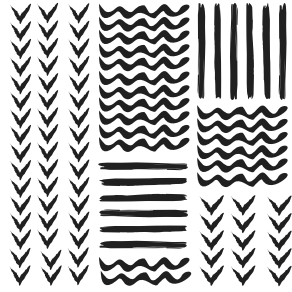




Foundation for
**Agrarian
Studies**



ANNUAL REPORT
2014-2015



Foundation for
Agrarian
Studies



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INTRODUCTION

The Foundation for Agrarian Studies (FAS) is a charitable trust based in Bangalore, India, and established in 2003. The major objectives of the Foundation are to facilitate and sponsor multi-disciplinary theoretical and empirical research in the field of agrarian studies in India and other less-developed countries.

The Foundation works 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.



FAS-RLS

Partnership Project

Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung and the Foundation for Agrarian Studies entered into a partnership project titled "Understanding Agrarian Relations in India" in September 2014. The purpose of the project is an increased understanding on critical issues on the agrarian relations in India. The Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung supports various activities of the Foundation, such as, research for theme based articles to be published in the *Review of Agrarian Studies*, and seminars and workshops to discuss and disseminate the findings from the research in order to generate an in-depth discussion as well as to reach a wider audience.

In the year 2014, Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung supported research and writing for three in-focus articles on the theme "Interviews with Leaders of Peasant Movements in India." The articles were published in the *Review of Agrarian Studies*, the journal published by the Foundation for Agrarian Studies. Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung also supported a Seminar titled "Agriculture, Productivity and Environment with a Special Focus on Karnataka", which was attended by an audience of activists from rural organisations, scholars and students from different universities and policy makers.



PARI

PROJECT ON AGRARIAN RELATIONS IN INDIA

The Project on Agrarian Relations in India (PARI) was initiated in 2005 with the following objectives:

- To characterise the nature of capitalism and class relations in the countryside;
- To conduct specific studies of the oppression of the Dalit and Scheduled Tribe masses and of women;
- To report on the state of basic village amenities and the access of the rural masses to the facilities of modern life.

The villages studied represent a wide range of different agro-ecological regions in the country. Each year, one or two States are selected and two to four villages surveyed in different agro-ecological regions. We have now conducted surveys in 22 villages in nine states of India.

In the current year, work on PARI concentrated on data entry, cleaning and processing. The cleaning and processing of PARI data is time-consuming. Firstly, data from the household schedules are entered into access database files, specific to each village surveyed. Secondly, the data entered are cleaned, which involves correction of mistakes in data entry and data discrepancies. Also, extreme values are standardised based on average values applicable to a particular village. The PARI team then undertakes careful and detailed calculation of household incomes for every household surveyed in a particular village.

In 2014-15, data from various rounds continued to be processed. PARI data have been used for books, projects, reports, theses, and papers. The details of the same are listed below.

Articles and Papers written using PARI Database

Reddy, A. B., and Swaminathan, M. (2014). “*Intergenerational Occupational Mobility in Rural India: Evidence from Ten Villages*”, *Review of Agrarian Studies*, 4(1): 95-134.

Madhura Swaminathan and Arindam Das (2014), “*Differentiation of the Peasantry and Economies of Scale in Indian Agriculture: Evidence from Village Studies*” paper presented at the Ninth Forum of the World Association of Political Economy, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences (VASS), Hanoi, Vietnam, May 23 to 25, 2014.

V. K. Ramachandran and Aditi Dixit (2014), “*Proletarianisation of the Peasantry in India: A Note*,” paper presented at the Ninth Forum of the World Association of Political Economy, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences (VASS), Hanoi, Vietnam, May 23 to 25, 2014.

Deepak Kumar (2014) “*Official Sources of Statistics on Landholdings in India*,” paper presented at the Seminar organised by the Economic Analysis Unit, Indian Statistical Institute Bangalore, March 2015.

Deepak Kumar (2014) “*Landholdings in Contemporary Indian Villages*,” European Conference on South Asian Studies (ECSAS) 2014, Zürich, Switzerland, July 2014.

