

ANNUAL REPORT
2011 - 2012

ABOUT FAS



The Foundation for Agrarian Studies 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. It does so in association with a wide section of people interested in the agrarian question, including persons associated with academic institutions, social and political activists, members of mass organisations working in the countryside, and other professionals and scholars.



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PROJECT ON AGRARIAN RELATIONS IN INDIA

The major research undertaking of the Foundation is the Project on Agrarian Relations in India (PARI), a programme of village studies that began in 2005-6, and now covers 21 villages in nine States of India.

The major objectives of PARI are :

- to analyse village-level production, production systems and livelihoods and the socio-economic characteristics of different strata of the rural population;
- to conduct specific studies of sectional deprivation in rural India, particularly with regard to the Dalit and Scheduled Tribe populations, women, specific minorities and the income-poor and
- to report on the state of basic village amenities and the access of rural people to the facilities of modern life.

We canvass a village-level questionnaire in each village. In addition, we construct a village profile, based on the existing sources of secondary data.

Two villages were surveyed in Punjab in 2011 as part of the Project on Agrarian Relations in India.

Tehang, Jalandhar district

Tehang (Phillaur tehsil, Jalandhar district) is in the Doaba region of Punjab (that is, the land between the rivers Beas and Sutlej) and is about 5 km from Phillaur town. The village has been surveyed twice by the Board of Economic Inquiry, Punjab, once in 1931 and then in 1962. Tehang is what was called a "refugee village." Before Independence, about 85 per cent of the households resident in the village were Muslim; by the survey of 1962, there was no Muslim family in the village. In 2011, the main castes in the village were Jheer (Mehra), Lohar, Tarkhan, Chhimbe, Kamboj (all designated Backward Classes), Ad-

dharmi, Chamar, Valmiki (all Scheduled Castes), and Brahmin, Baniya, Sunar (Sunera), and Jat Sikh.

In Tehang, all cultivated land is irrigated, mainly by electrified tubewells, and some land is irrigated by canals. The main crops in the village were paddy (kharif) and wheat (rabi). In addition, fodder crops, pulses, oilseeds and sugarcane were cultivated as subsidiary or minor crops.

Non-agricultural employment in construction and in factories in neighbouring towns and cities was the most important source of employment for landless households. As agriculture was highly mechanised, there was not much agricultural employment in the village. The most labour-absorbent agricultural operation was paddy transplanting, a task performed by migrant workers from Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, and elsewhere. Some migrant families from Bihar and Jharkhand have settled permanently in the village, but the big groups from these States come to the village in the paddy-transplanting season. Most of the attached or long-term workers in Tehang workers are also from Bihar and Jharkhand.

There has been substantial emigration from Tehang to North America and Europe, and many migrants have settled abroad permanently. Other workers have migrated to countries of the Gulf and Africa.

In 1974, a separate residential area, Indira Nagar, was established by Government on nine acres of Government land in the village. People from the village acquired land here after houses were built in 1983; after the floods of 1988, they sold their houses to Dalit immigrants to the village. In 2009, Indira Nagar was made a separate panchayat.

There is no public transport to or from the village. Although auto-rickshaws are available, private vehicles

remain the main means of transport. There is one government elementary school and three senior secondary schools in the village.

Hakamwala, Mansa district

Hakamwala (also spelt Hakimwala) is a village in Budhlada tehsil, Mansa district, in the Malwa region of Punjab (that is, in southern Punjab and to the east of the river Beas after its confluence with the Sutlej). Hakamwala is 14 km from Budhlada, and is at the border of Punjab and Haryana. Hakamwala was one of the 11 villages surveyed in 1972 by the Economic and Statistical Organisation, Government of Punjab, as part of a socio-economic survey of 11 selected villages in the State.

In 2011, the main castes in the village were Kumhar (Backward Class), Chamar (Scheduled Caste), and Jat Sikh.

