assistance under IAY was that the amount the beneficiary received was something of the order of Rs. 17,500 for the construction of residence and Rs. 2,500 for sanitary latrines. However, in some of the cases, it was found that the construction of residences generally, required a higher amount which forced the beneficiaries to utilise part of Rs. 2,500/- earmarked for the construction of toilet. At times, the beneficiaries had also to face the cut in their sanctioned amount, which also lessened the amount. The high incidence of beneficiaries not utilising toilet facilities because of its incomplete construction or its defunct state, substantiates our point. It was also found that those beneficiaries who had better connection with influential people like Pradhans or members of panchayats, generally availed the benefits of the programmes. All this, supplemented with the presence of high proportions of non-beneficiary households, who could not qualify for scheme and blamed the programme functionaries viz. village pradhan etc. substantiates our point that though

the performance of the programme may be good, in terms of its target achievement, but its execution certainly took away some of the sheen from its performance.

Involvement of the Beneficiaries

The study of perception of beneficiaries as well as non-beneficiaries shows that involvement of the beneficiaries in the programme was certainly not of high order. This is because the process of selection of beneficiaries lacked an element of transparency, where the selection criteria was not poverty but proximity to power viz. either to programme functionaries or to elected representatives of village councils. The beneficiaries; who got benefited, on the programme were merely interested in procuring grants which was being provided at a very nominal cost with practically no provision for repayment. All this prompted the non-genuine beneficiaries to use all resources at their command and also did not hesitate to oblige the programme functionaries. The high proportion of sanitary latrines, not in use, because of incomplete construction, only highlights our point. The high proportion of non-beneficiaries also points out towards the fact that the time has now come to do away with target based approach which isolates the genuine beneficiaries and thus defeats the purpose of the programme.

Involvement of Functionaries

The involvement of programme functionaries, at best, be called perfunctory. It was observed that all the execution of the programme was being undertaken in a ritualistic way which encouraged the non serious beneficiaries to avail the grant and utilise it on their non priority area which defeated the purpose of the programme as was observed during the field visit that beneficiaries, receiving grant under the JRY scheme, for construction of sanitary latrines but was utilised by him for some other purposes because there was no effective monitoring.

It was also observed that the programme seemed to have evoked the interest of many other focus group of households who also had moved application, in group to block functionaries but no concrete action was taken by them which amply reflects

their indifference attitude towards the programme. It may be stated here, that lack of active involvement of functionaries was marginalising a sizeable section of genuine beneficiaries and thus limiting the scope of the programme (Table - 5.3, Annexure - 5.3.a).

Table – 5.3
Distribution of Rural Sanitary Latrines among Beneficiaries

Particulars	Varanasi		Saharanpur	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Gender Status				
Male	10	83.3	10	76.9
Female	2	16.7	3	23.1
Caste Status				
SC	5	41.7	8	61.5
OBC	7	58.3	3	23.1
Others	-	-	2	15.4
Occupation				
Agriculture	2	16.7	1	7.7
Agriculture labour	3	25.0	3	23.1
Wages	5	41.7	8	61.5
Artisan	2	16.7	-	-
Others	-	-	1	7.7
House Status				
Kachcha house	1	8.3	-	-
Semi-pukka	1	8.3	1	7.7
Pucca	10	83.4	12	92.3
Ownership of House (Mode of Construction)				
Self	2	16.7	9	69.2
Government added	10	83.3	4	30.8
Facility Available in House				
Latrine	12	100.0	13	100.0
Drinking water	7	58.3	11	84.6
Drain	2	16.7	11	84.6
Kitchen	4	33.3	3	23.1
Bed room	12	100.0	13	100.0
Causes of not use of Latrine				
Under construction	1	8.3	1	7.7
Not in habit	3	25.0	-	-
Useless at present	2	16.7	1	7.7
Requirement of Latrine				
Require	9	75.0	12	92.3
Not require	3	25.0	1	7.7
The place of Latrine before the construction of Latrine				
In the grassland	9	75.0	7	53.8
In the field	3	25.0	1	7.7
Medium of information of programme				
By pradhan	10	83.3	11	84.6
Block official	-	-	1	7.7
Beneficiary of programme	2	16.7	1	7.7

Contd...

