

Impact of Different Development Programmes for Scheduled Tribe People in Drought Prone Areas: Study on West Bengal

Abstract

Drought Pron Area Progmme (DPAP) is the earlist area development programme launched bt he Central Governmnet in 1973-74 to tackle the special problems faced by those fragile areas, which are persistently affected by severe drought conditions. The basic problems of Drought Prone areas are continuous depletion of vegetative cover, increase in soil ersion and fall in grong water levels.

Keywords: Drought Prone Areas, Watershed Development, Scheduled Teribe

Introduction

Sources of Data

The data have been collected from both primary and secondary sources.

Primary sources :-

The primary data on the socio economic conditions of the Santhal, Munda, Lodha, Savar and Birhor have been collected through personal interview at the field study.

Secondary Sources :-

The secondary data have been collected from various publication and report of the Government organization like census report published by Bureau of applied economics and development statistics of the Govt. of India, Reports on SC & ST development if any, bulletin published by Cultural Research Institute, Backward classes welfare Department of W.B. Govt. etc.

Objectives of Drought Prone Areas Programme:

The main objective of the programme is to minimize the adverse effects of drought on the production of crops and livestock and productivity of land, water and human resources of the drought affected areas. The goal of life programme is to accelerate overall economic development and to develop the socio-economic condition of the poor and disadvatge sections inhabiting the programme areas through creation and equitable distribution of reasource base and increased employment opportunities. The objectives of the programme are being addressed in heneral by taking up development works throught watershed approach for land development, water resource development and afforstation / pasture development.

Strategy of Drought Prone Areas Programme :-

1. The Common guidelines for watershed Developmet provide for a uniform strategy in the implement of all development programme. The main characteristics of this strategy are :
2. Area Development programmes to be implemented only on watershed basis.
3. Direct participation of the people in planning and development of watershed areas and maintenance of assets in the post project period.
4. Panchayati Raj Institutions have right to monitor and review the programme at distinct, block and village levels . The panchayati aj institutions can also functions as Project Implemntation Agencies of they so Desire.
5. Voluntary afencies to be given effective role inhte implementation of the programme particularly inmotivating people, community organisatin and training.

Coverage of Drought Prone Areas Programme in West Bengal:-

Dorught Prone Areas Programme (DPAP) came into operation in West Bengal in 1976-77. The entire Purulia district (20 blokcs), Seven selected blocks of Bakura district and the eight blokcs of Jharagram Sub-division of Paschim Medinipur were under the purviews under from this programme. But in 1983-84, Binpur -1 Blokc of Paschim Medinipur district

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was excluded from the covered of this programme. In addition to these 34 blocks, two blocks of Birbhum came under this programme.

Profile of Drought Prone Blocks of Paschim Medinipur, Bankura and Purulia

We projected first a brief a profile of the DP blocks (Drought Prone blocks) of Paschim Medinipur district to be followed by that of Bankura district and Purulia district.

(a) D.P. Blocks of Paschim Medinipur district :-

D.P. Blocks of Paschim Medinipur district are adjacent to the Jharkhand and Orissa States. All the DP blocks of Paschim Medinipur are cent percent rural while the percentage share of rural population to total population was 89.51 for the district as a whole in 2001. All 8 blocks of Jhargram sub-division of Medinipur district fall under the DPAP. But Binpur -1 block at Jhargram Sub-division viz. Jhargram, Bipur-II, Jamboni, Nayagram, Sankrail, Gopiballavpur -I and Gopiballavpur-II are under the purview of DPAP in Paschim Medinipur district. The DPAP project areas touch the eastern fringe of Chhotanagpur Plateau. A large number of scheduled tribe people concentrated in Drought Prone areas. All Drought Prone blocks represented higher share S.T. population than district average.

The DP block are socially, economically and infrastructurally backward relative to the district as a whole as in apparent from the following table.

(b) D.P. Block of Bankura district :-

Drought Prone block of Bankura district are also cent percent rural. Seven selected blocks of Bankura district are full of under the Drought Prone Areas Programme. These 7 selected D.P. blocks are Chhatna, Saltore Mejhia, Gangajalhati, Indpur Hirabandh, Ranibandh. A large number of scheduled tribe population varied 2.21 percent in Mejhia to 47.28 percent in Ranibandh block. The economy of the block is found to depend mainly on agriculture. The social, economical and infrastructural status of these DP block of Bankura district reflects through the following table

(c) D.P. Block of Purulia District :-

Entire Purulia district i.e. 20 blocks of Purulia district are full under the Drought Prone Areas Programme. In Purulia district all the DP blocks except Balarampur are cent Percent rural. In 2001m the proportion of Scheduled tribe population varied from 4.31 percent in Purulia -II to 51.08 percentage in Bandwan. The percentage of literate persons among females was much lower than the percentage among males. The social, economics and infrastructural status of these DP blocks of Purulia reflects through the following table.

Watershed Development Programme Under D.P.A.P

Watershed Development activities involve management of soil and water along with various agronomical interventions with a focus on livelihoods improvement through communities in participatory planning and implementation of Watershed programmes. While management of natural resources has been intrinsic to watershed development

programme, in the twentieth century livelihood support activities were conspicuous by their absence in most of the watershed development interventions. The report of the Technical Committee on Watershed Development in India (Known as Parthasarathy Committee report) recognized the importance of livelihood issues in the watershed development programme.

