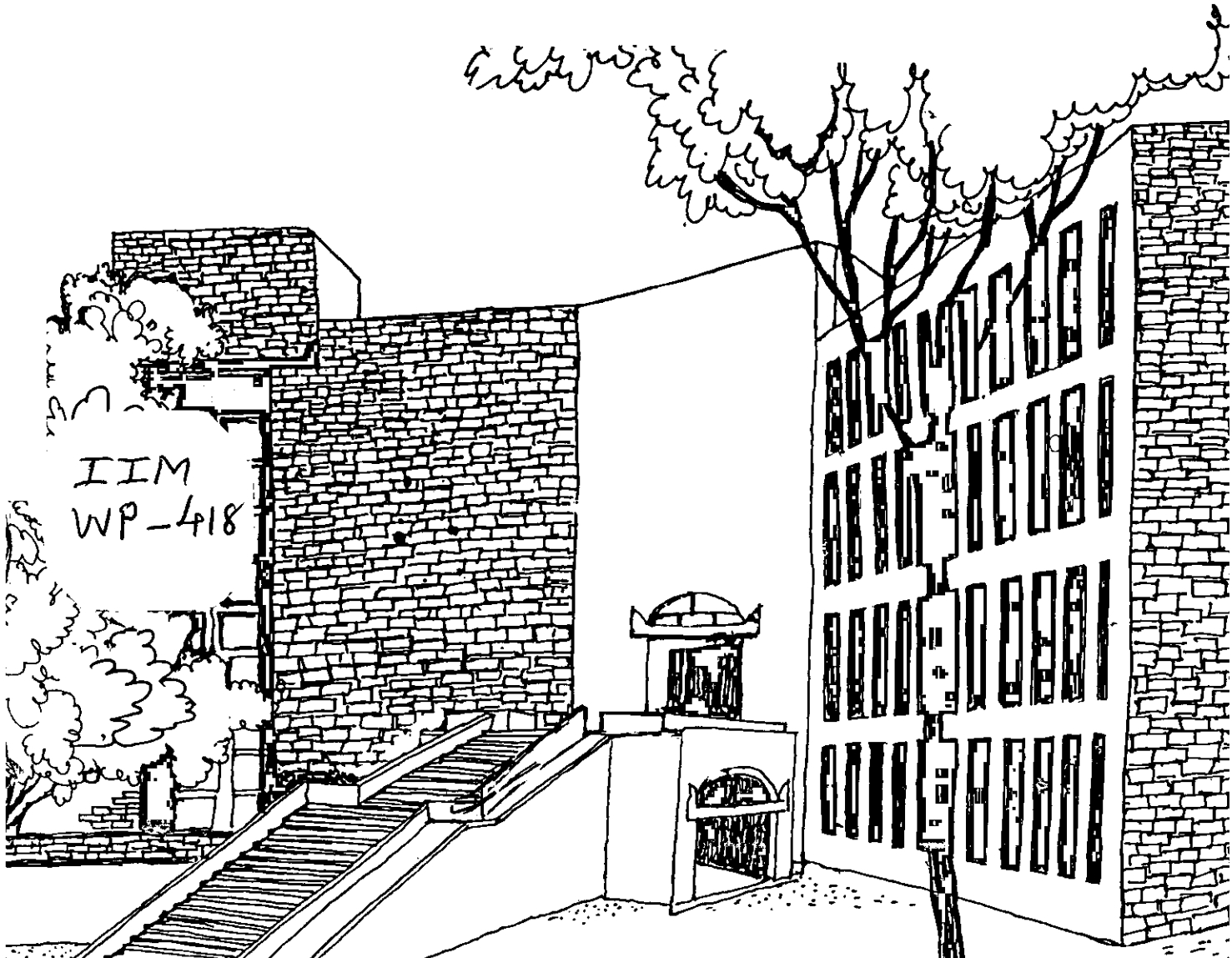


418



W. P.: 418

Working Paper



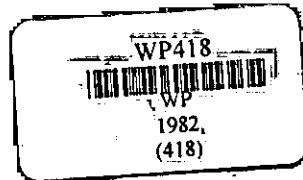
FAMINE AND FAMINE RELIEF:
COPING STRATEGY AT THE DISTRICT LEVEL

By

Vijay Shankar Vyas

&

Inderjit Khanna



W P No. 418

March 1982

The main objective of the working paper series of the IIMA is to help faculty members to test out their research findings at the pre-publication stage.

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT
AHMEDABAD-380015
INDIA

FAMINE AND FAMINE RELIEF

(Coping Strategy at the District Level)

Vijay Shankar Vyas and Inderjit Khanna *
(Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad)

Year after year, in large parts of India, the drought-induced famine** brings with it suffering and misery to millions of people. Their distress lasts not only during the famine but continues long afterwards, since the afflicted people have to reorganise their economy afresh from shambles. What is worse, it has become a recurrent phenomenon in the life of millions of households. Famine also creates a crisis for the administration. It has been recognised as the duty of the Government to see that people and cattle do not perish for want of food or fodder. Relief and succour has to be provided to the people to compensate, at least partially, for the loss that they suffer. A major instrument for assisting famine affected people is through wage-paid employment on famine relief works. The Government also takes responsibility for providing the basic needs like drinking water, medical and health facilities and to ensure availability of foodgrains, fodder and other essential items. Coping with these tasks is not an easy routine. It needs substantial adaptation in the modus operandi of the governmental functionaries as well as their relationship with different publics. In this paper we will examine the strategy evolved in a district of Rajasthan to cope with the recurring famine in the area and the rationale and the effectiveness of this strategy.

* The authors are grateful to the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad and the Government of Rajasthan particularly the Relief Secretary, Collector, Udaipur and their colleagues for making this study possible. However, they alone are responsible for the views expressed.

** Throughout this paper drought-induced famine is referred to as famine.

RAJASTHAN: THE GENERAL FEATURES

We have selected a district in Rajasthan because this State suffers the most from drought and scarcity conditions, and there is no evidence yet of its being better prepared to face - leave alone to avert - these calamities, inspite of hundreds of millions of rupees being spent on famine relief works.

Rajasthan is one of the largest states in the country with an area of 342 thousand sq.kms. Nearly fifty per cent of the area forms a part of the great 'Thar' desert; more than half i.e., nearly sixty per cent of the area, is declared as the drought-prone area. The population of the state, as per the 1981 census, is 34.10 million of which the rural population is 26.9 million. The population density in the state is 100 persons per sq.km., while the all India average is 208 (Director of Census Operations, 1981). There are 33,305 inhabited villages in the state, which has 26 districts. Nearly 34 per cent of the State's population is inhabiting drought-prone areas. Most of the area in the arid and semi-arid zone is single cropped and agricultural production is critically dependent on the monsoons, failure of which results in drought and scarcity conditions. Occasionally, drought and scarcity have occurred inspite of adequate rainfall, when the latter is ill-spaced or unseasonal. About 85 per cent of the state's working rural population comprises of agriculturists and agricultural labourers, and the average size of holding is 5.45 hectares which, when one considers the fact that more than 50 per cent of the state is covered by desert, is not very high.

Much of the rural population of the state also depends upon livestock for its means of livelihood. In 1977, for every hundred persons in rural areas of Rajasthan there were 195 head of livestock (excluding poultry) (Directorate

of Economics and Statistics, 1979).

Famines figure predominantly throughout the history of Rajasthan. In recent times, i.e., during the 19th century, famine was recorded in 22 years. In the first half of this century i.e., up to independence, famine was recorded 13 times (Chowdhary and Bajat, 1975). During the last three decades it has occurred 29 times, with varying intensity, over some or all the districts of the state. In fact, the current year (1981-82) is the fourth successive year of drought over a large part of the state. Appendix I gives details of rainfall, affected districts and the population since 1951.

Responsibility for Famine Relief

Prior to 1858, the Indian rulers while tackling famine generally adopted measures such as free distribution of grains, free kitchens, remission of revenue and other taxes, payment of advances, construction of public works and encouragement of irrigation*. During this period the British administration generally followed the same policy. After 1857, the British Government of India and the princely states, were not only confronted with more repeated and severe famine, but the former tried to frame a uniform policy of famine prevention and

* Mohammed Tughlaq was probably the first ruler to introduce some system into famine relief measures in India. In the famine of 1343 he is said to have distributed six months supply of grains to the inhabitants of Delhi, and made a grant from the treasury for farming and well-digging. In Akbar's time (particularly between 1573 and 1596) a number of famines occurred and he opened ~~alms~~ almshouses and free kitchens in cities, recruited more soldiers to provide employment, and started the building of a fort to provide work to the affected people. He even appointed a special famine officer. After the famine of 1596 was over, he constructed storehouses for grain and fodder in every district. These stores were maintained by the 'Dahseri tax' of ten seers per bigha in kind from tilled land as a famine insurance by the Government (Maloo, 1976).

relief. However, no such attempt was made by the princely states till the British Government gave them guidelines in the form of a 'Draft Famine Code for Native States' in 1885. This was also suggestive and the princely states were left free to frame their own codes. The Rajputana Famine Code came in 1897 (Maloo, 1976).

