

The background of the cover is a photograph of a river scene. In the foreground, there are green trees and bushes. The middle ground shows a wide river with a small bridge in the distance. The sky is a clear, bright blue. The text is overlaid on this image.

International Seminar on

POVERTY IN BIHAR: PATTERN, DIMENSIONS AND
ERADICATION STRATEGIES

18-20 April 2010, Patna

A Report

Organised by

Institute for Human Development

In association with

Asian Development Research Institute

Supported by

United Nations Development Programme

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AND ERADICATION STRATEGIES**

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List of Abbreviations

- ADRI - Asian Development Research Institute
- APL - Above Poverty Line
- BC - Backward Caste
- BPL - Below Poverty Line
- BRLP - Bihar Rural Livelihoods Programme
- CED - Chronic Energy Deficiency
- CSS - Common School System
- EGS - Employment Guarantee Scheme
- FCI - Food Corporation of India
- GDP - Gross Domestic Product
- GP - Gram Panchayat
- HDI - Human Development Index
- IHD - Institute for Human Development
- IIPA - Indian Institute of Public Administration
- ICDS - Integrated Child Development Services
- ILO - International Labour Organisation
- IRDP - Integrated Rural Development Programme
- MGD - Millennium Development Goal
- MDM - Mid-day Meal
- MFI - Microfinance Institution
- MNREGA/S - National Rural Employment Guarantee Act/Scheme
- MRP - Mixed Reference Period
- MSP - Minimum Support Price
- MYRADA - Mysore Resettlement and Development Agency
- NABARD - National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development
- NCF - National Curriculum Framework
- NGO - Non-Government Organisation
- NFHS - National Family Health Survey
- NEFIS - Nation-wide Electronic Financial Inclusion System
- NFSA - National Food Security Act
- NSSO - National Sample Survey Organisation
- PDS - Public Distribution System
- PLB - Poverty Line Basket
- PPP - Public-Private Partnership
- PRADAN - Professional Assistance for Development Action
- PRI - Panchayati Raj Institution
- PRS - Poverty Reduction Strategy
- RBI - Reserve Bank of India
- SC - Scheduled Caste
- SFCSC - State Food and Civil Supplies Corporation
- SGSY - Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana
- SHG - Self-help Group
- SRI - System of Rice Intensification
- SSHE - School Sanitation and Hygiene Education
- ST - Scheduled Tribe
- STD-PCO - Subscriber Trunk Dialling-Public Call Office
- UIDAI - Unique Identification Authority of India
- UNDAF - United Nations Development Assistance Framework

Preface

This report captures the proceedings of the international seminar on “Poverty in Bihar: Pattern, Dimensions And Eradication Strategies” held in Patna from 18th to 20th April 2010, organised by the Institute for Human Development, New Delhi in partnership with the Asian Development Research Institute (ADRI) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The seminar made valuable contributions to the ongoing efforts of the Bihar government towards poverty alleviation.

Inaugurated by the Chief Minister of Bihar, Mr. Nitish Kumar, the three-day seminar was a part of the Institute for Human Development’s Research Programme on Inclusive Development in Bihar. Its key objective was to analyse the nature and pattern of poverty in Bihar, discuss the issues relating to its measurement and identification, and suggest an effective and innovative strategy for its eradication.

A galaxy of scholars, policy-makers and practitioners presented papers and discussed a wide variety of issues such as identifying the poor, key dimensions of poverty in Bihar, gender disparities, experiences and success stories in poverty reduction in India, development paths for poverty reduction, the framework for State intervention, whether targeted schemes and programmes reach the poor and the excluded, and strategies, priorities and prospects for poverty reduction in Bihar. These discussions were spread over nine sessions in three days and included an international round table on the experiences and success stories in poverty reduction.

We express our gratitude to the paper presenters, discussants, chairpersons and participants at the seminar for their very rich and meaningful interventions. As the seminar was held early in the life of the IHD’s Bihar Research Programme, the discussions and deliberations therein would greatly contribute towards shaping the Programme.

We are grateful to our adviser, Ms. Janine Rodgers for detailed discussions, her expert inputs and involvement at every stage of this seminar. We also express our gratitude to our colleagues at ADRI, led by Dr. Shaibal Gupta, Dr. P.P. Ghosh and Dr. Sunita Lal for their unstinted support in the organisation of the seminar. At ADRI, the contribution of Mr. Surya Kant Pandey and Mr. Sudip Pandey deserves special acknowledgement. We would like to thank Ms. Prema Gera and Ms. Mona Mishra of the UNDP for helping us at every stage of the seminar. A special word of thanks to the IHD team of Ms. Amrita Datta, Ms. Joyita Ghose, Ms. Kasturi Mazumdar and Mr. Ashwani Kumar, who worked hard in the coordination of the seminar.

Gerry Rodgers and Alakh N. Sharma

Seminar Directors



Chief Minister Nitish Kumar arrives at the Seminar, with Professor Alakh N. Sharma, Director IHD and Dr. Shaibal Gupta, Member-Secretary, ADRI

Bihar is the poorest state of the country, with the exception of Orissa, and also ranks among the slowest growing regions of the country. The slow growth of the state along with the demographic pressure has led to its economic retrogression—the per capita income not only stagnated during the 1990s but actually showed a decline during some of the years. Bihar's per capita income, which was approximately 60 per cent of the Indian average during the 1960s, declined to approximately 40 per cent in 1993-94, and further to about 30 per cent during 2003-04. In respect of other social and human development indicators too, the state's performance has been poor.

However, in recent years, there have been signs of change. The growth rate has started accelerating and there have been concerted and massive efforts during the last three years or so by the Bihar government to alleviate poverty and generate livelihoods for the poor. There have been signs of improvements on several fronts. However, Bihar's poverty is deep-rooted and overcoming it requires coordinated efforts not only from the state and central governments, but also from many other actors, including local and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), international agencies, and many others. Poverty is a very complex issue and there is a dire need to devise a focused strategy for poverty eradication and clearly defined roles for the various stakeholders in this regard.

In this context, the Institute for Human Development (IHD, in association with the Asian Development Research Institute (ADRI), organised an international seminar at Patna from 18th to 20th April, 2010. The seminar, which was supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), brought together an eminent panel representing a wide range of experience and expertise from within and outside India to examine the existing perceptions of poverty and to review the impact of alternative policy approaches. The objective of the seminar was to analyse the nature and pattern of poverty in Bihar, discuss the issues relating to its measurement and identification, and suggest an effective and innovative strategy for its eradication. The participants at the seminar also examined the roles of different agencies and stakeholders involved in the alleviation of poverty in the state.

The Chief Minister of Bihar, Mr. Nitish Kumar, inaugurated the seminar. About 50 well-known scholars and experts from outside Bihar, including several from outside India, participated in the three-day seminar. The international participants included some renowned scholars and experts from the University of Sao Paulo, Brazil; the International Labour Organization, Geneva; Institute of Social Studies, The Hague; Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing; and Economic Research Group, Dhaka. From India, a number of eminent economists, policy-makers from the central government and the state government of Bihar and development practitioners participated in the seminar. They included

Professor Abhijit Sen, Member, Planning Commission; the well-known economists, Professor Y.K. Alagh, Professor Suresh Tendulkar, Dr. N.C. Saxena, Professor Jean Dreze, Professor Bina Agarwal, Professor Sudipto Mundle, Professor S. Mahendra Dev, Professor Amitabh Kundu, Professor Ravi Srivastava, Professor K.P. Kannan, Dr. J. Krishnamurthy, Dr. Manoj Panda, Dr. C. Ravi, and Professor D.N. Reddy; government officials, policy-makers and development practitioners including Dr. S.C. Jha, Professor Janak Pandey, Dr. P.P. Ghosh, Mr. Vyash Ji, Mr. C.K. Mishra, Mr. Tripurari Sharan, Mr. Vijoy Prakash, Shri Uday Narayan Chaudhary, Dr. Vijay Mahajan, Dr. Saurabh Sinha, and many others.

There was an intensive and high-level debate on the issues under discussion throughout the three days of the seminar. The participants also averred and agreed with each other that progress towards building a conducive environment for inclusive development can be fostered through better documentation of data and drawing on the good practices implemented elsewhere in India and abroad. In this context, this international seminar played a key role in contributing to the ongoing efforts of the Bihar government towards poverty alleviation. The key ideas presented, discussions held and conclusions reached at the seminar are summarised below.

On the Current Debate on Poverty and Poverty Measurement in Bihar and India

There was consensus among the participants at the seminar that the new estimates of poverty approved by the Planning Commission (the Tendulkar Report) constitute a step forward for Bihar, but they do not solve the problem of identification of the poor. The magnitude of poverty in the state is extremely high. Most poverty measures are complex and inaccurate, and fail to capture the complex reality of multiple deprivations at the grassroots level. There are a large number of exclusion errors. No methodology for the identification of the poor can be foolproof. While both errors of inclusion and exclusion occur, the latter are of more serious concern than the former. Therefore, the net for identifying the poor should be expanded, and a large number of people should be covered, especially in a traditionally poor state like Bihar. The possible improvements suggested in the method of identification of the poor were to make it much simpler, and to base it on obvious criteria for inclusion such as belonging to the SC/ST categories, landlessness, and lack of ownership of other assets recognised as symbols of wealth in the villages.

It was also suggested that the idea that there is only a single homogeneous target group of poor people should be abandoned, and instead different dimensions of deprivation and social exclusion should be identified, while targeting the needy populations in each situation different groups may be identified on the basis of deprivation in terms of various parameters including food, literacy, health, gender inequality, housing, and sanitation, among others. At the same time, certain groups of people such as salaried government employees, and big landowners should be automatically excluded from the list.

It was pointed out that PRI functionaries could play an important role in the identification of the poor. Some of the speakers also averred that while there was extensive discussion on identification of the BPL households in the state, the focus was entirely on the inclusion and exclusion of the poor whereas an important dimension of the poverty situation like the leakage of benefits or misuse of their BPL status by the beneficiaries did not figure in the debate. Finally, it was agreed that since in the current context, a large number of people are self-employed and are subject to employment fluctuations, it is more important to create a vulnerability line rather than a poverty line.

On Targeted Versus Universal Poverty Alleviation Programmes

It was acknowledged that the targeted cash transfer programmes have achieved some success in Bihar, and merit further research. However, the debate on universality versus targeting for anti-poverty policies indicated that all systems of targeting suffer from serious problems. In order to ensure that the needy groups are not excluded from the poverty list,

there should be universal entitlement for some easily identified groups, especially for availing of the Public Distribution System. One possibility is geographical targeting, that is, providing universal access in villages or blocks which suffer from particular disadvantages. It was argued that in a state where close to 93 per cent of the population may be identified as 'vulnerable', the debate on targeting seems redundant.

On International Experiences

The session on international experiences indicated that there were positive messages from Brazil, China, Bangladesh and elsewhere. These experiences highlighted that employment creation is central and we need to find ways to embed employment growth in policies aimed at achieving other goals. There was much to learn from the Chinese case, and it was recommended that the entire growth strategy should be pro-poor. There should be stress on rural industrialisation, including training with a strong emphasis on the participation of the poor in management systems and local institutions. There were discussions on some new approaches, which have been shown to work if the institutional conditions are right. These included direct cash transfers to eliminate hunger in Brazil, micro-credit in Bangladesh, and cooperative farming in Eastern Europe.

On Migration

It was argued that labour markets are unequal across various regions of the state. Out-migration of labour from Bihar is not a minor phenomenon and may be affecting about one-third of the rural households, which is much higher than what official estimates suggest. Migration to other states is now a major source of income for agricultural labour households. Research conducted at IHD shows that the incidence of migration has increased considerably during the past few decades.

It was pointed out that the migration of men has had an impact on gender relations and increased the participation of women in both work and decision-making, and state action is now needed to reinforce this. There was a widespread consensus among the participants that in order to bring about an improvement in the situation of women, there should be greater emphasis on property rights.

There is also a need to find new ways to channelise remittances from migration into investment, and new local financial institutions could help in this process. There is a case for greater central government involvement in the building of both physical and social infrastructure, and in education, the main issue now is that of ensuring quality. It was also pointed out that migration does not occur solely for livelihoods as an increasing number of people also migrate for educational purposes. It is thus imperative to strengthen the institutions of higher learning in order to arrest the migration of students from the state.

Interestingly, while, on one hand, it was argued that the extent of migration is high among the landless and the marginally landholding

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families as those owning land have greater access to credit and consequently, exhibit minimal levels of migration, on the other hand, it was also pointed out that there is a high degree of migration among the better-off communities which have some access to education. This has two major implications—firstly, in terms of research, there must be greater empirical understanding of the push and pull factors of migration, and secondly, there is a need for a more holistic policy to address the varied contexts within which migration occurs. It was also recommended that the state government should devise a proper registration system to keep a record of migrants who leave the state for work. The government can undertake skill development and capacity building programmes for migrant workers, which would enhance their employability and enable them to access better work opportunities in Bihar and other parts of the country.

On the Path(s) to Economic Growth

It was pointed out that while Bihar has witnessed a high growth rate of the economy during the last five years, the foundations of the growth are still weak. It was also felt that the present growth rate would not be sustainable unless it was accompanied by investment in industrialisation and more balanced urban development. State action to reduce poverty and meet the needs of the poor has become much more effective in recent years—but the same does not seem to apply to action intended to strengthen the production system. The creation of productive employment is a central issue, which calls for a better incorporation of employment goals in development planning, improved support services and projections of supply and demand for skills. The fact that regional differences within the state are not narrowing down was a disturbing trend. It was argued that control over assets is a very important factor in fostering economic and social mobility. It is, therefore, important to implement an inclusive growth strategy which is both egalitarian and instrumental in increasing both the production base and productive capacity in the state.

On the Diversification of the Rural Economy

It was argued that in order to make growth sustainable, it is critical to develop agriculture and also focus on the diversification of the rural economy into rural non-agricultural activities. The state has tremendous economic potential in the production of vegetables, fruits and milk. Additionally, it was pointed out that the debate on land reforms and agriculture has hitherto been limited in nature and that there is need for a more sustained discussion on these two significant areas of the economy.

On Poverty Alleviation Programmes in Bihar

There was an overall consensus among the participants that the implementation of government programmes in Bihar had substantively

improved during the past few years. The participants discussed the implementation processes related to several major poverty alleviation programmes including National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS), the Public Distribution Scheme (PDS), the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS), and the Mid Day Meal Scheme (MDM). Of these, the MNREGS was by far the most extensively discussed programme. Although participation in NREGA was found to be higher than for any other employment generation programme in the history of the state, there was still a tremendous scope for improvement. It was pointed out that poor implementation of poverty eradication programmes prevents women deriving the maximum benefit from these schemes taking full advantage of them (for example, the availability of better childcare facilities would make participation by women in MNREGA easier) and improving the MNREG, in particular, is largely a question of making local institutions more effective. The ICDS needs to be strengthened by focusing more attention on para-medical staff and laying emphasis on programmes such as the Rashtriya Swasthya Beema Yojana and Janashree Beema Yojana. For both the ICDS and the MDM, the rates of utilisation of funds must be improved. Critical programmes such as the Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC) were yet to take off. The 50 per cent reservation for women in PRIs needs to be backed by complementary actions to reinforce the effective participation of women (for instance, training of women panchayat functionaries is important). There are large leakages in the PDS, and one way to reduce them is through more local engagement (also through improvement in the supply bottlenecks or in the local delivery of foodgrains to dealers by the FCI/SFCSC). The universalisation of PDS was strongly advocated by several participants. Given that 93 per cent of the population in Bihar can be identified as vulnerable, universal PDS can be implemented with a simple exclusionary list wherein all non-marginal and small farmers and salaried employees can be excluded from its purview. An important aspect is to increase the procurement of local foodgrains, which necessitates building of storage capacity of both the FCI as well SFCSC.

Governance and Institutions

It was felt that the state lacked both adequate physical infrastructure and human resources, which was a crucial reason for poor governance and inferior quality of institutions in the state. The role of government programmes has already been discussed in the earlier section. Another aspect of governance includes the dire need to build the capacities of the middle and lower level government functionaries. This should be done by exposing these functionaries to best practices and success stories in other states and by providing them intensive training on critical issues. Proper monitoring and awareness building were also felt to be crucial in ensuring the smooth and effective functioning of institutions.

