

EVOLUTION OF PLAN PROGRAMMES OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT¹

First Five-Year Plan (1951-56): . The First Five-year Plan commenced when the economic situation in the country was far from favourable. It aimed at correcting the disequilibrium in the economy caused by the War and partition of the country. It proposed to initiate simultaneously a process of all-round balanced development which would ensure a rising national income. Focussed on building the economy from post-partition and aimed at building institutions which were considered necessary for development of the economy and for self reliance. Agriculture was the major sector on which the economy was centred

Second Five-Year Plan (1956-61): It aimed at accelerating the rate of growth and initiating a strategy to bring about the necessary structural changes in the economy. While agriculture continued to get high priority, there was due emphasis on industrialisation. "A socialist pattern of society" was explicitly accepted as the goal of the country's programme for social and economic development. The pattern of development was planned that they not only resulted in appreciable increases in national income and employment but also in greater equality. The benefits of economic development was to accrue more and more to the relatively less privileged classes of society. The Plan also defined the immediate task of laying down the foundation of a self-reliant economic growth.

Third Five-Year Plan (1961-66): The 3rd Plan was conceived as "first stage of a decade or more of intensive development leading to a self-reliant and self-generating economy". The basic criterion of the Plan was social gain rather than private profit. The Plan had setback due to drought conditions leading to steep fall in agricultural production over two successive years (1965-66 and 1966-67). The period also saw virtual stop of external credits. The rupee was devalued in 1966 and a period of readjustment followed. In these constraints, the finalisation of the 4th Plan due from April 1966 was delayed by 3 years. The Plan period was also marked by a trade deficit and mounting debt obligations. In 1967-68, there was a sharp recovery of agricultural output due to favourable weather conditions and widespread use of new varieties of seeds, fertilisers, pesticides, etc. This was the beginning of the era of "**the Green Revolution**". Food grain production which fell from 82 million tonnes (mt) in 1960-61 to 72 in 1965-66 was expected to be about 98 mt in 1968-69. Investment in private sector fell into two broad components: (a) organised sector of industry, mining, electricity and transport and (b) agriculture, village and small industries, rural and urban housing, etc.

Fourth Five-Year Plan (1969-74): The main objectives of the 4th Plan were:

- (i) To increase the pace of growth.
- (ii) Increase agricultural output.
- (iii) Reduce imports and increase exports by about 7% a year.
- (iv) Improve the functioning of the public sector undertakings.
- (v) Benefits of the development to reach the poor. Disparities in income to be reduced. Benefits of development to flow in the underdeveloped regions of the country. Specific programmes for social integration of backward communities into the mainstream rural communities.

¹ Five-Year Plan Documents of the Planning Commission, Government of India, New Delhi

- (vi) Increase employment opportunities.
- (vii) Shift of emphasis to district and local planning.
- (viii) Greater participation of *panchayati raj* institutions in the formulation of district plans. It also proposed to make their responsible for implementing local programmes and schemes.

In the beginning of the 4th Plan, for the first time, problems related to environment received Government's attention. At the initiative of the former Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, a National Committee on Environmental Planning and Co-ordination (NCEPC) was set up in 1972 following the Stockholm Conference, to identify and investigate the problems of preserving or improving the human environment in the country as well as to propose solutions for environmental problems. This High-level advisory body was charged, among others, with reviewing policies and programmes which have a significant bearing on quality of environment and advise Government on environmental management and to improve the human environment in the context of population growth and economic development. It was to advise and suggest on existing legislation and regulation and administrative machinery and also for [promoting and strengthening environmental research, education and awareness. The NCEPC in its existence of eight years (1972-80) provided a major thrust in environmental planning, approval of projects in selected sectors, human settlement planning, surveys of wetlands and spread of environmental awareness and research.

Agricultural output during the 4th Plan reached a new high with successful research in plant breeding, using foreign genetic material, and use of high-yield (HY) varieties of cereal seeds. Importance of irrigation and intensive use of sub-soil water in many areas was realised. Greater demand for and increasing the use of chemical fertilisers, insecticides and other inputs. The 1973-74 targets for food grain production was set at 129 mt. Industrial growth, notably, in steel and aluminium, a wide range of machine tools, industrial machinery, electrical and transport equipment, fertilisers, drugs, and pharmaceuticals, cement, minerals and petroleum production increased. There was also a large increase in the manufacturing capacity for power generators. These contributed to the strengthening of the industrial structure and valuable potential for sustained industrial growth was created.