During the late nineteenth century communications were a serious constraint in coping with famines. Writing about the period from 1882-83 to 1897-98, Maloo says that the Government of India spent nearly seven times more on railways than on irrigation works. Giving her conclusions on the measures adopted during the famine of 1891-92 and the scarcity of 1894-95 Maloo says, "For the first time in the history of Rajputana the famine relief operations in the affected states were organised with a certain degree of efficiency. It is true that the guidelines provided by the Famine Code enabled the rulers and their advisers to take preventive measures and to render prompt service to the sufferers, but at the same time it must be put on record that the rulers of these states were as usual liberal in their approach and were prompt in starting relief measures on humanitarian grounds" (Maloo, 1976, p.231).

At the start of the twentieth century, the attitude of the Government of India to famines and its policy on relief measures, underwent change. There was a shift in favour of village works as compared to large-scale centralised relief works. The Third Famine Commission (1901) and the Irrigation Commission (1903) emphasized the importance of small works. The second area where the attitude of the Government changed significantly was in regard to measures being taken in the context of preventing recurrence of famines. These included extension of irrigation facilities, where possible, and in the improvement of the economic conditions of the poorer agriculturists (Bhatia 1967).

Prior to integration, Rajasthan was comprised of 19 princely states and 3 chiefships. The process of amalgamation started in 1948 and continued till 1956, though the state came into existence in 1949. Traditionally, the rulers were obliged to provide relief to the drought affected people. Barring a few big princely states like Bikaner, Jaipur, Jodhpur, and Udaipur most other states were confined to geographical areas smaller than what now constitutes a district. In fact, many of these states were no larger than a tehsil. Thus, the unit of planning for famine relief in the olden times covered geographical areas equal to, and in many cases smaller than a district.

The limits imposed by difficulties of transport and largely subsistence character of food economy restricted the area over which succour could be provided. Relief was, mainly, provided in the form of revenue remission and cancellation and some relief works. In this way, the ruler came to share some of the burden of his afflicted citizens. Taccavi loan was another device which could provide some assistance. However, such help was more symbolic than substantial (Morris 1974). Not many among the affected households could, however, receive adequate support in times of extreme distress. There was virtually no way in which substantial resources from either non-agricultural groups or other regions could be mobilised and transferred to the affected areas and people.

It was also customary for the rulers, as well as the subjects, to build some stocks of foodgrains in surplus years. As long as the stocks lasted with the principality, employment was provided on construction of forts and palaces. Occasionally irrigation works, particularly tanks, were

also built*.

The immediate cause of famine or scarcity is failure, deficiency, or unseasonal rains, but its severity, and the intensity of distress caused by it, is determined by social and economic factors. Of these, the most important are the stocks of foodgrains in affected areas, the extent of rise in prices and the availability of alternative (non-agricultural) employment. Even at places where food could be provided the problems of lack of drinking water facilities and fodder for cattle have to be tackled. Once the stocks of foodgrains or fodder are exhausted the people tend to migrate along with their cattle to more fertile areas. During scarcity, thousands of people from Rajasthan move with their livestock towards the Malwa plateau in the east, the fertile plains of Punjab in the north and towards pasture lands of Gujarat in the south. At times, human and cattle migrants travel hundreds of kilometres causing considerable hardship to the people and their cattle. In recent years, this migration is resented by the farmers of the neighbouring states and at times leads to law and order problems.

The popular Government, after the formation of Rajasthan, inherited the tradition of providing relief to the drought stricken people. With the introduction of representative institutions, political leadership has, of necessity, become more responsive to the group pressures. The Member of Parliament (M.P.) and Members of Legislative Assembly (M.L.A.) as much as the office bearers of the panchayati raj institutions are conscious of the

* One of the largest tanks in Rajasthan, Rajsemand lake was built as a famine-relief work by the Maharanas of Udaipur in the years between 1662 and 1676 (Directorate of District Gazetteers, 1979).

fact that they can be voted into or out of power on the basis of what they do for the people in their constituencies. This ultimately results in more resources being demanded, and received by a drought affected district than would normally be warranted on strictly economic criteria (Morris, 1974). With their plodding, and due to the benevolent approach of the government, huge resources are diverted, year after year, for the famine relief work. While the immediate hardship caused by the famine is thus met, the diversion of financial resources from the economically productive schemes to the relief tasks ultimately slows down the developmental programmes of the state.

Development versus Relief

One aspect of coping strategy is whether the successive efforts of tackling famine have had any tangible results in strengthening the economic base of the region. In this connection, it is necessary for us to understand the process and nature of funding famine relief operations in Rajasthan. The matter of central assistance to states to meet unforeseen expenditure due to natural calamities was first considered by the Second Finance Commission in 1957. This Commission recommended transfer of certain amounts, known as margin money, into a fund every year to meet such eventualities. The Commission recommended an amount of Rs.61.5 million every year for this purpose, out of which Rs.4 million was earmarked for Rajasthan. The subsequent Finance Commissions generally followed this practice though the amounts earmarked for this purpose were reassessed from time to time. The Sixth Finance Commission (1973) addressed itself to this problem in some detail. It observed, "The practice envisaged in these codes (i.e., famine codes) of keeping ready a list of works to be taken up for execution as relief programmes appears to

have fallen into disuse in many states. The result is that in an emergency relief works are in many cases taken up on an adhoc basis with an inadequate attention to their long term utility". The Commission further maintained, "It is our distinct impression that there has been a good deal of avoidable waste in the expenditure incurred in the name of drought relief and also that with better planning and organising more enduring benefits could have been secured. It is possible, that the constraint of resources for developmental programmes in the plans in a few cases lead to pressures by the states on the centre for larger assistance in the form of drought relief.....". The Commission, therefore, recommended, "We strongly urge that instead of incurring large scale expenditure on relief on an adhoc basis on schemes of dubious value, provision ought to be made on a much larger scale for development of drought and flood prone areas in the Fifth Plan both in the state and central sectors". The Seventh Finance Commission (1978) generally endorsed these observations.

The table shown in the next page indicates the extent of expenditure in Rajasthan on famine relief and that under the various state plans, from the First to the Fifth Plan.

Table 1Expenditure Under Plan and On Famine Relief

(Rs. in million)

Plan period	Plan expenditure	Expenditure on famine relief	Ratio of expenditure on famine relief to plan expenditure (per cent)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
First Plan (1951-56)	541.4	26.2	4.84
Second Plan (1956-61)	981.8	19.1	1.94
Third Plan (1961-66)	2123.4	54.8	2.58
Three Annual Plans (1966-69)	1367.5	243.6	17.82
Fourth Plan (1969-74)	3087.9	1680.6	54.42
Fifth Plan (1974-79)	8576.2	162.1	1.89
Total	15678.2	2186.4	13.10

- Source: 1. Directorate of Economics and Statistics, "Regional Statistics of Rajasthan, 1961-79", Government of Rajasthan, Jaipur, July 1980 (for plan expenditure from second to fourth plan).
2. Planning Department, Government of Rajasthan (For First and Fifth Plan expenditure).
3. Expenditure on famine relief as per appendix-I.

It would be seen from Table 1 that during the period under review expenditure on famine relief was equal to 13 per cent of the total planned expenditure. The pace of expenditure on famine relief has further accelerated in the years since the beginning of the Sixth Plan. During one and half years of the Sixth Plan, from 1st April 1980 till October 1981, a staggering expenditure of Rs.1060 million was incurred under this head. If one is looking for

durable assets created under this programme one will have to travel far and wide throughout the state to come across really useful works. While it is understandable that in times of distress it is the government's duty to provide relief, should not such benevolence be tempered with the objective of reducing the rigours of future droughts? The rate at which this expenditure has been rising, particularly during the last 15 years, and the fact that the incidence of famine has not reduced is a disturbing factor.

With the scope for building forts and palaces disappearing, the emphasis should have shifted to developmental works which, in the long run, would go towards minimising the intensity of future famines. While sanctioning advance plan assistance in times of natural calamity, the central government does lay down certain priorities on the basis on which relief works are to be taken up. The first priority is to invest more on on-going plan works so as to complete them quickly and get returns. The second priority is for those plan works which could not be taken up earlier due to paucity of resources, but with the additional central assistance could be initiated and incorporated into the plan. Such works would naturally include drinking water schemes, irrigation, afforestation, soil conservation, with roads as the last priority. In fact, roads take away the largest share of relief funds.