At the same time, the functioning PRIs was far from perfect. Participation of all castes and social groups needs to be ensured in the village-level institutions. At the same time, service delivery of these institutions,

especially related to specific schemes and programmes needs to be enhanced.

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On Women's Empowerment

The participants lauded Bihar for being the first state to take the bold step of reserving 50 per cent of the seats for women in the state's PRIs. At the same time, low levels of literacy of women, coupled with their low workforce participation rate, were attributed to cultural factors. It was also revealed that government schemes such as the Balika Cycle Yojana had had a tremendous impact in the state as it had done wonders in improving mobility among young women. It also had the potential to provide a fillip to women's empowerment in the state, which would also boost women's participation in village level institutions. Further, women in the state also need to be provided greater access to micro-credit services.

Other Aspects of Human Development

While it was agreed that the education and health situation in the state was improving, it was felt that a lot more still needed to be done. There was concern about the how the low levels of nutrition in the state were related to high levels of poverty. It was acknowledged that while the implementation of government programmes such as ICDS had considerably improved in the recent past, a lot more remained to be done. On the education front, in particular, there was a lot of discussion on the low levels of literacy, especially female literacy in the state. While during the last few years, there has been mass recruitment of teaching staff, now it was imperative to transfer the focus on the quality of education provided. The housing situation of the state also needs to be overhauled. One-third of the total housing deficit in the country occurred in the state of Bihar, and 75 per cent of the housing in the state constituted kuccha housing.

It was felt that the problem of poverty in Bihar could not be solved by the central government alone and that the state also has a major role to play in this process. Further, it was asserted that the tax base should be widened to cover 7 per cent of the population, as against the current 5 per cent. The state should play a proactive role in raising resources for Bihar's development. At the same time, significant investment in the state by the central government, state government, Finance Commission and Planning Commission is also required.

On Statistics and Research Capacity

The statistical base for assessing policies and progress is very weak in the state. More emphasis is needed on building reliable statistical systems. There is a need to strengthen the research capacity and research institutions concerned with economic and social development in the state.

The detailed session-wise report of the seminar is presented in Section 3.

1. INAUGURAL SESSION



Professor Alakh N. Sharma, Director, IHD welcoming the Chief Minister, other distinguished guests and other participants; seated from left to right Mr. Gavin Wall, Professor Abhijit Sen, Mr. Nitish Kumar, Professor Y.K. Alagh, Dr. Gerry Rodgers and Dr. Shaibal Gupta

Professor Alakh N. Sharma, Director, Institute for Human Development, while welcoming the august panel and the participants of the seminar said that after a long period of stagnation, Bihar's economy has started doing remarkably well. There has been considerable improvement in the delivery of poverty alleviation programmes, which has been manifested in enhanced growth rates and higher human development indicators. However, there are still enormous challenges to be faced such as improving the functioning of delivery institutions at the grassroots and middle levels, and addressing the issue of resource crunch which is ostensibly limiting the state's capacity for financing development.

Dr. Gerry Rodgers, Visiting Professor, IHD welcomed the participants and revealed that the seminar was a part of a wider research programme on inclusive development in Bihar, the goals of which are to ensure better information and analysis on the pattern of development in Bihar, with a particular focus on trends and changing opportunities, and on patterns of inclusion and exclusion of different groups; a better understanding of the impact of policy measures aimed at inclusive development, be they by the State or other actors, particularly in terms of the impact on employment and poverty; nurturing of debate and dialogue on these issues; and promotion of research capacity in the state. He said that the programme is being built as a partnership with various institutions such as the ADRI, and that wider collaboration with other institutions in Bihar could be foreseen

with institutions such as ILO, UNDP and NABARD providing financial support.

Dr. Rodgers outlined a brief history of the various studies which the current research drew from and emphasised that this was a research programme rather than a project because several specific projects, covering not only rural development and poverty but also gender relations, urban development, migration, conflict and other issues, are being planned or are under way. He said that the seminar had brought together expertise on some of the key issues that the research programme aimed to address and hoped that the discussions therein would guide its future development.

Mr. Gavin Wall, UN Resident Coordinator, India, a.i. and FAO Representative in India and Bhutan, felt that while Bihar faces a number of complex development challenges, during the last few years, there have been concerted efforts to overcome structural problems. He congratulated the Bihar government on its governance reforms and innovative programmes. He said that Bihar is one of the seven priority states under the India UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for the period 2008-2012. In 2009, 11 UN Agencies, the government of Bihar and the Planning Commission pioneered a joint programme on Convergence with the objective to assist a few districts to be on track for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The idea behind this programme was to absorb more resources and optimise their utilisation through better planning, implementation and monitoring of central and state schemes. He felt that this could become a model for other states to emulate. He hoped that concrete steps would emerge from this seminar that would help Bihar in addressing the issue of poverty.

In his keynote address, **Professor Abhijit Sen**, Member, Planning Commission praised Chief Minister Nitish Kumar for Bihar's overall performance in achieving poverty reduction and boosting the growth rate, as well as in the implementation of various programmes including PDS in the state. He said that Bihar is doing its best to face the enormous challenges that lie before it. Poverty has declined in the rural areas from 62.3 per cent to 55.7 per cent, and in urban areas from 44.7 per cent to 43.7 per cent, and Bihar has done well in poverty reduction during the last three years.

He stated that the identification of poor is an extremely difficult exercise. The Tendulkar Committee Report would be helpful to the government of Bihar for acquiring more resources and PDS related programmes as the number of poor in Bihar would go up from the existing 65 lakh to 90 lakh. They would command foodgrains worth Rs. 3500 crore annually. He argued that in a country like India, it is not easy to substitute the various government programmes by cash transfers. Hence, in many programmes, we need to move to universalisation, for instance schooling, in the context of right to education.

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INAUGURAL SESSION

Professor Alakh N. Sharma

Dr. Gerry Rodgers

Mr. Gavin Wall

Professor Abhijit Sen

Professor Y.K. Alagh

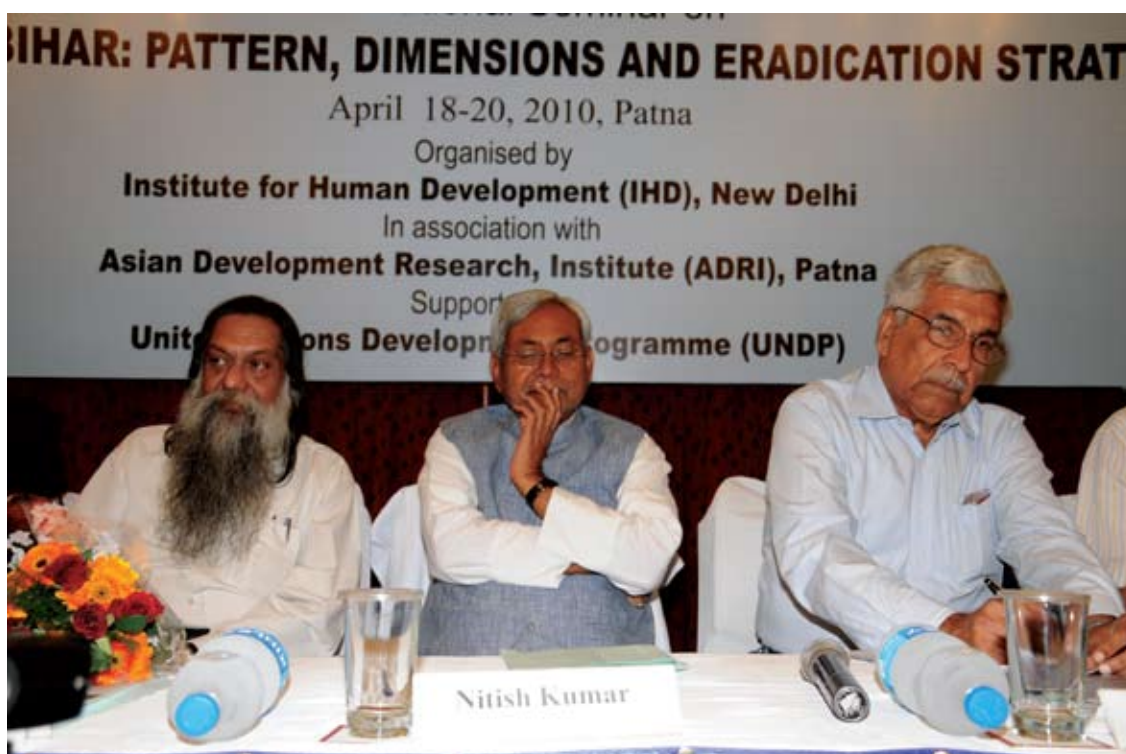
Mr. Nitish Kumar

Dr. Shaibal Gupta

He announced that the government would launch a census for the identification of BPL families by the end of the year, and the characteristics for inclusion and exclusion would be defined on logical grounds, with consultations with state governments.

Professor Yoginder K. Alagh, Chairman, IHD, in his remarks, noted that economic development in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh has to be the foundation of sustained growth of the country in the long run. He presented an outline of what development means to Bihar during the next few years, emphasising that it is necessary to build a political consensus on the question of the aspiration of the *Aam Admi* (common man). He also urged the audience to examine how its great wealth of renewable and non-renewable resources, large existing manpower and the economic sectors could be linked up with the regional, national and global economy. Specifically, he felt that the essential steps required in Bihar are providing economic support to policies for widespread agricultural growth including the integration of tariff and monetary policies with price policies, organisational and financial support to public-private partnerships for communication, market development, and agro-processing.

Mr. Nitish Kumar, Chief Minister of Bihar, in his inaugural address, pointed out that the last few years have heralded a significant change in Bihar. While this change is palpable and positive, he said that he was neither over-optimistic nor complacent about the state of development in Bihar. He emphasised that he was aware that there has been no considerable change in the lives of the poor. He said that while infrastructure has developed and new roads are being made, migrants from rural areas are



Professor Abhijit Sen, Member Planning Commission, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and Professor Y.K. Alagh, Chairman, IHD

still flocking to the cities and living in slums in deplorable conditions. There is not enough employment generation in villages. The situation in both the rural and urban areas is alarming and that much needs to be done. He said that there has definitely been an increase in the growth rate, and conversations in Bihar today focus not on the rate of crime, but on the rate of growth but we should not be complacent about this. It is easy to believe that the high growth rate of the state would push poverty down, but the ground reality is not so.

In the context of the National Food Security Act, he shared with the audience that he had put in a lot of time and effort to improve the PDS in the state, but this exercise had not shown any positive results. He put forward a strong case for cash transfers and felt that the PDS in its current form should be dismantled. Cash subsidies should be given to the poor through the banking system. Corruption in PDS would end only when the beneficiaries are able to buy grains from the free market. He argued that food entitlements should be given directly to individuals, and not to households. This would also halt the nuclearisation of families in rural areas, which is a perverse development that has gained momentum in order to maximise the benefits from government schemes. He criticised the Food Corporation of India (FCI) and lamented that Bihar is forced to store grains from states such as Punjab in the FCI godowns in Bihar, while it cannot store its own grains grown in the state. In this exercise, the farmers of Bihar particularly suffer and are not able to get the Minimum Support Price (MSP).

The Chief Minister discussed the various poverty estimates for the state and their implications for development schemes and programmes. According to the Planning Commission, 65 lakh families are below the poverty line in Bihar, whereas the Ministry of Rural Development puts this number at 72 lakhs. The state government has identified 1 crore 40 lakh families to be below the poverty line, with the average family size being 3.99. He argued that the BPL list is an easy political weapon used by the Centre against the state government. The Centre provides food subsidy on the basis of the Planning Commission numbers, which are much lower than the state government numbers. The good news, he said, was that, on the basis of the recommendations of the Tendulkar Committee, this number was expected to increase to 90 lakhs.

Based on the experience of his state in the enumeration of the poor, he argued that there should be an independent commission or authority like the Election Commission of India to undertake this task. Corruption is the biggest challenge in the

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INAUGURAL SESSION

Professor Alakh N. Sharma

Dr. Gerry Rodgers

Mr. Gavin Wall

Professor Abhijit Sen

Professor Y.K. Alagh

Mr. Nitish Kumar

Dr. Shaibal Gupta

Dr. Gerry Rodgers, Visiting Professor, IHD presenting an overview of IHD's Bihar Research Programme



preparation of the BPL list and politicisation of the entire exercise leads to much controversy.

Dr. Shaibal Gupta, Member Secretary, ADRI, delivered the vote of thanks. He said that under the leadership of Nitish Kumar, Bihar is on the path of rapid development as is reflected from its very high growth rate, as well as the notable transformation that has taken place in the governance system of the state.



Chairperson, Professor Suresh Tendulkar, Chairman, Expert Group on Methodology for Estimation of Poverty (seated in the centre) along with the audience



Chief Minister Nitish Kumar delivering the inaugural address

SESSION 1: INTERNATIONAL ROUND TABLE ON EXPERIENCES AND SUCCESS STORIES IN POVERTY REDUCTION

SECTION 3



Seated from left to right, Professor Ricardo Abramovay, Dr. Azita Berar-Awad, Professor Arjan de Haan, Dr. Gerry Rodgers, Professor Guobao Wu, Dr. Sajjad Zohir, Professor Bina Agarwal

This session was chaired by **Dr. Gerry Rodgers**.

Professor Ricardo Abramovay, Department of Economics, University of Sao Paulo, Brazil, began by stating that the most striking issue in the dynamics of recent rural transformations in Brazil is the fact that they are not based on a rupture with the past defined by latifundia, very bad working conditions and degradation of the ecosystems. He noted that in spite of persisting poverty and inequality, the continuation of large landed estates and the predatory exploitation of resources, there is a clear deepening of the liberties and capabilities, which signify noticeable improvements in well-being and the promising perspective of a better use of ecosystems. He presented some data on the unprecedented simultaneous reduction of poverty and inequality during the last ten years in Brazil. He highlighted the benefits of the direct cash transfer programme undertaken in Brazil and also discussed some problems linked to the massive transfer of credit and land to farmers. He also noted some of the main problems linked to the functioning of agri-business and some social initiatives that try to change the behaviour of the private sector.

Dr. Azita Berar-Awad, Director, Employment Policy Department, International Labour Organization, Geneva, focused on the interplay between employment, labour market assessment of international strategies, in particular, Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRSs) and MDGs, and on the country responses to mitigate the impact of the global financial and economic crisis. She argued that we are witnessing a shift in the dominant development paradigm that has underpinned international and national strategies with respect to poverty eradication during the last two decades. The financial and the economic crisis has brought to the fore and forced the recognition of the underlying jobs crisis characterised

SESSION 1

Dr. Gerry Rodgers

Professor Ricardo
Abramovay

Dr. Azita Berar-Awad

Professor Arjan de Haan

Professor Guobao Wu

Dr. Sajjad Zohir

Professor Bina Agarwal

by persistently high levels of unemployment, especially among youth, the high and growing levels of informality, and the rise in precarious forms of employment, growing inequalities and decline in the share of labour in total income.

She noted that developing countries had pursued a variety of interventions to combat the current economic crisis, such as cash transfers in Latin America, direct employment in India and a massive public works programme in South Africa. While discussing the role of the State, public policy, fiscal space and capacity in all this, she argued that it was possible to combine both social protection and direct employment. She pointed to the need for greater emphasis on entitlements and rights-based approaches to development including the enforcement of a global level playing field on fundamental labour rights.

She concluded on a note of hope, saying that while in the 1990s, the employment and labour market agenda was neglected in the international and national poverty reduction agendas, the current economic crisis has forced both the industrialised and developing countries to apply new measures. This presents a window of opportunity to push for the inclusive and pro-poor growth agenda.

Professor Arjan de Haan, Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, observed that Bihar is taking great strides in development and poverty reduction. He presented a useful framework for formulating conditions for poverty reduction in India vis-à-vis the Chinese experience in poverty reduction, and highlighted the six 'Is', namely institutions, incentives, infrastructure, investment, income transfers and innovative thinking.

He compared India's inclusive growth agenda with China's desire for a harmonious society. He argued that development disparities across and within states are increasing in both India and China and one needs to create institutions for economic development to address this. In the case of Bihar, he felt that the state has always had the potential for growth, specifically drawing attention to its historical potential and the role of migrants. The critical issue, he argued, was how institutions can be turned around for investment, growth and economic development.

Dr. Guabao Wu presented lessons of China's poverty reduction and presented an impressive overview of the facts pertaining to poverty reduction in China. He also noted that China has shown a phenomenal improvement in socio-economic indicators such as life expectancy at birth, infant and under-5 mortality, adult literacy, maternal mortality and access to safe drinking water.

