



## Greening Rural Development

### KEYWORDS

Rural .development ,Plans . Green

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#### ABSTRACT

*In our country, where the majority of the population dwells in villages, national development becomes almost synonymous with rural development. Sri Aurobindo said, "the villages are the cells of a human body. When every cell is healthy, the body is healthy." Villages are the soul of India. Rural development has remained the central point in the mind of the planners while formulating the plans and setting out the objectives . Different five years plans provide a clear picture of the laudable objectives and massive investments made to change the village scenario . Over the years the constitution of GDP has changed but not the country, not the people . Poverty reduction and economic growth can be sustained only if natural resources are managed on a sustainable basis. The rationale for greening rural development emerges from the Twelfth Five-Year Plan (2012-17) strategy of 'faster, sustainable and more inclusive growth' for poverty alleviation. Greening rural development can stimulate rural economies, create jobs and help maintain critical ecosystem services and strengthen climate resilience of the rural poor .*

#### PAPER

Sustainable inclusive growth is a necessary and sufficient condition for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The Commission on Growth and Development 2008 notes that inclusiveness—a concept that encompasses equity, equality of opportunity, and protection in market and employment transitions. As pointed out by Wilkinson and Pickett (2009), more inclusive societies generally have a better economic and political performance than unequal ones. Thus, sustainable development means that we pass on to the future generation at least as much capital (natural +physical +human) as we have, so that they no less a chance than us to be happy. Joseph Stiglitz, Amartya Sen, and Jean-Paul assessed the measurement of economic performance, one that embraces the ambition of going "beyond measures of market activity to measure wellbeing. However, growth itself cannot ensure that all people, especially the poor and the vulnerable, benefit equally from economic progress. Growth has bypassed those most vulnerable and the poor, giving rise to inequalities in income and wealth .Same has happened in Indian economy . Hollis B. Chenery states that the concept of progress, in most developing countries is heavily conditioned by their colonial past. They want to run their economies on their model, which concentrate on the modern sections of economy. But in our country, first five year plan adopted a strategy of 'planning from below' One of the main objectives of this plan was to increase employment opportunities and to raise the standard of living of the masses. Foremost consideration was given to the rural sector on account of the problem there.

The Community Development Programme, the first nation wide programme for the social and economic reconstruction was started on 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct. 1952, followed by National Extension Service. The main objective of second five year plan was "The benefits of economic development must accrue more and more to the relatively less privileged class society". This made important modifications in tackling the problem of rural development. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Five-Year Plan states, "The more immediate problem is to combat the curse of poverty with all the ills that it produces, and it is recognized that this can only be done by social and economic advances so as to build up a technologically ma-

ture society and a social order which offers equal opportunities to all citizens." .The Intensive Agriculture District programme, Intensive Agricultural Area Programme, High Yielding Varieties Programme and such other programmes were launched for achieving self sufficiency in foodgrains.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan states, "but for us it is important to lay far greater stress on positive steps for ameliorating the conditions of poorer people through planned economic development". To rectify the class and regional imbalances, target oriented programmes Drought Prone Area Programme, Small Farmers Development Agency, Marginal Farmers and Agricultural labourer, Tribal Area Development Programme, Command Area Development Programme were launched . The 5<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan had two objectives to achieve: to improve the living conditions of the rural poor; and to develop the overall economy of such areas which were below the poverty line. The Minimum Needs Programme was born as a result of such a philosophy.

The 6<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan plan states, "the reduction in poverty should receive the highest priority in our development strategy" Within this framework of basic objectives, the strategy of rural development concerning the rural people underwent an overhaul. The poverty alleviation programmes were reorganized and also expanded in their scope and coverage. The Integrated Rural Development Programme was launched during 1978-79, initially in 2300 blocks . Small Farmers Development Agency, Special Livestock Production Programme, Training to Rural Youth for Self Employment were merged with IRDP. The Panchayati Raj Act was passed by the Parliament and through the Panchayat, all the developmental programmes have been executed for the greater benefit of the poorest of the poor.

The major objectives of 7<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan were work, productivity and employment. Apart from sectoral programmes, the package of poverty alleviation programmes aimed at giving self-employment and wage employment to the poorer sections of community were continued on a big scale .A massive programme of Integrated Dairy Development was launched in 1978. The Integrated Rural Energy

programme was taken up as a plan scheme in 7<sup>th</sup> plan for planning for energy for rural development. TRYSEM was introduced in 1979 to provide technical skills and to upgrade the traditional skills of rural youth belonging to the families below the poverty line. First attempt was made to involve rural women more intensively in economic activities in groups under the Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas scheme in 1982-83. The scheme could not make much headway in this direction. Rural sanitation programme was launched in 1986 to improve the quality of life of the rural poor. In 1989, NREP and RLEGP were emerged into a single rural wage employment programme called Jawahar Rozgar Yojana. With a view to meeting the housing needs of the rural poor, IAY was launched as a sub-scheme of JRY. Now it is being implemented as a major scheme for construction of houses to be provided to the rural poor at free of cost. Rural sanitation is another area in which initiative has been taken thoroughly. CRSP which was launched in 1986 was reconstructed in 1999.