The table below gives the figures of number of villages affected, population affected and expenditure on famine (by decades) in the last 30 years in Rajasthan.

Table 2
Incidence of famine and expenditure by decades
in Rajasthan

S.No.	Item	Unit	1951-61	1961-71	1971 to 81
1.	Number of villages affected	Nos.	57,746	69,058	1,34,782
2.	Population affected by scarcity	million	10.61	39.887	57.720*
3.	Expenditure on famine	Rupees in million	45.37	1350.33	2108.52

Source: Relief Department, Government of Rajasthan

It is clear from the above table that the incidence of famine and the expenditure thereon has assumed a huge magnitude in the sixties and seventies as compared to the fifties. Further, while the per capita expenditure on famine, in terms of affected population, works out to Rs.4.27 in the fifties it rose sharply to Rs.35.85 in the sixties and settled down at Rs.31.46 in the seventies.

* excluding that in 1974-75, 1978-79, and 1979-80 since affected population figures for these three years are not available.

An year to year examination (see Appendix I) shows that there seems to be no relationship between the population affected by scarcity and the famine expenditure in a particular year. For example, in the year 1952-53 the population affected was 1.3 million while the famine expenditure was Rs.10.27 million. As against this, in 1953-54 the population affected was 2.30 million (nearly double that of 1952-53) while the expenditure on famine was Rs.3.03 million which is less than half the expenditure in 1952-53. Likewise, in 1968-69 the population affected was 13.1 million with an expenditure of Rs.154.2 million, while in the very next year population affected was 7.2 million whereas cost of relief operation was Rs.630.7 million. Thus, in the latter year with just about half the affected population the expenditure was four times the preceding year.

This leads to the conclusion that the extent of relief expenditure does not seem to have a direct and proportionate relationship to the population affected. Any one of the following explanations may be valid. Either, in some years the administration had a better grip on the situation and was, therefore, managing the crisis more effectively. Conversely, in some years the pressures were too great to resist and wasteful expenditure was incurred. The latter view finds support in the observations of various Finance Commissions. They have maintained that while the expenditure on famine relief has been increasing it has had little or no long-term impact on the economy in terms of reducing the incidence of future famines or mitigating hardships of the affected people. By and large, it has been a fire-fighting operation the objective of which has been to provide employment virtually at the doorstep of the affected people. The objective seems to be of diffusing the crisis, but not one of trying to find a more permanent solution to it.

RELIEF OPERATIONS IN A DISTRICT

In terms of coping strategies for tackling the crisis of famine it will be useful to concentrate on an administrative level which performs both planning and implementation functions. The district seems to be the most effective level from this point of view. For the purpose of this study the coping strategies adopted by the district administration in Udaipur district of Rajasthan were looked into. This district, located in southern Rajasthan, is one of the largest districts in the State having an area of 17,300 sq.kms. and a population of 2.35 million (1981 census) of which nearly 85 per cent is rural population. Nearly 33 per cent of the total population of the district is tribal and 8 per cent belong to the scheduled castes. Literacy, percentage was 17.41 in the district in 1971 as compared to the state average of 19.07. The average size of agricultural holdings was 2.2 hectares in the district compared to the state average of 5.5 in 1970-71. Within the working force, the percentage of cultivators, agricultural labourers and other workers to total workers in the district was 69.76, 6.47 and 23.77 in 1977*.

This district formed a major part of the erstwhile Mewar state, whose ruler was known as the Maharana. Severe famines in this area were experienced in 1662, 1764, 1812-13, 1833-34, 1868, 1869, 1888, 1899 and 1901. The methods adopted by the princely rulers of this area, of coping with famine

* Source: Directorate of Economics and Statistics.
"Regional Statistics of Rajasthan 1961-79",
Government of Rajasthan, Jaipur, July 1980
(for all figures in this para).

were no different from those adopted by other states of Rajputana. However, while in British India the British government had enormous resources, and experienced administrators, these rulers were invariably handicapped by inadequate resources and relatively inexperienced administrators (Maloo 1976).

The worst famine of the nineteenth century in Rajputana and in Mewar state was in 1899-1900 and is referred to as the 'Chappanya Kal' as it occurred in Vikram Samvat 1956. Out of 2.1 million head of cattle in Mewar state, 1.5 million (70 per cent) perished. Human deaths numbered 2,34,344 (Maloo, 1976, p.289). While dealing with this famine the main efforts were through opening relief works, poor houses and the grant of takavi advances for wells. Amongst the works, emphasis was on railways, roads and the construction of irrigation works. A special irrigation department was also formed. The total expenditure on famine relief operations in Mewar state amounted to Rs.2.5 million. The state was sanctioned a loan of Rs.0.5 million by the Government of India, for famine relief purposes. The annual interest rate on this loan was 4 per cent. Relief efforts were said to have been hampered by the incapacity of officials and the difficulty experienced in conveying grain to places remote from railways (Rajputana Gazetteers, p.62). Another acute famine, in the pre-independence period, was witnessed during the year 1939-40. In that year, out of a total expenditure of Rs.8.76 million in Mewar state, Rs.1.19 million were spent on famine relief works. Next in order of expenditure in that year was an amount of Rs.0.69 million earmarked for the palace expenses (Report on the Administration of Mewar State for the years 1940, 1941 and 1942).

In Mewar state the crime rate increased during famines, particularly in areas inhabited by the Bhils*. The resident of Mewar while writing to the Famine Commissioner, Rajputana on 12th December 1899 said, "There has been a marked increase in crime owing to the famine.... crime is confined to cattle stealing and petty thefts amongst the Bhils themselves". A little later on 26th February 1900 the Secretary to Government of India, writing to Agent to the Governor General, Rajputana said, "Finally, I am directed to draw your attention to recent increase of crime in Rajputana..... In all but a few of these cases the value of property looted was small, and there appears to be little doubt that the great majority of outrages were committed by the semi-starving persons in search of food or the means of buying it. Most of the cases are probably to be ascribed to the Bhils or to the criminal tribes" (Papers regarding the famine, 1899-1900).

After independence, Udaipur became one of the largest of the 26 districts in Rajasthan. Till the early 1970's no specific schemes seem to have been taken up to tackle the problem of recurring famine on a long term basis. Of course, the normal developmental efforts, through the five year and annual plans, were stepped up in the district and these did include sectors like agriculture, animal husbandry, irrigation, power, roads, drinking water supply etc. But, such sectoral developmental efforts were going on throughout the state and no specific scheme was put into effect to tackle the crisis of famine

* The maintenance of law and order appears to have been fairly important from the administration's point of view, during such famines. Jawalia, while writing about the economic conditions during the late seventeenth century refers to famines in 1685, 1693, 1694 and 1697 and says that traders were unable to leave their houses, and there was looting of caravans, traders and rich persons. In fact in 1697, he says, that looting was the order of the day (Jawalia Brijmohan).

on a long term basis, as has happened from the 1970s. On the other hand, famines, as such, were tackled in the 1950s and 1960s as special situations requiring a 'fire fighting' type of operation. The details of famine in Udaipur district since 1964-65 are given in Appendix II.

Response to Crisis by District Administration

Before Rajasthan state came into existence, there were no clear cut rules or regulations governing the declaration of scarcity. After the state was formed the first enactment on this subject was the Rajasthan Affected Areas (Suspension of Proceedings) Act 1952. This Act dealt with suspension of proceedings in execution of decrees for money in areas affected by famine. The Rajasthan Tenancy Act, 1955, dealt with suspension and remission of rent in the case of such calamities. The Rajasthan Land Revenue (Land Records) Rules 1957 contained instructions about recording of rainfall and the preparation of accurate forecasts of crops. These rules also provided detailed instructions about Girdawri.

In Rajasthan, the declaration of famine or scarcity is based on the Girdawri. This is a visual crop inspection of the Kharif crop done by the officials of the revenue department normally between, 1st and 31st October every year. In case the Kharaba is more than 50% the village is declared as famine or scarcity affected. Under the Rajasthan Land Revenue (Land Records) Rules 1957, the Collector of the district has the power to prepone or postpone the start of Girdawri by 15 days. The decision is taken on the basis of rainfall pattern during the year.

The First Famine Code was incorporated by the state government in 1962. Prior to this, the work relating to declaration of scarcity and

providing of relief was governed by various circulars and orders issued by the government from time to time. The code of 1962 provided the framework within which all such action was to be taken. At the state level, the administration of famine relief works was entrusted to the Relief Commissioner. However, effective implementation of relief measures was provided at the district level through the Collectors. With the further passage of time, the need for revision and updating of this code was felt. In 1980, a draft Rajasthan Natural Calamities Manual was published inviting comments of all concerned. Based on these, the final document is expected to be issued shortly.