Fifth Five-Year Plan (1975-80): The Fifth Plan was formulated in light of two problems -_inflationary pressure and worsening BOP position due to steep rise in prices of imported oil & other materials including foodgrains. Escalation in costs, higher outlays on public consumption and non-development expenditure led to an erosion of resources for the Plan resulting in staggering of programmes owing to diminution in the size of investment in real terms.

Sixth Five-Year Plan (1980-85): The 6th Plan was prepared as a perspective plan (1980-81 to 1994-95) visualising accelerated progress towards removal of poverty, generation of gainful employment and technological and economic self-reliance. The 6th Plan continued with the objective of growth, modernisation, self-reliance and social justice.

The major objectives of the Sixth Plan were:

- (i) Achieving a higher growth rate of economy in the past.
- (ii) Moving towards significant reduction in the present disparities of income and wealth.
- (iii) Ensuring the country's continued progress towards self-reliance.
- (iv) Significant reduction in unemployment.

- (v) Appreciable rise in the standard of living of the poorest sections of population.
- (vi) Provision by State of some of the basic needs such as clean drinking water, adult literacy, elementary education, health care, rural roads, rural housing for the land less and minimum services for the urban slums.

In the beginning of the 6th plan, in recognition of the need for a fresh and comprehensive look at the administrative and legislative aspects of environmental protection, the Government of India constituted a High-Power Committee under the chairmanship of Shri N.D.Tiwari, former Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission. The Committee expressed the need for creation of a separate Department of Environment at the Centre to spearhead the role that environmental conservation must play for sustainable national development. The Department of Environment was thus created in 1980 to look exclusively after environmental issues. The Department was merged with the Forest Department (operating from the Ministry of Agriculture) into a full-fledged Ministry of Environment and Forests in 1985.

Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90): The objectives of the 7th Plan continued to be growth, equality and social justice, self-reliance, improved efficiency and productivity. The emphasis was on policies and programmes which would accelerate the growth of foodgrain production, increase employment opportunities and raise income. Emphasis of rural employment through National Rural Employment Programme (NREP), Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) and the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) to continue with better planning, closer monitoring and tighter organisation for effective implementation. Promotion and expansion of off-farm employment in agro-based rural industries and services. The Plan also had a component for raising the level of literacy to improve the functional relevance of education and to expand opportunities for acquiring new skills. The infrastructure sectors such as- power, energy, transport and communication to be improved and strengthened. Expansion and improvement in health care, nutritional support for vulnerable groups, fertility control, provision of clean drinking water and sanitation and housing. Anti-poverty programmes through income generating schemes. Shift of a sizeable part of the rural population from agriculture to secondary and tertiary sectors for protection and improved status of the under privileged.

Major Programmes of the Seventh Plan (1985-90):

There was considerable increase in the total area brought under afforestation programme. Block plantations, strip plantations, and farm forestry were carried out. Plan funds were made available through State Forest Departments. A National Wastelands Development Board (NWDB) was set up in June 1985 with the principal aim of reclaiming wastelands through a massive programme of afforestation activities with people's participation. To ensure an area-specific approach on fuelwood and fodder, a new centrally sponsored scheme was initiated from 1988-89. This scheme was to cover the watersheds in the districts included under the National Watershed Development Programme of the Department of Agriculture as to ensure integrated development of wastelands in the identified watershed. The scheme was to be implemented in 11 States. A centrally sponsored scheme for aerial seeding to cover vast tracts in a cost effective manner, especially in remote, inaccessible areas such as ravines and hills was introduced. Under the National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) and Rural Landless Employment (NLEP) and the Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) carried out by the Department of rural Development, 25% of the funds were specially earmarked for the social sector forestry component, during the first four years of the 7th Plan.

However, the schemes had a number of deficiencies. The seeds for the programmes/schemes for afforestation were mostly collected without determining their quality. There were no specific plan of action for meeting fuelwood and fodder requirements, except for the continuance of the scheme for rural fuelwood plantation, which does not directly address the issue. The efforts at social forestry programme, were also largely departmental. The rural poor and tribals were given restricted access to resources for their basic sustenance.