He argued that the key factors which underpinned these achievements were the growth pattern benefiting the poor, targeted poverty intervention, improvement in access to social services, establishment of a social security system for protecting the vulnerable from falling into poverty and the participation of all the actors concerned. He noted that China had many achievements in poverty reduction but there was little consensus on

whether and to what extent, lessons from China in poverty reduction could be replicable in other countries.

Dr. Sajjad Zohir, Director, Economic Research Group, Dhaka, focused on microfinance in Bangladesh and its potential for poverty reduction for Bihar. He explained that the two regions share a similarity in their agrarian structure. He also noted that Bangladesh, since the mid-1990s, has been carrying out activities for the measurement and identification of poverty, poverty mapping, etc., which have met with both success and failure.

Posing the question as to whether microfinance has led to poverty reduction or not, he felt that the answer is not a simple 'yes' or 'no'. In certain conditions, it works, while in some others, it does not. He traced the evolution of microfinance and gave reasons as to why microfinance has the potential for poverty reduction, which includes the provision of access to credit and thereby potential investment to households; facilitation of migration leading to remittances, which, in turn, create the market for locally produced goods. At the same time, he noted that it had been empirically proven that microfinance services were availed of by the poor, rather than the very poor in Bangladesh. He concluded that microfinance and MFIs are not static activities or agencies, and that therefore, their roles—both potential as well as actual—in contributing towards poverty reduction have also been changing.

Professor Bina Agarwal, Director, Institute of Economic Growth, New Delhi stated that we need to ask new institutional questions and come up with innovative thinking for poverty reduction. Looking at the production side, she said that the farmers of Asia and Africa now have increasingly small land holdings and more men than women tend to leave agriculture, and thus in most Asian countries, women constitute over 40 per cent of the total agricultural workers. Therefore, she noted that small farmers and women are going to play an increasing role in national and international agriculture production, which is why it is imperative to bring them out of the morass of poverty.

She argued that collective and group approaches are needed for poverty reduction, and outlined six principles for such cooperatives, viz., voluntariness, small size, socio-economic homogeneity, participatory decision-making, checks to contain free riding, and fair distribution of production benefits. She noted that the advantages of group farming included risk sharing, increase in the arable area, labour sharing, diversity of skills, knowledge, talents, potential for higher value agricultural production, bargaining power: better access to credit, inputs, information, reduced social isolation and greater social respect.

SECTION 3

SESSION 1

Dr. Gerry Rodgers

Professor Ricardo
Abramovay

Dr. Azita Berar-Awad

Professor Arjan de Haan

Professor Guobao Wu

Dr. Sajjad Zohir

Professor Bina Agarwal

Professor Ricardo Abramovay, University of Sao Paulo, Brazil and Dr. Azita Berar-Awad, Employment Policy Department, International Labour Organization, Geneva



She argued that such collectivities already exist in Central Asia and that their output was 1.8 times higher and that the total factor productivity was also significantly higher than in individual farms. She advocated the use of SHGs for the promotion of such producer collectives and articulated that the mushrooming of civil society groups can act as the pillars on which these collectivities can exist.

Discussions

There was a rich discussion on the operationalisation of collectives suggested by Professor Bina Agarwal, especially in terms of how it would be possible to reach the poorest of the poor by collective farming, (when the poorest do not even have land), whether it would be possible to avoid the negative outcomes of the socialist collectivities, and how free-riding in such groups could be prevented.

There were deliberations on the paradigm shift in social policy in the post-economic crisis world, with the emphasis that during the last two decades, growth had been taking place, but that the government has not been able to take advantage of the growth for the poor. There was a discussion on macro-economic policy instruments for full employment such as the need for more demand management, and on consumption based on increased wages rather than on debt. In that sense, the crisis was seen as a window of opportunity for complementing inclusive social protection policies with the growth agenda. It was articulated that there are many different policy elements in poverty reduction efforts. The success stories suggest that a unique combination of factors is required, including growth, social protection, and social transfers to encourage and enable access to mainstream opportunities.

There was also a discussion on the commercialisation of microfinance and some commentators felt that this rather new institutional context does not serve the poor.

SESSION 2: IDENTIFYING THE POOR

SECTION 3



Seated from left to right, Professor Abhijit Sen, Professor C. Ravi, Professor Gerry Rodgers, Professor Suresh Tendulkar and Dr. Himanshu

The chairman for the session, **Professor Suresh Tendulkar**, National Fellow, Indian Council of Social Science Research and the Chairman of the Expert Group on Methodology for Estimation of Poverty submitted that the current Expert Group decided to move away from the calorie intake norm in view of the fact that the method of calculating calorie consumption by converting the consumed quantities during the last 30 days as collected by NSS has not been found to be well correlated with the nutritional outcomes observed from other specialised surveys either over time or across space.

He explained the use of the reference poverty line basket (PLB) and explained that the Expert Group considered it desirable to situate recommended reference PLB in some generally acceptable aspect of the present practice. As the estimated rural share of the poor population at 28.3 per cent has been heavily criticised, it was decided to recommend the mixed reference period (MRP) equivalent to the urban PLB corresponding to 25.7 per cent of the urban headcount ratio as the new reference PLB to be provided to rural as well as urban population in all the states after adjusting it for within the state urban relative to the rural and rural and urban state relative to the all-India price differentials. This was done in the interest of continuity as well as in view of achieving consistency with broad external validity checks with respect to nutritional, educational and health outcomes.

He noted that the question of the measurement of the poor, and identification of the poor for public policy are two distinct problems. The two do not give the same estimates. The measurement can be done on the basis of the ex-post consumer survey but for identification purposes, we need to undertake a census at the local level. For the latter, one needs to use the easily identifiable characteristics of poor households. However, as

SESSION 2

Professor Suresh Tendulkar

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Dr. Himanshu

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Dr. Sunil Mishra

Professor Abhijit Sen

Professor Jean Dreze

Dr. N.C. Saxena

no survey is flawless in design or execution, he cautioned that the inclusion of ineligible households and exclusion of eligible households is bound to occur to some extent.

Professor Tendulkar made a distinction between rights and policies. He felt that the former should be enforced but the latter are constrained by the availability of resources. However, at the fundamental level, it should be clear that one cannot distribute rights if one does not have the resources. Therefore, guaranteeing rights through legislation (which is an easier way) does not guarantee utopia.

Professor C Ravi, Joint Director, Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Hyderabad explained that poverty reduction has become a top priority in the agenda of India's development planning and that the country's planning processes have been sensitive to the fulfilment of the basic needs of the poor. He said that pro-poor macro policies and public intervention programmes targeted at the poor to supplement a generic growth strategy are two complementary approaches that are popular for eliminating mass deprivation.

He noted that the measurement of poverty has largely dealt with economic deprivation in the income or expenditure space, and that the former may not make adequate provision for the fulfilment of some of these basic needs. Elaborating on the distinction between the measurement of poverty and identification of the poor, he argued that the former requires a distinct methodology and makes use of well-designed household surveys and reliable quantitative data. The methodology and data collection must ensure comparability of the poverty estimate over time and between regions and socio-economic groups. He emphasised that for practical considerations, the methodology should be simple enough to be used by functionaries implementing the programmes, and that the data should serve the specific needs of various types of public intervention programmes designed to overcome multiple deprivations. He felt that there should be no scope for manipulation in the process of data collection by vested interest groups and found it desirable that the process of identification facilitates the formation of sub-groups among the poor, specifically the bottom poor, who mainly need subsidised programmes for employment and food security as well as access to health and education, among other things.

In his presentation, **Dr. Himanshu**, Assistant Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University started by explaining that the Tendulkar Expert Group has given up the calorie anchor, and rather convincingly so as it is correlated neither with income nor with malnutrition. He said that once it was decided to give up the calorie anchor, they decided to check the validity of certain criteria such as health and education.

Professor Suresh Tendulkar, Chairman,
Expert Group on Methodology for
Estimation of Poverty



In Bihar, he explained that with the new poverty line, the pace of decline of poverty is slower in both the rural and urban areas, and that 79 per cent of the illiterate households, 80 per cent of the agricultural labourer households and 75 per cent of SCs are counted as poor. Therefore, it appears that the new poverty line is able to capture these vulnerabilities.

He also noted serious problems from estimation to identification of the poor. He said that the Tendulkar committee provides an estimate of the percentage of the poor, while for the targeted programme intervention, we need to identify the poor. In a similar vein, he highlighted that in terms of targeting the areas where the proportion of poor is very high, the real problem is not related to the estimation of poor, but with their identification. For the latter, he said that there is a need to find proxies. He discussed at length the inclusion and exclusion criteria recommended by the Saxena Committee for the identification of the poor. He also commented on political interference in identification, as it is a sensitive issue and is directly related to the issues of livelihoods. He also commented on the poor quality of staff in the identification of the poor. Lastly, he discussed the implications of universalisation of PDS and geographical targeting.

In their presentation, **Dr. Gerry Rodgers** and **Dr. Sunil Mishra**, Associate Fellow, IHD, presented lessons from IHD surveys in the identification of poor in Bihar. They explained that different situations call for different measures. Anthropometric measures of children do tell something about poverty but their relationship with the class structure is weak. However, agricultural labour households do show significantly greater shortfalls in weight and height.

Poverty is multi-dimensional, and its components are correlated, but this complexity can be reduced to a small number of separate components through a statistical procedure. This procedure identified food quality, clothing, education and good housing as the most important indicators. Calorie intake was not closely correlated with poverty. However, the quality of food was an extremely powerful indicator. The connections between poverty and social exclusion were also complex. Caste played an important role in some dimensions of poverty, but much less in others.

The experience gained during the IHD survey work suggested that direct measures such as calorie intakes or anthropometric shortfalls should not be favoured for an overall identification of the poor. Low calorie intakes may be an effective way of identifying the extremes of hunger and deprivation—poor people should first aim to achieve the food intake required for survival in the immediate; everything else is secondary. But the poverty line cannot be only about short-term survival. As for anthropometric measures, they are vulnerable to interpersonal fluctuation, though average measures may be good indicators of poverty in the population as a whole.

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In conclusion, they argued for a more systematic identification of the different types of vulnerability in order to better identify the scope and nature of the policy interventions needed.

Discussions

There was a clear consensus that the magnitude of poverty is very high in Bihar and that such a situation is clearly unacceptable. There were deliberations on the connection between the measurement and identification of poverty. While it was agreed that the Tendulkar Committee Report was a step forward, some participants noted the methodological concerns with the Report. It was felt that the nature of urban and rural poverty is very different; the former has to do with consumption, whereas the latter has to do with the lack of facilities, and therefore, it was argued that the definition of urban poverty needs to be distinguished from that of rural poverty.

There was a discussion on targeted schemes and some participants argued that the PDS should be universalised. It was also asserted that there is an overemphasis on estimation and identification, and that no methodology of identification of the poor is foolproof. It was felt that exclusion errors are more serious than inclusion errors, and in order to avoid these, a large number of people should be covered and the safety net should be expanded. At the same time, some groups such as those in government service or big landowners should be automatically left out to avoid inclusion errors.

It was also noted that the exercise of identification of the poor should be left to the local bodies at the district and block levels. For this purpose, suitable training and capacity building should be undertaken. At the same time, the process should be free from any kind of political intervention at the ground level.



Ms. Mona Mishra, United Nations Development Programme

PANEL DEBATE

SECTION 3

PANEL DEBATE

Professor Abhijit Sen

Professor Jean Dreze

Dr. N.C. Saxena

Dr. NC Saxena, former Secretary, Planning Commission, argued that it is not possible to give universal coverage because of supply constraints, and therefore whether we like it or not, we cannot get away from targeting. He felt that we need district-wise and block-wise figures for poverty. As the distinction of the poor from the non-poor is often arbitrary, he argued that exclusion issues were very sensitive in the identification of the poor, and cited examples such as not including households which have ceiling fans or mobile phones in the BPL list.

Professor Jean Dreze, University of Allahabad, began by stating that the issue of poverty estimation and poverty identification depends on the context, and that he would like to argue from the food security perspective, in the context of the NFSA and the right to food. In view of the complexity of operations related to the identification of poverty, he made a case for universalisation, especially in states like Bihar, Jharkhand and Orissa. He felt that we should be concerned with exclusion errors more than inclusion errors. He reflected on the bitter experience of the 2002 BPL census and noted that in many states, the distribution of BPL cards has not been completed. He argued that the targeted system is divisive; and that it works better only when everyone has a common stake in the system. He clarified that 'universal' does not mean 'uniform', and that he was in favour of giving additional entitlements to the more deprived.

At the same time, he said that it was necessary to identify the poor, and outlined a framework for the same, emphasising that BPL identification should be simple and transparent. He argued that any scoring method is beyond people's comprehension, and advocated a method which avoids scoring, and only uses very simple inclusion and exclusion criteria. He cautioned that there were bound to be errors, and no one should be under the impression that there can be a foolproof list. He also preferred that there be no caps, that is, an upper limit to the number of people who are counted as poor.

Professor Abhijit Sen, Member, Planning Commission, mentioned the problem of large-scale inclusion and exclusion errors in the existing practice of identification of the poor. He said that exclusion errors are much more serious than inclusion errors, and hence it would be better to start with a large number of poor than what has been officially done so far. Unfortunately, the present poverty estimates based on NSS data are not helpful in this regard. However, the new estimates by the Tendulkar Expert Group would be helpful, to a large extent, in this regard as they would increase the incidence of poverty in the state. Professor Sen felt that geographical targeting may also be done with a very high coverage in the poor regions, and, of course, with a reasonable cap. This would reduce the problem in the regions and states which are extremely poor. He felt that for regions with low poverty, the criteria

for inclusion becomes important. He argued that we can achieve much better correspondence between consumption poverty and the way we can finally arrive at indicative numbers at the district level. The more the caps, the better would be the correlation. He also put forward an argument that state benefits should be made individual-based, and not household-based.

Discussions

The intense discussions made it obvious that we are now looking at a very broad band of poverty and vulnerability which social policy needs to address. It was felt that identification of social groups such as destitutes and near-destitutes for social assistance, combined with some kind of geographical targeting, is a step in the right direction. Thus, we need not BPL kind of criteria, but criteria for social policy assistance.

There was emphasis on the divisive nature of targeted programmes. New rounds of targeting lead to new rounds of politicisation (the cost of targeting perhaps may far outweigh the cost of universalisation of the programme). Also, it was discussed that the estimation exercise gets unfairly criticised because it does not identify the poor, something which it is in any case not trying to do.

Caps were felt to be problematic because they are automatically exclusionary. However, it was argued that if there were to be caps at all, they should be applied at the block level and not at the gram panchayat level. At the same time, it was argued that there have to be discretionary methods at the GP to identify the poor. There was also a discussion on how to address different dimensions of poverty—its multidimensionality, literacy, health, etc along with the role of service delivery and infrastructure in poverty reduction.



Professor Abhijit Sen, Member, Planning Commission

SESSION 3: KEY DIMENSIONS OF POVERTY IN BIHAR

SECTION 3



Seated from left to right, Mr. Vyash Ji, Dr. Praveen Jha, Professor Pranab Banerji, Professor Janak Pandey, Dr. Preet Rustagi, Mr. C.K. Mishra and Dr. J. Krishnamurty

The Chairman of the session, **Professor Janak Pandey**, Vice-Chancellor, Central University of Bihar, noted that after addressing international and national issues related to poverty, the focus of the conference would now shift to Bihar, which was the most crucial phase of the conference.

Dr. Praveen Jha, Associate Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University, started his presentation by scrutinising two strands of literature for an analytical understanding—heterodox economics and Marxist tradition in the context of deficit/gaps in well-being indicators in Bihar.

He stated that in Bihar, the labour force participation rate remains low, especially for women. In urban areas, there are shortfalls in employment for both males and females. There has been no overall improvement in employment. He explained that there has been a significant increase in the number of self-employed persons and a decline in agricultural labourer households, all of which indicate a negative trend. He also highlighted the decline in the share of manufacturing and trade in urban areas and observed that there were several small to significant changes in labour market dynamics in the state. He argued that it is obvious that agriculture is not able to accommodate all the workers, which is why those who can move out of it do so, while those who cannot find other forms of employment are expelled.