In Udaipur district, the monsoon normally sets in around the fourth week of June. Each official of the revenue department, from the Patwari upwards keeps an eye on the rainfall position in his area. The Patwari is required under the famine code to note systematically in his diary and report, from time to time, the general condition of crops, fodder, availability of drinking water for men and cattle, the rainfall with description and duration of rain and influence on crops and fodder, the prevalence of cattle disease or epidemic, the emigration or settling of men and cattle and other matters affecting the economic state of the people living in his area. His superior, the Inspector, Land Records (I.L.R.) is required to visit villages to detect signs of coming distress and report the result of his personal observation and enquiry to the Tehsildar. The Code requires him to submit a fortnightly diary to the Tehsildar indicating the conditions of the principal crops, fodder, water, men and cattle.

The Tehsildar, apart from supervising the activities of the I.L.R. and Patwari has to daily submit the extent of rainfall (whenever it occurs)

to the Collector, the Relief Commissioner and the Executive Engineer, Irrigation Department. He has also to submit a weekly report regarding the general agricultural condition in his Tehsil to the Sub Divisional Officer (S.D.O.), Collector and the Relief Commissioner of the state. The S.D.O. is required to test the accuracy of the weekly reports and send his comments to the Collector. He has also to constantly visit villages and keep himself aware and alive to the prevailing situation.

The Collector, apart from keeping himself personally informed of the situation, has to submit a consolidated weekly report of his district to the Relief Commissioner and also a fortnightly report on the agrarian conditions in his district. The latter compiles all such reports at the state level and submits them to the Government.

With the start of the Girdawri, the Patwari has to visit each village in his area and make a visual crop inspection of the standing crop. Any public representative or the cultivator can join him in this inspection. Based on this inspection he enters the extent of crop likely to survive in his record viz., Khasra Girdawri. A 16 anna crop is taken as the ideal and therefore, 6 anna crop would mean 10 anna 'Kharaba'. He estimates the crop likely to be available from each field and thus works out the 'Zharaba' in every village. The I.L.R. is required to inspect every village under his charge and physically check 25 per cent of private land and 100 per cent of land with fluctuating rent. The Tehsildar has to inspect 10 per cent of the cultivated area and 20 per cent of area under trespass and tank bed cultivation. The S.D.O. has to check at least 45 villages in 25 Patwar circles under his charge to ensure the correctness of reporting. There is no norm fixed for the Collector, but

knowing the issues arising out of the Girdawri he also tours some of the areas to personally verify the extent of damage to crop. He also has consultations with the people's representatives and other persons competent to give opinion on this issue. The Draft Manual, referred to above, also contains a provision asking him to call a meeting of these persons at convenient places and time. Based on this Girdawri the Collector has to submit a detailed first report to the Government by 31st October and a final report by 30th November*.

These are the preparatory steps which have to be taken by the district administration under the Famine Code, before scarcity is declared. The Collector, Udaipur aptly described these procedures as the 'drill'. With so much of past experience the administration has sufficient practice in the 'drill'. With the first indication of the ensuing calamity the administration swiftly swings into action.

We visited Udaipur towards the end of October 1981 and found that after having the results of the girdawri with him the Collector had submitted his detailed report to the Government of Rajasthan on 22nd October. The report was prepared after discussing the situation with the elected representatives and the concerned district level officials in a meeting of the District Famine Relief Advisory Committee. In this report it was estimated that out of 163 thousand hectares of sown area there was kharaba in 98,000 hectares, resulting

* Separate efforts are being made at the Institute to see whether a more effective system of anticipating famine is possible so as to make it more precise and give warning signals much earlier to the administration.

in an expected loss in production to the tune of nearly 100,000 metric tonnes. The number of affected villages was estimated at 1566 out of a total of 3180 villages. In the affected villages, the khar ba was found to be more than 50 per cent on the basis of girdawri. The Collector's report to the government covered the following points:

- i) Prospects of the rabi crop
- ii) Estimated job requirements in the relief works
- iii) Proposals for relief works
- iv) Fodder requirements
- v) Arrangements for drinking water facilities
- vi) Requirements of tools, implements, vehicles, staff and stationery.
- vii) Proposals for gratuitous relief
- viii) Medical facilities and other arrangements for labour at relief works.

The state government had already i.e., on 21.9.81 given instruction to start test relief works wherever necessary. Promptly, within a week, the Collector had started 60 test works in 15 tehsils. By the end of October we found that the Collector and the district administration were on their toes, waiting for the formal declaration of scarcity so that they could organize relief operations in full swing.

When we visited the state headquarters at Jaipur, towards the middle of November, we found the relief department officials busy preparing the memorandum which was to be submitted to the Government of India. This memorandum is based on the reports of the 26 district Collectors and is, in effect, a request for central financial assistance to meet the crisis. Apart from the

report of the Collectors, the Relief Secretary had himself visited the three affected regions viz., Bikaner, Jodhpur and Udaipur to have discussions with the local officials and get a better idea of the situation before preparing the memorandum.

On the basis of the memorandum, the Central Government is expected to send a study team to assess the situation and recommend the quantum of relief. Nowadays, as per the award of the Seventh Finance Commission, this is restricted to 5 per cent of the annual plan outlay of the state, but in its latest submission, i.e., in 1981, in view of the fact that it was the fourth successive year of drought the state government was requesting for a much larger amount, and a larger share of it as grant rather than loan. It was expected that while the issue of actual sanction from Government of India would take another month, relief activity had already started and the expenditure was being met out of the 'margin money' provided by the Finance Commission for natural calamities.

III

DEVELOPMENTAL EFFORTS IN THE DISTRICT

A relevant issue in this context is whether in a state like Rajasthan, or for that matter in the district selected for the case study, developmental efforts were on the scale and of the nature as could strengthen the production base of the economy and enable it to mitigate the rigours imposed by frequent failures of rainfall.

Appendix III shows that during the 23 years from 1956 to 1979 a total sum of Rs.1044.75 million had been spent on planned developmental activities in Udaipur district. Although the sum, by itself, is quite impressive,

on per capita basis it hardly amounted to Rs.10.07 in 1956 and Rs.106.68 in 1978-79. While it is obvious that adequacy or otherwise of planned expenditure should not be judged only by normalising it against population (per capita basis) but if to this are added factors like the drought proneness of the area, the hilly terrain and the fact that about 40 per cent of the population of the district belongs to the scheduled tribes and scheduled castes, the problem of long term development is further compounded. An encouraging feature, however, from the point of view of financial allocations is a pronounced increase in the allocation for irrigation sector. This expenditure increased from Rs.8.57 million during the second plan (1956-61) to Rs.74.90 million during the fifth plan period (1974-79). Similarly, in the power sector, the increase was from Rs.12.05 million to Rs.321.81 million. As past history indicates recurrent famines in the area, the emphasis on irrigation and power sectors is welcome.

However, when we shift our sights from expenditure to the physical achievements, as brought out in Appendix IV, the picture is quite unsatisfactory. In terms of agricultural production, neither the per capita value of agricultural production nor the per capita foodgrains production has shown any appreciable rise. Likewise, while the expenditure on irrigation and power has increased significantly and so have the number of wells energised, there has not been any marked increase in the gross irrigated area or in the proportion of total irrigated area to total cropped area. In the communication sector also, we find that in about 18 years the total road length (including fair weather roads) in the district has increased by only 200 kms. Similarly, the literacy percentage has increased from a meagre 8 per 100 to a barely satisfactory 21 per 100, in 30 years. Other indicators of social and economic progress, also, do not suggest a more encouraging picture.

As in other parts of the country, in Udaipur district also, apart from the normal developmental plans of various departments, a large number of special area programmes, like the Tribal Sub-Plans, Drought-Prone Area Programme, Food for Work Programme, and schemes to benefit the weaker sections of society, like the Small Farmers Development Agency (SFDA) and Antyodaya programme have been taken up in the 1970s. Large sums of money were spent on these programmes and on paper at least, impressive number of families were covered. For example, in Udaipur district under Food for Work Programme, during one year 1978-79, as many as 2000 works were completed. These included village roads, irrigation tanks, drinking water wells etc (Directorate of Economics & Statistics, 1979). Under the SFDA programme, during the period of 5 years from 1971 to 1976 a sum of more than Rs.15 million was spent on development schemes, and credit facilities to the tune of Rs.73 million were also provided. In the Antyodaya programme, nearly 23,000 families were covered between the period 1977 and 1981 under various schemes. Credit amounting to Rs.11 million was disbursed under the same programme.

