

Passage

Rural development lies at the heart of any meaningful development strategy. This is the only mechanism to carry the message to the majority of the people and to obtain their involvement in measures designed to improve productivity levels. Rural population exceeds 70 percent of the total population of the country, despite a rapid rate of urbanization. (Average rural income is 34 percent less than per capita urban income. A large part of under employment is still concealed in various rural activities particularly in the less developed parts of the country. For centuries, the true magnitude of poverty has been concealed from view by pushing a large part of it to the rural areas. This set in motion a self-perpetuating mechanism.) The more enterprising and talented in the rural society migrated to the cities in search of dreams which were seldom realized. Such migrants added to urban squalor. The relatively more prosperous in the rural society opted for urban residence for different reasons. The rural society itself has in this way systematically been denuded of its more enterprising elements, as rural areas developed the character of a huge and sprawling slum. Development in the past has touched rural scene mainly via agricultural development programmes. These are essential and would have to be intensified. Much more important is a large scale expansion of physical and social infrastructure on the village scene. These included rural roads, rural water supply and village electrification as a part of the change in the physical environment and primary education and primary health care as the agents of social change.) The task is to provide modern amenities as an aid for bringing into motion the internal dynamics of the rural society on a path leading to increase in productivity and self-help, changing the overall surrounding, while preserving coherence, integrated structure and the rich cultural heritage of the rural society.

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Development in Rural Areas

Rural population is 70% of the country's total population. The development of this populace is the only way to incorporate them into measures of productivity enhancement. Average rural income is less than urban income because they are involved in less productive jobs. The ^{true} size of poverty is kept hidden in rural areas for centuries. The intellectual masses migrated to urban areas where their dreams came true. This brain drain from rural areas ^{has} left them with poor conditions. Some developments have been made in agriculture and these efforts would have to be enhanced. The most important task is to improve the social and physical infrastructure of villages. The need is to provide modern facilities to rural areas to increase productivity levels while keeping the cultural heritage intact.

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