

NIRD RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS - 2006-2008

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1	Evaluation of Revised Long Term Action Plan for KBK Districts of Orissa	Jacob George
2	Provision of Urban Amenities in Rural Areas (PURA) : An Analysis	Jacob George
3	Management of Common Property Resources: A Comparative Study of the Management of Community Forest in Nagaland and Meghalaya	Jacob George
4	Pro-poor Strategy for Micro-credit Delivery System - A Study in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Orissa	R. Chinnadurai
5	Approaches to Forest Management: A Comparative Study of JFM & Self – initiated Forest Management	S N Rao P K Das
6	Improvement in Rural Livelihoods through Dairy Farming	S. Venkatadri K. Swaroopa Rani G. Raghunadha Reddy
7	Role of Panchayats in Decentralised Delivery of Services with Particular Reference to Health and Education	S.K. Singh Y. Bhaskar Rao E. Venkatesu
8	Socio-economic Appraisal of the Proposed Polavaram Project on the Life of the Tribals in the Affected Areas	K.P. Kumaran G. Rajanikanth T. Vijaya Kumar T. Brahmanandam
9	Tribal Community Empowerment : A Study of Some Models	T. Vijaya Kumar R.R. Prasad
10	Competency Mapping for Rural Development Officials	B. Udaya Kumar Reddy
11	Stakeholders' Participation and Equity Aspects of Watershed Development in India : A Study in Two States (Rajasthan and A.P.)	U. Hemantha Kumar S S P Sharma
12	Community Mobilisation for Promoting Elementary Education : A Case Study of Janshala Model	G. Rajanikanth T. Vijaya Kumar
13	Interventions for Women Empowerment : A Study in Three States	A. Rizwana
14	Development of Entrepreneurship among Rural Women	Gyanmudra
15	Partnership Strategies for Marketing of Rural Products - A Study of Public and Private Sector Linkages	N.V. Madhuri
16	Kapur Gaushala Society : A Case Study	Gyanmudra
17	Evaluation of National Child Labour Projects in Andhra Pradesh	K. Suman Chandra C. Dheeraja T. Vijaya Kumar
18	Evaluation of SGSY in High Poverty Regions	P. Purushotham Balraju Lakshmi Narayana
19	Abolition of Child Labour and Universalisation of Primary Education through Gram Panchayat : Case Studies	C.S. Singhal S. Vijayakumar
20	Evaluation of Namak Mazdoor Awaas Yojana	B. Chakravarty P C Sikligar R. Chinnadurai N. Kalpalatha

21	Participatory Village Development Under Nammadhu Gramam in Tamil Nadu	K.P. Kumaran
22	Evaluation of 100 per cent Financial Inclusion of Banks in Ganjam, Orissa	B.K. Swain
23	Evaluation of 100 per cent Financial Inclusion in Srikakulam District, A.P.	B.K. Swain
24	Evaluation of the Central Sector Scheme for Cooperative Education and Training	P.V.A. Rama Rao N. Mohanan

1. Evaluation of Revised Long Term Action Plan for KBK Districts of Orissa

Jacob George

Introduction

The present study is an evaluation of the Long Term Action Plan Project, implemented in the erstwhile three Kalahandi, Bolangir and Koraput (KBK) districts of Orissa from 1998 to 2006-07. Recently these were divided into 8 districts for administrative convenience. The basic premises of Revised Long Term Action Plan (RLTAP) include drought proofing and poverty alleviation through conservation of natural resources and mobilising poor for bringing about improvement in their employment and income opportunities. The project was also taken up for industry and infrastructure and employment generation besides for provision of drinking water, health and nutrition.

Objectives

- * To study the physical and financial progress of all projects/ schemes under RLTAP
- * To examine and document the role of people (stakeholders) and people's organisations in planning, implementation and monitoring of different projects
- * To assess the extent of benefits accrued to the target groups both in the short and long term; and
- * To analyse the effectiveness of the existing administrative system and suggest improvement measures

Study Area and Methodology

The study was taken up in the nature of quick evaluation study as per the request of the Government of Orissa to examine the above mentioned objectives. Secondary data were collected at the State and district levels and also discussions were held with different departments/officials who were involved in the implementation of the project. Apart from the secondary data, various participatory techniques were used in the evaluation. The study relied more on physical verification of projects and discussion with stakeholders. Instead of a detailed questionnaire, semi-structured interviews of stakeholders at various levels were held. Focus group discussions were also held with stakeholders. Apart from officials, few non-governmental organisations working in the area were also contacted. The study covered mainly 11 activities, which were grouped into 3 major areas : (1) Agriculture and allied activities ; (2) Industry, infrastructure and employment ; and (3) Drinking water, health and nutrition. Six experts each were assigned with collecting information regarding these three sectors..