One would have expected that with all these investments under the plan and easier availability of credit, infrastructure development and economic upliftment of target groups would have taken place to an extent as would significantly reduce the incidence of ~~future~~ famines, mitigating the hardship of the people, and introducing a decelerating trend in the famine expenditure in the district. However, Appendix II shows that not only the incidence of famine has not abated between 1964 and 1981, in fact it has increased, but the expenditure on famine relief has reached a staggering figure of nearly Rs.100 million in 1980-81. In sum, therefore, while the increased plan expenditure should have provided long term development of the area and should

have mitigated the rigours of drought, in fact, we find that quite the contrary is happening. Not only has the incidence of famine increased, but the expenditure on famine relief has also increased by leaps and bounds. Should we not, then conclude that the present developmental policies and strategies are not appropriate to meet the threat of drought in Udaipur district?

Long Term Strategy

Since the early 1970s, realising that the normal plan programmes are slow in bringing about a general improvement in the rural life and environment, especially in the difficult arid and semi-arid regions, certain programmes have been specially designed and are being implemented in an attempt to tackle the problem of famine on a long term basis. An important programme of this nature was the Rural Works Programme (RWP). The RWP was started by the Central Government in 1970-71 (IVth Plan period). At that time it had identified 54 drought affected districts throughout the country. Ten of these districts were in Rajasthan and Udaipur was one such district. A district was the unit of planning under this programme, and the districts were selected on the basis of the following criteria: (i) level and periodicity of rainfall, (ii) intensity and occurrence of drought in the past, and (iii) proportion of irrigated area to the total cultivated area. The emphasis of this programme was on providing employment.

At the beginning of the Fifth Five Year Plan in 1974-75, the RWP was renamed as Drought Prone area Programme, or DPAP. The programme aims at strengthening the economic base and increasing and stabilising the income of the people in rural areas, particularly the weaker sections of the society, with optimum utilisation of land, water and livestock resources and restoration

of ecological balance (Planning Commission, 1981). Some important elements of the programme were: development of water resources, afforestation, soil **conservation** and pasture development, livestock and dairy development, change in agronomic practices and the development of subsidiary occupations.

In the case of Rajasthan, a two pronged strategy was implemented under the DPAP programme. For the desert areas, schemes like rural water supply, pasture development, collection and chilling centres for milk (since the economy of this area is largely dependent on livestock) were given priority. In the case of semi-arid hilly areas the strategy included work on soil conservation, minor irrigation and rehabilitation of degraded forests. Udaipur district comes under the latter category.

To coordinate and supervise the execution of the DPAP project and other district development activities, the District Development Agency (DDA) was established in 1974-75 under the Rajasthan Societies Act. The membership of the executive body consisted of a member of parliament, two members of the **state legislature**, President of the Zila Parishad and the Chairman of the District Central Cooperative Bank. All the district level officers of the concerned departments were also members of this Agency. The Collector was its Chairman. It had a full time Chief Executive Officer designated as the Project Director.

The project responsibilities of the DDA were preparation of annual plans, coordination of activities by other development departments, expedition of agriculture credit applications, control of subsidy programmes and project monitoring.

The DPAP was a centrally sponsored programme. Its funding till 1978-79 was shared by the Government of India and the State Government in the ratio of 2:1. However, since 1979-80 it was being shared by the two governments on a 50:50 basis. The annual DPAP plan for the three tehsils of the district coming under DPAP were prepared by the DDA and then submitted to the Special Schemes Organisation (SSO), which was a multi-disciplinary group constituted at the state secretariat level. The SSO consolidated the proposals of all the DPAP districts and submitted them to the state planning department which was responsible for preparing the state's annual plan. Each annual plan was a part of a five year plan. The planning department submitted the entire state plan (including DPAP) to the Planning Commission, Government of India. This plan was finalised after consultations between the state Chief Minister and the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission.

Individual projects e.g., irrigation works, roads, drinking water etc. schemes which were part of the district DPAP plan were proposed by the DDA and then considered by a sanctioning committee. Till 1978-79 this committee was at the level of the Government of India, with state participation. Since this was causing some delay and inconvenience in the implementation of the programme, from 1979-80 the Government of India agreed that this committee would be at the state level, headed by the Chief Secretary and representatives of the Central Government were its members. This arrangement expedited the clearance of individual projects.

To ensure that the DDA was able to carry out its assigned functions, it was vested with the following powers:

1. to solicit reports pertaining to development activities and land records from all departments and agencies within the district.

2. to solicit budget guidelines and allocation from development departments at the state level, to assist in the process of district planning.

Appendix V gives the allocations and expenditure since the inception of the programme in Udaipur district. In all, activities in 14 sectors were planned throughout the state. In Udaipur district, during the Fifth Plan period expenditure was taken up under sectors of agriculture, forestry, irrigation, power and individual economic benefit schemes. In the other sectors no activity was planned. Within these five sectors, emphasis was largely on irrigation and agriculture. In the Sixth Plan period (1980-85) two sectors have been added viz., those of Cooperation and Sericulture. The emphasis remains on irrigation and agriculture, with power and forestry getting a little boost in terms of plan allocations.

Table 3 next page gives the outlay and expenditure under DPAP in Udaipur district from 1974 to 1982.

Table 3
Outlay and Utilisation (by sectors) under DPAP
in Udaipur District from 1974 to 1982

(Rs. in millions)

S.No.	Sector	Revised Fifth Plan outlay (1974-79)	Expendi- ture 1979-80	Outlay 1980-82	Total Allocation 1974-82*	Utili- sation 1974-82**
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	SFDA facilities	0.31	0.29	0.02	0.62	0.73 (117)
2.	Agriculture	3.51	1.21	4.10	8.82	5.58 (63)
3.	Irrigation	7.99	1.40	4.56	13.95	10.30 (74)
4.	Forestry	0.07	0.11	0.79	0.97	0.59 (61)
5.	Power	0.50	-	0.76	1.26	0.96 (76)
6.	Cooperation	-	0.05	0.10	0.15	0.10 (67)
7.	Sericulture	-	-	0.20	0.20	-
8.	Agency and execution	0.22	0.08	0.22	0.52	0.52 (100)
Total		12.60	3.14	10.75	26.49	18.73 71%

* Includes expenditure for 1979-80

** Up to January 1982

Figures in brackets indicate percentage of utilisation to allocation

Table 3 indicates that the utilisation of funds has been far below the allocations. Notwithstanding the recurrent occurrence of drought during this period (1974-81) the various departments have not been able to utilize the funds allocated to them under this programme. If, indeed, the administration considered that tackling the crisis of famine required not only 'fire fighting' operations but long term and lasting development of the area, then such an important programme like the DPAP, which was specifically designed in the 1970s to tackle drought on a more lasting basis, should not have had unutilised funds. This gap between the allotment and the expenditure does not reflect a sense of urgency in the long term perspective.

Discussions at various levels left us with the impression that this programme has become one of 'funding' rather than 'drought-proofing'. The national sixth plan document (1980-85) also gives a similar indication when, while discussing the DPAP it states that "mere spending of money even on accepted priority programmes would not meet the objective unless this is done as a part of clearly conceived perspective of development" (Planning Commission, 1981, p.173).

During our second visit to Udaipur in February 1982 we discussed the DPAP programme with local officials. It was told that in 1981-82 a demonstration of improved dry land cultivation practices were carried out on 163 plots, each of 1 hectare size. It was reported that while the maize yield on demonstration plots were nearly 30 quintals per hectare, ordinary practices yield 15-20 quintals of maize per hectare, The constraint in adopting the recommended practices largely seemed to be the availability of improved seeds. Unfortunately, the large majority of farmers, though they understand the benefits, do not have the resources to obtain inputs; they are

particularly handicapped in obtaining credit from the institutional sources. It seems that the procedures followed by these institutions are too cumbersome. It would seem, therefore, that along with proper extension, a comprehensive and effective delivery system for seeds, fertilizers, credit and other inputs to the numerous small farmers is required to make dry farm land projects more acceptable and widespread in this drought prone district.

An interesting innovation introduced by the government this year, in terms of coping with the famine, is a decision to delegate powers, of sanctioning works up to Rs.1,00,000 under DPAP in famine affected areas, to collectors. This has not only speeded up the process of sanction, but is resulting in more local enthusiasm in completing works quickly. The Collector has taken up a campaign to complete anecuts (soil conservation works) in a fairly big way. He has already sanctioned 13 such anecuts in 2 tehsils costing Rs.7,55,000. Each such work would employ about 50 persons per day for two months. It is expected that these works will result in irrigating 176 hectares and would benefit 267 farmers. He has also sent 7 works, each costing more than Rs.1,00,000, to the SSC for sanction.