The 5th, 6th and 7th Plan periods also became years of the “**Operation Flood Project**” also known as ‘**the White Revolution**’ dominating the animal husbandry sector for 20 years from 1970-1990. This single initiative through milk producers’ co-operatives, galvanised the milk industry into unprecedented growth to meet the requirements in urban areas. The milk production stagnant over post-independent years grew from an annual 3 million tons in 1947 to 22 million tons in 1972 and to 44 million tons in 1985. The Project was also successful to link the small and marginal farmers and landless labourers who constitute some 70% of all milk producers, to get a lion’s share of earnings directly (MOA, 1996).

Fodder development however, continued to be marginalised even in the 7th Plan - despite a growing concern over the acute scarcity situation. The devastating effects of the two year stretch of severe drought, almost country wide during the 1985-87 period focussed attention on the need for alternate strategies for feeding the livestock. The 7th Plan however, could not rise above the departmental approach of fodder development schemes (MOA, 1996). The 7th Plan also saw the establishment of a separate Department of Biotechnology (which was being implemented by the Department of Science and Technology) in 1986. The Ministry of Science and Technology also established a project on “National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting” (NCMRWF) in 1989 with the prime objective of developing operational capability of medium-range (3 to 10 days in advance) weather forecasting capability.

Economic Liberalisation and the new Economic Policy, 1991

The early nineties witnessed major economic problems induced by fiscal imbalances and difficulties in the Balance of Payment (EAP, 1993). A structural adjustment process was begun to correct the imbalances and to bring down the BOP deficit. A new Economic Policy was prepared and with it began a process of economic reforms and liberalisation. The role of the Planning Commission was also redefined from a highly centralised planning system towards indicative planning, with emphasis on prioritisation of goals to reduce bottlenecks, and achieving higher growth rates. The Planning commission was also to play an integrative role and help in the development of a holistic approach to the policy formulation in critical areas of development.

The Eighth Five Year Plan and Sustainable Development (1992-97):

The 8th Five-Year Plan was launched in 1992, which was also the year of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (**UNCED**) also known as “**the Earth Summit**”. The UNCED resulted in the adoption of a number of International Conventions on Environment. These include the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (**UNFCC**), the Convention on Biological Diversity (**CBD**), the Montreal Protocol on Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS), the **Forest Principles**, and the decision for a UN Convention to Combat Desertification (**UNCCD**), which was eventually adopted in 1994. The UNCED also agreed on a broad agenda for sustainable development of the world in the 21st century and prepared a blue-print giving the framework of objectives, activities and costs of implementation titled “**Agenda 21**”.

In the Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-1997), the role of the Planning Commission was redefined *viz.*, to move towards indicative planning which would outline the priorities and encourage a higher growth rate from a centralised planning system.

The 8th Plan had the benefit of positive growth rate of the 6th and 7th Plan which took the average GNP growth rate from an annual 3.5% to beyond 5.5%, with growing agricultural incomes, rising per capita consumption of food grains and other essential commodities and declining capital-output ratios and percentage of population under poverty line. The severe economic problems in 1990-91 made the 8th Plan to give special attention to infrastructure sectors such as power, transport and communications as a part of structural reforms. Accordingly, a process of economic liberalisation with changes in industrial and trade policies was initiated.

The 8th Plan was on building long-term strategic vision. The goal of sustainable development is reflected in the 8th Plan document, which underlines the significance of ensuring co-ordinated and integrated Governmental action for conserving nature and ensuring sustainable use of natural resources through a participatory process. The Plan recognised "Human Development" as the core of all developmental effort. The priority sectors of the Plan were health, education, literacy, and basic needs, including drinking water, housing and welfare programmes for the weaker sections. However, the severe economic problems limited public investment to socially critical areas focusing on human development and to give further impetus to the poverty alleviation programmes and to projects for diversification of agriculture, wasteland development, forestry, rural non-farm sector, rural infrastructure and housing and services.