Particulars	Varanasi		Saharanpur	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Benefit to villagers by the programme				
Yes	11	91.7	11	84.6
No	-	-	1	7.7
Do not know	1	8.3	1	7.7
Did you see improvement in village				
Yes	11	91.7	10	76.9
No	1	8.3	3	23.1
Total	12	100.0	13	100.0
Information of launching year of programme				
Know	3	25.0	5	38.5
Do not know	6	50.0	4	30.8
No response	3	25.0	4	30.7
Latrine under programme				
Indira Awas Yojana	10	83.3	11	84.6
Other programme	2	16.7	2	15.4
Facility of water near the Latrine				
Facility available	10	83.3	13	100.0
Facility not available	2	16.7	-	-
Source of water near Latrine				
Well	2	16.7	-	-
India Mark-II	5	41.7	1	7.7
General hand pump	3	25.0	12	92.3
Nothing	2	16.7	-	-
Water storage near Latrine				
Yes	4	33.3	-	-
No	8	66.7	13	100.0
Use of Latrine				
Yes	6	50.0	11	84.6
No	6	50.0	2	15.4
Uses by the member of family				
For all	6	50.0	11	84.6
Not uses	6	50.0	2	15.4
Total	12	100.0	13	100.0

Source: Field Survey.

5.1.3 National Programme on Improved Chulhas

The national programme on improved Chulha (NPIC) has been an ongoing programme since Sixth Plan, with the provision of sizeable investment in the form of subsidy, both by central and state governments. It was launched during 1984-85, with the objectives of fuel conservation, removal/reduction of smoke from kitchen, check the deforestation and environmental degradation, reduction in drudgery of women and consequent health hazards and employment generation in rural areas. As a result of continuing R & D efforts, different types of improved/smokeless chulhas have been developed. These are available in fixed and portable types. It is said that while the traditional chulhas have an efficiency of 8-10 percent, these improved

chulhas have a minimum thermal efficiency of 20-25 percent. In order to ensure, the quality and durability, the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has already installed an ISI marking scheme on portable chulahas.

Despite all these efforts by the government, the programme has not been successful so far and it was found out that a large number of improved chulhas installed were either not functioning or were not in use. An evaluation study by NCAER for the period of 1992-93 also found out that about a fourth of chulhas installed, went out of order within a year of establishment. The beneficiaries, too, so far have shown a marked indifference towards the maintenance of chulhas.

Profile of Beneficiaries

The study covers a total of eleven beneficiaries randomly selected in Varanasi district. However, the study team could not locate even a single beneficiary in all the five sample villages in Saharanpur district. The subsequent enquiry reflected that the distribution of improved chulha takes place from the block level where the block level functionaries encourage their female workers to take up the responsibility of distributing it in their respective areas. In the absence of female workers, this task is then assigned to male village level functionary, to identify a female workers, who could be trained and then be given the responsibility to distribute and install the improved chulhas to prospective households in the villages. In Saharanpur our research team found out that the distribution of chulhas had taken place from the block, however, the respective male functionaries had either dumped it at village pradhan's place or at their acquaintance's place. The distribution beyond this had not taken place because it was alleged, by many focus groups of households, whom the team contacted, that pradhan was demanding arbitrary price which was higher than the stipulated price. The block office was also not in a position to provide any further details of the distribution, which reflect its indifferent attitudes, on one hand, and dominance of pradhan, on the other. It was also found out that no environmental building or awareness campaign have ever organised by block or

village level programme functionaries prior to the launching of the programme or in between. Further, the study team did not meet any female functionary who was given technical training to install improved chulhas under her supervision. All this also confirms that block level functionaries did not attach any significance to the programme, thereby, projecting their low level of involvement.