Shamsher Singh (2014) “*Caste Based Exclusion in Access to Housing and Basic Household Amenities- Evidence from an Indian Village*” paper presented at the British Sociological Association (BSA) Annual Conference, University of Leeds, UK, April 2014.

Forthcoming Books based on PARI Data

Rawal, Vikas, and Swaminathan, Madhura (forthcoming, 2015), *Socioeconomic Surveys of Two Villages of Rajasthan*, Tulika Books, New Delhi.

Abstract

In this book, we study the distribution, across socio-economic classes and across castes, of a range of variables -- including incomes from crop production and other sources, ownership and control of land and other assets, aspects of employment, and access to credit -- for two villages in Rajasthan. We argue that location in the class and social hierarchy, particularly, for those at the two ends of the hierarchy, is critical for understanding economic and non-economic aspects of living standards.

The first village is 25F Gulabewala village of Sri Ganganagar district, surveyed in 2007. The data and analysis presented in this book shows the development of capitalist agriculture in Gulabewala village. Crop production in Gulabewala is characterised by high yields and income, high

levels of mechanisation, and low levels of use of family labour. Differentiation has led to the emergence of two major classes in the village: big capitalist farmers and rural manual workers. This differentiation is associated with a high degree of landlessness, high inequality in the ownership of land and other assets, and consequently, very high inequality in incomes.

A distinctive feature of the village is the near-perfect correlation between class and caste. Dalit households – from both Sikh and Hindu backgrounds – comprised the landless, asset-less rural proletariat. The Jat Sikh households (classified as Other Backward Classes or OBC in Rajasthan) were the landowning capitalist farmers.

Gulabewala village is an example of the paradox of

the Indian countryside, that is, the development of productive forces and capitalist agriculture alongside the persistence of unfree labour relations and discriminatory social relations.

The second village, Rewasi in Sikar block and district, belongs to the semi-arid region of Rajasthan. The village was surveyed in 2010. In Rewasi village, ownership of tubewells and other sources of irrigation were critical for agricultural production. The reference year of our survey, 2009-10, was a year of low rainfall and widespread crop failure in the kharif season. As a result, agricultural incomes in the reference year were very low. However, as our data on costs and incomes from cultivation show, the economic impact of drought was differential across classes. With better access to irrigation and capital, landlords and richer sections of the peasantry were better able to withstand drought-like conditions and contain their losses. On the other hand, poor peasants and cultivating households from the class of hired manual workers incurred substantial losses as a result of drought.

In the survey year, incomes from agriculture were meagre and constituted a relatively small share of total household income for most households. While richer sections of the village derived substantial incomes from businesses and salaried jobs, poor peasants and manual workers depended substantively on wage labour. Availability of wage employment within the village was limited, and many workers from Rewasi migrated to different parts of India as well as to other countries, in particular to West Asia. A majority of migrants from Rewasi worked in skilled occupations. More than one-half of households surveyed in the village received remittances in the reference year, averaging Rs. 31,000 per household. Another important source of income was from animal husbandry. The majority of households owned animals; for example, 94 per cent of households owned goats. Animal resources were thus an important means to sustain incomes and nutrition in bad agricultural years.



INTERNAL PROJECTS

Migration from Rural Bihar: A Village Level Study Yoshifumi Usami and Yasodhara Das

Migration from rural Bihar in search of work has increased manifold in the last few decades. Workers from Bihar have long travelled out of the State in search of work. A large number moved to West Bengal and Assam in the 1960s. In the 1970s, the direction of migration gradually turned towards the northwestern states of Punjab and Haryana, where migrant workers went to work as agricultural wage-workers.

Recent longitudinal surveys in Bihar show an increased volume of migration from the State, a diversification of the tasks undertaken by migrant workers, and an increase in the duration of migration. According to the Census of India 2001, Bihar is second only to Uttar Pradesh in terms of

the number of migrants leaving the State. The sheer scale of migration in contemporary Bihar is astounding: at any point of time, about one-half of all working men are absent from the State, working in rural and urban areas outside.

