



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
30 November 2017

Original: English

Commission for Social Development

Fifty-sixth session

31 January–7 February 2018

**Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and
the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly:
priority theme: strategies for the eradication of poverty to
achieve sustainable development for all**

Statement submitted by the Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



Statement

Poverty versus Population: The Causes and Challenges to Achieve Sustainable Development

Poverty and Population can be described as two sides of the same coin. Although there are many other causes which shall be listed below, yet the challenges differ from country to country, community to community and place to place. The United Nations has made tireless efforts in eradicating the poverty yet nearly one billion people live in extreme poverty and more than 800 million endure hunger and malnutrition. The United Nations has set 2030 as its target to eradicate the poverty. The problem of poverty has engaged the attention of individual scholars, institutions, governments and above all state and society in tackling it in their sphere of activity. This is one such complex human problem which has vast literature generated through the surveys and studies and related activities and should have induced the desired speed in arresting this problem. But one finds discernible gap between powerful rhetoric and equally important pronouncements in its accomplishment.

The purpose of this presentation is to share with the stakeholders the outcome and impact of the following surveys, studies, publications, lectures, seminars and conferences organised by the Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development (CRRID) from the grassroot to the state, national and international level focusing on the eradication of poverty linked with the sustainable development:

Socio-Economic Status (Intern Religion and Inter Caste Analysis):

This was a field based study carried out in the rural area forming the part of district Saharanpur in the district of Uttar Pradesh, India. It was emphasised that a sincere attempt may be made to relieve poverty and alleviate human conditions of living in marginalized villages so as to improve the status of health of masses. The Eighth Five Year Plan emphasized that the galloping growth of the country's population not only nullified economic progress, but also accentuated other problems such as illiteracy, housing shortage, environmental degradation, pollution, food shortage, malnutrition, poor health, unemployment and poverty. Socio-economic characteristics influence the reproductive and child health status of a community, society and also the state. An analysis of the socio-economic status of different castes and religious groups is therefore imperative because these locations influence the health status and demographic behaviour of the population. The other factor is the education status being a source of information about every aspect of life. This is one of the basic indicator of socio-economic development. Educational inequality in India is a far most serious problem than inequality. Hundred years ago Swami Vivekanand declaimed "The chief cause of India's ruin has been the monopolizing of the whole education and the intelligentsia of the land... among a handful of men". Education is, therefore, a vital means to achieve the goal of development. Education in general, and of women in particular, influence the size of the family and ultimately the eradication of poverty.

This study was published by Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development (CRRID) in a book form in 2005. It was widely circulated and had received enthusiastic response from the readers as well as reviewers.

Chandigarh Slums (Issues of poverty and human rights)

A field based project to study the Chandigarh Slums (Issues of poverty and human rights) was assigned by the Union Territory of Chandigarh. The objectives of

this project were to study the growth of the slum colonies in the planned city of Chandigarh; suggest policies to be adopted by the Chandigarh Administration for the rehabilitation of slum dwellers; to analyse the dimensions of poverty in the urban slums in the areas of health and education. Finally, the key question to examine “Whether housing poverty leads to a large burden of diseases and low education”? Since, the present study focused on providing the strategy to reduce urban poverty, the first step was to define the urban poor. The project suggested in making its recommendations to build the houses for the slum dwellers by the Chandigarh Administration. The shifting of the thousands of the slum dwellers to the housing colonies built had the following impact; proper health conditions, sanitation, children education and in providing these clean living conditions. These contributed in their social mobility thereby the acceptance of their skill, experience in providing the employment.

The project received historical recognition with the Prime Minister of India inaugurating the first lot of colonies built for the slum dwellers. This project was later supported by UNESCO. The letter of Prime Minister is reproduced below to convey the recognition of the efforts made by the CRRID.

“I am glad to learn that the project on poverty eradication undertaken by CRRID has been chosen by UNESCO to be among the best such projects. My best wishes to you and your team at the Centre on this important achievement. I am sure that CRRID will continue to earn more laurels in times to come”.

Strengthening the processes of Cooperative Development, Peace and Security in India, South and Central Asia

The CRRID has been engaged in promoting Cooperative Development, Peace and Security since 1995. The first such initiative was supported by Japanese Foundation in India. In 2011 in the September session of Parliament, a budget head was created to promote the processes of Cooperative Development, Peace and Security in South and Central Asia. The CRRID was assigned the five-year programme on this very theme. A multidisciplinary team of experts, diplomats, public and media men was constituted. In the words of Professor Manmohan Singh “There cannot be development without peace and peace without development” The United Nations and several other countries and many experts have underlined that development, peace and security are the necessary conditions to eradicate poverty to achieve sustainable development. The impact of this programme can be perused from the reproduction of the message of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh “I am glad to know that the Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development is organizing an International Conference on Peace and Development. Peace and development complement each other. While peace is essential to optimally harness human and material resources for promoting development, development based on sustainable practices and equity and justice reinforces peace. Efforts to eradicate poverty, preserve environment, enhance productivity, ensure gender equality and above all to establish a caring economy are in the direction of serving the cause of peace and development. Historically, India has been pursuing this goal by employing peaceful means. The path shown by Mahatma Gandhi by adopting non-violent methods continue to guide the destiny of the nation. Rest of the world has realized that there is no alternative to this path. I hope that the deliberations in the Seminar will inspire the participants to rededicate themselves for the cause of peace and development”.

The outcome of the lectures, seminars, conferences have been published by the Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development in the book forms. These publications have been widely circulated and reviewed by reputed journals in India and abroad.

Promotion of Small Family Norms through Innovative Methods

A multidisciplinary project on Promotion of Small Family Norms through Innovative Methods was assigned by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India. The specific objectives of this project were to bring awareness amongst the sections of population known for producing more children than they can economically afford thereby resulting into raising the level of poverty; to train the available manpower including women in the skills required by the local enterprises in the small, medium skill industries as well as service sector; to constitute the team headed by the medical officers assisted by medical staff and coordinated with the social scientists. This project established how the larger size of family and economically not maintainable was attributed to the 'Will of the God'. So was the religious belief held by the population that poverty was the 'Will of the God'. This is how I call poverty and population have diverse relationship. The project was replicated elsewhere in India.

Ongoing project

The other initiative which is an ongoing activity carried by Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development pertains to raising the level of farmers in promoting them as processors of their processed agriculture produce and by providing them the market and also promoting the dairy farming to supplement their income. These two major steps in eradicating the poverty in the rural sector has been widely acknowledged.