He argued that despite the increase in the wage rate during the post-economic reforms period, there has been a worsening of the employment situation in the state in both qualitative and quantitative terms. As regards the workforce transformation, he stated that there was no evidence of any shift, though vulnerabilities have increased since the early 1990s. He also observed that migration has had modest positive spin-offs, but that its gains must not be over-stated.

SESSION 3

Professor Janak Pandey

Dr. C. Ravi

Dr. Praveen Jha

Dr. Preet Rustagi

Mr. Vyash Ji

Dr. J. Krishnamurty

Mr. C.K. Mishra

In his presentation on the issue of health and nutrition, **Professor C. Ravi**, Joint Director, Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Hyderabad, noted that among the states and Union Territories in India, Bihar has the second highest incidence of stunting, is the third highest in terms of underweight children and the fourth highest in wasting. Bihar's performance in reducing poverty and malnutrition has also been below par. He noted that between the years 1998-99 and 2005-06, the incidence of underweight and wasting (0-3 years) children increased, but that of stunting declined by 10 percentage points.

Using NFHS 2005-06 data, he revealed that social group disparities continue to persist, and that while more than two-thirds of the SC children and over half the Backward Caste (BC) children suffer from stunting and are underweight. He also discussed the status of maternal and childcare in Bihar on the basis of using NFHS data, and expressed concern that Bihar has the highest incidence of chronic energy deficiency (CED) among women.

He concluded that a multi-pronged approach is needed to address various issues in the health sector. Improvements in the standards of living in terms of income, and access to housing, drinking water, sanitation and education and health facilities are the crucial components of this approach. Specifically, maternal and child care deserve special attention and strengthening ICDS would be important in this regard.

Dr. Preet Rustagi, Senior Fellow, IHD presented an overview on the status of education in Bihar and argued that education is central to human development; it is a basic endowment and needs to be recognised and ensured as an entitlement and right for every person. This is essential for the overall economic growth and development of not just the state but the entire country, for no nation can prosper unless it ensures the basic human development of all its citizens, especially women, and the socially excluded and marginalised sections of society. She highlighted the need for Bihar to build on the right to education, to properly implement the universalisation of ICDS, with efforts to incorporate early education components, to improve

the quality of education along with efforts to end gaps by ensuring uniform norms and regulations as proposed in the Common School System (CSS) report. She pointed out that the state also needs to narrow gaps in the area of education for girls, the SCs, and minorities. Generation and mobilisation of public awareness on the importance of schooling and inclusive education too needs to be stepped up with a focus on elementary education. Simultaneously, school health programmes also need attention alongside the implementation of School Sanitation and Hygiene Education (SSHE) programme. The prominent issue, according to her is to

Professor Janak Pande, Vice-Chancellor, Central Bihar University, Dr. Preet Rustagi, Senior Fellow, IHD and Mr. C.K. Mishra, Principal Secretary, Department of Health, Government of Bihar



devise viable means of meeting the gap between the demand and supply of teachers, and the concomitant issue of the need to recruit, train, motivate and reward teachers, while also monitoring their performance, making them accountable, and developing leadership among them.

Dr. Rustagi also highlighted other relevant issues such as the need to make schools interesting, as specified in the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005 and the public–private partnership model. She discussed learner assessments and touched upon the marks versus grades debate, whether there should be examinations at all, and how children should be promoted to the next grade. After-school programmes which focus on extra curricular skills, building leadership and providing academic support should be strengthened. There is a need to undertake research to understand how learning takes place, especially in the context of new technologies, and ways to encourage community participation and improve leadership. She concluded her presentation by contending that data systems need to be improved in order to generate accurate statistics for evaluating performance.

Dr. Pranab Banerji, Professor, Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA), presented the findings of a study undertaken by IIPA for the government of Bihar on migration. He argued that out-migration of labour from Bihar is not a minor phenomenon and may be affecting about one-third of the rural households, which is much higher than what official estimates suggest. Further, migration is an important coping mechanism for the poor and is essentially a response to a structural problem and not the result of floods or droughts, as it is often perceived to be. The migrant labourer has a low reservation wage because his family remains in the villages. He is prepared to undertake longer hours of work and accept poor living conditions in order to remit money to his family, which is perhaps the most important cash inflow for them to maintain their low levels of consumption. Remittances are, therefore, the life-line for survival and little of it is used for capital formation. Bihari migrant labourers, by keeping wages low in the destinations of migration, seem to contribute substantially to surplus generation and development in these areas.

The first discussant, **Shri Vyashji**, Principal Secretary, Labour and Employment, Government of Bihar, discussed the steps that the government of Bihar has taken in the labour and employment sector. He touched upon the rise in agrarian wages in Bihar since the 1970s, after a lot of agitation by trade unions and urged researchers to study why such an agitation has not occurred in during the post-reform period.

He reflected on migration from a historical perspective, and expressed concern about distress migration from the state, and about the need to safeguard the interests of outmigrants. He stressed that in order to increase employability and bargaining power, workers have to be trained in a market-driven manner. He also described recent government initiatives in the sector and highlighted the role of public–private partnerships.

SECTION 3

SESSION 3

Professor Janak Pandey

Dr. C. Ravi

Dr. Praveen Jha

Dr. Preet Rustagi

Mr. Vyash Ji

Dr. J. Krishnamurty

Mr. C.K. Mishra

The second discussant, **Dr. J. Krishnamurty**, Visiting Professor, IHD commented on Praveen Jha's paper, stating that the rise in self-employment was not necessarily a negative phenomenon. He emphasised that the rise in wage rate should be recognised and that, in terms of many measures, NSS data should be given more importance than Census data.

He averred that diagnostic exercises on the issue of employment should be undertaken at the state level and that employment projections must be made. Since it is imperative to identify the reason for any problem before addressing it, he highlighted the need to analyse systematically whether the failures in education and health can be attributed to the lack of cultural and/or historical resources, or administrative failure. He also felt that separate state level priorities are required on skill development and migration.

The third discussant, **Mr. C.K. Mishra**, Principal Secretary, Department of Health, Government of Bihar, spoke about the general improvements in the health situation in the state in recent years, especially in the context of new government programmes. He noted the spurt in institutional deliveries and in the immunisation rate during the last five years, and claimed that this is directly related to poverty reduction and could help reduce it.

Discussions

During the discussions held after the presentations, members of the audience and participants expressed concern about the low levels of nutrition in the state, which are related to the high levels of poverty. It was acknowledged that while the implementation of government programmes such as the ICDS had improved considerably in the recent past, a lot more remained to be done.

There was an extensive discussion on the education front, particularly the low levels of literacy, especially among females, in the state. While during the last few years, there had been mass recruitment of teaching staff, it was felt that the focus now needed to be shifted on ensuring the quality of education.

The discussion also focused on the linkages between the low levels of literacy and the low labour force participation rate. Further, the low level of education and participation in work among women was attributed to cultural factors, and the need to educate and train them so that they can participate in the workforce and be gainfully employed, were also the subjects of discussion. It was stressed that such efforts would also have positive spillovers in terms of their participation in the *panchayati raj* system.

There was a consensus among the participants that the incidence of migration had increased during the last few decades and that the state government should thus undertake an exercise to register migrants who leave the state for work. At the same time, it was suggested that the government can undertake skill development and capacity building programmes for migrant workers, which would enhance their employability and enable them to get better work opportunities in Bihar and other parts of the country.

SESSION 4: GENDER DISPARITIES—HOW IMPORTANT FOR POVERTY?

SECTION 3



Seated from left to right, Ms. Manimala, Dr. Govind Kelkar, Professor Bina Agarwal, Ms. Janine Rodgers, Ms. Amrita Datta and Ms. Nirmala Buch

The chairperson of this session, **Professor Bina Agarwal**, noted with surprise that the gender dimension had not come up during the earlier sessions. She stated that the unitary household in economic analysis is far from the real household, where disparities do persist. Thus, schemes which target individuals are likely to have a different impact vis-à-vis those which target households.

Dr. Govind Kelkar, Programme Coordinator, UNIFEM, New Delhi, said that there have been changes in the policy discourse from a sheer neglect of women's concerns to an attempt at understanding women's concerns. This has gone hand-in-hand with the demands made by feminists for concrete, quantitative data on the situation of women. She discussed two major changes in the situation of women in Bihar since the 1990s. The first was that Bihar was the first state to provide for 50 per cent representation of women in PRIs. The second was that the government of Bihar had relaxed the task norms for women in MNREGA works. There are now separate measurements of work for men and women, and women's measure is notified as 15 per cent less to that of men. This is a significant step and takes into account women's household and caring responsibilities, which take up a considerable part of their time. She argued that formalisation of such norms and practices helps in according recognition for their work while also playing a positive role in social transformation.

While referring to the presentation made by the Chairperson during the first session of the seminar on the issue of feminisation of agriculture, she listed two major factors which have contributed to this feminisation. First, as compared to men, women have much less access to, and control and ownership of land and assets, and second, due to the outmigration

SESSION 4

Professor Bina Agarwal

Dr. Govind Kelkar

Ms. Janine Rodgers

Ms. Amrita Datta

Dr. Reetika Khera

Ms. Nirmala Buch

Ms. Manimala

of men, women are left behind to take care of the land and family. In this context, she argued that women's ownership and control of land can lead to higher and better quality of production, while enabling them to use the household income for their own and their family's well-being, and it can also reduce gender-based violence within and outside their homes.

In conclusion, she said that the key consideration for policy in Bihar should be on providing livelihoods with dignity to all women and men, with special attention on women among the excluded sections of society such as rural women, dalits, tribals and Muslims. She lamented that agrarian struggles and the peasant movement in Bihar had failed to effectively shake off the patriarchal bias and women's complicity in maintaining the male-dominated social order continues to persist. Women's exclusion from rights, land and other productive assets and widespread gender discrimination also need to be taken into account in the identification of the poor and in the analysis of poverty. She also argued that asset ownership is preferable to government programmes which enhance incomes as with ownership and control of assets and land, there is likely to be a change in public opinion about gender roles and socio-cultural norms, as also about the social, economic and political position of women. Lastly, she recommended that the availability of domestic lighting and cleaner fuels for cooking need to be seriously considered in identifying the poor and addressing rural poverty.

Ms. Amrita Datta, Associate Fellow, IHD and **Ms. Janine Rodgers**, Visiting Researcher, IHD discussed the results of a recent IHD survey on changing gender roles in rural Bihar. They found that male migration had led to an increase in women's workloads both within and outside the household. The role of women in agriculture both as labourers and as managers has also increased, along with their increased responsibilities inside the household. They found that the rise in local wages and remittances had helped augment the disposable incomes of women had higher disposable income through. This enabled them to have more decision-making power inside the household and in the management of money besides also contributing to their increased mobility. They said that in the absence of male members of the family, women often faced barriers in both accessing credit, and getting it on favourable terms. They noted that since 1999, the number of government programmes actually reaching villages has increased but that the benefits of these programmes are uneven by castes. MNRGS was found to have been largely absent from the survey sites.

They concluded by pointing out that improvements observed in education, health and nutrition, housing, communications and public services over time enhance the potential for empowerment of women. They noted that the higher disposable income derived from men's remittances and from higher local wages facilitates better access to and control over resources. At the same time, it was also emphasised that though women's participation in the labour market and their role in the domestic sphere has increased, their role in the public and political spheres has not similarly

improved and the higher representation of women in PRIs remains more nominal than substantive.

Dr. Reetika Khera, Visitor, Centre for Development Economics, Delhi School of Economics, started her presentation with an overview of the MNREGA in the country. She highlighted the gender-related provisions of MNREGA, including one-third of all employment for women, the provision of job cards for single women, payment of equal wages, offering work within a 5 km radius and no restrictions on the sharing of the 100-day quota within the home.

She also discussed the results of a study that she had undertaken on women workers and the perceptions of MNREGA in five states including Bihar. It was found that the labour force participation of women was the highest in Rajasthan, followed by Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. During the preceding three months, as many as 70 per cent of the women had no other source of cash income as against the corresponding figure of 40 per cent men. Thus, she argued that MNREGA provided a unique employment opportunity for women.

She argued that the attractiveness of MNREGA is that it is “government” work, and, therefore, there is regularity and predictability of working hours, it is less exploitative, is socially acceptable and “dignified” and better paid. She cited many examples of women whose lives had qualitatively improved after participation in MNREGA, and substantiated it by citing the statistic that 68 per cent of the workers said that MNREGA work was “very important” in their lives.

She noted that barriers to women’s participation in MNREGA included the illegal presence of contractors, harassment at the worksite, especially on contractor-managed worksites, lack of childcare facilities and delays in wage payment. She also noted that in the context of Bihar, cultural norms play a major role in the low workforce participation of women.

The first discussant, **Ms. Nirmla Buch**, President, Child Rights Observatory, Bhopal, delineated the issue of women’s access to and control of resources, and stated that government policies and programmes do not sufficiently address gender issues, specifically the issue of intra-household allocation of resources. She argued that the state was not serious about enforcement of its programmes and cited the example of lack of crèche facilities in MNREGA. While pointing out that sound programme monitoring as well as programme design are crucial for the success of any government intervention, she also expressed concern at the fact that women field workers of the government are paid a lower wage than their male counterparts. She suggested that women’s participation in the Panchayat has to be substantive and 50 per cent reservation of seats for them is just the first step.

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SESSION 4

Professor Bina Agarwal

Dr. Govind Kelkar

Ms. Janine Rodgers

Ms. Amrita Datta

Dr. Reetika Khera

Ms. Nirmla Buch

Ms. Manimala

Chairperson, Professor Bina Agarwal,
Director, Institute for Economic Growth



She argued that there is a need to systematically move from wage employment to asset building. In this context, access to training and technology and resources is crucial. Lastly, she emphasised that women must have access to land and incentives such as recording land titles in women's names can be one means of achieving this.

The second discussant, **Ms. Manimala**, Director, Media for Change, dwelt on the question of women's right to assets, especially natural resources. She pondered on the kind of development we really need, and whether there was any relationship between poverty and the development model as there seemed to be no space for the poor in development.

She stated that she failed to understand why MNREGA provided employment for only 100 days, and why it gave only one job card to a family. In the larger context, she also discussed how opportunities for work for women could be created and mentioned the positive role of the Janani Suraksha Yojana in Bihar.

In conclusion, the chairperson summarised and noted the particular role that women play as managers of resources, and children. Finally, she urged the participants to consider not just the removal of poverty but also the removal of opulence.

Discussions

The discussion at the end of this session on gender disparities focused on the development model that the state should adopt in the context of poverty and feminisation of poverty. It was argued that affirmative action is necessary for the empowerment of women. In this context, 50 per cent of reservation for women in panchayati raj institutions was lauded.

While there was a consensus on the significant increase in incomes in present-day Bihar as opposed to the incomes prevailing a few decades ago, it was concluded that the condition of women had not changed much over this period. Old forms of discrimination continued even as new forms emerged. The discussion also touched on the issue of sex-selective abortion and high maternal mortality in the state, and continuing violence against women.

The role of cultural norms in the low workforce participation of women was also discussed. Attention was drawn to the impact of male migration on women, especially on the problems that they face on being left alone by the male members of the family. The issue of HIV-AIDS transmitted by male migrants was also discussed.

The chairperson concluded the discussion by highlighting that the existing literature on intra-household resource reveals a gender bias in the way we conceptualise gender issues. She drew attention to time-use surveys, which have proven to be very useful. She also cited the example of gender budgets as for example, in Kerala, where 10 per cent of the total budget is allocated for women. Finally, she urged the participants to think gender as that might help one find some innovative solutions to poverty.

SESSION 5: EXPERIENCES AND SUCCESS STORIES IN POVERTY REDUCTION
IN INDIA

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Professor S. Mahendra Dev, Chairman, Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices, Government of India, Professor Jean Dreze, University of Allahabad, Dr. Vijay Mahajan, Chairman and Managing Director, BASIX, Hyderabad

The chairperson, **Professor S. Mahendra Dev**, Chairman, Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices, Government of India, provided an overview and background regarding the approaches to poverty alleviation in India. He observed that the government has a two-pronged approach to the issue, viz. promoting economic growth, and initiating direct action towards poverty alleviation.

He presented success stories of reduction in both income and non-income poverty. He discussed the experiences of Kerala in the areas of education, health, social security, land reforms and decentralisation; of Tamil Nadu in the Mid-day Meal scheme; of Andhra Pradesh with regard to the PDS and SHGs; of Maharashtra with the Employment Guarantee Scheme (EGS); of Himachal Pradesh in primary education and of West Bengal in land reforms and decentralisation. He also cited the example of MNREGA as a success story.

