

Young Scholars' Workshop on Contemporary Issues in Rural India
Concept Note

The Foundation for Agrarian Studies (FAS) is a charitable trust based in India and established in 2003. Its major objectives are to facilitate and sponsor multi-disciplinary theoretical and empirical enquiry in the field of agrarian studies in India and elsewhere in less-developed countries. As a network of academics and other scholars, it is supported by progressive corporate organisations and donor agencies that are interested in promoting research to eradicate hunger, poverty, and malnutrition, promote gender equality, and research on measures to reduce social and economic inequalities.

The Foundation undertakes a wide range of activities in fulfilling these objectives. Our research includes the Project on Agrarian Relations in India (PARI), an India-wide programme of village studies ongoing since 2005. The project involves description and analysis, and the creation of a detailed database on village India in diverse agro-ecological and socio-economic regions of the country based on regular village surveys conducted by the Foundation. The Foundation has surveyed 25 villages in 11 States of India under this project.

The Foundation has an active publication programme. It periodically publishes the results of village surveys in its "Socio-Economic Surveys" book series. The *Review of Agrarian Studies* is the peer-reviewed journal of the Foundation for Agrarian Studies. The *Review* is one of the most widely-read journals on agrarian issues. The Foundation also publishes edited volumes and monographs on specific issues pertaining to rural India as part of an "Agrarian Studies Series."

The work of the Foundation is characterised by the active involvement of young scholars, some of whom are also involved in various capacities with the activities undertaken by FAS. Since its inception, the Foundation has supported the research of M. Phil. and Ph. D. scholars. It runs a rolling internship programme for students interested in studying aspects of rural India.

The Foundation has organised national workshops and conferences to disseminate the results of its research to the wider academic community, peasant and agricultural workers' organisations, and women's associations. In 2018, it conducted an international conference on "Women's Work in Rural Economies," in Vayalar, Kerala. The Conference was attended by approximately 100 delegates from India and other developing countries. The Foundation regularly organises and co-sponsors workshops and seminars for young scholars. In December 2017, the Foundation organised a workshop for young scholars on "Contemporary Rural Issues in India." This was attended by 50 student and scholars from different parts of the country, who interacted with senior scholars on the subject.

As part of its training and capacity building efforts, the Foundation plans to organise a two-day workshop to explore the research interests of young scholars working in the field of agrarian studies and socio-economic aspects of rural life in India.

The workshop is expected to cover themes pertaining to the agrarian economy of India, including agricultural production and productivity, inequalities in the agrarian economy, the state of agricultural credit, farm business incomes, and rural employment and wages. It will include sessions on the method of village studies, and a hands-on data analysis exercise. The tentative list of faculty expected to participate in the workshop include Abhijit Sen, Arindam Das, Madhura Swaminathan, R. Ramakumar, K. Nagaraj, V. Surjit, Venkatesh Athreya, and V. K. Ramachandran.

The tentative dates for the workshop are March 1-2, 2019, and it will be held at the M. S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, Chennai, Tamil Nadu.