The national sixth plan document 1980-85 acknowledges the weakest aspect of the operation of the DPAP as "Its lack of effort and impact on the development of better dry land farming practices and cropping patterns" (page 168). We are inclined to agree with this view. It is found that while we do have technology as regards agronomical practices, in regard to the varieties the technology is hardly available.

The problem of employment in rural areas is mainly of seasonal employment and under-employment. The situation is further aggravated in times

of famine. While the earlier mentioned special programmes were also designed to tackle this problem, the Food for Work programme started by the Government of India in 1977-78 was initiated specifically with a view to create additional employment in rural areas on works of durable utility to the community. Based on this experience the sixth plan (1980-85) has initiated the National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) throughout the country to provide sustained supplementary employment opportunities to those seeking work during lean employment periods in the year. It is a centrally sponsored scheme with the centre and the state sharing expenditure on 50:50 basis. The Collector, Udaipur is using this programme as an additive to the relief works. Works up to Rs.30,000 can be executed by the local Panchayats and those up to Rs.1,00,000 by the technical departments at the district level. In February 1982, 4 to 5 such works were going on in each of the 18 Panchayat Samitis of the district.

In terms of technical guidance to the Panchayats for works, earlier under the Food for Work Programme and now under the NREP, each Panchayat Samiti has been authorised to recruit one Junior Engineer while the Development wing under the Collector has been given one Assistant Engineer to supervise them. The problem here seems to be that since these posts are not permanent and provide little in terms of future prospects for the technical hands, they are using these appointments as stepping-stones to employment in the permanent technical departments of the government. The result is vacant posts and short tenure of incumbents.

FAMINE, DEVELOPMENT AND DECENTRALIZATION

We can see from earlier observations that in terms of taking preparatory measures for meeting the crisis the district administration is fully geared to meet the situation. Partly, this is because of the long experience. There are some other compelling circumstances too which result in activating the district administration in times of such crisis. Firstly, it is the pressure which is brought to bear on the administration by the local leaders and the public. This pressure in the time of a crisis like famine can be easily accentuated, and turned into a law and order problem. Earlier references to the famines in the erstwhile Mewar state indicate that crime and looting used to increase during famines. While this was possibly due to lack of communications and, therefore, delay in providing relief, today with much greater awareness in rural areas and more involvement of the state government, the hardships of the people do take the shape of pressure groups being built up which could be exploited by political parties. This was clear during a visit to Udaipur. A similar observation was made by Wolf Ladejinsky in his paper on 'Drought in Maharashtra, Not in a Hundred Years'. He wrote, "One can't spend time in the company of a Collector without realising that in the back of his mind is the problem of maintaining law and order, for which he is solely responsible. This political consideration cannot be divorced from the human and economic problems which reduce, in effect, to feeding the potential starving. Any lapse in employment, however shortlived, must be carefully watched, for it could lead to the very circumstances the Collectors are bent on preventing" (Walinsky 1977, p.520). He further observed, "What he (the Collector) applies himself to above all is the maintenance of law and order,

ot so much via police force as through the creation of projects yielding employment, and beating the drums for a greater availability of food supplies. It is a combination of all these elements which probably explains why the ample combustible material for violent action has so far not been ignited" (Walinsky 1977, p.529).

The declaration of famine brings with it larger financial resources. The local leadership is well aware of this fact and puts increasing demands on the administration to open relief works locally, which is not possible through the normal planning process because of scarcity of resources. Since they are members of the Tehsil/District level Relief Advisory Committees, which recommend, and in some cases decide, where relief works are to be opened such actions enable them to project an image of being responsible for the development of their region.

Apart from the pressure from politicians, the local and state level newspapers goad the district administration to act. In fact, the local press thrives on highlighting such issues. Coupled with this, is the possibility of the issue being raised in the Parliament and the State Assembly. All these factors keep the state government and the district administration constantly alert while they tackle the crisis created by a severe drought.

The state government fixes the responsibility squarely on the shoulders of the collector. He is given a mandate to save the human life and cattle and to minimise the hardships of the people. At the same time, there is no pin-pricking, or narrowly interpreted "accountability". He is given a long rope and the whole exercise is result oriented. The Collector and his staff generally rise to the occasion. It is because of this atmosphere of

'action' that as far as the problem of tackling the immediate crisis is concerned, "fire fighting" so to say, the administration is not found wanting. A welcome result is that one does not find the spectre of classical famine and death haunting the drought affected areas. We are inclined to agree with "adejinsky that "considering with what the district Collectors have to make do, their performance on the firing line has been altogether praiseworthy" (Walinsky 1977, p.529).

A sense of urgency and personal involvement was indeed observed. There was also considerable confidence amongst the officers that they would be able to meet the challenge. There were frequent exchanges between the Collector and his subordinates through meetings and field visits and also between the state level and the district through visits by Ministers and the Relief Secretary. It was clear to all at the district level that the state government attached greatest importance to relief operations and their performance on this score was being observed by all who matter.

Attention was earlier drawn to the fact that despite otherwise stated objectives, roads take away the largest share of relief funds. For this purpose, the position obtaining in Udaipur district during the 5 years in the decade of 1970s when the incidence of drought was quite serious were looked into. These years are 1972-73, 1977-78, 1978-79, 1979-80 and 1980-81. The details of the number of the villages, population affected and expenditure on famine relief under different works is given in Appendix VI. It will be seen that approximately 50 per cent of the expenditure has been on roads, and in the last year i.e., 1980-81, it accounted for as much as 71 per cent of the total expenditure.

Though relief policy clearly states that the priority should be accorded to the plan works, it is not always possible, since such works may be few, not very labour intensive and dispersed over distant locations. Further, the plan works are selected on the grounds of efficiency and economy. They normally, have a low employment potential since the ratio of material to labour component varies from 60:40 to 80:20. In today's conditions it is also not possible to ask people to migrate to areas where such works are organised. Provision of employment as the principal relief measure dictates other sets of terms. It would mean more labour intensive work and that too in the vicinity of the affected villages. This results in a proliferation of relief works. Since irrigation, forest, soil conservation and drinking water supply schemes are not always easy to locate in each and every village and have low employment potential, an easy option available is construction of roads. Since provision of employment is of paramount consideration in the famine relief operations, Udaipur Collector's explanation is quite illuminating. He maintained, "these works (irrigation, soil conservation, forestry, etc.) may be considered more productive than roads, but they do not provide enough direct employment. I have to ensure that employment is available to the suffering people and to that extent a road link of 15 to 20 kms., can provide as much employment as 50 or 100 works under irrigation or soil conservation. From supervision point of view also it is better to take 20 roads with 'x' labour strength than 50 scattered irrigation or 100 soil conservation works employing the same labour. No doubt, we try to see that the road works, which are still a priority are brought up to gravel stage so as to have future utility also".

A similar view is expressed by Suresh Singh while writing about the famine in Palamu district, Bihar in 1967. He says, "the emphasis on the

productive aspects could not be stretched beyond a point. The supreme objective of relief was to save life, and the emphasis on the productive aspect was only secondary to it. Famine labour was weak and largely unskilled; its capacity for larger and better output was limited. The injection of a large number of technical personnel did improve the technical efficiency of relief works. A pronounced technical bias to planning and execution made a few projects enduring and productive. However, as two-thirds of the cost of relief works went towards the payment of wages, the expenditure on capital works could not be large. Labour-capital ratio was about 85:15. The post famine maintenance of relief works was left to the normal departmental agency which was hamstrung by lack of resources. These factors explained the difficulties encountered in giving a productive orientation to famine relief" (Suresh Singh, 1975).

It was earlier observed that in the context of Rajasthan, the extent of relief expenditure does not seem to have a direct and proportionate relationship to the population affected. In the context of Udaipur district too the same phenomenon was noticed. Appendix II reveals that with an affected population of 1.8 million in 1979-80 the expenditure was Rs.78.8 million in the district, while in the next year (1980-81) the affected population was only 857 thousand but the expenditure on famine relief was Rs.100.6 million.

Another aspect of the famine relief strategy is its link with local politics, i.e., the response of the local political leaders. When we discussed this matter with the local officials of the district the thought which was uppermost in their mind was the tremendous pressure brought on them by the people through the local leaders. The reason such pressure is brought is also

quite clear. The immediate advantages to the people of an area which the declaration of drought brings are two fold. Firstly, it brings about suspension of land revenue. Indirectly, the non-recovery of government dues generates pressures to postpone, or cancel recovery of other dues, e.g., bank loans; and secondly, it leads to the opening of relief works to provide employment and thus, purchasing power to the people.