According to the National Sample Survey, in 2007-8, Bihar was the highest-ranked among States with respect to, first, the estimated number of short-term migrants among men in the age-group 15 to 64 years, secondly, the intensity of migration (50 males per 1000 males in the population), and, thirdly, the intensity of seasonal migration by men from a rural region (54 males per 1000 males in the population).

Wage rates in Rural India Yoshifumi Usami and Arindam Das

This study, now being conducted by Yoshifumi Usami and Arindam Das, attempts to evaluate the methodology used by different agencies that collect and publish data on wage rates in rural India. It also analyses data on wage rates and wage earnings from the village studies conducted as part of the Project on Agrarian Relations in India. The study further

attempts to explain diverse arrangements, or modes, of wage employment, the variation of wages paid for different agricultural operations, agricultural wage differentials between different States of India, and gender-based wage disparities.

The Environmental Impact of Chemical Fertilizer Use in Indian Agriculture: A Study Based on Village-Level Data

Junko Shindo, T. Jayaraman, Kamal Murari, Biplab Sarkar, and Sanjukta Chakraborty

Among the most striking features of the agricultural economy of India since Independence is the dramatic increase in agricultural production as a whole, and cereal production in particular. Among the major factors associated with this increase are the expansion of irrigation and the increased application of bio-chemical inputs, particularly chemical fertilizers. It is noteworthy that 16 per cent of world nitrogen fertilizer use takes place in India, the largest consumption in the world after China.

Although chemical fertilizer was essential for India's Green Revolution, it has the potential to cause pollution in groundwater and river water in agricultural areas. According to our estimation of nitrogen balance in farmland in India, potential nitrogen load to the environment from farmland has increased rapidly after the 1980s, especially in the northern states in the Indo-Gangetic Plain. Scientific papers published to evaluate groundwater quality for domestic uses show nitrogen concentrations exceeding drinking water standards

in many sites.

Further development of Indian agriculture cannot neglect the issue of the optimum use of nitrogen as part of a more general concern for environmental sustainability. The term "optimum use" is particularly important, given the importance of agriculture for both food security in general and the income and livelihoods of farmers, especially poor and marginal farmers.

This study, led by Junko Shindo and T. Jayaraman and with the participation of Kamal Murari, Biplab Sarkar, and Sanjukta Chakraborty, aims to understand and quantify the nitrogen balance and nitrogen outflow to the environment at the micro level, specifically at the level of the village. While doing so, this project will also re-examine the sources of secondary data for estimating nitrogen balance and nitrogen outflow at the district and State levels.

Doctoral and Pre-doctoral Level Theses

The Foundation for Agrarian Studies supports various doctoral and pre-doctoral level theses by providing data from the PARI archive. Any student from an Indian or foreign university is eligible to

apply for the use of PARI data for research. The final selection depends on a review of their research proposal and personal interviews.

Completed Ph.D. Theses based on PARI data and submitted in 2014-15

Shamsher Singh, “Access to Basic Amenities: A Sociological Study of Villages in Selected States of India.”

This thesis is a sociological analysis of the access of households in nine selected villages of four Indian states-Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Karnataka to basic amenities such as housing, domestic electricity, sanitation facilities and water

for domestic use. The thesis studied the factors which determine access of households to basic amenities, specific forms of social exclusion and deprivation faced by households of different social and economic groups, implementation of various government schemes in the selected villages. The research also explores international and national norms related to basic amenities.

Ongoing Ph.D. Theses using PARI Data

R V Bhavani, Rural Credit Outreach in India in the Reform Period: A Study with special reference to Karnataka

The study examines the scenario of rural credit in India, the outreach of the formal sector and the prevailing lacunae. Following analysis based on secondary data and the reports of different committees, the prevailing situation on the ground is examined with indebtedness data from primary household surveys in three Karnataka villages conducted by the Foundation for Agrarian Studies in April-May 2009.

Biplab Sarkar, The Economics of Household Farming: A Study with special reference to West Bengal.

The research attempts to examine farm business incomes of rural households in West Bengal, paying particular attention to the absolute levels of crop incomes earned by households from their operational holdings, and the variations in farm business incomes across crops, regions, and socio-economic strata.



