

Dr. Y. Appaji
M. Swaroopa

OVERVIEW OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

Rural development implies both the economic betterment of people as well as greater social transformation. Increased participation of people in the rural development programmes, decentralization of planning, better enforcement of land reforms and greater access to credit are envisaged for providing the rural people with better prospects.

Initially, main thrust for development was laid on agriculture, industry, communication, education, health and allied sectors. Later on, realizing that accelerated development can be provided only if governmental efforts are adequately supplemented by direct and indirect involvement of people at the grass root level, the thrust shifted.

Accordingly, on 31st March 1952, an organization known as Community Projects Administration was set up under the Planning Commission to administer the programmes relating to community development. The community development programme, inaugurated on October 2, 1952, was an important landmark in the history of the rural development. This programme underwent many changes and was handled by different Ministries.

In October 1974, the Department of Rural Development came into existence as a part of Ministry of Food and Agriculture. On 18th August 1979, the Department of Rural Development was elevated to the status of a new Ministry of Rural Reconstruction. It was renamed as Ministry of Rural Development on 23rd January 1982. In January 1985, the Ministry of Rural Development was again converted into a Department under the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development which was later rechristened as Ministry of Agriculture in September 1985. On July 5, 1991 the Department was upgraded as Ministry of Rural Development. Another Department viz. Department of Wasteland Development was created under this Ministry on 2nd July 1992. In March 1995, the Ministry was renamed as the Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment with three departments namely Department of Rural Employment and Poverty Alleviation, Rural Development and Wasteland Development.

Again, in 1999 Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment was renamed as Ministry of Rural Development. This Ministry has been acting as a catalyst effecting the change in rural areas through the implementation of wide spectrum of programmes which are aimed at poverty alleviation, employment generation, infrastructure development and social security. Over the years, with the experience gained, in the implementation of the programmes and in response to the felt needs of the poor, several programmes have been modified and new programmes have been introduced. The Ministry's main objective is to alleviate rural poverty and ensure improved quality of life for the rural population especially those below the poverty line. These objectives are achieved through formulation, development and implementation of programmes relating to various spheres of rural life and activities, from income generation to environmental replenishment.

In order to ensure that the fruits of economic reform are shared by all sections of societies five elements of social and economic infrastructure, critical to the quality of life in rural areas, were identified. These are health, education, drinking water, housing and roads. To impart greater momentum to the efforts in these sectors the Government launched the Pradhan Mantri Gramdya Yojana (PMGY) and the Ministry of Rural Development was entrusted with the responsibility of implementing drinking water, housing and rural roads component of PMGY.

During the Ninth Plan period, several anti-poverty Programmes have been restructured to enhance the efficiency of the Programmes for providing increased benefits to the rural poor. Self Employment Programmes were revamped by merging the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), the Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA), the Supply of Improved Tool-Kits to Rural Artisans (SITRA), the Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM), the Ganga Kalyan Yojana (GKY) and the Million Wells Scheme (MWS) into a holistic self-employment scheme called Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY).

Keeping in view the needs and aspirations of the local people, Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) have been involved in the programme implementation and these institutions constitute the core of decentralized development of planning and its implementation. The Ministry vigorously pursue with the State Governments for expeditious devolution of requisite administrative and financial powers to PRIs as envisaged under 73rd Amendment Act of the Constitution of India. On 25th December 2002, under Drinking Water Sector, a new initiative 'Swajal Dhara' empowering the Panchayats to formulate, implement, operate and maintain drinking water Projects was launched. In order to further involve PRIs in the development process, a new initiative 'Hariyali' was launched by Hon'ble Prime Minister on 27th January, 2003. Hariyali was launched to strengthen and involve Panchayati Raj Institutions in the implementation of watershed development programmes namely IWDP, DPAP and DDP.

Realising that empowerment of rural women is crucial for the development of rural India, a women's component is introduced in the programmes for poverty alleviation to ensure flow of adequate funds to this section. The Constitutional Amendment (73rd), Act 1992 provides for reservation of selective posts for women. The Constitution has placed enormous responsibility on the Panchayats to formulate and execute various programmes of economic development and social justice, and a number of Centrally Sponsored Schemes are being implemented through Panchayats. Thus, women Members and Chairpersons of Panchayats, who are basically new entrants in Panchayats, have to acquire the required skill and be given appropriate orientation to assume their rightful roles as leaders and decision makers. Imparting training to elected representatives of PRIs is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments/Union territory Administrations. Ministry of Rural Development also extends some financial assistance to the States/UTs with a view to improve the quality of training programmes and to catalyze capacity building initiatives for the elected members and functionaries of PRIs.