The entire net sown area of the village is irrigated by tubewells and canals. The quality of irrigation varies widely. Canal water is mostly lifted with diesel pumps or tractors, because the level of water in field channels is below the level of fields. The main crops cultivated in Hakamwala were cotton, paddy, and wheat. In addition, rapeseed, cluster beans, fodder crops, and vegetables were cultivated, almost entirely for household consumption. After the introduction of Bt cotton, yield levels of cotton rose steeply.

Agriculture is characterised by high levels of mechanisation. Big landlords employ long-term attached workers for agricultural work. They are paid wages in cash or in the form of a share of the crop. In addition to agriculture, construction work and brick kilns in neighbouring villages provide some employment to manual workers in the village.



FAS-UNICEF PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

The FAS-UNICEF collaboration began in late 2010 and continues through 2011 and 2012. Based on primary village-level data, a series of reports dealing with aspects of deprivation and living standards among women and children are planned. In the current year, draft reports were prepared and submitted for two villages of Uttar Pradesh and two villages of Maharashtra.

UTTAR PRADESH

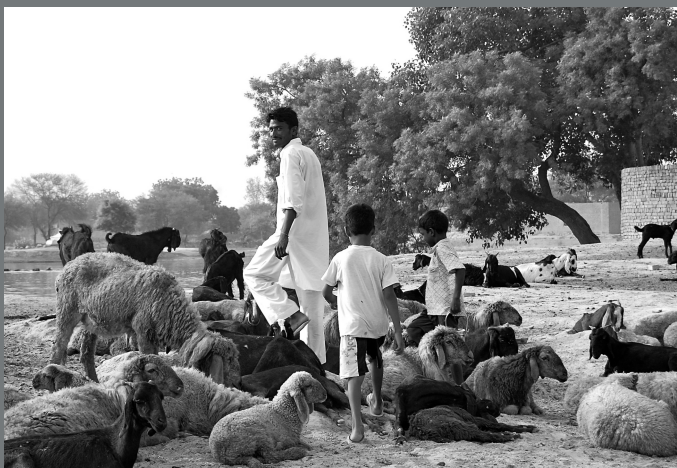
Some highlights of our study of two villages of Uttar Pradesh follow.

Harevli village

The revenue village of Harevli is located in the Najibabad block of Bijnor district in Uttar Pradesh. The total geographical area of Harevli is 505 hectares. Of this, 444 hectares were classified as "area under cultivation." Area irrigated amounted to 364 hectares or nearly 82 per cent of the area under cultivation. The major sources of irrigation in Harevli are government canals and private tubewells, the latter powered by electric or diesel-driven pumps. Paddy is the main kharif crop and wheat and rapeseed are grown as winter crops. Sugarcane is grown widely.

School education

The village of Harevli in western Uttar Pradesh is one of high agricultural productivity. In terms of school education, however, its performance was



disappointing. Out of 113 girls in the age group of 6 to 18 years, 83 were attending school and 30 were out of school. In other words, more than one-fourth of the girls were out of school. Even in the age group of 5 to 14 years, only 75 girls were in school and 9 were out of school, meaning that more than 10 per cent of the girls were out of school at the elementary school level itself. Did boys fare much better? The answer is no. Out of 87 boys in the age group of 6 to 14 years, 13 boys, or about 15 per cent, were out of school. Out of 121 boys in the age group of 6 to 18 years, as many as 27 boys (or over 22 per cent) were out of school. While these are average proportions for boys and girls out of school, they conceal the disparities in this regard across social groups and across asset quintiles.

To illustrate, in the age group of 6 to 10 years, Other

above the age of seven years (49.8 per cent) being much lower than the male literacy rate (64.8 per cent).

In terms of educational attainments, the situation among women was grim. There were only 4 graduates among the 132 females aged 25 years or older in Harevli, and all of them came from Other Caste Hindu households. There was not a single female aged 25 years and above from the Other Backward Class, Scheduled Caste and Muslim households who had completed even twelve years of formal education.