Findings

The RLTAAP is an attempt to bring this region in Orissa on par with rest of the country. It is a regional development plan, where apart from Central assistance, convergence of resources from all other sources was also thought of. The project consisted of a Central special plan with a Central plan component of Rs.3083.10 crore and a state share component of Rs. 798.66 crore.

During the nine-year period of the project, an estimated amount of Rs.3083 crore was to be released from the Government of India. However in eight years, only Rs. 1193.95 crore was released, i.e., approx. 38.73 per cent of the Central share. It may also be noted that during the first five years, the implementation was very tardy. Of the Rs.444 crore received from the Government of India in the first five years, only an amount of Rs.317 crore was spent, i.e., 71 per cent of the amount released.

The tardy progress could be attributed to slow release of money from the Government of India on the one hand and slow progress in implementation on the other. The constraints faced include: (1) Even though the three KBK districts were divided into eight districts, the staff position was not increased commensurate with the number of districts; (2) The decision making process was mostly centralised with project sanction (both technical and administrative) resting with the State capital; (3) The social and economic backwardness of the area itself makes the implementation difficult; (4) The very low level of literacy on the one hand and the large scale seasonal migration on the other made the process of participatory planning and implementation difficult; (5) In the initial years the State did not make any effort to involve the Panchayat; (6) The process of getting yearly sanction of the project from the Planning Commission instead of a five-year project sanction added to the misery; (7) The focus of the project changed from year to year based on the direction of the Planning Commission; and (8) Money was received mostly in the last quarter of the financial year. Even though there was some sluggishness, both in the quantum of financial releases from the Centre and in the process of implementation, the project picked some momentum from the sixth year onwards.

The effort by the Government of India to start the Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana helped through more easy flow of funds. The State Government had taken several initiatives to improve project implementation. This includes making Revenue Divisional Commissioners (northern and southern) and Deputy Chief Administrators, delegating higher financial and administrative powers to these officers, including as the District Collector.

Specific Suggestions Sector-wise

Watershed Programme

1. Convergence of efforts of other relevant sectors like agriculture, horticulture, forestry, etc., is necessary to obtain optimum results of watershed programme.
2. Hariyali guidelines are to be adopted in implementing watershed programme.
3. Constraints in the flow of funds were observed in the implementation of watershed programme. There is need for adequate and timely flow of funds

Afforestation Programme

As far as possible plantations should be of Non-Timber Forest Produce (NTFP) variety.

Raising plantation of aromatic and medicinal plants through Self- Help Group (SHG) formed within the Vana Samrakshna Samiti (VSS) should be undertaken for economic upliftment of rural poor, especially tribals.

Repeated training of cutting edge forest staff should be undertaken.

Development of decentralised nurseries through SHGs should be encouraged.

More of people's participation in planning and implementation with total control of funds to VSS is necessary for higher level of success.

As per the JFM approach, 50 per cent share of the final harvest and 100 per cent of intermediate products have to be given to the VSS. However, the VSS is not very confident about this, as the members do not feel that they are co-managers of the project. The VSS needs to be involved as an equal partner.

Water Resource Development

The NREGP funds should be utilised effectively for land development and creation of irrigation channels for optimising the output of water resource development.

For improved efficiency in water use, Warabandi system needs to be introduced.

There is a need for upward revision of the cost of implementing the project from the existing Rs.35,000 per ha.

The members of the Pani Panchayat need to be trained intensively for effective management.

Agriculture

The agricultural extension system is found to be extremely weak, hence efforts should be made to strengthen the extension system by appointing agriculture graduates on a project basis.

Presently the farmers are dependent on private sources for crucial inputs like seeds, finance etc. If one were to learn from the experiences of other states, farmers may face problems in the long run. Efforts were needed from the government to provide certified seeds and also facilitate finances from the formal sectors.

Agricultural implements can be given to SHG groups - one may try to form young educated unemployed ST groups for this purpose.

There is a need to effectively try water conservation including encouraging drip and sprinkler irrigation in horticultural crops. In this regard, subsidy norms may be revised.

Excessive dependence on the private sector without proper governmental regulation can land the farmers in deep trouble.

Horticulture

Generation and supply of quality planting material should be the responsibility of horticulture department. This may be achieved with the help of trained SHGs.

Onion storage facility may be increased.

There is a need to have a definite target for SC/ST communities in this scheme.

There is a need to establish mini cold storage facilities to protect farmers from price fluctuations.

Fisheries

The quality of the reservoirs needs to be improved by de-silting and clearing of weeds, imparting training to the SHG members to improve efficiency.

The tax imposed on fish needs to be reduced.

Animal Husbandry

As the awareness level of the people is low, there is little or no demand for veterinary services. In this context, there is a need for a proactive approach to animal health care and for breed improvement in the KBK districts.