The Eleventh Plan saw injection of huge resources from the Union Budget to the rural and farm sector. This thrust formed the substance of the Bharat Nirman Programme. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act has provided a major foundational support.

Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation has been separated from the Ministry of Rural Development from 13th July, 2011 and renamed as Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation.

The top five year plans in rural development planning of India.

1. The First Five Year Plan (1951-1956):

Though the First Five Year Plan was basically a simple exercise of putting together programmes, targets and outlays, it provided the first milestone in rural development through the launching of the Community Development Programme and National Extension Service.

2. Second Five Year Plan (1956-1961):

India's tryst with planning came with the formulation of the Second Five Year Plan. P.C. Mahalanobis, an eminent statistician, and a man with a wide range of ideas, is generally credited with preparing the blue print of the Second Plan.

At that point of time, this plan was the most self-conscious attempt at planning in any newly Independent country in the third world.

The Second Plan laid strong emphasis on industry. The idea was that this strategy will relieve the excess population in rural India. The strategy sought to increase employment in heavy Industry and the capital goods sector, so that the load on the agricultural sector could be lightened.

It was primarily a strategy of industrialization, which hoped to succeed by forging strong industry linkages, both forward and backward. As a result of this emphasis, the performance of India's capital goods sector improved substantially during this period.

It also laid a solid ground for a vibrant and self-reliant industrial base in India. Though the Second Plan is widely regarded as an "industrial plan", there were other paths finding formulations made by Indian planners during this period as well.

For example, the plan document included a very lucid chapter titled "Land Reforms and Agrarian Reconstruction". Emphasis and hopes were placed on co-operative farming practices in Indian agriculture. The formulation also envisaged a vast network of Community Development Programmes, national extension services and an irrigation network financed by public budgets.

The concept of democratic decentralization for assigning development responsibilities to Panchayati Raj Institutions was also advocated by the Balwantrai Mehta Committee.

Thus, while it would be inaccurate and unfair to say that the second plan lacked an agricultural strategy, it would not be unwarranted to maintain that planners were grossly over-optimistic as to what traditional Indian agriculture, with its conventional input-output basis and deep seated social stratification, and could do within the political constraints.

3. The Third Five Year Plan (1961-1966):

Among the priorities listed in the Third Plan, it was generally recognised that agriculture had the first place. Thus in its initial formulation at least, the Third Plan differed from the Second Plan. It is generally recognised that there was a general de-emphasis of agriculture in the Second Plan. The Third Plan attempted to reverse this.

Its immediate objectives were:

1. To secure an increase in the national Income of over five percent per annum and at the same time ensure a pattern of Investment which could sustain this rate of growth in the subsequent plan periods.
2. To achieve self-sufficiency in food-grains and increase agricultural production to meet the requirements of industry and exports.

3. To expand basic Industries like steel, chemicals, fuel and power and establish machine building capacity.

4. To establish progressively greater equality of opportunity and bring about reduction in disparities of income and wealth and a more even distribution of economic power.

Annual Plans:

The situation created by the Indo-Pakistan conflict in 1965, two successive years of severe drought, devaluation of the currency, general rise in prices and erosion of resources available for plan purposes, delayed the finalization of Fourth Five Year Plan.

Instead, between 1966 and 1969, three Annual Plans were formulated within the framework of the draft outline of the Fourth Plan. The Annual Plans were notable for the formulation of a clear-cut strategy of agricultural development. This strategy carried over into the Fourth Plan and was notable for its shift in perception of the binding constraints on Indian agriculture.

Planning and Agricultural Transformation:

4. The Fourth Five Year Plan (1969-1974):

The planning and agricultural transformation strategy came to be implemented during the course of the Fourth Plan and was more popularly known as the "Green Revolution" in agriculture. Even as the "Green Revolution" in agriculture was ushered, it was realised that "distributive Justice" still remained a distant dream. Thus, arrived the popular slogan of 'Garibi Hataao' and with it came the emphasis (in poverty alleviation as a distinct planning objective in its own light).

5. The Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-1979):

The Fifth Plan was formulated against the backdrop of severe inflationary pressures. The major objectives of the plan were to achieve self reliance and adopt measures for raising the consumption standard of people living below poverty line.

This plan also gave high priority to bring Inflation under control and to achieve stability in the economic ill nation. It targeted an annual growth rate of 5.5 percent in national income. The 1970s are significant because of the Minimum Needs Programmes, IRDP, Rural Employment Programmes and some area development programmes.

Poverty alleviation and Indian Planning:

6. The Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85):

It again undertook eradication of poverty as its primary aim.