The 8th Plan strategy was on employment generation that were environmentally friendly with the introduction of the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), the National Rural Employment Programme (NREP), the Rural Landless Employment Generation Programme (RLEGP). Nearly 16% of the urban India and 26% of the rural India did not have access to safe drinking water. The 8th Plan therefore, stressed on the need to extend the Urban and Rural Drinking Water Missions to 'no-source' villages (Ministry of Rural Development) and to small towns with population upto 20,000 (Ministry of Urban Development). The Rajiv Gandhi Drinking Water Mission was therefore launched to provide drinking water and sanitation facilities to these villages/hamlets. Programmes to conserve moisture through watershed development, catchment area treatment and integrated schemes for wasteland development including afforestation were initiated. The Integrated Rural Energy Programme for energy development in rural and urban areas with Central and State Plan funds, had during the 7th Plan covered about 750 Blocks. During the 8th Plan, the focus of this Programme was decentralised with a least cost mix of various energy options, covering conventional and non-conventional and renewable energy sources. The 8th Plan, with the introduction of the Constitutional Amendments, also proposed active participation of people in the planning and implementation through a decentralised approach. The Integrated Wastelands Development Scheme aimed at integrated land management based on village/micro watershed plans prepared after taking into account land capability, site conditions, and local needs of the people. The scheme aimed at enhancing people's participation in wastelands development programme. The Plan also recognised the role and involvement of Voluntary Agencies (VAs) and other people's institutions that are essential for effective micro-level participatory planning and implementation.

The 8th Plan document also articulated a policy on draught animals and that the overall improvement in the quality and work output of bovine population in the country. The issues of fodder needs and production were still not been adequately addressed (MOA, 1996).

The National Health Care Programme under the 8th Plan was based on popular participation with focus on disease prevention and health promotion. The problem of inadequate sanitation services in both rural and urban areas was of serious concern. As of 1988, about 54% of the urban population and almost 97% of the rural population did not have satisfactory sanitation facilities. The on-going health care and family welfare schemes were strengthened with the objective of minimising water/air borne communicable diseases, better health delivery services to the poor.

The environmental issues that were prominently taken up during the 8th Plan include:

- Conservation and sustainable utilisation of biodiversity in selected ecosystems including forests, mangroves, wetlands, coral reefs, mountain ecosystems.
- Afforestation, wastelands development, and conservation of soil and moisture and ensuring that water resources are not polluted.
- Control of industrial and related pollution with an accent on reduction and/or management of wastes, particularly hazardous wastes.
- Improving access to clean technologies.
- Tackling urban environmental issues.
- Strengthening scientific understanding of environmental issues, as well as structures for training at different levels, orientation and creating environmental awareness, resources assessment, water management problems.
- An alternative energy plan.

Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002):

The 9th Plan recognised that creation of employment opportunities and an increase of economic growth by themselves may not be sufficient to improve the living conditions of the poor. They would need to be accompanied by measures that enhance the social and physical conditions of existence. Primary education, primary health care, including the prevention and promotion of safe drinking water, nutrition and sanitation require heavy investment which has to be met with public funds. However, since the requirements of social infrastructure vary significantly across regions, the Plan recognised that greater decentralisation of decision-making powers than exists is desirable. Furthermore, recognising the localised nature of these essential sources, the Plan recommended that it is desirable that the control over operation and maintenance of facilities should be in the hands of people's institutions and local associations, with adequate resources being made available, either from the exchequer or through delegation of powers to raise such resources.

The various sector and cross-sector projects and programmes launched earlier on are continuing within the framework of the Ninth Five-Year plan. The Ninth Plan, which has an outlay of Rs.8592 billion, envisaged an average growth rate of 6.5 percent for the Plan period.

The major objectives of the Ninth Five Year Plan include:

- Ensuring the growth rate of the economy with stable prices.
- Providing the basic minimum services of safe drinking water, primary health-care facilities, universal primary education, shelter, and connectivity to all in a time-bound manner.

- Containing growth rate of population.
- Ensuring environmental sustainability of the development process through social mobilisation and participation of people at all levels.
- Empowerment of women and socially disadvantaged groups such as scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, and other backward classes and minorities as agents of socio-economic change and development.
- Promoting and developing people's participatory institutions like *Panchyati Raj* Institution, co-operatives, and self-help groups.
- Strengthen efforts to build self reliance.

WOMEN AND FIVE-YEAR PLANS²

The First Five Year Plan (1951-56): envisaged welfare measures for women. To spear head these, the Central social Welfare Board (CSWB) was established in 1953 which symbolised the welfare approach to women's problems. The CSWB was also reflective of the community development approach. Although rural women were within the purview of the community development programmes, they were not specifically catered to as a target population based on economic and other specific development related criteria. A large majority of poor rural women remained outside its purview.

