

Role of Participatory Development in Indian Economy

Shubhendu Chel*

Department of Economics, Bankura Zilla Saradamani Mahila Mahavidyapith, Natunchati, Bankura, West Bengal

Abstract – Any debate over "participatory development" and "good governance" is inseparable from the end of the Cold War, the "lost decade" of the 1980s, and evolving discussions over development strategies from the economic growth orientation of the 1950s to the structural adjustment and sustainable development of the 1980s. Since the Cold War's end, donor countries have come to demand that development aid be more effectively and efficiently implemented and started to seek new aid strategies capable of garnering the support of their people and of replacing the strategy based on East-West ideological conflict.

There is growing awareness that in order for aid to have visible effects, to protect human rights, and to promote democratization, donors must become actively involved in reforms of developing nations' political systems, policies, and implementing structures.

Keywords: Development, Participation, Economic

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INTRODUCTION

The objective of economic and social development in developing countries is to set in motion a process of self-reliant and sustainable growth through which social justice can be achieved. Development within a developing society aims, we believe, at building into society the mechanisms that will ultimately permit self-reliant growth without foreign assistance, at sustaining stable growth patterns for economic development in harmony with the environment, and at providing equal and appropriate opportunities to take part in development to overcome income gaps, regional disparities, and inequalities between men and women.

The period since the 1980s has seen a global trend toward political democratization and pluralism, economic liberalization, and transitions to a market-oriented economy, although varied from country to country and region to region. In this light, increasing attention has come to be paid to the importance of broader people's participation.

For this to be possible, the central focus of development is not necessarily to boost production of material goods; instead, it should be to foster and enhance people's capability to have a role in their society's development. To this end, people should be willingly involved in a wide range of development activities, as agents and beneficiaries of development. It is this participation that is important.

We believe it is needed both as a goal and as a tool of development.

Our study committee regards participatory development as an approach to development that is designed to enhance sustainability and self-reliance and to achieve social justice through improvements in the quality of people's participation. For us, the focal point of participatory development should be the qualitative enhancement of participation in local societies which can be defined as groups of rural communities and as administrative and developmental units.

The government-led development approach adopted by many developing countries beginning in the 1950s and 1960s was, on the one hand, effective and efficient as a method of planned and concentrated investment of scarce resources into industry. Given insufficient participatory capabilities of local people and local societies, however, it tended on the other hand to put the intended beneficiaries of development these very local people and societies in a passive position. This government-led approach to development left intact, or even widened, deep-rooted problems including economic and social disparities between social classes, between genders, between regions, and between urban and rural areas, in effect reinforcing the position of the classes and regions that benefited from development. Regrettably, this has undermined and counteracted the

effectiveness and sustainability of development projects and of development itself.

ROLE OF PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT IN INDIAN ECONOMY

Participatory development is not an attempt to replace the top-down development approach with a local-community-led approach. Rather, it is a viewpoint that simultaneously stresses the need for the government-led approach in terms of national-level economic planning and coordination of development planning and the demerits of widening disparities and worsening poverty inherent in that approach when used alone. Participatory development attempts to introduce a bottom-up style of development in order to remedy the government-led approach's shortcomings, specifically by focusing on qualitative improvements in local society's participation.

This participation must not be transient; it must entail the sustainable upgrading of participation quality. For this to happen, the underlying conditions must be met to facilitate the long-term process of participation and its self-reliant sustainability. The long-term process of participation cited here is: raising the awareness of local people, forming community groups, upgrading their requisite resource management abilities, and creating norms or internalizing their mechanisms, and improving capabilities for external negotiations. The shaping and planning of this participatory process requires both a long-term vision and a willingness to selectively improve and bolster traditional community systems as tools of development. Support from NGOs is needed to help accumulate the organizational learnings and experiences of local groups and to train leaders.

We regard "good governance" as such that should help countries to achieve sustainable and self-reliant development and social justice. Good governance can therefore be understood as comprising two concepts: the ideal orientation of a state that works best to achieve self-reliant and sustainable development and social justice; and the ideal functioning of government that operates most effectively and efficiently.

The key point of the former, i.e., the ideal orientation of a state, hinges on whether the state's basic attitudes are democratically oriented. Elements contributing to this include, for example, the legitimacy and accountability of the government, the securing of human rights, local autonomy and devolution of power, and civilian control of the military.

The latter, the functioning of the government, depends on whether a government has the requisite political and administrative structures and mechanisms and the capability to function effectively

and efficiently. Elements contributing to the latter concept of good governance include the basic laws and institutions of a nation, the administrative competence and transparency, decentralization of its administration, and the creation of an appropriate market environment; all of these are needed to support people's participation in every aspect of politics, the economy, and society. These are therefore necessary components of good governance as "the government functioning as the basis for participatory development."

Participatory development and good governance are related in the following way: participatory development, with its central focus on raising the quality of participation by local societies and thus better achieving self-reliant and sustainable development and social justice, is one important form of people-oriented development. Good governance is the foundation of participatory development inasmuch as it provides the government functions needed to promote participation and create the environment in which participatory processes take place.

Yet good governance as a function of government does not refer solely to support for participatory development: as participatory processes evolve, good governance develops into such functioning that supports wider and more mature people's participation.

DISCUSSION

In this sense, participatory development promotes good governance in its turn. The projection of the concept of good governance onto the national system--an orientation of a state--then progressively boosts people's trust in their government, inasmuch as, through good governance, government services improve in effectiveness and efficiency. Thus in the long run, good governance evolves into stronger aspirations for further democratization.

The strength of a state's desire for democracy also influences the process of formation of political and administrative structures and government's capability to translate this national stance into action. In turn, this, too, influences the evolution of participatory development. Participatory development and good governance are consequently interrelated, as are the two component elements of good governance, the ideal orientation of the state and the ideal functioning of government.

A tide of political democratization and economic liberalization based on competitive principles has been sweeping the world and stimulating, in its wake, the drive toward a new role for government. A shift is also occurring in development strategies, away from a single focus on economic growth and

toward greater emphasis on sustainable development. Many countries, moreover, are becoming aware (albeit to varying degrees) of the need to provide opportunities for broader participation as a complement to government-led development approaches. Yet in consideration of the present widening disparities in developing countries such as those between the rich and the poor groups of society, it is necessary to review past methods of promoting economic and social development in developing nations.

In other words, it is extremely important to clarify how the results of development projects have contributed to human development in aid planning, implementation, and evaluation. To clarify this, it is necessary both to strive to more accurately understand the economic and social conditions and needs of the intended ultimate beneficiaries and reflect them in aid planning and implementation and to give support for the building of community organizations and institutions to enable more people to take advantage of aid achievements and participate in development themselves at the local and regional level.

CONCLUSION

Research conducted by several development agencies (World Bank, CIDA, USAID, IRDP) suggests that there are many benefits to be gained through the use of participatory development. These studies suggest that while participatory development projects may have high startup costs, they will be less expensive and more sustainable in the long run. These studies also found that participatory development projects are better at addressing local needs and are generally more relevant to local populations than traditional development projects.

Community participation is also thought to increase the efficiency of development projects. Participation can also contribute towards more equitable outcomes so long as elite capture of participatory mechanisms is avoided.

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Corresponding Author

Shubhendu Chel*

Department of Economics, Bankura Zilla Saradamani Mahila Mahavidyapith, Natunchati, Bankura, West Bengal