Consequently, the programmes to eradicate poverty:

NREP, RLEGP, TRYSEM, DWCRA, IRDP—were strongly emphasised. The strategy adopted was to move simultaneously towards strengthening infrastructure for both agriculture and industry. Stress was laid on tackling inter-related problems through a systematic approach with greater management, efficiency and intensive monitoring in all sectors and active involvement of people in formulating specific schemes of development at the local level and securing their speedy and effective implementation.

7. The Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-1990):

Poverty alleviation continued to be a central concern in the Seventh Plan. Growth of employment opportunities, human resource and infra-structure development, removal of inequalities, an expanded system of food security, increase in productivity in agriculture and industry, participation of people in development and substantial improvement in agricultural and rural development administration were identified as priority areas.

To reduce unemployment and consequently the incidence of poverty, special programmes like Jawahar Rozgar Yojana were launched in addition to the existing programmes. Due recognition was accorded to the role of small-scale and food processing industries can play in this regard.

Annual Plans:

Separate Annual Plans were made in 1990-91 and 1991 – 92 Formulated within the frame work of the approach to the Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97), the basic thrust of this Annual Plan was on the maximization of employment and social transformation. The Annual Plans were made and the Eighth Plan could not take off in 1990 due to the fast changing political situation at the centre.

8. The Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97):

Some of the salient features of economic performance during the Eighth Five Year Plan indicate among other things:

1. Faster economic growth.

2. Faster growth of manufacturing sector and agriculture and allied sectors.

3. Significant growth rates in exports and imports improvement in trade and current account deficit, significant reduction in the Central Government's fiscal.

9. The Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002):

The Ninth Plan emphasized "priority to agriculture and rural development with a view to generate adequate productive employment and eradication of poverty". There was emphasis on the seven identified Basic Minimum Services (BMS).

These included:

(1) Provision of safe drinking water,

(2) Availability of primary health service facilities,

(3) Universalisation of primary education,

(4) Public housing assistance to shelter-less poor families,

(5) Nutritional support to children,

(6) Connectivity of all villages and habitations and

(7) Streamlining of the public distribution system with a focus on the poor.

The plans also aimed at pursuing a policy of fiscal consolidation, whereby the focus was on sharp reduction in the revenue deficit of the government.

The specific objectives of the Ninth Plan included:

1. Priority to agriculture and rural development with a view to generating adequate productive employment and eradication of poverty.
2. Accelerating the growth rate of the economy with stable prices.
3. Ensuring food and nutritional security for all, particularly the vulnerable sections of society.
4. Providing the basic minimum services.
5. Containing the growth rate of population.
6. Ensuring mobilisation and participation of people at all levels.
7. Empowerment of women and socially disadvantaged groups such as scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and OBCs and minorities as agents of socio-economic change and development.
8. Promoting and developing people's participatory institutions like Panchayati Raj institutions, co-operatives and self-help groups.
9. Strengthening efforts to build self-reliance.

10. The Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007):

The Tenth Plan was approved by the National Development Council on 21st December 2002.

This plan has a number of new features that include, among others the following:

1. The plan recognises the rapid growth in the labour force. It aims at creating 50 million job opportunities during the period, by placing special emphasis on employment intensive sectors of agriculture, irrigation, agro-forestry, small and medium enterprises, information and communication technology and other services.
2. The plan addresses the issue of poverty and the unacceptably low levels of social indicators.
State wise growth
3. The Tenth Plan has adopted a differential development strategy. For the first time, state-wise growth and other monitorable targets have been worked out in consultation with the states to focus better on their own development plans.
4. The Tenth Plan has identified measures to improve efficiency, unleash entrepreneurial energy and promote rapid and sustainable growth. Agriculture is to be the core element of the Tenth Plan.

Mid-Term appraisal of Tenth Plan:

The mid-term Appraisal of Tenth Plan was approved by National Development Council in June 2005. It presented a detailed assessment of the performance of the economy as a whole as well as an assessment of performance in individual sectors in comparison with the Tenth Plan targets.

The scope for correcting all deficiencies within the Tenth Plan period is limited. However, it was necessary to define a corrective agenda and to initiate the process as quickly as possible. Mid-term Appraisal of Tenth Plan identified many policy initiatives to overcome these weaknesses.

Some of the priority areas of action were:

1. Investment in irrigation/water management.
2. Fertilizer pricing.
3. Improving the effectiveness of Sarva Sikhya Abhiyan (SSA).
4. National Rural Health Mission.
5. Oil Pricing.
6. National E-Governance Plan.
7. Small scale industry etc.

These suggestions deserve careful consideration and should form the framework for policy formulation leading to Eleventh Plan.

11th plan - 2007 to 2012

achievement of improved quality of life for the citizens of the state & socio economic development.