Rural Connectivity

The Rural Works Department is to be created at the district level by drawing personnel from different engineering departments. The additional staff have to be hired through an agency for a definite period. The entire planning and implementation should be done at the district level by the Rural Works Department. Delay in allotment of funds, splitting up of works and allowing sub-contractors have severely affected the quality of work. There is a need to ensure strict quality standards, may be by providing a five-year maintenance clause in the contract. All the funds earmarked for connectivity are to be pooled at the district level and implementation should be done by the newly created Rural Works Department. NREAP funds may be used for new road

formation whereas RLTA funds used for black topping. As a large gap still exists with regard to rural connectivity, there is a need for allocation of more funds to this key sector.

Residential Clusters

There is a need to construct residential clusters in all the district headquarters wherever facilities are yet to be created.

Market Complexes

The management of the market complexes is to be entrusted to SHGs, preferably tribal SHGs wherever possible. Clear-cut policy may be drafted regarding levying of user charges. The tribals who are bringing their own agricultural produce may not be charged at these market complexes.

A building may be designed for each village with more than 500 population, which can be used as an Anganwadi centre, the emergency feeding centre can also be used for community TV centre in the KBK districts.

KBK Hostels

Even though this is one of the most successful schemes which helped the tribals to a maximum extent, funds were allotted only in the initial years of the RLTA. There is a need to continue this scheme with allocation of larger quantum of funds.

As these hostels are for girl children up to V standard there is a need to extend it to at least VII standard. The food expense per child which is fixed at Rs.258 per month is insufficient and needs to be enhanced on a continuous basis based on the price index. Board facility or a stipend may be given to these ST girls who are from the villages, where the hostels are located and are not eligible for accommodation in the hostel. The existing Kanyashram should be expanded and upgraded up to X standard.

Pre-recruitment and Vocational Training

The recruitment training can be imparted through the existing Extension Training Centres located in the region. Vocational Training should be imparted and the funds allotted should be effectively utilised.

Handloom and Handicrafts

There is a need to encourage public-private partnership in promoting tribal products. More artisan centres need to be developed. There is a need to ensure adequate supply of Hank Yarn at reasonable rates to the production units.

The Apex Marketing Society needs to be reorganised and strengthened. Approximate strategy for reviving the Primary Weavers Cooperative Societies may be worked out and implemented. Most of the crafts as well as the handlooms engaged in traditional variety need to be upgraded to undertake diversified market-oriented products.

Urban Drinking Water

People and peoples' institutions like urban local bodies have to be involved in planning, implementation and monitoring; otherwise, the scheme cannot become sustainable.

A decision involving the people concerning the water rates needs to be taken before implementation of the scheme.

Even the location of the stand post has to be made in consultation with people and the operation and maintenance of the stand post has to be entrusted to street committees.

Rural Drinking Water Supply

Efforts should be made to provide protected water to few uncovered villages.

There is a need for capacity building of the PRI members before handing over the maintenance of rural drinking water supply.

The role of stakeholders needs to be clearly defined (PRI, DRWS and community).

More funds should be allocated for maintenance of rural drinking water supply.

Mobile Health Unit (MHU)

There is a shortage of almost 2000 doctors in KBK district as per the Director, Health Services, Government of Orissa. There is a need to give higher remuneration to doctors working in mobile health units as the work is more tedious and risky.

A single visit for an hour a month may not be enough to provide health care to villagers. There is a need to increase the MHUs from one per block to at least two per block and in bigger blocks to three, to ensure at least two visits to villages.

Effective monitoring mechanisms regarding the functioning of MHU should be developed for involving people and Panchayats.

Emergency Feeding Programme

Given the level of poverty and the level of migration, leaving the old and infirm indicates a need for continuing this programme with vigour as this is the most vulnerable section prone to starvation deaths.

The per capita cost of food is Rs.2.70 at present which is inadequate and should be raised to Rs.5.00 per day.

Infrastructural facilities for cooking food, storage of rations along with drinkings water facility should be provided at the feeding centres.

Panchayat should be made responsible for monitoring the scheme. There is a need to prepare a long-term perspective plan at the district level and get it approved by the State and the Planning Commission at the apex level, so that there is a clear-cut direction for the five-year plan period.

Plans have to be made from the lowest Panchayat level involving people through people's institutions and should be aggregated at the block and district levels.

Separate provision/ demarcation of funds should be made in proportion to the SC and ST population. Specific projects and programme should be prepared for their overall development.

Funds should be made over directly to the district so that there is no delay in transfer of money from the State government for the smooth implementation of projects.

During the last three to four years, the entire KBK funds from the Centre were received almost only in the last quarter of the financial year. There is a need to ensure quarterly fund flow right from the first quarter of the financial year, as implementation of the projects is more difficult in these areas.

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