In addition to land and water management the watershed plus approach gives equal emphasis to livelihood support intentions, which is based on the analysis of assets (physical, social, human, natural and financial) from which rural people derive their livelihoods. In comparison with conventional watershed projects, this approach recognise that natural resource interventions are necessary but not sufficient for the elimination of rural poverty.

The primary objectives of all the major watershed development projects were to prevent land degradation, balance the ecosystem, enhance retain capacity of soils and the fertility of the soil. All these projects largely, focused on the water harvesting structures.

Watershed Development In Tribal Villages: Case Study on Jhargram In West Bengal Socio-Economic Profile

A study was undertaken in four villages of Jhargram block namely Dhanghori, Khasjungle, Chatarpada and Payarachali under Paschim Medinipur district. West Bengal. In Dhanghori and Khasjungle the two scheduled tribe communities viz. Munda and Santal are inhabited. Near about 50 Munda households in each village and 20 Santal households in Dhanghori and is Santal household in Khasjungle had been found. In Dhanghori and Khasjungle village, about cent percentage villagers had possess agricultural land. In Dhanghori village, one household possessed 19 Bighas agricultural land, while other possessed 1 Bigha to 6 Bighas agricultural land. The tribal inhabitants of other villages viz Khasjungle, Chatarpada and Payarachali also possess agricultural land.

Livelihood Option

Most of the people were engaged in wage labour (agriculture or / and non agriculture). A very few proportion people of these villages were engaged in Govt. service. Agriculture is an important source of income of all tribal households of these villages. The entire family engaged themselves in agriculture during cultivation period. Generally the female members of these tribal households were give to nearby forest to collect Sal leaves and it is also a source of their earnings during few months in a year.

Agricultural Activities

Agriculture is also an important source of income of the tribal inhabitants of these villages. They mainly cultivated paddy in their lands. Besides, this ground-nut and Til also produced. During study it was found that on an average Rs.4500.00 annual income was earned from agricultural activities by each household. Despite, a very few household of these areas yearly more than Rs. 50,000.00 was earned from their agricultural activities. Nevertheless, among

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these families each possesses about 20 Bighas agricultural lands and beside Paddy cultivation. They produce ground-nut and Til seeds in large quantity.

Programme Activities

Within the Micro Watershed the assets created under the programme primarily come under two categories i.e. creation of water bodies and Land Development. The creation and renovation of water bodies included check Dam, Gully plugging, Farm Pond and Irrigation Channet etc. Under land development Field Bunding, Stone Bunding and Mechanical Fitter Strip (MFS) were taken up and in some villages guard wall / support wall were also created.

In early days the tribal people of these villages were solely depend on monsoon for paddy cultivation. In all villages surveyed the watershed programme like earthen dam (for storage of water) creation succeeded in bringing water to dried field. In Dhangori village, there were three earthen dam which are storing water from adjacent areas particularly from forest areas and irrigated that to the agricultural lands of Munda community. These earthen dams are also keep up the water level of the adjacent agricultural lands which definitely increase the fertility level of adjacent agricultural lands. One big earthen dam (Water reserver) is also observed in the Chatarpada mouja which provides irrigation facilities and pull up the water level of the adjacent agricultural lands of Scheduled tribe (Santal) community. During rainy season the water flows come from Khas jungle forest areas and stored in this earthen dam. There is another earthen dam also observed within these areas. Kangsabati irrigation canal also flows surrounding these areas. Nevertheless it is also irrigated few agricultural lands of these areas.

Impact of The Programmes

During study on the impact of the Drought Area programme on the scheduled tribe people of these areas. some points emerge in front of me. These are —

- i) Earlier the villagers were completely depended on monsoon for paddy cultivation. But, after implimentation of watershed programmes i.e. earthen dam (water reserver) and irrigation canal creation, the fertility of the land is defenitely increased earlier days. In one bigha, 3 quintals paddy had been produced but after implimentation of these programmes that must increase the fertility of that lands and presently in one bigha the tribal people can able to produce more than 5 quintals paddy.
- ii) Apart from the traditional paddy creation, the tribal people now produces til seeds and ground nuts in their agricultural fields. They also started vegetable cultivation. It is defenitely the watershed development programmes which motivated these tribal people towards the new dimensions.
- iii) During study it was found that the earthen dam (Water reservers) was not properly maintained time to time. So, the capacity of the reserver gradually depleted after certain periods.

- iv) The benefits of these programmes were gone to the adjacent agricultural lands of these water reservers and the irrigation canal.
- v) During in study it was learnt from the aged tribal people of these areas that due to these earthen dams, the dry leaves, insects which come to the agricultural lands from the adjacent forests are now dumped into the earthen dams. As per their perception, these leaves and incests which increases fertility of the land, now they are deprived.
- vi) The tribal people of these area were not informed regarding the benefits of these programmes. During study the aged tribal people were punished their grievances about these water were reservers which arises due to lack knowledge of the benefits of watershed development programmes.

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