As the educational level of parents influences the school performance of children, we examined the level of educational attainment among parents for families with children. The findings were interesting.



Backward Class and Other Caste households reported 100 per cent school attendance while eight out of 47 Scheduled Caste children and one Muslim child were out of school. In terms of economic status, the children aged 6 to 18 in the top asset quintile Q5 group recorded 100 per cent school attendance, but this was not the case in all other asset groups. Not surprisingly, there is a large overlap between Q5 households and the social group of "Other Castes."

Literacy rates and educational attainment

In terms of literacy rates too, the data reveal poor progress, with large differences across gender, social group and wealth categories. The literacy rate, measured as the percentage of the relevant population that can both read and write, was 57.7 per cent overall in 2006, with the literacy rate for females

For example, a majority of Scheduled Caste households with children had no literate adult. Most Scheduled Caste and Other Backward Class households and two-thirds of the Muslim households had no adult female literate. With one exception, among Other Caste Hindu households, there was at least one literate adult female and one literate adult male in every household.

Household Amenities

Lastly, our examination of the endowments of households with children in respect of certain basic household amenities -- domestic electricity connections, pucca houses with more than just a shanty room in which to live, safe water sources within households and access to latrines -- shows that the general picture was one of highly inadequate

achievement for the majority, and some degree of inequality across social groups and asset classes. Persons in the top asset quintile and in the social group of Other Caste Hindus were much better provided for than others. The most disturbing feature with respect to the provision of household amenities was in respect of providing the village and households with lavatories. The vast majority of the population has to defecate in open spaces, an affront to human dignity, a hazard to human health and hugely oppressive for women.

Mahatwar

Mahatwar village is in Rasra tehsil, Ballia district, eastern Uttar Pradesh. Mahatwar is a multi-caste village, with 10 different castes. Dalits accounted for 60 per cent of all households. The dominant land owners were Brahmin and Rajput families. At the time of our survey, there were 156 households and 1,122 persons resident in the village. The village records report the entire geographical area of 148 hectares as being available for cultivation and all but two hectares of it as being irrigated. Irrigation is from groundwater, using tubewells energized by diesel or electricity. The major crops grown in Mahatwar are paddy during the kharif season and wheat (sometimes inter-cropped with mustard) during the rabi season.

School Education

The data on school attendance show that Mahatwar had some distance to go to achieve universal school enrolment and attendance. Even in the age group of 6 to 14 years, 6 girls out of 148 and 4 boys out of 139 were not in school. The attendance ratio dropped

sharply for the age group of 15-16 years, especially for girls. Eleven out of 36 girls and four out of 27 boys were out of school in this age group. In the age group of 17 to 18 years, 15 out of 23 girls and 9 out of 35 boys were out of school. Further, school enrolment and attendance ratios varied significantly between children of different castes and economic classes.

It was no surprise then to have found a large number of child workers. If we include, as many scholars suggest, all children out of school as 'working' in some sense, as many as 61 girls out of 207 and 43 out of 201 boys were working children. These are high proportions indeed.

Literacy rates and educational attainment

The literacy rate, measured as the percentage of the relevant population that can both read and write, was 56.9 per cent in 2006. Literacy among females was 43 per cent and literacy among males was 70.4 per cent. Interestingly, these figures are remarkably close to those for Ballia district in 2001 Census at 57.86 per cent for persons, 71.9 per cent for males and 43.2 per cent for females.

Scheduled Castes had the lowest literacy rates of all. The sex differentials in literacy rates were high in all social groups, though they were especially high among the Scheduled Castes, followed by the Other Backward Classes. The top asset/income quintile stands out from the rest, with distinctly higher literacy rates for males and females.