Second Five-Year Plan (1956-61): Was closely linked with the overall approach of intensive agricultural development. The welfare approach to women's issues continued. The Plan recognised the need for the organisation of women workers. It also perceived social prejudices they suffered. The Plan recommended that women should receive maternity benefits and crèche for children of women workers. It also recommended speedy implementation of the principle of equal pay for equal work and provision for training to enable women to compete for higher jobs.

Third Five-Year Plan (1961-66): The largest share for social welfare was provided for expanding rural welfare services. The health programme concentrated mainly on provision of services for health, education, nutrition and family planning.

Fourth Five-Year Plan (1969-74): Continued the emphasis on women's education. The basic policy was to promote women's welfare with the family as a base of operation. The outlay on family planning was stepped up to reduce the birth rate from 45 to 25 per thousand through mass education. High priority was accorded to immunisation of pre-school children and supplementary feeding for children, expectant mothers and nursing mothers.

Fifth Five-Year Plan (1974-79): Emphasised the need to train women in need of income and protection. It also recommended a programme of functional literacy to equip women with skills and knowledge to perform the functions of child care, nutrition, health care, home economics, etc. This Plan coincided with the International Women's Decade. A Committee on the Status of women in India (CSWI) was constituted for a comprehensive examination of all questions relating to the rights and status of women in the context of changing social and economic conditions in the country and problems relating to the advancement of women. The Report stated that the dynamics of social change has adversely affected a large section of women and had created new imbalances and disparities such as: declining sex ratio, lower expectancy of life, higher infant and maternal mortality, declining work participation, illiteracy and rising migration.

² Source: National Perspective Plan for Women 1988-2000 AD, Ministry of Youth Affairs, Sports, Women and Child Development, GOI.

The CSWI Report led to a debate in the Parliament and to the birth of a new consciousness of women as critical inputs for material development rather than as targets of welfare policies. It was also realised that constitutional guarantees of equality would be meaningless and unrealistic unless women' right to economic independence is acknowledged and as contributors to the family and national economy is improved.

A major outcome of the CSWI Report was the National Plan of Action (1976) for Women. The Plan identified areas of health, family planning, nutrition, education, employment, legislation and social welfare for formulating and implementing programme for women and called for planned intervention to improve the conditions of women in India. The Plan also led to the setting up of the "Women' Welfare and Development Bureau" in 1976 under the Ministry of Social Welfare.

In 1977-78, as an exercise for the 6th Five-Year Plan, the Government appointed a Working Group on Employment of Women. This Group devoted a whole chapter on women and Development. For the first time, a shift was perceived from welfare to developmental approaches for women. The 6th Plan also recognised lack of women' access to resources as a critical factor impeding their development. The step of providing joint 'pattas' (Titles) to men and women were initiated.

Seventh Five-Year Plan (1985-90): The Seventh Five-Year Plan continued the efforts initiated in the 6th Plan focussing on generating awareness about women' rights and privileges and training them for economic activity and employment. Women' access to critical inputs and productive resources such as land (joint title or *patta* scheme initiated in the 6th Plan period) were expanded in the 7th Plan to include support through micro-credit, marketing, training in skills/management and technology. Another salient and crucial recognition was the need for organisation of women workers and Unions that could improve legal services to safeguard rights, reduce occupational and health hazards. The total outlay on women-specific schemes in the 7th Plan was 2.4% of the total outlay.

Eighth Five-Year Plan (1992-97): The Government of India is implementing over 27 schemes for women through various departments and ministries - Rural Development, Labour, Education, Health, Science & Technology, Welfare, Women and Child Development, etc.

C. Plan Programmes on Afforestation through Successive Plans³

S.N	Plan Period	Year	Area Afforested (in mha)	Cumulative (in mha)
1.	First	1951-56	0.05	0.05
2.	Second	1956-61	0.31	0.36
3.	Third	1961-66	0.58	0.94
4.		1966-69	0.45	1.39
5.	Fourth	1969-74	0.71	2.10
6.	Fifth	1974-79	1.22	3.32
7.		1979-80	0.22	3.54
8.	Sixth	1980-85	8.86	17.05
9.	Seventh	1985-90	0.75	17.80
10.		1990-91	1.15	18.95
11.	Eighth	1992-97	7.95	26.90
12.	Ninth	1997-2002	1.48 (upto 1998)	28.38 (upto 1998)

Source: NFAP, MOEF, GOI, 1999

³ National Forestry Action Programme, Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India