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## REVIEWS IN BRIEF

*Second India Studies—Water*, M. C. Chaturvedi, The Macmillan Company of India Ltd., Delhi, 1976. Pp. viii + 94. Rs. 8.00.

This study on water in the Second India studies, sponsored by the Ford Foundation, makes an attempt to examine the position regarding the availability of water and related land resources, the magnitude of demand for and supply of water, water management problems and policies and programmes needed for solving these problems around 2000. A.D. The problem of water resources for India's future looks very formidable. By the turn of the century, a second India would have been born. With about 50 per cent of the available water resources committed by 1973-74, it has been possible to support irrigated agriculture only on about 26 per cent of the land and barely provide drinking water facilities to 10 per cent of the population. With the present trend of development, the utilizable water resources would have been completely withdrawn, creating serious scarcity. It is estimated that only 70 per cent of the villages would have been served with organized water supply and only 50 per cent of the urban population could be supplied with water borne sanitation. Agriculture would continue to remain the primary user, accounting for 89 per cent of water use but only 50 per cent of the sown area would be only marginally irrigated even with complete utilization of the total irrigation potential. Revolutionary steps need to be taken to prevent a crisis on the water front. It is contended that the present technological approach is likely to have disastrous consequences on water resources development. It is suggested that development has to be planned in terms of viable planning regions such as river basins which should be linked to a national plan over space and time, and has to be integrated with total rural development.

*Development of Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers: A Study in Mathura*, S. M. Pandey, Shri Ram Centre for Industrial Relations and Human Resources, New Delhi-5, 1974. Pp. viii + 116. Rs. 20.00.

This brochure presents the results of a study made in two blocks in Mathura district of Uttar Pradesh to examine the impact of the assistance received by the beneficiaries under the Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers (MAFL) Development programme on their income, employment, pattern of expenditure, and indebtedness. The study is based on the analysis of data collected from a sample of 128 beneficiary families, 105 non-beneficiary marginal farmers and 105 non-eligible small farmers in the size-group of 2.5-3.75 acres pertaining to the year 1972-73. It is observed that the real effectiveness of the scheme is restricted to only 58 per cent of the beneficiary households cultivating 2.5 acres or less. A majority of beneficiary respondents reported a net increase in their household income

due to the MFAL assistance which positively influenced their economic position. Significant changes were also observed in the occupational structure of beneficiary households due to the MFAL assistance. The number of beneficiary respondents reporting cultivation as main occupation declined from 72 per cent to 68 per cent and those engaged in dairying increased from 3 per cent to 9 per cent before and after receiving assistance respectively. The impact of the assistance was more significant on secondary occupations such as dairying and cattle-care. Withdrawal of surplus labour from agriculture helped the beneficiary families in making cultivation of owned or leased land more economical and profitable. The incidence of poverty was observed to be much less for the beneficiaries than for the non-beneficiary marginal farmers. It is suggested that the effectiveness of the scheme could be enhanced by taking necessary precautionary measures at the stages of finalising the programme contents, their administration and implementation.

*Food, Population and Employment: The Impact of the Green Revolution*, Edited by Thomas T. Coleman and Donald K. Freebairn, Cornell University Programme on Science, Technology and Society, Ithaca, Praeger Publishers, Inc., New York, U.S.A., 1973. Pp. xiv + 272.

This volume is the outcome of a workshop held at Cornell University in June, 1971 to discuss some of the more clear-cut social, political and economic consequences of the Green Revolution. It contains eleven invited papers dealing with the main theme of the workshop and the summary of discussions, which are organized in four parts. The introductory chapter in Part I provides an historical perspective for the examination of recent controversies based on various estimates of population growth and the ability of the world to feed an expanding population. Part II which consists of four chapters, considers the parameters of change with respect to technical progress in agriculture in developing countries, food needs and the effective demand for food, examines the prospect of a reduction in population growth through changes in attitudes to family formation and fertility and the impact of population growth on rural-urban migration and distribution. Discussions on these topics highlight the challenges that the developing countries will increasingly face in regard to food, population and employment in the next few decades. Part III comprising six chapters explores the emerging problems and dilemmas that bear on equity in income distribution, stability in politics and government, social change, spatial growth and scale of urban organization, industrialization and employment and the impact on trade. The main threads of arguments presented in the preceding chapters as well as the comments of the participants in the workshop are brought together in the last part. The importance of research in agriculture and its high pay-off is stressed. The critical issue that determines how hunger and malnutrition can be alleviated depends on whether the level and composition of the com-

modities indicated by effective demand will match those needed to meet the "requirements." While the green revolution has made striking progress in a few countries which have had persistently heavy food deficits with increasing reliance on food imports, it is still to be seen whether its progress will lead to an increase in output of small farmers and in the real wages of the working class and other low incomes groups and lead to self-sufficiency. An important point emerging from the discussions is that a broad inter-disciplinary approach is needed for a proper understanding of the green revolution in all its aspects and for finding solutions to the problems growing out of it. It is also observed that it is too early to foresee and evaluate the full eventual impact of the green revolution on agricultural modernization.



*The Assault on World Poverty: Problems of Rural Development, Education and Health*, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A., 1975. Pp. xi + 425. \$ 5.95.