Performance of the programme

The performance of the programme could not be said to be good because it was found out that almost ten out of eleven improved chulhas, accounting to over 90 percent, were not in use. Among the factors contributing to its non-use were problems encountered during cooking, lack of experience in handling it was defunct and large scale cooking was reported to be not feasible. All these problems clearly suggests that prior to their distribution, no exercise was undertaken to impart necessary information and benefits on its use. As a result of which the beneficiaries demanded that necessary training be imparted, back up mechanism also be provided in case of malfunctioning of chulha or a breakdown, availability of cooking material at local or village level etc. Further, the study team also did not encounter any of the mentioned provisions, which naturally affected the performance of the programme.

Involvement of Beneficiaries

The study team found that the involvement of the beneficiaries in the programme has been poor from the very beginning. As stated earlier, the indifferent attitude of the programme functionaries towards the programme coupled with highly subjective selection procedure have not prompted or induced the prospective households to join the programme and things have also compounded as no proper environmental building exercise or awareness campaigns have been organized either at the start of the programme or at regular intervals. The near absence of back up mechanism has also discouraged the people to join the programme. The availability of timber for traditional chulhas and the blocks proximity to the city was

also compelling many of the potential customers to explore the possibility of switching to liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) rather than go for improved chulhas. Further, it may also be pointed out the non-availability of fuel for improved chulhas at local or village levels was also acting against the scope of programme and marginalising many focus group households. Thus, it could be said that the involvement of beneficiaries was quite poor or at best superficial.

Involvement of Functionaries

The performance of the programme has also suffered on account of poor involvement of programme functionaries. The indifferent attitude of functionaries at block level has also percolated down to village level, emboldening and encouraging the village pradhans and programme functionaries to resort to unethical means and demand arbitrary prices from the focus group of households in sample districts. The near absence of monitoring and supervisory support services has also contributed to the poor performance of the programme and projected the low level of involvement of programme functionaries. The lack of transparencies in the selection process has also sidelined many of the focus group of households to join the programme. These non-beneficiaries have come out openly against the manner in which the programme has been handled and organised. The study of their perception shows that many of them were inclined to join the programme because of the difficulties was faced with traditional chulhas & advantages associated with improved chulhas (Table - 5.4, Annexure 5.4a).

Table – 5.4
Profile of Beneficiary in National Improved Chulha Programme

Particulars	Varanasi		Saharanpur	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Gender Status				
Male	10	90.9	-	-
Female	1	9.1	-	-
Social Status				
SC	9	81.8	-	-
OBC	1	9.1	-	-
Minority	1	9.1	-	-

Contd...

Particulars	Varanasi		Saharanpur	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Households Occupation				
Agriculture	1	9.1	-	-
Non-Agricultural labour	8	72.7	-	-
Shops	1	9.1	-	-
Artisan	1	9.1	-	-
Total	11	100.0	-	-
Status of Houses				
Kachcha	1	9.1	-	-
Semi-Pakka	1	9.1	-	-
Pakka	9	81.8	-	-
Involvement in Programme				
Gram Pradhan	10	90.9	-	-
B.D.O.	1	9.1	-	-
Selection Procedure in Programme				
Merit	5	45.5	-	-
Personal interest	2	18.2	-	-
Approach	1	9.1	-	-
Panchayat of village	3	27.2	-	-
Present Position of Chulhas				
In use	1	9.1	-	-
Useless	10	90.9	-	-
Reason of not Using of Chulhas				
Many problem create	2	18.2	-	-
No experience	1	9.1	-	-
Worst position	3	27.3	-	-
Problems create to cook for more people	4	36.4	-	-
Problems to Chulhas				
Not use/Do not know	5	45.5	-	-
Useless in summer they have stabilize	1	9.1	-	-
Problem should be taken in cooking for more members	1	9.1	-	-
Time taking	2	18.2	-	-
No response	2	18.2	-	-
Suggestion of better cooking energy				
Free cooking gass chulhas	2	18.2	-	-
Distribution of chulhas in village	1	9.1	-	-
Distribution of kerosene oil	4	36.4	-	-
Training for chulhas use	3	27.3	-	-
Publicity of quality of chulhas	1	9.1	-	-
Staff for care of chulhas	1	9.1	-	-
Fuel available in local level for chulhas	2	18.2	-	-
No response	2	18.2	-	-
Total	11	100.0	-	-

Source: Field Survey.

Note: In Saharanpur no beneficiary was found in sample village.