He felt that political commitment is most important, and social mobilisation and decentralisation play a crucial role in ensuring the success of programmes. He argued that social movements in southern states were partly responsible for the success they had achieved in poverty reduction and human development. He also felt that the north-eastern states have done well as compared to other tribal areas due to their better performance in education and women's empowerment.

He noted that top-down approaches may not work and a participatory and decentralised approach is required, along with proper design. He stated that programmes are successful where women's empowerment is high, along with the involvement of civil society organisations and NGOs such as the Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA), and MYRADA. Lastly, he noted that group approaches, such as SHGs are becoming important in poverty reduction programmes. He argued that it is important to deepen democracy by strengthening decentralisation.

SESSION 5

Prof. S. Mahendra Dev

Prof. Jean Dreze

Dr. Vijay Mahajan

Professor Jean Dreze, started with a cautious note saying he did not know if MNREGA qualifies as a success story, and it may be a bit premature to say so. He said that the MNREGA is unique in a sense that it is historically unprecedented and astounding – 50 million people are working, and it is not a handout – it's something they have to work for. He noted that it is also reasonably obvious, if one has read the law that it has been framed from the worker's point of view. At every step, there is a sense of the strong entitlements for the people. It is the first law in the country which holds a lot of inbuilt provisions for transparency. It's also a law that everyone knows. There's no other law which is so well known in rural India – the extent of knowledge and public interest very high. He stated that MNREGA is a law that has fostered creativity and thinking in the public sector. It is also unique as it has the potential to be a tool for economic and social change in rural areas, reactivation of institutions of local governance, slowing down of migration, and changing power relations. He emphasised that more and more states understand this, Rajasthan being the first, followed by Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, which like Bihar had low penetration of MNREGA, but with a steady putting in place of systems, have now surged ahead. In states which have created a constructive climate for MNREGA the impacts are beginning to show – in food security, women's empowerment, participatory processes etc. He also noted that the bad news is that there are also states where the programme has not taken off. These include Kerala, Maharashtra, Punjab, Haryana, West Bengal, Orissa, Bihar and Jharkhand, and in the last three there is a desperate need for MNREGA.

Professor Dreze discussed his bitter experience with the MNREGA in Jharkhand. He said that there has been some progress even though it is the worst governed state in the country. But the pace of implementation has been really slow, and this is very disappointing because Jharkhand has the most potential for MNREGA in the country. If it takes off, it will have a big impact on the productivity in the agricultural and rural sector. He said that Jharkhand also has good tradition of local collective action, especially in tribal areas. It has great potential for participatory planning. People are desperate to find work. There's a need, there's a potential. He lamented that in spite of the fact that the money comes from the central government, the programme has not taken off. He felt that the roots of little progress lay in an anarchic and criminal and corrupt government. He said that the whole of Jharkhand is becoming a government of fiction – one on paper, one on the ground, where the contractor-politician nexus is strong; all political parties side with the contractor, and not workers.

He argued that in states where MNREGA works, there has to be a political decision that the politicians want the programme to work. Every aspect of MNREGA in Jharkhand is a struggle. It is a really pro-worker law implemented by a hostile state; it's a class struggle. He discussed at length delay in wage payments under MNREGA after payment of wages through bank account was regularised. The final instance of struggle is the whole struggle for transparency.

In conclusion, he asked the audience how we can make this struggle more balanced and more fair? And he had two answers to this question. First, support the activation of the accountability provisions of the act (payment of unemployment allowance, payment of compensation, imposition of penalty when official don't do their work), and second, that the workers should be able to organise.

Dr. Vijay Mahajan, Chairman and Managing Director BASIX, Hyderabad, started with a discussion on IRDP and SGSY—the self-employment programmes of the government, as against the wage employment programme, the MNREGA.

He said that in the 1980s and 1990s, the banking system turned from social banking to ensuring their own profitability. While the conventional banking sector neglected the rural populace, the SHG programme innovated by MYRADA and PRADAN came to the forefront to partially meet the demand for credit in the countryside. He traced the history of the microfinance movement in the country. Today, 5 million SHGs are linked by banks. They are able to avail of credit without any collateral and the loan outstanding of the microfinance sector is worth Rs. 50,000 crores in the country. While this calls for celebration, at the same time, he felt that the numbers pertaining to poverty are shocking. Therefore, the macro-economy has to eventually send resources through the micro-economy at the level of the household. The 8 per cent rate of growth has to be distributed to the bottom of the population and to people who are destitute, disabled and aged, who do not fall under the purview of either wage or enterprise.

He put forward a passionate case for a micro-transactions system in the country for which three building blocks are volume, technology and regulation. In terms of volume, he estimated that there are 5-8 billion transactions taking place in India in every year. In the area of technology, he cited the amazing surge of mobile phone users and developments on the UIDAI (Unique Identification Authority of India) front, and felt that in the next five years, most of the citizens would have a system of biometric identification. Thirdly, in terms of regulation, he felt that the RBI needs to be a regulator for all of India. He said that this Nation-wide Electronic Financial Inclusion System (NEFIS) would only be for transactions below Rs. 1000 and would facilitate universal financial inclusion. This is the golden decade, and if we push it, we can get micro-transactions going.

He also noted the need to get back to households—their livelihood, and their livestock. He then presented case studies of success stories in poverty reduction and livelihood creation across the length and breadth of the country, which included the case of the system of rice intensification (SRI)—a system which increases rice yields, needs less irrigation and fertilisers, but needs intensive care in certain times; potential of water user association for areas sunk under big dams to enhance the area under irrigation and reduce conflicts related to water usage; dryland irrigation, especially in Jharkhand, for which micro-planning and micro-

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SESSION 5

Prof. S. Mahendra Dev

Prof. Jean Dreze

Dr. Vijay Mahajan

Chairperson, Professor S. Mahendra Dev, Chairman, Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices, Government of India



implementation are needed. He also cited successful examples from horticulture in Gujarat (mango and cashew) and noted the innovation of a bulk cooler in animal husbandry for the collection of chilled milk, which has now made the supply chain of milk in far smaller villages possible. He highlighted poultry (Sugna) and broiler development by PRADAN in the tribal areas in Madhya Pradesh and the success of the South India Federation of Fishermen Societies in the spheres of livelihood creation and poverty reduction.

In the non-farm sector, he touched upon agro-processing and manufacturing clusters in Raidurg in Vellore district and jobs created in the services sector in the STD-PCO (Subscriber Trunk Dialling – Public Call Office) business. He argued that if Bihar has to really give an impetus to its micro-economy, it needs microfinance and micro-transactions. He noted the good work, which is already taking place in Bihar under the Women's Development Corporation, wherein there are 70 federations of SHGs and many income generation activities are undertaken. He also noted the innovation of makhana cultivation under the Bihar Rural Livelihood Programme as a successful innovation. In conclusion, he highlighted the need to design schemes and programmes that had the potential to be successful.

Discussions

There was a wide-ranging discussion on the MNREGA. It was debated whether MNREGA is a short-term or a long-term solution to the problems of rural unemployment and poverty. Specifically, the impact of NREGA on migration was discussed. It was felt that while NREGA had a tremendous potential to reduce out-migration from Bihar, its impact was limited as the programme was not implemented satisfactorily in the state. NREGA's potential in addressing a vast canvas of rural issues such as increasing rural employment, improving rural infrastructure, increasing women's participation in the workforce and enhancing their agency, and strengthening of village institutions, was also discussed. At the same time, the central government's fiscal capacity to undertake and sustain programmes such as the NREGA were discussed.

There were deliberations on the nature of economic growth witnessed in the state and the kind of employment it has created. It was argued that there is an obsession with growth per se, and that inclusion has never been seriously factored in. In this context, the financial inclusion of the poor was also discussed and it was felt that financial literacy is as important as financial inclusion.

Professor Jean Dreze



SESSION 6: DEVELOPMENT PATHS FOR POVERTY REDUCTION

SECTION 3



Seated from left to right, Professor D. N. Reddy, Dr. Manoj Panda, Professor Sudipto Mundle, Professor Amitabh Kundu, Dr. Gerry Rodgers and Dr. P.P. Ghosh

The session was chaired by **Professor Amitabh Kundu**, Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

Professor Sudipto Mundle, Emeritus Professor, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, New Delhi, began with a discussion about the paradox of poverty in India. This essentially referred to the fact that despite having a growth rate of around 9 per cent and being one of the largest emergent world economies, India has a Human Development Index (HDI) rank of 134 out of 182 nations and has more than one-third of its population living below the poverty line.

In this context, can India's growth be called inclusive? He argued that the proportion of the GDP growth received by the poor was less than their proportion in the total population. He further argued that growth was a necessary but not a sufficient condition for poverty reduction and that it needed to be complemented by suitable policies for its equitable distribution.

He then turned his focus on the state of Bihar and the situation of poverty therein. The foremost argument made by him in this regard was the need for land reform and egalitarian land distribution. He referred to Operation Barga in the late 1970s which distributed land rights equitably and accelerated agricultural growth in the process. However, this had not been repeated anywhere in the 30 years that ensued. In the current political scenario, he considered land reforms to be an impossible proposition and went on to suggest that the second best option for poverty reduction in Bihar was to combine growth-mediated poverty reduction with a direct support of redistributive policies. In addition, he stated that there can be no easy top-down solution for poverty and empowerment of people needs to take place from below. He also mentioned the need to strengthen the Panchayati Raj system.

SESSION 6

Professor Amitabh Kundu

Professor Sudipto Mundle

Dr. Manoj Panda

Dr. Gerry Rodgers

Dr. P.P. Ghosh

Professor Pranab Banerji

Professor D. N. Reddy

Dr. Saurabh Sinha

Dr. Pranab Banerji, Professor, Indian Institute of Public Administration, New, Delhi, argued that the phenomenon of migration has lengthy historical roots in the state of Bihar. The earliest migrations had taken place as indentured labour to Mauritius and the West Indies. Subsequently, labour from Bihar had been widely used in both Bengal and Assam. In the 1960s and 1970s, while several parts of the country benefited from the Green Revolution and the consequent industrialisation, this failed to take place in Bihar. Consequently, he argued, labour from Bihar continued to feed the farms and factories of Punjab, Haryana, Delhi and elsewhere.

He also analysed the nature of remittances and other factors affecting the phenomenon of migration in present day Bihar. During the course of his study, he found that migration was most rampant among the landless and the marginally landholding families. Those owning land had greater access to credit and recorded low levels of migration. The remittances sent by migrant labourers were largely spent on procurement of food. On the whole, he argued that migration is a long-standing issue that has been bypassed by policy-makers leading to its intensification and worsening of the condition of the state.

Dr. Gerry Rodgers and **Dr. P.P. Ghosh**, Chairman, ADRI, explored the process of development in Bihar since the 1970s and identified patterns over time. Four different data sources were used by the authors to explore four different perspectives. The first of these was an investigation of the overall growth path of the state using data primarily from the rural areas as 90 per cent of the population of the state resides in rural areas. The second part of the paper consisted of a cluster analysis for identifying regional patterns. It was suggested that new clusters in the central and western parts of the state may turn out to be new growth poles with less dependence on agriculture and greater urbanisation. Part III of the paper was a village level analysis. It considered data from 36 villages to track distinct patterns of development. The fourth section presented findings from case studies carried out in the state's Purnia district. The key findings were that migration emerged as a major factor and that state level interventions seemed to be increasingly effective though local systems of production were slow to develop.

The first discussant, **Professor D.N. Reddy**, former Dean, University of Hyderabad argued for a special emphasis on investment in education. He described MNREGA as a short-term social security system that was unsustainable in the long term. He pointed out the futility of add-on programmes, which he described as mere palliatives, in bringing the marginalised into the mainstream. Further, they cannot address the serious structural problems regarding the growth in the state.

The second discussant, **Dr. Saurabh Sinha**, Independent Consultant, New Delhi, presented an overview of and suggestions for development paths for poverty reduction. He pointed out that there are multiple paths and multiple dimensions of poverty reduction. While there has been significant discussion on the income dimensions of poverty, there has been very little discussion on the non-income dimensions, and there is a need

to focus on both equally. While in the 1950s and 1960s, the focus of the poverty debate was largely on the lack of income and consumption, increasingly more dimensions of poverty are being identified today such as asset poverty, poverty related to empowerment and social protection, among others. The non-income dimensions of poverty are as important as the income dimensions. There should also be greater emphasis on nutrition, and on improving water and sanitation facilities. He suggested the need for greater analysis of the role of Janata Darbars (People's Courts) in improving governance in the state. He also emphasised the need to optimise the utilisation of Central funds and pointed out that Bihar has one of the lowest utilisation rates of Centrally-sponsored schemes in the country. Further, he stressed on enhancing the targeting of beneficiaries and improving the administrative machinery of the state by addressing the human resource gap.

Discussions

There was an intense discussion on the issues raised during the session. It was pointed out that while the utilisation of available public sector funds has traditionally been low, on an average, it has risen to nearly 60–70 per cent in most sectors and 90 per cent in some. It was also pointed out that land reforms broadly consist of three different programmes—ceiling reforms, tenancy reforms and consolidation. With regard to land ceilings, one finds that in Bihar, the percentage of people holding more than ten hectares of land has always been lower than the rest of India, and is declining. Thus, a land ceiling may be redundant in the state. Tenancy reforms might be useful; however, the nature of tenancy is changing. Since hereditary tenancy is no longer the practice, it is difficult to determine who should get the rights to land. While consolidation is definitely desirable, as landholdings are extremely fragmented in the state, this would require a strong administrative machinery.

The issue of training administrative officials at the middle and lower levels came up repeatedly during the discussions. These officials must have exposure to other states of India, and their capacities must be enhanced.

There was also a critique of the language of inclusive growth, which seems to ignore the fact that poor people are often the drivers of growth. Migrants from Bihar contribute to growth processes in other parts of India, especially urban India. However, they are unwelcome and they have to encounter hostility in the places of their migration. Policies of urban development are often exclusionary, and these migrants bear the brunt by living in slums and paying high charges for basic utilities such as water, sanitation and electricity.

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Professor Amitabh Kundu

Professor Sudipto Mundle

Dr. Manoj Panda

Dr. Gerry Rodgers

Dr. P.P. Ghosh

Professor Pranab Banerji

Professor D. N. Reddy

Dr. Saurabh Sinha

SESSION 7: POLICIES AND POLITICS: THE FRAMEWORK FOR STATE INTERVENTIONS



Seated from left to right Dr. Ashok Pankaj, Mr. Tripurari Sharan, Professor K.P. Kannan Professor D. N. Reddy and Professor Ravi Srivastava

This session was chaired by **Professor D.N. Reddy**.

Professor K.P. Kannan, Professor, Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, shared his concern on the consequences of economic growth, especially that related to the distribution of income for the excluded groups. He pointed out the complexities in the relationship between economic growth (EG) and human development (HD), and noted that India has consistently performed poorly in the human development index, fluctuating between ranks 130 and 134. There is, nonetheless, great intra-national variation in human development outcomes. He compared the states of Kerala and Bihar in terms of the incidence of poverty and vulnerability, of inadequate housing, of lack of sanitation, and the percentage of people deprived of minimum wages. For example, while close to 93 per cent of Bihar's population might be identified as vulnerable, in Kerala, the corresponding figure is 63 per cent; and while 75 per cent of the population of Bihar has had no more than five years of education, in Kerala, that number is merely 43 per cent. He also linked poverty with the lack of dignity and pointed out that the number of people living in kuccha houses is extremely high and so also is the number of people without access to a private toilet. In fact, in Bihar 75 per cent of the population does not have access to a private toilet facility, while in Kerala the corresponding figure is just 4 per cent. He pointed out that the most socially marginalised communities fare the worst on all indicators across states. He highlighted four major lessons for public policy. First, government schemes may be able to tackle calorie poverty but not an improvement in the HDI rank. For the latter, improved public policy concerning sanitation, roads, health services and education is required. Second, education is central to bringing about an improvement in human development outcomes for women and children, and for other traditionally excluded groups like SCs/STs and Muslims. Third, it is important to push up wages through programmes like

the MNREGA. Finally, organising the working poor is critical to enable them to reach higher human development outcomes.

The chair added in response to this presentation that Kerala had a long history of social and political mobilisation, which had played an important role in its development trajectory.

