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Impact of Irrigation on Agricultural Growth and Poverty Alleviation in India



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THE ROLE OF AGRICULTURE IN REDUCING POVERTY AND HUNGER IN INDIA

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Abstract

Economic growth is the most powerful instrument for reducing poverty and improving the quality of life in developing countries. Poverty is the scarcity or the lack of a certain amount of material possession or money poverty is a multifactor concept, which may include social, economic and political elements. Absolute poverty, extreme poverty, or destitution refers to the complete lack of the means necessary to meet basic personal needs such as food, clothing and shelter. On the other hand, it is estimated that nearly one third of the food produced in the world for human consumption every year gets lost or waste 40 percent of the fruits and vegetables, and 30 percent of cereals that are produced are lost due to inefficient supply chain management and do not reach the consumer markets. Such as Food could be salvaged by timely with drawing it from the distribution network, aggregation it and then redirecting it to the people in need.

I. INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is the main stay of the Indian economy because of its high share in employment and livelihood creation. It is also an important source of raw material and demand for many industrial products, particularly fertilizers, pesticides, agricultural implements and variety of consumer goods. Agricultural growth has long been recognized as an important instrument for poverty reduction. Yet measurements of this relationship are still scarce and not always reliable. The power of agriculture comes

not only from its potentially strong growth linkage effects on the rest of the economy. Decomposing the aggregate decline in poverty into a rural contribution, an urban contribution, and a population shift component shows that rural areas contributed more than half the observed aggregate decline in poverty. Agriculture is the basic source of food supply in India. Raising supply of food by agricultural sector has, therefore great importance for economic growth of a country.¹

Agriculture and Poverty

Agriculture which accounts for little less than 40 percent of the gross domestic product in India affords bread and substance to three fourth of the population directly, while for the rest its contribution is indirect. The growth and progress of economic and social conditions for the poor ruralities determines the fate of most of the population. Ashok Rudra had pointed on that the cost of the alleviation from poverty and hunger would be enormous when the numerical strength of the poverty strikes is nearly 2/3 rd of urban population and ¼ th in the rural sector and a certain minimum consumption per day has to be assured to them. This needs not only enormous food and shelter facility but also needs a very comprehensive network of enforcement machinery.²

The importance of agriculture in the economic development of any country, rich or poor is borne out by the fact that it is the primary sector of economy which provides the basic ingredients necessary for the existence of mankind and also provides most of the

raw materials which when transformed into finished products serve as basic necessities of the human race.³ In a preponderantly agrarian economy, agriculture plays a most strategic role from several points of view. At a minimum, farm production must be increased rapidly enough to keep pace with population growth. However, in a speedy industrializing economy, this is not enough. Industrialization necessarily brings with it urbanization and a rapid expansion of the industrial labour force. This may then be expected to bring with it a rising per capita demand for food based on higher urban incomes.⁴

In addition to supplying food agriculture must provide many of the raw materials for industry for instance, the late of textile industry will be crucially affected by the supply of raw cotton leather goods industry will depend on the availability of hides and skins; food processing drew and tobacco manufactures will all be dependent on agricultural supplies therefore, the pace of advance in a wide range of consumer goods manufactures will be eventually affected by the pace of agricultural development. In addition, agriculture must generate export surpluses in order to earn the foreign exchange with which to finance the import of capital goods and certain kinds of industrial raw materials.⁵

However agriculture is not only a supplier of goods for domestic and export needs but is also supplier of production factors such as capital and labour. A rapidly expanding industrial sector necessarily draws some of its labour force from the rural areas. Moreover in one form or another; agriculture is called upon to save and finance a significant part of the investment for an expansion of industrial plant, transport and other sector as well.

Agriculture as a source of Livelihood

Agriculture has a greater role in economic development in the less developed countries as it provides livelihood to a vast majority of people living

in the country. The agricultural sector provides livelihood to about three-fourth of the Indian population that is seven out of every ten person in India depends on agriculture. It indicates that in spite of rapid industrialization in the country, primary sector is still the main sector providing employment opportunities for the majority of the workers and has, thus acted as the big shock-absorber. This fact reflects the importance of agriculture and lesser development other sectors of the economy.

Poverty and Unemployment

The food is severe not so much as a general problem but it is acute and exists in the real sense for those who are poor with meager purchasing power, and those who are unemployed with no capacity to buy food. And unfortunately the number of those people is very large almost one-third of the entire population. Because of the slow pace of development in the past, as also a pattern of investments that tilted heavily in favour of capital-intensive production and concentration of income and wealth in few hands, the volume of world of work/jobs did not rise part passes with the rise in work-force. Hence there was an increase in the volume and intensive of poverty increased income with farmers thus acts both ways; it provides the rural saving and the rural purchasing power to buy new industrial goods, the relative emphasis on the two purposes differing with the progress of the economy as also the pace of rise in rural income.⁶

Employment-Expansion

Agricultural development in adding economic development is no less significance is the increase in the opportunities in India for productive employment that becomes possible within the rural sector itself. Apart from the asset-formation that takes place, the expansion of work- opportunities is of key importance in an economy with under – employment on a large scale in addition to unemployment. The expansion in output and a very large at that made

possible with new technology, creates work in abundances to handle. The multiple and the more of labour time from a lot many workers. The preparations of soils, sowing of seeds, feeding of inputs, harvesting of grains, cleaning them, storing the products etc., multiply jobs. And since these operations are to be repeated with the introduction of more than one crop in a year, the expanded job opportunities become available at higher incomes.

This rise in income, particularly of the poor further adds substantially to the employment capacity with in the rural sector. This happens because increase in incomes at lower levels creates demand for more farm products other than cereals and pulses. A rising proportion of the income increases tends to be spent more on non-food grain items like milk, milk-products vegetable, fruits, meat, eggs etc. The activities in respect of these products get boosted, further adding to employment and incomes. This process goes on and on with multiplier effect on the quantum of work and the number of jobs. To conclude that the contribution of agriculture is many –fold being related to the various aspects of income-generation capital-formation and employment creation. As such the growth of agriculture deserves to be accorded a very high priority in any scheme of resource –cultivation for general economic development.

II. CONCLUSION

In the light of the causes enumerated above it is clear that the solution of the food problem lies in

bringing the gap between demand for supply of food grains rises. In view of the inadequate diet of the Indians in general, and more particularly of the poor the solution boils down to the raising of supplies, and to an extent curtaining demand through the control of population. Increase in production and making available a larger proportion for non rural population. Price fixation, alongside satisfactory arrangements for the sale and distribution of food articles .Regulation of demand through curbs on wasteful consumption and control of population. The Improvement in the economic conditions of the poor is equally necessary to raise their effective demand.

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