At least half the female population of Mahatwar aged above 16 years in every asset quintile including the richest one had not had a single year of formal schooling. Among males, the picture was better, but still one of rather modest achievement. The overall situation is thus one of massive deprivation in access to formal schooling, practically across the board, and for both females and males. The only group that was a distinct exception was the male segment of the richest asset quintile.

More than 80 per cent of Scheduled Caste households and more than 60 per cent of Other Backward Class households with children did not have a single literate adult female. It is clear that inherited educational deprivation contributes to a weak domestic environment for learning for Scheduled Caste and Other Backward Class children. Policies relating to inclusion in formal education need to bear this in



mind.

Household Amenities

Our examination of the endowments of households with children in respect of certain basic household amenities -- domestic electricity connections, pucca houses with more than just a shanty room in which to live, safe water sources within households and access to latrines -- shows that the general picture was one of highly inadequate achievement for the majority, and some degree of inequality across social groups and asset classes.

MAHARASHTRA



Some highlights from our study of two villages of Maharashtra.

Warwat Khanderao

The revenue village of Warwat Khanderao (hereafter Warwat) is located in the Sangrampur block of Buldhana district in the Vidarbha region of the state of Maharashtra. Warwat belongs to the agro-ecological zone known as Western Maharashtra. Cotton (both Bt and non Bt varieties, and frequently intercropped with green gram and red gram) was the main kharif crop, and jowar, maize, sesamum, pulses and black gram were other important crops in the kharif season. There was no irrigation in the village in 2006-07. Warwat is a multi-caste village, where Other



Backward classes made up nearly half of all households. Muslims and the Nomadic Tribes account for around one-fifth each while the Scheduled Castes accounted for the remaining one-tenth.

School attendance

More than a quarter of the girls in the age group 16 – 18 years were not in school. Although there was little difference between boys and girls in school attendance rates in the age group 6 to 14 years, a sharp gender gap emerged in the age group 15 to 18 years.

By our estimate, a total of 27 per cent of all children were working. Clearly, child labour is far from being eliminated in Warwat and access to formal education is being denied for a significant share of the child population in the village.

Literacy and adult educational attainments

The overall literacy rate was 74.5 per cent in 2007, with female literacy 65.6 per cent and male literacy 83.5 per cent. The 2001 census put the literacy rate for Warwat at 66.5 per cent, with the male literacy rate at 73.8 per cent and the female rate at 58.8 per cent. Given that Census of India figures, if anything, are likely to overstate literacy rates, it would appear that there was some progress in literacy in Warwat after 2001.

In terms of social groups, Scheduled Castes have the lowest literacy rates and the “Other Backward Classes” the highest literacy rates in the village. Our examination of literacy among different cohorts



indicates a rapid expansion of schooling for girls over the last twenty-five years. Most of the expansion in male schooling occurred earlier.

In general, wealthy households reported higher median and mean years of schooling for both females and males. The highest asset quintile stood apart, with 10 and 7 median years of schooling respectively for males and females aged above 16 years. At the other end, the poorest quintile reported 6 and 0 median years of schooling for males and females.

Since a major concern of this study is children, we examined households with children separately. Among all social groups, there were some households with children and without a literate adult male, although the percentage of such households was generally much lower than the percentage of households with children and without a literate adult female. Muslims and Scheduled Castes were the most deprived in this regard. In terms of economic classes, only the top asset quintile had no household without a literate adult male.

Household Amenities

Around half of all households with children in Warwat lived in non-pucca shelters. One-fourth lived in single-room shelters. One-fifth lacked access to electricity for domestic consumption. More than 90 per cent did not have access to drinking water within the homestead or just outside. The most disturbing

feature with respect to the lack of amenities was in respect of providing the village and households with lavatories.

Since our survey, the elected Sarpanch of the village has been active in getting funds to the village for the construction of toilets.