Mr. Tripurari Sharan, Secretary, Department of Food and Civil Supplies, Government of Bihar, highlighted the contestation between the state and the Union governments on the poverty head-count, the surveying methodology and the importance of arriving on the same platform. He revealed that one of the most common refrains he heard during his official visits to check the implementation of the PDS was that of improper targeting, that is, instances of some members of a family receiving the Antyodaya card while others did not. He went on to argue that these errors of inclusion and exclusion in the identification of the poor have become a key issue of debate amongst policy-makers today. Further, the path from poverty estimation to poverty enumeration is a complicated one and must be trodden carefully as it creates avoidable discord between different constituencies of the poverty question. Next, he compared the situation described by M.N. Srinivas in his studies on Sanskritisation, wherein he found that during the caste census in colonial times, various castes often attempted to present themselves as higher castes while seeking an avenue for social mobility. In the current context, however, this practice is ironically seen among households wanting to be classified as poor, despite the negative social connotations associated with the same.

Next, he pointed out that while the academic debate on poverty seems to be centred around poverty estimation, the debate in policy circles is more related to poverty enumeration. However, he also highlighted the importance of a comprehensive and composite examination of the questions of both estimation as well as enumeration as far as public policy is concerned, especially if such policy should refrain from generating discord and disparity on the ground. He concluded by arguing for the establishment of a standing commission on the enumeration of poverty as that would not only facilitate more effective policy-making but would also resolve conflict between the Union and State governments.

Dr Ashok Pankaj, Senior Fellow, IHD, focused on Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), particularly at the gram panchayat level. He listed the main factors responsible for effective service delivery including— the setting up of an adequate number of institutions; legal constitutional arrangement; a well-defined purpose for institutions; and a link between delivery and legitimacy. Next, he highlighted three fundamental problems in poverty alleviation in Bihar—the lack of universal access to health and education, the poor quality of delivery, and the prevalence of plenty of leakages. He discussed the findings of his studies which revolved around participation by different social groups in the gram panchayat, the functioning of these systems and institutions, and the implementation of government schemes. He pointed out that the beneficiaries often preferred to interact with

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Professor D. N. Reddy

Professor K.P. Kannan

Mr. Tripurari Sharan

Dr. Ashok Pankaj

Professor Ravi Srivastava

Mr. Tripurari Sharan, Secretary,
Department of Food and Civil Supplies,
Government of Bihar



PRI functionaries instead of bureaucratic officials because the former were perceived to be more accessible, less corrupt and more likely to listen to beneficiaries than the latter. His most salient argument was that the poorest of the poor from all social categories were excluded on all these fronts. Their participation was limited to election and getting information about government schemes such as MNREGA and PDS.

The discussant, **Professor Ravi Srivastava**, Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University, pointed out that it is difficult to speak of issues of development in Bihar without explicitly looking at issues of political economy. He stated that for the upper castes, where they lived did not make much of a difference, but for the lower castes it was a life-changing factor. He also once again drew attention to the deep-rooted social mobilisation in Kerala and the relevance of this in shaping Kerala's development. The process of development in low human development states is embedded in a deep-rooted structural inequality. While there has been a move in the recent past from a politics of clientelism to a greater discourse of rights and the contestation for rights has become somewhat institutionalised, much still needs to be done to manage this process of transition. He asserted that politics and policies in Kerala were centred around the working poor, which made a huge difference in tackling poverty as compared to other states in the country.

Discussions

The discussion focused on the following issues: the links between poverty and the social identity of individuals; defining dignity or *izzat* and relating it to development; under-utilisation of PRIs; increasing inequality amongst various states; and the role of migration. It was pointed out that discourses around *izzat* (dignity) or *atmasamman* (self-respect) cannot compensate for the lack of development in any state. Contemporary Bihar is a living example of this. The under-utilisation of PRIs was also mentioned, especially in terms of their possible role in the identification of the poor.

Additionally, it was argued that the rural–urban disparity was a greater hindrance to equitable development than even caste or gender-based inequality. The portrayal of migration as a window of opportunity was also questioned and it was argued that the beneficiaries of migration are mostly better off communities with some access to education. The concept of dignity was discussed as a critical factor in improving an individual's quality of life. Two components of dignity were identified—control and ownership of assets to both sexes; educational and technical skills; and freedom of mobility for both men and women. It was felt that women's migration is also an important phenomenon that needs to be studied further.

Professor Ravi Srivastava, Jawaharlal
Nehru University



SESSION 8: DO TARGETED SCHEMES AND PROGRAMMES REACH THE POOR AND EXCLUDED?

SECTION 3



Seated from left to right, Mr. Vijoy Prakash, Dr. Chirashree Das Gupta, Dr. Nisha Srivastava, Dr. Puja Vasudeva Dutta, Professor Alakh N. Sharma and Mr. Sandeep Chachra

The chairperson, **Dr. Nisha Srivastava**, Professor, University of Allahabad welcomed the participants and gave the floor to Dr. N.C. Saxena.

Dr. N.C. Saxena presented an overview of the targeted schemes and programmes in India, the conditions of their success and the implications for Bihar. He also addressed two issues raised by the Chief Minister in the inaugural session—the role of the government in tackling poverty and the adoption of cash transfers. He observed that there are two different ways in which flagship programmes are being implemented in the country today. While some ministries like education and health have a higher sense of ownership about their flagship programmes through improved monitoring, greater transparency, etc., others have adopted a more constitutional position and play the role of mere funding bodies.

Dr. Saxena highlighted the importance of improving investment in the state, through the government of India, the Planning Commission, the Finance Commission and external agencies. The per capital outlay in Bihar is one of the lowest in India. Tackling stagnation in agriculture is also critical to improving human development outcomes in the state. While agricultural wages have gone up, the rate of increase of wages is not as high as in the 1980s.

One of the major challenges in improving the PDS is that of improving distribution systems. Additionally, PDS shops are often closed, food supply is not consistent and coupons are often distributed incorrectly. PDS is functioning well in certain states, including Chhattisgarh, which has the same governance issues as Bihar. Dr. Saxena pointed out that this is because of the political will to implement the programme in the state—there is a significant devolution of powers to the panchayats,

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Dr. Nisha Srivastava

Dr. N.C. Saxena

Dr. Chirashree Das Gupta

Professor Alakh N. Sharma

Dr. Puja Vasudeva Dutta

Mr. Vijoy Prakash

Mr. Sandeep Chachra

the state government has invested additional funds of its own in the scheme and is tackling corruption. In Bihar, as in other states, there is very little monitoring of the programme both by the state and the central governments. Inefficient targeting is also a major challenge. Cash transfers, while conceptually appealing, must be tried on a small pilot basis before being implemented on a large scale. Moreover, direct cash transfers can work only if we have a good banking system, which is absent in Bihar. Thus, there is no escape from PDS in the short term.

The major issues facing MNREG implementation include lack of functionaries (junior engineers, rozgar sewaks, panchayat functionaries, etc.), the low number of average days worked, poor monitoring, poor participation, low awareness and delays in payment among others. Further, 33 per cent of the Bihar government's employees are class IV employees and there are very few line functionaries.

The chairperson added that ICDS is also an important programme that needs to be examined more closely. She pointed out that supplementary nutrition reaches only 4 per cent of the eligible children and 0.6 per cent of the mothers. There is thus an urgent need to carry out further research on where leakages in the system lie.

Dr Chirashree Das Gupta, Associate Professor, ADRI, discussed the effectiveness of 'targeting' in Bihar and argued for a rejection of the dichotomy between 'targeted' and 'universal' social service delivery in favour of developing a broad institutional framework of converging policies geared towards breaking the barriers to improvement of the social, economic and political status of the poor. Her empirical exercises around poverty reduction strategies in Bihar demonstrate that 'identifying the target' has been an exercise fraught with all the 'problems' that have been noted in the literature; and interventions which are aimed toward a more universal category of beneficiaries, as compared to those which are heavily reliant on narrow 'targeting' exercises, have a relatively better record in reaching the deprived in Bihar.

She noted that almost every problem that was associated with the 'universalisation' of welfare, that formed the basis of abandonment of 'universal entitlements' in favour of means-tested 'targeted social service delivery', re-emerged as the main concerns in the literature on 'targeting'. The existence of this vast common pool of knowledge has had no bearing on the framing of policy reduction strategies in a 'late developing state' like Bihar. The paper puts forward these two observations based on a review of the issues that emerge from the political economy of targeting in Bihar through the recorded experiences of identification of those below the poverty line. It is followed by overviews of four targeting-based programmes, which aim to intervene in one or more social aspects of deprivations due to poverty. The aim of the paper is to illustrate that the false dichotomy between universal and targeted social service

Dr. N. C. Saxena, former Secretary, Planning Commission



delivery needs to be rejected towards a willingness to develop a broad institutional framework of converging policies for breaking the barriers to improvement of the social, economic and political status of the poor.

Professor Alakh N. Sharma presented a paper on the impact of policies to reduce poverty among the excluded in Bihar. He shared the results from a recent IHD survey and located them in the context of an earlier IHD survey of 1998. This framework provided a comparative perspective and was useful to study the impact of government policies in the state. He argued that penetration of government programmes had increased over time in rural Bihar. While in 1998, only 14.53 per cent of households benefited from any government programme, in 2009, as many as 29 per cent of the total households had job cards. More than 50 per cent of the landless labourers and 25 per cent of the marginal farmers had job cards.

He noted the positive impact of new schemes for women and girl children such as the Janani Suraksha Yojana and the Balika Cycle Yojana. These new schemes had the potential to provide a fillip for women's empowerment in the state, which would also be a booster to women's participation in village level institutions. He felt that while there was a lot of scope to improve the functioning of the PDS in the state, it was at least functioning, unlike the Total Sanitation Campaign, which had been a gross failure.

Dr. Puja Vasudeva Dutta of the World Bank presented preliminary findings of a 2009 study on the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGS). She pointed out that while the MNREG does not guarantee employment in Bihar just yet, those provided employment are likely to belong to the poor and marginalised groups. Measures to expand coverage to meet this unfulfilled demand would necessitate attention to both demand and supply-side constraints.

About a quarter of the rural households had at least one member who worked on the scheme during the year preceding the survey. At the same time, there is evidence of a large unmet demand for the programme: nearly 90 per cent of those who worked on the scheme reported that they would have liked more days of work. And two-fifths of the households wanted work but did not get it. Overall, the scheme seems well-targeted in that the participants tend to be mostly illiterate, poor households belonging to the marginalised groups including the scheduled castes. She argued that in order to increase coverage, both demand and supply side issues need to be addressed. Expressed demand is constrained by low awareness about the scheme, its entitlements, and procedures, particularly among poor women. On the supply side, there are several signs of rationing such as people not issued job cards, people turned away from worksites, and worksites not being opened.

The first discussant, **Shri Vijoy Prakash**, Principal Secretary, Department of Planning, Government of Bihar presented an overview of various anti-poverty programmes in the state and argued that some programmes such

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as NREGA need to be modified in the context of the state. He felt that since Bihar lags behind in social sector parameters, NREGA could be modified to provide employment in education, health, women and nutrition sectors. He also noted that many government programmes have a disempowering effect on the poor and push people into poverty. These include individual and communities involved in traditional occupations such as midwifery and snake charming, among others. He felt that there is a need to plan for alternative employment and provide compensation to such people.

The second discussant, **Mr. Sandeep Chachra**, Director, ActionAid India said that the fruits of several government programmes are not reaching the marginalised sections of the society. The main reason is that the apparatus of power and bureaucracy is captured by the elites and there is a lack of political will in implementing programmes. Mr. Chachra felt that organising the poor and making them a part of the implementation machinery will go a long way in better implementation of programmes.

Discussions

There was a general consensus that implementation of government programmes was now much better in Bihar than it had been in the past. New schemes such as the Balika Cycle Yojana, the Mukhya Mantri Kanya Suraksha Yojana, and the Janani Suraksha Yojana appeared to be working well at the ground level. At the same time, there was considerable scope for improvement in various schemes such as the NREGA, PDS and ICDS.

In terms of the NREGA specifically, it was felt that the employment generated in the state was especially low and there was a considerable scope for improvement here. This was expected to have an impact on the migration situation in the state. Women's participation should also be increased.

The viability of cash transfers was discussed at length. While the state's experience with the coupon system in the PDS was overall positive, there were some issues of concern. The possibility for corruption was one such issue. It was also pointed out that cash transfers may be unfairly biased against the poor in the state.

The targeting of beneficiaries was another issue that was raised during the discussion. There was a lot of debate on universal vis-à-vis targeted poverty alleviation programmes. It was felt that a poor administrative machinery at the lower level coupled with high levels of corruption made implementation of targeted schemes difficult.

SESSION 9: CONCLUDING PANEL DISCUSSION ON STRATEGIES, PRIORITIES
AND PROSPECTS FOR POVERTY ERADICATION IN BIHAR

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Seated from left to right, Professor J. Krishnamurty, Dr. Shaibal Gupta, Dr. Gerry Rodgers, Professor Sudipto Mundle, Shri Uday Narayan Chaudhary, Dr. S.C. Jha and Professor K. P. Kannan

The session was chaired by **Dr. S.C. Jha**, Former Chairman of the Special Task Force on Bihar, Government of India. He welcomed the panelists and participants, and handed over the floor to Professor Alakh N. Sharma.

Professor Alakh N. Sharma and **Dr. Gerry Rodgers** presented an overview of the seminar. Professor Sharma pointed out that one of the major issues discussed in the seminar had been that of identification of people below the poverty line. There is a general consensus that the present method of identification of the poor is faulty and does not capture the complex reality prevailing on the ground. For a state like Bihar characterised by widespread poverty, there could be geographical targeting wherein the poorest districts can be given additional attention. Functionaries at the level of the PRIs must be involved in the identification of the BPL. Dr. Rodgers reflected on some dialectics which were at play in the seminar such as whether the discussions and debate were related to structural change or tinkering at the margins; growth versus redistribution; institutions (implementation and governance) or policy instruments; universality or targeting and poverty or social exclusion. Regarding the last dichotomy, Dr. Rodgers felt that poverty and social exclusion feed on each other. But they may lead one into different policy directions. Income poverty might be reduced while social exclusion persists; eliminating social exclusion may leave important dimensions of poverty untouched.

Another important issue raised during the seminar was that at the present juncture, both a long-term strategy for growth and direct poverty alleviation programmes are very important and the government must

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Dr. Gerry Rodgers

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Dr. Shaibal Gupta

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Ms. Amrita Datta

focus on both. Bihar has experienced a high growth rate during the last five years but the foundations for growth are still weak. Growth must be sustainable. It is also critical to develop agriculture and focus on the diversification of the rural economy. There was intense discussion on direct poverty alleviation programmes, especially on whether they should be universal or targeted. Professor Sharma argued that while generally universal programmes have worked better, Bihar cannot afford to make all its programmes universal at this stage. However, it must certainly aim to make them universal at a later stage. Also, Bihar may not be ready to implement all schemes through a direct cash transfer programme at this juncture in its development trajectory.

He mentioned two important direct poverty alleviation programmes—the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGS) and the Public Distribution Scheme (PDS). The MNREGS has not reached its huge potential in the state, though targeting has improved to some extent. The PDS has improved after the introduction of food coupons but issues pertaining to godowns, food procurement and corruption remain. Finally, Professor Sharma advocated the strengthening of institutions to improve delivery mechanisms. He identified institution and capacity building as some of the major challenges facing Bihar.

Dr. Gerry Rodgers identified some of the major axes of disagreement that emerged through the seminar. He outlined four of the major dichotomies, firstly, that between structural change and superficial tinkering; secondly, between institutions and instruments. He pointed out that in the session on experiences and success stories in poverty reduction in India, Jean Dreze seemed to favour engaging with institutions while Vijay Mahajan favoured instruments, making theirs a crucial discussion for a further understanding of this dichotomy, and in what senses it might be a false one. Thirdly, a running theme through the seminar was the dichotomy between universal programmes and targeted programmes. A fourth dichotomy that emerged through the course of the seminar was between poverty and social exclusion. The adoption of either concept as a starting point affects the manner in which the identification of the target groups for policy is carried out. As with the other dichotomies enumerated above, this helps one deliberate on the mechanisms that drive the entire process of change. Moreover, an understanding of social exclusion can initiate thinking about social inclusion.