The pressure to declare famine or scarcity condition starts with the girdawri. The patwari circulates his tour programme in advance to the villagers. During his visits he is subjected to considerable local pressure to declare kharaba in excess of 50 per cent which will enable the village to be declared as famine affected. No doubt, the work of the patwari is supervised at three levels, i.e., by the Inspector Land Records, tahsildar and Sub-Divisional Officer, but with the limited time and larger area under their charge the supervising officers generally endorse the patwari's recommendations.

The democratic process ~~it~~ has thus brought about an awakening at the local level, but this is more in terms of demanding state assistance and support. More often than not, both the higher level administration and the political leadership is carried away by such demands rather than a need to scrutinise them carefully.

The local pressures have been intensified with the process of decentralization. In 1978-79, the state government took a decision that works costing up to Rs.250 thousand could be sanctioned by the Collectors. Since the opening of relief works is discussed in the District Famine Relief Advisory Committee which comprises of all the fourteen members of the legislative assembly (MLA) of the district, one can well imagine the plight of the Collector

in case he chooses to resist the opening of some works. At times when the work is estimated to cost more than Rs.250 thousand it is split into parts and sanctioned in piece meal. The introduction of decentralised decision making was essential in order to effectively face the crisis, incidence of which is localised, but as a consequence of this move the pressures on administration shifted from Jaipur, the state capital, to Udaipur the district headquarter. The bureaucracy at the latter level has only limited capacity to withstand such pressure.

Why is it that such pressures are exercised intensely at the district and lower levels? To some extent the benevolent and paternalistic attitude of the government is responsible for this. Further, most local level leaders have realised that normal developmental activities under the state plan have to undergo fairly meticulous scrutiny to pass the test of cost-benefit analysis and, therefore, such works cannot be started haphazardly. State financial resources are also limited, with the result that there are very few new starts every year. Meanwhile, development being considered a part of political obligation, people who get elected to office want more of visible evidence of development in their own constituency. Unlike Members of Parliament whose sphere is large and who have greater involvement in the national level politics, the MLAs are more concerned with the local level issues and local sensitivities. Also, they wield greater influence over state leadership and through them, or because of their easier access to them, can exercise substantial pressure on the district administration.

In times of a crisis such as a famine, the decision making power is decentralised in the office of the Collector, and the government has

necessarily to accept his recommendations. The Collector cannot antagonise the elected representatives in the district. If he adopts a rigid attitude he is charged with lacking human approach and sensitivity. In these circumstances the local leadership, particularly MLAs, play an important role in the decision making process at the district level. As a consequence thereof, the scene of action shifts to an MLAs constituency. The genesis of small, locally disbursed, employment oriented works could be traced to this process of decentralization and decision making.

While the democratic process has brought about decentralisation and the demand for local and small works, the interest of local leadership is largely confined to the opening of works rather than the quality of such works, partly because the local level leadership lacks initiative and the capability to watch over the effective implementation of the projects. With all the clamour for succour to the afflicted, the declaration of famine and opening of relief works become justification for such expenditure. What tangible and lasting contribution is made to the area's economy becomes an issue of secondary importance.

To sum up, while famine relief works do provide means for employment at a time when the normal source of employment i.e., agricultural operations, dries out and, thus, avert the major calamities, these are, now emerging as a substitute for local level development.

INCIDENCE OF FAMINE IN RAJASTHAN SINCE 1951

Rajasthan	Unit	1951-52	1952-53	1953-54	1954-55	1955-56	1956-57	1957-58	1958-59	1959-60	1960-61
Rainfall	Cm	-	22.53	18.79	18.32	25.26	27.71	20.30	33.40	70.17	45.07
Number of affected districts	Nos.	24	8	11	13	13	7	14	6	-	18
Number of affected tehsils	Nos.	168	28	40	34	32	31	69	24	-	62
Total number of villages affected by scarcity		727300	5425	7157	2162	1825	1353	6581	1309	-	4634
Area under scarcity conditions	Acres	58056960	7496960	28216320	N.A.	N.A.	790400	24756480	12915200	-	23040000
Per cent of Area under scarcity conditions to total geographical area		69.81	8.88	33.41	N.A.	N.A.	0.94	29.37	15.32	-	27.55
Population affected by scarcity	in millions	N.A.	1.30	2.30	0.37	1.17	0.09	2.27	1.07	-	2.09
Percentage of population affected by scarcity to total population		N.A.	8.14	14.40	2.32	6.99	0.58	14.23	6.74	-	13.09
Famine expenditure	Rs. in millions	5.39	10.27	3.03	4.14	3.36	3.17	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00

INCIDENCE OF FAMINE IN RAJASTHAN SINCE 1951

o. Rajasthan	Unit	1961-62	1962-63	1963-64	1964-65	1965-66	1966-67	1967-68	1968-69	1969-70	1970-71
Rainfall	Cm	71.31	51.97	48.14	57.37	36.33	43.44	59.99	39.93	44.83	52.54
No. of affected districts		5	10	18	15	24	23	12	26	23	8
Number of affected tehsils		9	28	80	50	121	122	41	N.A.	109	15
Total number of villages affected by scarcity		379	1248	6568	3282	11126	9909	2366	22799	10877	504
Area under scarcity conditions	Acres	77440	N.A.	23653120	3878540	27712160	22167680	N.A.	57711915	N.A.	-
Per cent of area under scarcity conditions to total geographical area		0.09	N.A.	28.15	4.61	32.96	26.37	N.A.	58.61	N.A.	-
Population affected by scarcity	in millions	0.40	1.29	4.09	0.17	5.50	4.57	1.52	13.16	7.28	0.33
Percent of population affected by scarcity to total population		2.02	6.40	20.31	8.49	27.29	22.69	7.57	65.31	36.14	1.64
Famine expenditure	Rs. in millions	2.00	2.00	4.00	35.57	11.25	11.49	77.97	154.20	630.73	421.08

INCIDENCE OF FAMINE IN RAJASTHAN SINCE 1951

S.No.	Rajasthan	Unit	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80	1980-81	1981-82
1.	Rainfall	Cm	66.48	-	77.93	46.65	80.27	73.58	56.90	69.90	-	-	-
2.	Number of affected districts		13	26	-	25	-	-	19	26	26	26	22
3.	Number of affected tehsils		61	153	-	165	-	-	109	133	188	160	130
4.	Total number of villages affected by scarcity		6139	18868	-	19873	-	-	12251	5609	31095	21395	19482
5.	Area under scarcity conditions	Acres	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6.	Per cent of area under scarcity conditions to total geographical area		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7.	Population affected by scarcity	in millions	2.90	13.57	-	N.A.	-	-	9.23	N.A.	N.A.	16.79	15.21
8.	Percent of population affected by scarcity to total population		11.24	52.60	-	-	-	-	35.80	-	-	65.08	44.61
9.	Famine expenditure	Rs. in millions	62.11	102.46	464.20	25.53	90.04	7.17	4.27	35.10	231.99	446.46	621.14

- Source: 1. Chowdhary K H and Iapat M T (1975), "A study of impact of famine and relief measures in Gujarat and Rajasthan" Agro-economic Research Centre, Sardar Patel University, Vallabh Vidyanagar (For S.No.2 to 8 from 1951-52 to 1969-70)
2. 21 years of Rajasthan's Economy, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Jaipur (Rajasthan, Feb. 1975. (For S.No.1 and 9 upto 1971-72)
3. Relief Department, Government of Rajasthan Jaipur (For S.Nos.2,3,4 & 7 from 1970-71 to 1981-82 and S.No.9 from 1972-73 to 1981-82).