12th - 2012 - 2017: 50 million new work opportunities in the non farm sector. To remove gender and social gap in school enrolment.
To enhance access to higher education.

last plan

NITI AAYOG - 1st Jan 2015.

Rural Development in India

Rural development usually refers to the method of enhancing the quality of life and financial well-being of individuals, specifically living in populated and remote areas. Traditionally, rural development was centred on the misuse of land-intensive natural resources such as forestry and agriculture. However today, the increasing urbanisation and the change in global production networks have transformed the nature of rural areas. Rural development still remains the core of the overall development of the country. More than two-third of the country's people are dependent on agriculture for their livelihood, and one-third of rural India is still below the poverty line. Therefore, it is important for the government to be productive and provide enough facilities to upgrade their standard of living. Rural development is a term that concentrates on the actions taken for the development of rural areas to improve the economy. However, few areas that demand more focused attention and new initiatives are:

- Education
- Public health and Sanitation
- Women empowerment
- Infrastructure development (electricity, irrigation, etc.)
- Facilities for agriculture extension and research
- Availability of credit
- Employment opportunities

Importance of Rural Development

Rural development is important not only for the majority of the population residing in rural areas, but also for the overall economic expansion of the nation.

Rural development is considered to be of noticeable importance in the country today than in the olden days in the process of the evolution of the nation. It is a strategy that tries to obtain an improved and productivity, higher socio-economic equality and ambition, and stability in social and economic development.

The primary task is to decrease the famine that exists in roughly about 70 percent of the rural population, and to make sufficient and healthy food available.

The secondary task is to ensure the availability of clothing and footwear, a clean environment and house, medical attention, recreational provision, education, transport, and communication.

Objectives of Rural Development

The objectives composed by the government in the sixth five-year plan for rural development are:

- To improve productivity and wages of rural people
- To guarantee increased and quick employment possibilities
- To demolish unemployment and bring a notable decline in underemployment
- To guarantee an increase in the standard of living of the underprivileged population
- To provide the basic needs: elementary education, healthcare, clean drinking water, rural roads, etc.

1. Explain rural development and its importance.

(A) Meaning

1. Rural development means an action plan for the economic and social upliftment of rural areas.
2. It aims at improving the quality of life of people living in rural areas.
3. It focuses on the action for the development of areas that are lagging behind in the overall development of the rural economy.

Rural development is important because of the following reasons:

(i) A large proportion of population is living in rural areas

1. Rural people account for about 3/4th (75%) of the total population.
2. In 2016, 68.84% of the population accounted for the rural population.
3. They have always lagged much behind the overall progress of the economy.

(ii) Agriculture: Major source of livelihood

1. Agriculture is still a major source of livelihood in rural areas.
2. More than two-third of India's population depends on it.
3. So, the development of agriculture will contribute to the betterment of rural areas and rural people.

(iii) Lack of basic necessities

1. Majority of poor people live in rural areas.
2. They do not have access to basic necessities of life like food, health facilities, sanitation, etc.

2. Explain the key issues in rural development. (NCERT)

Answer: The key issues in rural development are:

(1) Development of infrastructure

- There is a lack of infrastructure in rural areas.
- Infrastructure development like electricity, irrigation, credit, marketing, transport facilities, etc., needs to be addressed.

(2) Reduction of poverty

- The reduction of poverty is important because rural areas have the maximum poverty.
- Around 30% of the population is below the poverty line; this figure reduced to 21.92% in 2012.
- There is a serious need of taking steps for the alleviation of poverty.

(3) Development of health facilities

- Rural areas lack proper health facilities.
- Better health facilities are necessary for physical growth of individuals.

(4) Development of productive resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Productive resources of each locality need to be developed to enhance employment opportunities. It will help in diversification of production activities with a view of finding an alternative means other than crop cultivation to sustain life.
(5) Development of human resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a need to improve the quality of human resources in rural areas. It can be done by improving the literacy rate (especially female literacy), skill development, industrial training, etc.

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- o assist in policy formulation of rural development programmes and to make periodic assessments of the physical and financial progress achieved.
- To analyze and furnish comments on EFC/SFC memorandums and Cabinet Notes received from MoRD.
- To liaise with MoRD to engage States for greater cooperative federalism.
- To provide a platform for the resolution of inter-sectoral and inter-departmental issues to accelerate the implementation of various schemes of the Ministry.
- To monitor MoRD's schemes such as MNREGA, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G), Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY- NRLM), and National Social Assistance Programme. The Vertical participates in the preparation of the Terms of Reference for evaluation of key CSS schemes of MoRD. It also provides inputs for the finalisation of reports pertaining to these schemes.
- The Vertical coordinates with MoRD to review the updation of DMEO's Output-Outcome Monitoring Framework.