Finally, Dr. Rodgers pointed out that while it is heartening to experience a spirit of optimism around Bihar, as opposed to the usual pessimism, the phenomenon of a 'Bihar euphoria' is unwarranted as yet, as numerous structural issues still need to be resolved.

Dr. Shaibal Gupta pointed out that there was a lengthy discussion on targeting through the seminar. It is evident, and various committees including the Tendulkar Committee and the N.C. Saxena Committee corroborate this, that the magnitude of poverty is extremely high in the

state, and as Professor K.P. Kannan pointed out in his presentation earlier, 93 per cent of the people are vulnerable.

Dr. Gupta outlined four factors which conditioned the regional profile: firstly, colonialism and the contingent de-industrialisation; secondly, the land tenure system; thirdly, lack of public investment; and fourthly, the kinds of social movement that the state had witnessed. He pointed out that a number of social sector programmes that have been successful in other parts of the nation have failed in Bihar. He felt that the institutional memory of governance must be taken into consideration. Further, when a programme is conceived at the pan-Indian level, the diverse contexts within which it is implemented are often ignored. Some strategy for long-term institutional reform, especially related to land reform, is very important in Bihar.

Professor K.P. Kannan outlined nine key short-term interventions to bring down poverty, which require not drastic policy changes, but strengthening of the existing system of governance and delivery of public services. Firstly, he advocated the need for a universalised PDS. He pointed out that the debate between the targeted and universal programmes would continue for the country as a whole, but as far as Bihar is concerned, the PDS can certainly be made universal. This is because, if 93 per cent of the population can be identified as vulnerable, then identification of beneficiaries should not be necessary. Professor Kannan felt that universal PDS can be implemented with a simple exclusionary list wherein all non-marginal and large farmers and salaried employees can be excluded. The current official poverty figures in Bihar identify 57 per cent of the people as poor, which means that an additional 36 per cent must be funded by the state government (with the remaining 57 per cent being funded by the central government). He estimated that an additional Rs. 18,000 crore would be required by the state government to make the PDS a universal scheme. He argued that a universalised system would, therefore, be much easier to implement as opposed to a very difficult targeting programme, which would also be extremely costly. One way of raising resources for the programme would be through increased tax collection, which at 5 per cent, is one of the lowest in the country. An increase of 1 per cent would provide the government with more than the required amount of Rs. 18,000 crore.

Second, he advocated for better implementation of the Mid-day Meal (MDM) programme. He argued that while the funds for the programme are available, they need to be better utilised. With an effective MDM programme, enrolment rates in school would increase automatically. Third, implementation of the ICDS programme, which is Centrally-funded, must be improved. Assistance given by the central government, as in the case of the MDM, must be better utilised. Fourth, policy-makers must look beyond consumption poverty, to associated factors, especially health. Illness can be a major factor in a person's movement to along the poverty line. It is critical to strengthen the public health sector, and

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public health centres in villages must be improved. Fifth, the Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana must be better utilised. While it is only available to BPL families nationally, states like Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Kerala have expressed the desire to include unorganised workers within the ambit of the scheme. Sixth, improving the functional literacy among the general population, with a focus on women is central to a growth strategy. A female literacy mission has been announced by the central government. This functional literacy programme might be combined with a skill training programme. Seventh, it is important to implement the MNREGS effectively. There is still plenty of scope to implement it in land and water management programmes (such as watershed management, rainwater harvesting, etc.) before extending it to social services. Strengthening of the PRIs is central to an improved implementation of the MNREGS. Eighth, the revenue collection mechanism must be tightened, as a tax collection of 5 per cent is too low. Most states are able to collect 8 to 10 per cent. Lastly, Professor Kannan pointed out the value of learning from the experiences of other states, and suggested that political leaders from the state should visit other parts of the country where schemes are being implemented more successfully.

Professor Sudipto Mundle summarised the key messages from the seminar relating to estimation, identification and implementation. He pointed out that the Tendulkar Committee Report had played an important role in rectifying current issues with poverty estimation. For a large number of programmes, identification remains an important issue. To deal with problems related to identification, rules of identification should be relatively simple, so that it may be administered relatively easily. PRI functionaries can play an important role in the identification of the poor. Control over assets is a very important factor in ensuring economic and social mobility. It is important to have a growth strategy that is inclusive rather than creating additional programmes. For this, encouraging the growth of the rural non-farm sector is very important. Using information technology can be a feasible solution to promoting transparency in select programmes. Professor Mundle concluded by stressing the importance of the role of PRIs in decentralised governance, especially in terms of the inclusion of more women into these government structures.

Professor J. Krishnamurty delineated some key issues which required further deliberation. Firstly, while there was extensive discussion on identification of BPL, with the focus being entirely on inclusion and exclusion, but leakage of benefits did not figure in the debate, that is, how the BPL status is often misused by beneficiaries. Secondly, like earlier discussions on employment, poverty too has no single measure. Its measure depends on the purpose that it is being used for and thus there are

Shri Uday Narayan Chaudhary, Speaker, Bihar Legislative Assembly and Dr. S.C. Jha, Former Chairman of the Special Task Force on Bihar, Government of India



multiple poverty lines depending on the purpose. In our current context, a large number of people are self-employed and are subject to employment fluctuations, which is why it is important to create a vulnerability line rather than a poverty line. Thirdly, Professor Krishnamurty questioned the limited nature of the debate on reforms. He stressed the importance of talking about reforms in agriculture and land. Fourthly, he pointed out the need for states to raise much more resources than they have done in the past. There is both a demand for programmes and financial resources to implement programmes, but more research needs to be conducted on why programmes are not successful in the state. Fifthly, there must be greater discussion on the creation of 'community assets' with the understanding that often there is no concrete 'community' in a village and all children might not benefit from the construction of a school depending on their social background. Finally, there must be greater discussion on how to reduce poverty through the creation of productive employment opportunities and the state must take greater responsibility for this.

Dr. S.C. Jha drew on his experience as the chairman of the Special Task Force on Bihar and argued for greater debate on the development path for Bihar with a sectoral focus. He argued that while Bihar has taken great strides in economic development in recent years, it must address issues related to the structural reforms and inclusive growth. Global experience shows that targeted programmes do not always work. He argued that there must be greater focus on the rural economy and that revenue generation is critical to the success of any endeavour of the government. He concluded by stressing the need to disseminate the key messages of the seminar among the key stakeholders as also in the wider social sphere.

Mr. Uday Narayan Chaudhary, Speaker, Bihar Legislative Assembly, delivered the valedictory address and provided a politician's perspective. He pointed out that even after more than six decades of independence, there is a large distance between the haves and the have-nots in the country. He questioned the sense of having policy-makers who sit in the capital and devise policies for contexts as diverse as seen in India. Till date, the government has not been able to guarantee clean drinking water to the people. Even as some Indians enjoy lifestyles at par with those in the more 'developed' countries, most Indians continue to live in abject poverty.

When Bihar was bifurcated in 2000, the newly formed Bihar got floods in the north and drought in the south. While it has water in abundance, it is unable to collect and distribute it. Even though there are many programmes on paper, very little has been done on the ground. Mr. Choudhary pointed out that lakhs of students from Bihar go to Bangalore to study. Technical institutions are thus urgently required in the state to make it an educational hub. He concluded by pointing out that without the development of Bihar, the nation as a whole cannot hope to prosper.

Ms Amrita Datta delivered the vote of thanks.

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Annex 1: Seminar Programme

18 APRIL 2010 : ERADICATING POVERTY IN BIHAR—YES WE CAN!

1530–1700 hrs.	:	INAUGURAL SESSION
Welcome and Opening Remarks	:	Professor Alakh N. Sharma , Director, Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi
About the IHD Bihar Research Programme	:	Dr. Gerry Rodgers , Visiting Professor, IHD, New Delhi
Remarks	:	Mr. Gavin Wall , UN Resident Coordinator, India, a.i. and FAO Representative in India and Bhutan
Keynote Address	:	Professor Abhijit Sen , Member, Planning Commission
Remarks by the Chairperson:	:	Professor Y.K. Alagh , Chairman, IHD and Former Union Minister
Inaugural Address	:	Mr. Nitish Kumar , Chief Minister, Bihar
Vote of Thanks	:	Dr. Shaibal Gupta , Member-Secretary, Asian Development Research Institute (ADRI), Patna
1700-1720 hrs.	:	Tea Break
1720-2000 hrs.	:	SESSION 1: INTERNATIONAL ROUND TABLE ON EXPERIENCES AND SUCCESS STORIES IN POVERTY REDUCTION
Chairperson	:	Dr. Gerry Rodgers , Visiting Professor, IHD, New Delhi
Panelists	:	Professor Ricardo Abramovay , Department of Economics, University of Sao Paulo, Brazil Dr. Azita Berar-Awad , Director, Employment Policy Department, International Labour Organization, Geneva Professor Arjan de Haan , Institute of Social Studies, The Hague

		<p>Professor Guobao Wu, Director, Rural Development Institute, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing</p> <p>Dr. Sajjad Zohir, Director, Economic Research Group, Dhaka</p> <p>Professor Bina Agarwal, Director, Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi</p>
2000 hrs.	:	RECEPTION AND DINNER
19 APRIL: THE INCIDENCE OF POVERTY IN BIHAR		
0900-1145 hrs.	:	SESSION 2: IDENTIFYING THE POOR
Chairperson	:	Professor Suresh Tendulkar , National Fellow, Indian Council of Social Science Research
Presentations	:	<p>Professor C. Ravi, Chairman, National Statistical Commission, Government of India</p> <p><i>Can We Really Measure Poverty and Identify the Poor When Poverty Encompasses Multiple Deprivations?</i></p> <p>Dr. Himanshu, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi</p> <p><i>Dimensions of Poverty in Bihar: Issues in Measurement and Identification</i></p> <p>Professor Gerry Rodgers, Visiting Professor, IHD New Delhi and Dr. Sunil Mishra, Associate Fellow, IHD, New Delhi</p> <p><i>Identification of the Poor in Bihar: Lessons from the IHD Surveys</i></p>
Panel Debate	:	<p>Professor Abhijit Sen, Member, Planning Commission</p> <p>Professor Jean Dreze, University of Allahabad</p> <p>Dr. N.C. Saxena, Former Secretary, Planning Commission</p>
1145-1200	:	Tea Break
1200-1330	:	SESSION 3: KEY DIMENSIONS OF POVERTY IN BIHAR
Background Paper	:	Professor Alakh N. Sharma , Director, IHD, <i>Political Economy of Poverty in Rural Bihar</i>

Chairperson	:	Professor Janak Pandey , Vice-Chancellor, Central University of Bihar
Presentations	:	Dr. C. Ravi , Joint Director, Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Hyderabad <i>Health and Nutrition</i> Dr. Praveen Jha , Associate Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University <i>Labour and Well-Being in Contemporary Bihar: Context and the Prospects</i> Dr. Preet Rustagi , Senior Fellow, IHD <i>Education and Skills</i>
Discussants	:	Mr. Vyash Ji , Principal Secretary, Labour and Employment, Government of Bihar Dr. J. Krishnamurty , Visiting Professor, IHD and Formerly Senior Employment Specialist, International Labour Organization Mr. C.K. Mishra , Principal Secretary, Department of Health, Government of Bihar
1330-1415	:	Lunch
1415- 1615	:	SESSION 4: GENDER DISPARITIES—HOW IMPORTANT FOR POVERTY?
Chairperson	:	Professor Bina Agarwal , Director, Institute of Economic Growth, New Delhi
Presentations	:	Dr. Govind Kelkar , Programme Coordinator, UNIFEM, New Delhi <i>Gender and Poverty: An Overview</i> Ms. Janine Rodgers , Visiting Senior Fellow, IHD, New Delhi and Ms. Amrita Datta , Associate Fellow, IHD, New Delhi <i>Changing Gender Roles in Rural Bihar: First Results from the IHD Survey, 2009</i> Dr. Reetika Khara , Visitor, Centre for Development Economics, Delhi School of Economics, New Delhi <i>Women Workers and Perceptions of NREGA</i>

Discussants	:	Ms. Nirmala Buch , President, Child Rights Observatory, Bhopal Ms. Manimala , Director, Media for Change, New Delhi
1615-1630 hrs.	:	Tea Break
1630-1830 hrs.	:	SESSION 5: SPECIAL SESSION: EXPERIENCES AND SUCCESS STORIES IN POVERTY REDUCTION IN INDIA
Chairperson	:	Professor S. Mahendra Dev , Chairman, Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices, Government of India
Speakers	:	Professor Jean Dreze , University of Allahabad Dr. Vijay Mahajan , Chairman and Managing Director BASIX, Hyderabad

20 APRIL: ALTERNATIVES FOR POVERTY REDUCTION

0900-1100 hrs.	:	SESSION 6: DEVELOPMENT PATHS FOR POVERTY REDUCTION
Chairperson	:	Professor Amitabh Kundu , Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi
Presentations	:	Professor Sudipto Mundle , Emeritus Professor, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy and Member, National Statistical Commission, New Delhi <i>Growth, Distribution and Poverty Reduction in India: Some Observations</i> Dr. Manoj Panda , Director, Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Hyderabad <i>The Macroeconomics of Poverty Reduction in Bihar—Routes to Sustainable Growth</i> Dr. Gerry Rodgers , Visiting Professor, IHD, New Delhi and Dr. P.P. Ghosh , Director, ADRI, Patna <i>Patterns of Development in Rural Bihar</i>

		<p>Professor Pranab Banerji and Dr. Girish Kumar, Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi</p> <p><i>Poverty and Migration: Some Insights from a Study on Bihar Migrant Labour</i></p>
Discussants	:	<p>Professor D. N. Reddy, Former Professor and Dean, University of Hyderabad</p> <p>Dr. Saurabh Sinha, Independent Consultant, New Delhi</p>
1100-1115 hrs.	:	Tea Break
1115-1300 hrs.	:	SESSION 7: POLICIES AND POLITICS: THE FRAMEWORK FOR STATE INTERVENTION
Chairperson	:	Professor D. N. Reddy , Former Professor and Dean, University of Hyderabad
Presentations	:	<p>Professor K.P. Kannan, Professor, Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum</p> <p><i>Human Development Policies for Poverty Reduction in India and Their Relevance for Bihar, with Particular Reference to Excluded Groups</i></p> <p>Mr. Tripurari Sharan, Secretary, Department of Food and Civil Supplies, Government of Bihar</p> <p><i>From Estimation to Enumeration – Poverty and the Policy Problem in India</i></p> <p>Dr. Ashok Pankaj, Senior Fellow, IHD, New Delhi</p> <p><i>The State and Poverty Alleviation Programmes in Bihar: Lessons from IHD Research</i></p>
Discussants	:	Professor Ravi Srivastava , Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi
1300-1345 hrs.	:	Lunch
1345-1545 hrs	:	SESSION 8: DO TARGETED SCHEMES AND PROGRAMMES REACH THE POOR AND EXCLUDED?
Chairperson	:	Dr. Nisha Srivastava , Department of Economics, University of Allahabad

Presentations	:	<p>Dr. N.C. Saxena, Former Secretary, Planning Commission <i>An Overview of Targeted Schemes and Programmes in India, the Conditions for Their Success and the Implications for Bihar</i></p> <p>Dr. Chirashree Das Gupta, Associate Professor, ADRI <i>The Effectiveness of "Targeting" in Bihar</i></p> <p>Professor Alakh N. Sharma, Director, IHD, New Delhi <i>The Impact of Policies to Reduce Poverty among the Excluded in Bihar: First Results from the IHD Survey</i></p> <p>Dr. Martin Ravallion, Dr. Rinku Murgai and Dr. Puja Vasudeva Dutta, the World Bank <i>Status of NREG in Bihar</i></p>
Discussants	:	<p>Mr. Vijoy Prakash, Principal Secretary, Department of Planning, Government of Bihar</p> <p>Mr. Sandeep Chachra, Director, ActionAid India</p>
1545-1600 hrs.	:	Tea Break
1600-1830 hrs.	:	SESSION 9: CONCLUDING PANEL DISCUSSION ON STRATEGIES, PRIORITIES AND PROSPECTS FOR POVERTY REDUCTION IN BIHAR
Chairperson	:	Dr. S.C. Jha , Former Chairman of the Special Task Force on Bihar, Government of India
Overview of the Seminar		
Deliberations	:	Dr. Gerry Rodgers , Visiting Professor, IHD, New Delhi and Professor Alakh N. Sharma, Director, IHD
Panelists	:	<p>Dr. Shaibal Gupta, Member-Secretary, ADRI</p> <p>Professor K. P. Kannan, Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram</p> <p>Professor J. Krishnamurty, Visiting Professor, IHD</p> <p>Professor Sudipto Mundle, Emeritus Professor, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, New Delhi</p>
Valedictory Address	:	Shri Uday Narayan Chaudhary , Speaker, Bihar Legislative Assembly
Vote of Thanks	:	Ms. Amrita Datta , Associate Fellow, IHD and Bihar Research Programme Coordinator