FAMINES IN UDAIPUR DISTRICT FROM 1964-65

S.No.	Rajasthan	Unit	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80	1980-81	1981-82
1.	Rainfall	Cm	111.81	44.20	59.85	69.28	63.81	80.00	32.16*	N.A.	79.20*
2.	Number of affected tehsils		-	17	-	-	9	12	17	17	16
3.	No. of villages affected by scarcity		-	2960	-	-	1062	311	2990	1739	1566
4.	Population affected by scarcity	millions	-	N.A.	-	-	0.44	0.25	1.80	1.18	0.88
5.	Famine expenditure	Rs. in millions	-	-	-	-	19.30	2.18	78.89	100.64	-

* Figures are from 1st June to 30th September

Source: 1. Directorate of Economics & Statistics, Rajasthan, Jaipur, "Basic Statistics"
(For rainfall figures)

2. Relief department, Government of Rajasthan, Jaipur (For S.Nos.2 to 5)

EXPENDITURE UNDER PLAN IN UDAIPUR DISTRICT

S.No.	Unit	1956-61	61-66	66-67	67-68	68-69	Total 69-70	69-70	70-71	71-72	72-73
1.	Total Rs. in millions	63.73	89.64	18.19	12.00	25.60	55.80	41.74	55.62	54.99	53.11
2.	Per Capita* (per year)	10.07	12.56	12.75	8.40	17.94	-	29.28	38.97	30.48	29.44
3.	<u>By Sector:</u>										
	Irrigation	8.57	19.76	4.58	2.56	2.46	9.60	7.21	7.88	8.24	6.95
4.	Power	12.05	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	12.45	-	22.02	25.86	21.86	20.08

EXPENDITURE UNDER PLAN IN UDAIPUR DISTRICT

S.No.	Unit	1973-74	Total 69-74	74-75	75-76	76-77	77-78	78-79	Total 74-79	79-80
1.	Total Rs. in millions	49.91	255.51	84.40	88.27	94.94	119.99	192.45	580.07	242.44
2.	Per Capita* (per year)	27.71	-	46.78	48.93	52.63	66.51	106.68	-	134.39
	<u>By Sector</u>									
3.	Irrigation	7.57	37.87	8.00	4.95	11.37	18.82	31.75	74.90	49.04
4.	Power	20.49	110.32	35.98	35.50	48.13	76.36	125.81	321.81	157.69

* For per capita calculation upto 1961 the census population of 1951 has been taken from 1961 to 1971 that of 1961 and from 1971 to 1979 that on 1971 has been considered.

Source: Directorate of Economics & Statistics, Rajasthan, Jaipur.

SOME ASPECTS OF PHYSICAL PROGRESS IN UDAIPUR DISTRICT

No.	Unit	1960-61	61-62	65-66	70-71	75-76	76-77	77-78	78-79
•	Per capita gross value of principal agriculture production	Rs.	212	-	175	238	268	261	-
•	Per Capita availability of food grains	in Kgs.	166	-	160	253	206	153	188
•	Per cent of net area to total area available for cultivation	%	33.53	-	36.35	42.15	40.89	39.36	39.16
•	Per cent of area under food grains and others:								
•	a) Food Grains		81.42	-	79.82	84.57	84.42	86.05	86.33
•	b) Others		18.58	-	20.18	15.43	15.58	13.95	13.67
•	Cooperative Credit	Rs. in lakhs							
•	a) Short term		-	-	30.82	15.00	105.83	53.79	42.92
•	b) Medium term		-	-	-	8.97	12.87	17.99	10.53
•	c) Long term		-	-	2.51	25.17	10.17	32.17	28.19
•	Animal Husbandry	'000 Number	2671 (58-59)	2816	3044	-	3465 (72-73)	-	3445
•	Gross irrigated area	'000 Hectares	143	-	123	132	446	169	166
•	Proportion of total irrigated area to total cropped area	%	39.19	-	23.49	26.52	29.08	34.34	34.37
•	Power (Electric operated wells)	Number	-	-	-	1218	6573	7475	8635
0.	Roads	Km.	3035	-	3191	3285	3294	3235	3274
1.	Literacy	%	8(1951)	13.60	-	17.41	-	-	-

sources:- 1. Directorate of Economics & Statistics, Govt. of Rajasthan. "Regional Statistics of Rajasthan (1961-1979)" Jaipur, July 1980.

2. Directorate of Economics & Statistics, Government of Rajasthan, "Basic Statistics Rajasthan," 1956, 1961, 1965, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978 and 1979.

DROUGHT PRONE AREA PROGRAMME-UDAIPUR

DISTRICT: : UDAIPUR		DISTRICTWISE/SECTORWISE FINANCIAL ABSTRACT					(Rs. in millions)		
Sectors	Revised Outlay Vth Plan	ACTUAL EXPENDITURE		Proposed outlay for Vith Plan (1980-85)	1980-81		Proposed Outlay 1981-82	Expenditure upto Januar 1982	
		1974-75 to 1978-79	1979-80		Revised Outlay	Expenditure			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
SFDA Type facilities	0.31	0.43	0.29	0.11	0.02	0.01	-	-	
Agriculture	3.51	2.20	1.21	8.75	1.69	1.25	2.41	0.92	
Ground Water	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Irrigation	7.99	6.53	1.40	10.52	1.50	1.04	2.96	1.33	
Forestry	0.07	0.07	0.11	1.99	0.28	0.23	0.51	0.18	
Sheep Pasture	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Cattle & Dairy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Power	0.50	0.20	-	3.10	0.50	0.43	0.26	0.33	
Rural Water Supply	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Milk Routes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Cooperation	-	-	0.05	0.35	0.06	0.03	0.04	0.02	
Land Records	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Lathi series	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Sericulture	-	-	-	0.71	0.10	-	0.10	-	
Agency & Execution	0.22	0.22	0.08	0.60	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	
P.F. Cell	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total	12.60	9.65	3.14	26.13	4.36	3.12	6.39	2.89	

Source: Special Schemes Organisation, Government of Rajasthan, "Drought Prone Area Programme Draft Annual Plan 1981-82 Rajasthan"
Jaipur. (Page-02)

DROUGHT DETAILS OF UDAIPUR DISTRICT

S.No.	Year	Number of scarcity affected villages	Population of scarcity affected villages (in millions)	Public works Department	Irrigation	Forest	Soil Conservation Works	Panchayat Samiti Works	Total
1.	1972-73	2994	1.8	14.59	9.67	0.31	5.19	3.61	41.40
2.	1977-78	1452	0.80	13.76	3.12	0.37	0.04	-	19.30
3.	1978-79	311	0.25	1.23	0.11	0.08	-	0.75	2.18
4.	1979-80	2990	1.80	17.46	5.45	0.72	0.24	55.00	78.89
5.	1980-81	1739	0.85	71.46	13.34	0.83	1.50	13.50	100.64

Source: Office of Collector, Udaipur.

GLOSSARY

1. Collector - Chief district level officer, responsible for conducting relief operations in the district.
2. Girdawri - A visual crop inspection
3. Inspector Land Records (ILR) - revenue official supervising work of the Patwari.
4. Kharaba - estimated crop loss
5. Kharif - Summer crop
6. Khasra Girawri - a revenue record
7. Panchayat - third tier of Panchayati Raj institutions at village level.
8. Panchayati Raj institutions - three tier elected bodies at village block and district level.
9. Panchayat Samiti - Middle tier of Panchayati Raj institutions at Block Level.
10. Patwari - revenue official at village level
11. Tehsildar - revenue official supervising I.L.R. and Patwari.
12. Sub Divisional Officer(SDO) - revenue official supervising work of Tehsildar, I.L.R. and Patwari.
13. Zila Parishad - top tier of Panchayati Raj institutions at district level.

R E F E R E N C E S

1. Bhatia B.M. (1967) "Famines in India - a study in some aspects of the economic history of India (1060-1965)" Bombay (second edition).
2. Chowdhary K.H. and Bapat M.T. (1975), "A study of impact of famine and relief measures in Gujarat and Rajasthan". Agro-economic Research Centre Sardar Patel University, Vallabh Vidyanagar.
3. Director of Census Operations (1981). Census of India, Series-18, Rajasthan. Paper 1 of 1981 - Provisional population totals, Jaipur.
4. Directorate of District Gazetteers (1979), "Rajasthan - District Gazetteers - Udaipur", Government of Rajasthan, Jaipur.
5. Directorate of Economics and Statistics (1979), "Basic Statistics", Rajasthan, Jaipur.
6. Jawalia, Brijmohan, "Rajasthan ki Arthik Avastha" (Hindi)(Rajasthan's economic condition) (Vikram Samvat 1715 to 1771) Published in Varda Year 12 No:4.
7. Maloo, Kamala Kumari (1976), "The History of Famine in Rajputana 1858-1900". Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Department of History, University of Udaipur, Rajasthan.
8. Moris David Morris (1974), "What is a famine", Economic and Political Weekly, Bombay; Vol.I X No:44 (November 2, 1974).
9. Paper regarding the Famine and the relief operations in India during 1899-1900. Vol.II Native States.
10. Planning Commission (1981). Sixth Five Year Plan 1980-85. Government of India, New Delhi.
11. Rajputana Gazetteers, Volume II-A, The Mewar Residency.
12. Report on the Administration of Mewar state for the years 1940, 1941 and 1942.
13. Suresh Singh K (1975) "The Indian Famine 1967. A study in Crisis and Change" - New Delhi 1975.
14. Walinsky Louis J (Ed.) (1977). "Agrarian Reform as Unfinished Business". The selected papers of Wolf Ladejinsky. The World Bank, Washington.