The 8<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan document in chapter 2 sets forth the outline of the rural development programme of which rural industrialization is an important part. This plan also stresses awareness towards the need for providing continued protection to the weaker section, despite the overall move towards liberalization and privatization. National Social Assistance Programme was introduced for social assistance benefit to poor households affected by old age, death of primary bread earner and maternity care.

The focus of 9<sup>th</sup> Five-Year plan was on "Growth with Social Justice and Equality". Among the main objectives of this plan were: priority to agriculture and rural development with a view to generating adequate productive employment and eradication of poverty; empowerment of women and socially disadvantaged groups and minorities as agents of socio-economic change and development; promoting and developing people's participatory institutions like Panchayati Raj institutions, co-operatives and self-help groups. Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana was launched in 2000 with the objective of providing road. Antyodaya Anna Yojana commenced in the year 2001 to provide food security to the poorest of the poor. A initiative called 'Hariyali' was taken up with an objective of empowering PRIs both financially and administratively in implementation of Watershed Development Programmes in the country from 2003-2004. Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme aims at providing drinking water supply to the entire rural population. IRDP has now been restructured and renamed as Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana with the objective of creating sustainable income generating opportunities. EAS was merged with Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana.

Agricultural development is considered as a core element of the 10<sup>th</sup> Five-Year plan as growth in this sector is likely to lead the widest spread of benefits especially to the rural poor. National Food for Work Programme was launched in 2004 in 150 most backward districts of the country. The 11<sup>th</sup> Plan document entitled 'Towards faster and more inclusive growth' stresses that benefits of development should reach to all sections of population. The National Rural Employment Act, 2005, which confers legal right to employment on the rural citizens is a landmark in the history of independent India. National Rural Livelihoods Mission, National Rural Drinking Water Programme, Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan and PM Adarsh Gram Yojana have been launched and implemented as a part of total planning.

A significant segment of India's population, particularly the rural poor, depends on natural resources for subsistence and livelihoods. The Approach Paper to the Twelfth Five Year Plan notes that "as the economy gains the capacity to grow rapidly, it will come up against the constraint of limitations of natural resources and then need to exploit these in a sustainable manner". The rationale for greening rural development emerges from the Twelfth Five-Year Plan (2012-17) strategy of 'faster, sustainable and more inclusive growth' for poverty alleviation.

Greening rural development refers to a variety of activities that regenerate and conserve the natural resource base, innovate and use clean materials, technologies and processes to create environment-friendly products, livelihoods, enterprises and jobs. There are four major ways in which greening rural development schemes will have positive economic impact: contribute to inclusive local growth; improve environmental sustainability; help to make communities more resilient to natural disasters; and help to make public expenditure more effective. The major schemes can potentially make a significant contribution to sustaining natural resources and ecosystem services.

The major schemes will contribute by: improving agricultural productivity through increased yield response to fertilizers and water availability for irrigation; increasing private investment in clean technology and green resources; increasing incomes for the rural poor through green value-chains and markets; increasing returns on investment through improved ecosystem services in aquaculture and fisheries; reducing the economic costs from natural disasters by strengthening local resilience; conserving water quality and quantity through increased water use efficiency in agriculture; improving vegetative cover and biodiversity; reducing soil erosion and increasing soil carbon; reducing the impact of drought through water harvesting, resilient cropping and secure drinking water; reducing the impact of floods through better drainage, resilient cropping and flood resilient systems; reducing the disease burden through safe disposal of sanitation waste and water contaminants, cleaner habitats and less use of chemical fertilizers; conserving biodiversity for the rural poor and making assets created through public expenditure more durable.

India has a long history of rural development efforts and experiments. Different five year plans provide a clear picture of the laudable objectives and massive investments made to change the village scenario from that of poverty, malnutrition, illiteracy and insanitation to that of prosperity and plenty. Today, when most of the countries in the world are aiming at rapid economic growth rate, India is still battling with the problem of the betterment of the huge army of its poor. India cannot shine without the shining of rural India. Poverty reduction and economic growth can be sustained only if natural resources are managed on a sustainable basis.

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