This volume deals with five related fields of rural development, agricultural credit, land reform, education and health. It seeks to "analyse the causes of poverty, to examine the ways in which it can be alleviated and to outline programmes in which the World Bank plans to help." Its main focus is on rural development as a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of the rural poor encompassing small-scale farmers, tenants and the landless. The three chapters in the first section examine the nature and extent of the problem of rural development, policies and programmes for rural development followed by the developing countries and the scope of the World Bank's programme for agricultural and rural development. The sections on agricultural credit and land reform examine certain aspects of the problem of agricultural productivity in detail and contain proposals for improving the conditions of the rural poor. The last two sections on education and health critically analyse the direction in which educational systems and health practices have evolved in the past as well as examine the educational and health problems of the urban and the rural poor and suggest measures to make the social infrastructure services more responsive to the needs of the developing countries.

The volume highlights the fact that although economic growth in most of the developing countries has been encouraging over the past three decades, its benefits have not been shared by a very large proportion of their people; on an average, the poorest 40 per cent of the developing countries is not much better off than it was. The need is therefore stressed for reshaping the development strategies to help the poor to become more productive. The major thrust of the World Bank's activities in rural areas has been in lending for agricultural development. As a result of the changes in emphasis in policy in recent years and with its focus on reduction of poverty, the Bank

has introduced "new style" projects which are intended to reach large numbers of people through area development, land settlement, irrigation and land improvement schemes. Most of the projects have an agricultural base and involve technological change. The expansion of "new style" projects has led to a substantial change in the nature of lending for agriculture inasmuch as the share of agriculture in total lending has increased considerably and within agriculture, poverty-oriented projects have a larger share. There has also been a significant increase in the share of the poorest countries in the Bank's lending for both agriculture and poverty-oriented projects. Between fiscal years 1968 and 1972, the percentage of Bank assisted agricultural projects where the participating farmers owned less than five hectares rose from 17 to 67. The number of projects that are directly focussed in some way on providing benefits to the rural poor increased from five 5, *i.e.*, 17 per cent of all lending for agriculture in 1968 to 28, *i.e.*, 47 per cent in 1974, involving an increase in loan advances from over \$ 29 million to \$ 474 million. The number of beneficiary farmers under the "new style" projects is estimated at 11.8 million in 1974.

The second section examines the agricultural credit practices, problems, programmes and policies and agricultural credit delivery systems in the developing world. A major concern of the World Bank has been to strengthen the credit institutions within the borrowing countries and particularly to ensure their financial viability. The agricultural credit projects of the Bank have generally been oriented towards funding special production activities. The Bank's lending for agriculture to the poorest countries exceeded \$ 1,000 million of which more than half was for farm credit. About one-fourth of all credit financed by the Bank is intended for small-scale producers. India and Mexico, together received nearly two-fifths of all farm credit lending from the Bank during the fiscal years 1969-73. It is envisaged that long- and short-term agricultural credit operations during the same period would have benefited more than nine lakh small farmers with holdings of five hectares or less, located mainly in India (long-term credit for three lakh small farmers) and in Ethiopia. It is reported that the World Bank's lending for farm credit through commercial channels, via the central bank has proved satisfactory from a managerial and control standpoint, and has been effective both technically and in reaching the clientele of large borrowers. But such institutions are less likely to deal directly with the small farmers because of high administrative costs, lack of borrower collateral and locational limitations restricting access. Though the best way of reaching large numbers of small farmers is still not clear, co-operatives provide one of the most promising vehicles for dealing with them. Almost 20 per cent of farm credit advanced by the World Bank is disbursed through the co-operatives. The need is also stressed for collecting more information relating to the performance of credit programmes for small farmers in improving productivity and incomes, and about the cost involved in providing such credit.

Though the World Bank's experience through project financing of land reform has been very limited, it has supported reforms that are consistent with the development objectives of increasing output, improving income distribution and expanding employment. The Bank has given support to countries interested in pursuing land reform in the form of technical assistance and finance for reform-related projects. The third section discusses some examples of World Bank involvement in land reform programmes, notably in Malawi and Tunisia.

The major issues facing education system and the choice of policy are considered under following five heads: (a) development of skills and their relevance, (b) mass participation in education and development, (c) education and equity, (d) increasing efficiency in education, and (e) improving management and training. During the fiscal years 1963-71, strong support was given by the Bank to technical and vocational education and agricultural education and training accounting for 29 per cent and 14 per cent of its lending, respectively. A shift in the pattern of educational financing was observed during 1972-74. The heavy concentration on the secondary level (44 per cent) during the earlier period gave way to greater support for primary and basic education and for the training of adults and youths, reflecting the Bank's concern for improving the relevance, efficiency or economy of education system.

Although the Bank's operations have influenced health conditions and some projects have included health services, direct lending for health projects has not been part of its activities. The number of health-related projects supported by the Bank has increased more than five fold from four in 1969 to 22 in 1973 with total loans and credits amounting to \$ 500 million. Of this amount, water supply and sewerage accounted for 73 per cent and population projects for 4.4 per cent. A comparative review of the policy relating to health is given in the last section which assesses the health situation in developing countries, examines the impact of poverty on ill-health, and of ill-health on economic development, analyses the trends in health policy in member countries and offers suggestions for reforms and outlines the policy the Bank has decided to follow.