Nimshirgaon

Nimshirgaon is a village in Shirol taluk of Kolhapur district in the sugarcane-growing region of western Maharashtra. Nimshirgaon belongs, in terms of the Planning Commission's classification, to the agro-ecological region of the Western Maharashtra Plain zone. Agriculture in Kolhapur is relatively modern and dynamic. Sugarcane is the major crop. Soya bean, pulses and millets are also cultivated, as are a variety of vegetables and fruit (including grape and mango). Irrigation is from a water supply system linked to the Krishna River.

Nimshirgaon is a multi-caste village. The Scheduled Castes form nearly one-third of all households in the village, and the next largest group comprises Jain households.

School attendance rates are higher than in our other village surveys and the percentage of children attending school in the age group 6 - 14 years does not differ significantly as between boys and girls. However, the percentage of girls in school falls sharply in the age group 15 - 16 years, and even more steeply thereafter. Further, there is not much variation across social groups and asset quintiles in respect of school attendance (6-14 years).

Literacy

The literacy rates in Nimshirgaon are not very different from those in Warwat Khanderao.

The historically inherited differentials across social groups have been reduced only marginally. These differentials cannot be diminished until government policy focuses on ensuring the right to education of the socially oppressed and disadvantaged.

For girls and women from the poorest households (i.e., the lowest three asset quintiles), even completing primary education seems an uphill task. Even in the top asset quintile, more than half the females aged 16

and above fail to complete elementary schooling. Notwithstanding the Right to Education Act, eight years of free and compulsory schooling looks destined to remain just a promise in much of rural India.

Overall, more than 20 per cent of all households with children in Nimshirgaon do not have a literate female adult. Around one-sixth have no literate male adult. More than half of the Muslim households do not have any literate adult member while half of all Nomadic Tribe households have no literate male adult. More than a third of Scheduled Caste households with children have no literate female adult member. Only among Jain households, all families with children had at least one literate male and female.

Household Amenities



About 20 per cent of all households with children in Nimshirgaon lived in non-pucca shelters. Close to 25 per cent lived in single-room shelters. Twenty five per cent lacked access to electricity for domestic consumption. One-third did not have access to drinking water within the homestead or just outside. The most disturbing feature with respect to the lack of amenities has been in respect of providing the village and households with lavatories, though Nimshirgaon does better than many other villages surveyed by FAS in this regard.



WORKSHOPS

The Foundation conducted three workshops during the year to present the findings of village surveys and to debate the issues arising from these surveys with academics and activists.

WORKSHOP ON THE UTTAR PRADESH ROUND OF VILLAGE SURVEYS

The Foundation for Agrarian Studies held a workshop on August 9–10, 2011 at Kolkata to discuss results from village surveys conducted in Uttar Pradesh as part of its Project on Agrarian Relations in India. The workshop was attended by a small group of scholars working on agrarian issues, including the FAS team.

In May–June 2006, the Foundation conducted detailed census-type surveys in two villages in Uttar Pradesh – Harevli in Bijnor district in Western Uttar Pradesh and Mahatwar in Balia district in Eastern Uttar Pradesh. The FAS team presented and discussed the results from data collected in these two villages at the workshop. The themes covered in the workshop included demography and education, socio-economic classes in the villages, land relations, cropping patterns and farm business incomes, employment, household incomes, indebtedness and household amenities. The discussions at the workshop highlighted interesting aspects of class formation in the Uttar Pradesh countryside in the contemporary period, on old forms of production relations that continue to survive, and sustained and new forms of relations that are emerging in contemporary Uttar Pradesh.