Annexure 2: List of Participants

S. No.	Name	Position	Institution	City/State
1	A.K. Jha	Scientist	Sanjay Gandhi Institute of Dairy Technology	Bihar
2	A.K. Singh	Principal Accountant General, Bihar		Bihar
3	A.V. Sinha	Adviser	Bihar State Planning Board	Bihar
4	Abhijit Sen	Member	Planning Commission, Government of India	Delhi
5	Ajay Kumar	Kisan	Agricultural Technology Management Agency, Patna	Bihar
6	Ajay Kumar Jha	Registrar	A.N. Sinha Institute, Patna	Bihar
7	Ajeet Kumar Tiwari	Senior Lecturer	Jai Prakash University, Chapra	Bihar
8	Alakh N. Sharma	Director	Institute for Human Development, New Delhi	Delhi
9	Alok Kumar	Senior Correspondent	Sanmarg Hindi Daily, Patna	Bihar
10	Amita Mishra	Lecturer	Bapurao Deshmukh College, Patna	Bihar
11	Amitabh Kundu	Professor	Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi	Delhi
12	Amrita Datta	Associate Fellow	Institute for Human Development, New Delhi	Delhi
13	Anand	Reporter	Mahua News	Bihar
14	Anand Kumar	Mukhiya	Amhara	Bihar
15	Anil Kumar Sharma	Lecturer	L.P Shahi College, Patna	Bihar
16	Anil Kumar	Adviser	Bihar State Planning Board	Bihar
17	Ankur Puri	Management Trainee	Xavier Labour Relations Institute, Jamshedpur	Jharkhand
18	Anwer Sayeed	Journalist	Press Trust of India	Bihar
19	Aparna	Assistant Labour Commissioner, Patna	Department of Labour Resources, Government of Bihar	Bihar
20	Arjan de Haan	Senior Lecturer	Institute of Social Studies, The Hague	Netherlands
21	Asha Singh	Head of Department, Economics	Magadh Mahila College, Patna University, Patna	Bihar
22	Ashok Pankaj	Senior Fellow	Institute for Human Development, New Delhi	Delhi
23	Ashutosh Kumar	Lecturer	B. N. M. College, Barhiya, T. M. Bhagalpur University	Bihar
24	Ashutosh Kumar	Research Associate	Asian Development Research Institute, Patna	Bihar
25	Azita Berar-Awad	Director	Employment Policy Department, International Labour Organization, Geneva	Switzerland
26	B.N. Sharma		Bihar Peasant Association	Bihar
27	B.N. Vishakarma	Vice-Chairman	Surya Social Reform Centre	Bihar
28	B.P. Gupta	Journalist	Freelancer	Bihar
29	B.P. Singh	Director	Bihar State Planning Board	Bihar

S. No.	Name	Position	Institution	City/State
30	Bakshi Amit Kumar Sinha	Research Associate, Centre for Economic Policy and Public Finance	Asian Development Research Institute, Patna	Bihar
31	Barna Ganguli	Research Associate, Centre for Economic Policy and Public Finance	Asian Development Research Institute, Patna	Bihar
32	Bhagwan Prasad Singh	Professor and Head, Department of Economics	Patna University	Bihar
33	Bina Agarwal	Director	Institute of Economic Growth, New Delhi	Delhi
34	Binay Kumar Singh	Lecturer in Economics	S.M.D. College , Punpun, District Patna	Bihar
35	Bipin Kumar	Lecturer	R.R.S. College, Mokama, Patna	Bihar
36	C. K. Mishra	Principal Secretary	Department of Health, Government of Bihar	Bihar
37	C. Ravi	Joint Director	Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Hyderabad	Andhra Pradesh
38	Chanchal Kumar	Secretary	Government of Bihar	Bihar
39	Chirashree Das Gupta	Associate Professor	Asian Development Research Institute, Patna	Bihar
40	D. Narasimha Reddy	Visiting Professor and Economist	Institute for Human Development, New Delhi	Hyderabad
41	Dennis Ramdahin	Research Scientist	Vihara Foundation	West Bengal
42	Faizan Ahmad	Special Correspondent	The Times of India	Bihar
43	Gavin Wall	UN Resident Coordinator, India, a.i. and FAO Representative in India and Bhutan	Food and Agriculture Organization	Delhi
44	Gerry Rodgers	Visiting Professor	Institute for Human Development, New Delhi	Delhi
45	Ghanswam N. Singh	Executive Director	National Institute for Research on Unorganised Sector	Bihar
46	Girendra Narayan Sharma	Secretary	Sugandhiy Aushidhiya Plant Production Committee, Bihar Branch	Bihar
47	Gore Lal Yadav	IAS, Retired		Bihar
48	Govind Kelkar	Programme Coordinator	United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), New Delhi	Delhi
49	Guobao Wu	Director	Rural Development Institute, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing	China
50	Gyanendra Yadav	Senior Lecturer	College of Commerce, Patna	Bihar
51	Harendra Kumar Singh	Chairman	Dolphin, Bihar	Bihar
52	Harishwar Dayal	Regional Director	Institute for Human Development, Ranchi	Jharkhand
53	Harmeet Sarin	Programme Associate	International Labour Organization, New Delhi	Delhi

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54	Harsil		United Nations Development Programme, Patna	Bihar
55	Heena Tabassum	Head of Department, Department of Sociology	A.N. College, Patna	Bihar
56	Himanshu	Assistant Professor	Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi	Delhi
57	Inderdev Sharma	Professor of Economics	A. N. Sinha Institute of Social Studies, Patna	Bihar
58	J. Krishnamurty	Visiting Professor	Institute for Human Development , New Delhi	Delhi
59	Janak Pandey	Vice-Chancellor	Central University of Bihar	Bihar
60	Janardan Jee	Principal Scientist	Indian Council of Agricultural Research	Bihar
61	Janine Rodgers	Visiting Researcher	Institute for Human Development, New Delhi	Delhi
62	Jean Dreze	Visiting Professor	University of Allahabad	Uttar Pradesh
63	K.P. Kannan	Professor	Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum	Kerala
64	K.P. Singh	University Professor and Former Head Department of Labour and Social Welfare	Patna University	Bihar
65	Krishna Ballava Singh	Professor of Economics	T. M. Bhagalpur University	Bihar
66	Kumari Veena	Lecturer	A.N. College, Patna	Bihar
67	Kundan Sinha	Professor	Patna University	Bihar
68	Lisha Singh	Reader	A. N. College, Patna	Bihar
69	M. Kumar	Economist		Bihar
70	M.K. Behera	Assistant General Manager	National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development	Bihar
71	Mahesh Kumar Singh	State Convenor	Bhartiya Viklang Sangh Bihar, Patna	Bihar
72	Mahua Ray Choudhary		The Development School BASIX	Bihar
73	Mani Mala	Director	Media for Change	Delhi
74	Manish Kumar	Lecturer in Economics	Ranchi University	Jharkhand
75	Manoj Kumar	Research Investigator	State Farmers Commission	Bihar
76	Manoj Panda	Director	Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Hyderabad	Andhra Pradesh
77	Menka Singh	Assistant Professor	University of Delhi	Delhi
78	Monazir Hassan	Member of Parliament		Delhi
79	Mr. Vyash Ji	Principal Secretary	Department of Labour and Employment, Government of Bihar	Bihar
80	Ms. Nirmala Buch	President	Child Rights Observatory, Bhopal	Madhya Pradesh
81	Mukesh C. Gupta	Senior Specialist	International Labour Organization	Delhi
82	N.C. Saxena	Former Secretary	Planning Commission, New Delhi	Delhi
83	N.K. Mishra	Department of Economics	Banaras Hindu University	Varanasi

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84	Nandu Mehta	Head of Department, Department of Economics	J.D. Women's College, Patna	Bihar
85	Neshant Khan	Reporter	Prabhat Khabar, Patna	Bihar
86	Niraj	Reporter	Prabhat Khabar, Patna	Bihar
87	Nirmal Kumar	Head of Civil Engineering	Muzaffarpur Institute of Technology	Bihar
88	Nisha Srivastava	Professor	Department of Economics, University of Allahabad	Uttar Pradesh
89	Nitish Kumar	Chief Minister	Government of Bihar	Bihar
90	Om Prakash	News Reporter	Samadhan	Bihar
91	P.C. Deogharia	Lecturer	Vinoba Bhave University	Jharkhand
92	P.K. Satapathy	Deputy General Manager	Food Corporation of India	Bihar
93	P.P. Ghosh	Director	Asian Development Research Institute, Patna	Bihar
94	Padma Kumar	Senior Deputy Programme Manager	Department for International Development	Delhi
95	Pradnya Pathankar	Programme Officer	World Food Programme	Delhi
96	Pramanand Singh	Reader in Economics	B. N. M. College, Barhiya, T. M. Bhagalpur University	Bihar
97	Pramod Kumar Singh	Director	Vidyasagar Samajik Suraksha Seva Evam Shodh Sansthan	Bihar
98	Pranab Banerji	Professor of Economics	Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi	Delhi
99	Praveen Jha	Associate Professor	Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi	Delhi
100	Preet Rustagi	Senior Fellow	Institute for Human Development, New Delhi	Delhi
101	Prema Gera	Assistant Country Director	United Nations Development Programme	Delhi
102	Priti Kashyap	Lecturer	A.N. College, Patna	Bihar
103	Puja Vasudeva Dutta	Economist	The World Bank	Delhi
104	Pyare Lal	Director	Bihar Institute of Economic Studies	Bihar
105	Qamar Ahsan	Vice-Chancellor	MMHA and P University, Patna	Bihar
106	R. K. Shahi	Senior Economist	Asian Development Research Institute	Bihar
107	R.K.P. Singh	Advisor	State Farmers Commission, Bihar	Bihar
108	Rabindra K Choudhary	Senior Lecturer in Economics	M.J.K. College, Bettiah	Bihar
109	Rabindra Prasad Singh	Reader	S.P. Mahila College, Dumka	Jharkhand
110	Rahbar Ali	Research Associate	Asian Development Research Institute	Bihar
111	Raj Shekhar	Management Trainee	ndain Institute of Management, Calcutta	Bihar
112	Rajeev Kumar Choudhary	Mukhiya	Bhagwanpur	Bihar
113	Rajiv Kishore	Secretary	Bele Gramya Vikas Sansthan	Bihar
114	Rakesh Kumar	Senior Lecturer	Magadh University	Bihar
115	Rakesh Raman	Associate Professor	Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi	Uttar Pradesh

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116	Rakesh Tiwary		Department of Planning, Government of Bihar	Bihar
117	Ram Binod Singh	Reader	L.N. Mithila University	Bihar
118	Ram Krishna Singh	Lecturer	L.P. Shahi College, Patna	Bihar
119	Ram Shankar Sharma	Secretary	Gram Swarajya Samiti Ghoshi	Bihar
120	Ravi Shankar Kumar	Field Information Officer	Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy, Patna	Bihar
121	Ravi Srivastava	Professor	Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi	Delhi
122	Reetika Khera	Visitor	Centre for Development Economics Delhi School of Economics, Delhi	Delhi
123	Ricardo Abramovay	Professor	Department of Economics, University of Sao Paulo	Brazil
124	Richa Singh	Research Associate, Centre for Economic Policy and Public Finance	Asian Development Research Institute, Patna	Bihar
125	Rohit Kumar		Chanakya National Law University	Bihar
126	S. Kumar	Advocate		Bihar
127	S. Mahendra Dev	Chairman	Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices, Government of India	Delhi
128	S.C. Jha	Former Chairman	Special Task Force on Bihar, Government of India	Bihar
129	S.K. Mishra	Special Correspondent	News and Feature Syndicate, Patna	Bihar
130	Sajjad Zohir	Director	Economic Research Group, Dhaka	Bangladesh
131	Sandeep Chachra	Director	Action AID India, New Delhi	Delhi
132	Sandeep Kumar	Programme Officer	Asian Development Research Institute, Patna	Bihar
133	Satyavrut Mishra	Senior Reporter	Business Standard	Bihar
134	Saurabh Sinha	Independent Consultant		Delhi
135	Shaibal Gupta	Member-Secretary	Asian Development Research Institute, Patna	Bihar
136	Shailendra Kumar	Research Scholar	Magadh University, Bodh Gaya	Bihar
137	Shambhu Kumar	Principal	P.N. College, Parsa, Saran	Bihar
138	Shankar Sah	Senior Lecturer	Department of Economics, J.P. University, Chapra	Bihar
139	Shashi Bhushan Jaiswal	Secretary	SAWDA Development Foundation	Bihar
140	Shashi Bhushan Prasad Singh	Secretary	Jagran Seva Munch	Bihar
141	Shashi Gupta	Guest Faculty	Patna University	Bihar
142	Shashi Ranjan Kumar	Research Officer	Asian Development Research Institute, Patna	Bihar
143	Shovmojit Banerjee	Correspondent	The Hindu, Patna	Bihar
144	Shri Uday Narayan Chaudhary	Speaker	Bihar Legislative Assembly	Bihar
145	Sidhu Nath	Reporter	Sandhya Prahori	Bihar
146	Somil Chhaya	Trainee Reporter	Prabhat Khabar	Bihar
147	Sri Raman	Executive Director	DAGAR	Bihar

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148	Sudershan Chauhan	Reader, Head of Department, PG Department of Home Science	Patna University, Patna	Bihar
149	Sudipto Mundle	Emeritus Professor and Member	National Institute of Public Finance and Policy and National Statistical Commission, New Delhi	Delhi
150	Suman Kumar	Reporter	Vijay Dhawaj, Patliputra Today	Bihar
151	Sumant Harshvardhan	Secretary	Dolphin, Bihar	Bihar
152	Sunil Kumar Mishra	Associate Fellow	Institute for Human Development, New Delhi	Delhi
153	Sunita Sharma	Lecturer	B.D. College, Magadh University	Bihar
154	Surendra Kumar	Field Supervisor	Asian Development Research Institute, Patna	Bihar
155	Suresh Singh	Pradesha Pradhan Mahasachiv,JD(U)		Bihar
156	Suresh Tendulkar	National Fellow	Indian Council of Social Science Research, New Delhi	Delhi
157	Tanisha Lal	Associate Coordinator	SEWA Bharat	Delhi
158	Tapan Kumar Shandilya	Principal	R.C.S. College, Maujhaul, District Begusarai	Bihar
159	Tripurari Sharan	Secretary	Department of Food and Civil Supplies, Government of Bihar	Bihar
160	V.K. Dubey	Retired Professor	Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi	Varanasi
161	V.N. Sinha	Member	Lions Club, Patna	Bihar
162	Veena Kumari	Senior Lecturer	Department of Philosophy, J.D. Women's College	Bihar
163	Victoria Rani		Patna University	Bihar
164	Vijay Kumar	Professor of Political Science and Director	Centre for Regional Studies	Bhagalpur
165	Vijay Kumar Choudhary	President	Bihar State Janta Dal (U)	Bihar
166	Vijay Mahajan	Chairman and Managing Director	BASIX, Hyderabad	Andhra Pradesh
167	Vijoy Prakash	Principal Secretary	Department of Planning, Government of Bihar	Bihar
168	Vijay Shankar Tiwari	Lecturer	St. Xavier's School, Patna	Bihar
169	Vikas C. Javipurjar	Reader	Department of Economics	Bihar
170	Vikas Singh		United Nations Children's Fund, Patna	Bihar
171	Vinay Kumar Ray		Centre Direct	Bihar
172	Vinod Odhar	Regional Manager	Action AID India	Bihar
173	Vinod Tiwari	Project Coordinator	Vihara Foundation	Uttar Pradesh
174	Vivek Misra	Governance Advisor	Department for International Development	Delhi
175	Y.K. Alagh	Chairman IHD and Former Union Minister		Delhi
176	Yogendra Kumar	Lecturer	A.N. College, Patna	Bihar
177	Yogendra Kumar Gautam	Secretary	Jan Jagran	Bihar





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