

3. RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The Concept of Rural Development

Rural - Is an area, where the people are engaged in primary industry in the sense that they produce things directly for the first time in cooperation with nature as stated by Srivastava (1961).

A society or community can be classified as rural based on the criteria of lower population density, less social differentiation, less social and spatial mobility, slow rate of social change, etc. Agriculture would be the major occupation of rural area.

Development: It refers to growth, evolution, stage of inducement or progress. This progress or growth is gradual and had sequential phases. Always there is increasing differentiation. It also refers to the over all movement towards greater efficiency and complex situations.

Rural Development (RD): is a process which aims at improving the well being and self-realisation of people living outside the urbanized areas through collective process.

According to Agarwal (1989) rural development is a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of rural poor.

Scope and Importance of Rural Development

Rural development is a dynamic process which is mainly concerned with the rural areas. These include agricultural growth, putting up of economic and social infrastructure, fair wages as also housing and house sites for the landless, village planning, public health, education and functional literacy, communication etc.

Rural development is a national necessity and has considerable importance in India because of the following reasons.

1. about three-fourth of India's population live in rural areas,
2. nearly half of the country's national income is derived from agriculture,
3. around seventy per cent of Indian population get employment through agriculture,

4. bulk of raw materials for industries come from agriculture and rural sector,
5. increase in industrial population can be justified only in rural populations' motivation and increasing the purchasing power to buy industrial goods, and
6. growing disparity between the urban elite and the rural poor can lead to political instability.

Objectives: The major objectives of rural development are:

- 1) to achieve enhanced production and productivity in rural areas,
- 2) to bring about a greater socio-economic equity,
- 3) to bring about a spatial balance in social and economic development,
- 4) to bring about improvement in the ecological environment so that it may be conducive to growth and happiness, and
- 5) to develop broad based community participation in the process of development.