Papers presented and discussions:

Session 1

Introduction to PARI and the Workshop: V. K. Ramachandran

Introduction to the study of villages: Aparajita Bakshi
Some features of the demography of the study villages: Venkatesh Athreya

Session 2

Chair: Smita Gupta

Socio-economic classes: V. K. Ramachandran and Navpreet Kaur

Land ownership and tenancy: Vikas Rawal

A further note on tenancy: V. K. Ramachandran and Navpreet Kaur

Session 3

Chair: Jeta Sankrityayana

Crop production and farm business incomes: Vikas Rawal

Notes on employment: Navpreet Kaur

Wage rates: Madhura Swaminathan and Biplab Sarkar

Session 4

Chair: Praveen Jha

Household incomes: Aparajita Bakshi

Session 5

Chair: V. K. Ramachandran

Household indebtedness: Madhura Swaminathan and Biplab Sarkar

Household asset holdings: Vikas Rawal

Session 6

Chair: R. Ramakumar

Household amenities: Shamsher Singh and Madhura Swaminathan

Schooling and education: Venkatesh Athreya

Session 7

Concluding discussion, observations



WORKSHOP ON THE MAHARASHTRA ROUND OF VILLAGE SURVEYS

The Foundation for Agrarian Studies conducted a Consultation on Results from Village Surveys in Maharashtra in collaboration with the Tata Institute of Social Sciences on October 8–9, 2011 in Mumbai. Apart from the FAS team working on the Project on Agrarian Relations in India, the consultation was attended by academics and activists from All India Kisan Sabha, All India Agricultural Workers Union, All India Democratic Women's Association, and trade unions.

The FAS team presented results from data collected from two villages in Maharashtra – Warwat Khanderao in Buldhana district and Nimshirgaon in Kolhapur district – at the consultation. These two villages were surveyed by the FAS team in 2007 as part of the Project on Agrarian Relations in India. The themes covered in the workshop included demography and education, socio-economic classes in the villages, land relations, cropping pattern and farm business incomes, employment, household incomes, debt and amenities. Land ownership patterns in seven villages in Maharashtra surveyed by scholars of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences were also discussed.

The consultation successfully brought academics and grassroot-level activists together to debate and analyse emerging patterns of class relations in rural Maharashtra, patterns and causes of deprivation, and areas of policy failure.

Papers presented and discussions:

Session 1

Introduction to PARI and the Consultation: V. K. Ramachandran, Ashok Dhawale

Introduction to the study villages: Aparajita Bakshi
Some features of the demography of the study villages: Venkatesh Athreya

Session 2

Socio-economic classes: V. K. Ramachandran and Navpreet Kaur

Session 3

Nimshirgaon: (1) land and irrigation; (2) crop pattern, yields and farm business incomes; and (3) labour absorption in agriculture: Vikas Rawal

Warwat Khanderao: (1) land and irrigation; (2) crop pattern, yields and farm business incomes; and (3) labour absorption in agriculture: Vikas Rawal and Madhura Swaminathan

Session 4

Household incomes: Aparajita Bakshi

Notes on employment: Navpreet Kaur

Wage rates: Madhura Swaminathan and Biplab Sarkar

Session 5

Rural banking in Maharashtra: Pallavi Chavan

Household indebtedness: Madhura Swaminathan and Biplab Sarkar

Household asset holdings: Vikas Rawal

Session 6

Report on TISS village studies: R. Ramakumar

Session 7

Household amenities: Shamsher Singh

Schooling and education: Venkatesh Athreya

Closing Session

Concluding discussion, observations

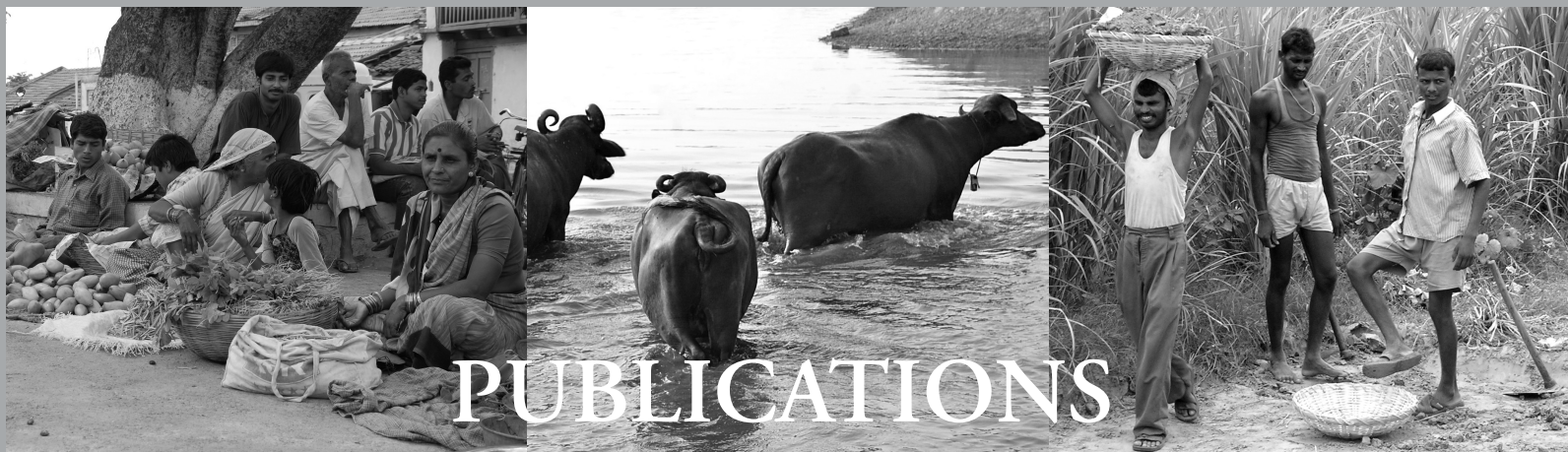


CONSULTATION ON RESULTS OF VILLAGE SURVEYS IN RAJASTHAN

A Consultation on Results of Village Surveys in Rajasthan (“Rajasthan mein Grameen Sarvekshan ke Nateejon par Vichar-Vimarsh”) was held at the Academic Staff College, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, on March 3–5, 2012. The Consultation, which was sponsored by the Department of Sociology, Rajasthan University, UNICEF, and the Foundation for Agrarian Studies, was attended by about 50 participants. Presentations were made on various aspects of village economies.

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

FAS is preparing for a collaborative research project with Professor Kaneko Jihei, Graduate School of Agricultural Science, Kobe University. Professor Kaneko is an expert on farm income accounting in Japan. This collaborative project is a study of the cost of cultivation of crops in rural India. The study will use data on costs of cultivation from the PARI database.



PUBLICATIONS



SCHOLARLY ARTICLES

Research papers, reports and newspaper articles based on the work of the Foundation are available on its websites (www.fas.org.in and www.agrarianstudies.org).



JOURNAL

The *Review of Agrarian Studies* is the peer-reviewed journal of the Foundation for Agrarian Studies (www.agrarianstudies.org). The journal invites articles on agrarian studies – on the forces and relations of production in agriculture and in rural areas, on living standards, and on different aspects of social formations in the countryside. The *Review* carries theoretical and empirical articles on social, economic, historical, political and scientific and technological aspects of agriculture and rural societies. The print edition of the *Review* is published jointly by the Foundation for Agrarian Studies and Tulika Books, one of India's most important publishers of books in the social sciences. The print edition of the *Review* is published jointly by the Foundation for Agrarian Studies and Tulika Books, one of India's most important publishers of books in the social sciences. The html content of the *Review* is rendered online, and the print edition typeset, by TNQ Books and Journals, one of India's leading providers of publishing services to scientific, technical and medical publishers worldwide.

The second issue of the journal was published online in 2011-2012.

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PERSONNEL

The research efforts of the FAS draw on the voluntary services of academics across India. They include

Venkatesh Athreya, Professor (retd.), Bharathidasan University
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R. Ramakumar, Associate Professor, Tata Institute of Social Sciences
Aparajita Bakshi, Assistant Professor, Tata Institute of Social Sciences



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