SEMINARS

Agriculture, Productivity and Environment with a Special Focus on Karnataka
Bengaluru, November 8 to 9, 2014

The seminar to discuss results from the Karnataka Round of village surveys was held in Bangalore on November 8-9, 2014.

Participants were mainly academics and activists from mass organisations such as the Karnataka Pranta Raitha Sangha (KPRS), All India Agricultural Workers Union (AIAWU), and All India Democratic Women's Association (AIDWA). Some members of the media were also present.

The list of papers presented at the Seminar are provided below:

Aparajita Bakshi *Introduction to the study villages*

V. K. Ramachandran *Class Structure in the Study Villages*

R. Ramakumar *Macro-economic data from Karnataka*

Deepak Kumar *Land Distribution, Irrigation, Tenancy*

Madhura Swaminathan and Yasodhara Das *Household Asset Holdings*

Biplab Sarkar and Chiranjit Poddar *Cropping Pattern, Crop Yields, and Incomes from Agriculture*

Niladri S Dhar and T. Sivamurugan *Labour Use in Agriculture*

T. N. Prakash Kammardi *Special Lecture on Agro-Economic Zones of Karnataka*

Aparajita Bakshi and Arindam Das *Household Incomes*

Niladri S Dhar, Arindam Das, T. Sivamurugan, and Tapas Singh Modak *Employment, Wage Rates, and Earnings of Manual Workers*

Venkatesh B Athreya and T. Sivamurugan *Education and Schooling*

Shamsher Singh *Household Amenities*

Pallavi Chavan, R. V. Bhavani, and Amalendu Das *Rural Credit and Indebtedness*

The seminar was based on results from surveys conducted in 2009 as part of the Project on Agrarian Relations in India. The villages for which data were collected are: Alabujanahalli, Siresandra, and Zhapur.

The seminar also included impressions from a partial re-survey of the villages undertaken by PARI staff in 2014.

FAS-ICSSR

Partnership Project

Income Diversification in Village India with a Special Focus on Dalit Households
Aparajita Bakshi

This study used data from seven village studies in order to analyse household income diversification in rural India, and its implications for poverty and income inequality. Since questions of poverty and inequality in India are closely related to questions of caste and social exclusion, their report paid special attention to income diversification among Dalit households in the villages (there were significant proportions of Dalit households in all seven villages). The report analysed these processes in quantitative terms.

The seven villages studied in this report represented diverse production conditions and levels of development, and, in particular, diverse conditions with respect to agro-climatic circumstances, irrigation and mechanisation, rural infrastructure, and access to and distance from urban centres. The villages therefore also showed wide variations in levels of income, occupational patterns and composition of income from various sources.



FAS-JAPAN COLLABORATION

A New Statistical Domain in India: An Enquiry into Gram Panchayat-Level Databases
Junichi Okabe, Aparajita Bakshi and Niladri Dhar

The objective of the forthcoming book is to study panchayat-level databases and their potential use in local-level administration, planning and policy implementation. The authors study the overall status of local-level data available in two contrasting gram panchayats, Raina gram panchayat, Bardhaman district, West Bengal and Warwat Khanderao gram panchayat, Buldhana district, Maharashtra. Data from the villages were taken from the archive of the Foundation for Agrarian Studies. As part of the study, the authors examined all records maintained by the concerned gram panchayats and by other important panchayat-level departments and institutions, such as Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) centres, primary schools, health centres, revenue offices, agricultural offices, and block development offices. They conducted interviews on the process of record keeping and use of accumulated data with

officials from panchayats, officers of other departments, Block Development Officers, ICDS officials, and land revenue and agricultural officials. The study attempts to understand the current and potential use of such records in decentralised development planning, the periodicity at which the records are updated, and reliability and accuracy of such records.

A specific and unique contribution of the manuscript is its attempt to evaluate of the accuracy of certain panchayat-level databases. To assess the reliability of important household-level database available with the panchayat, such as the ICDS registers, Civil Registration System birth registers, and BPL survey data, the authors conducted a micro-discrepancy analysis that compared the panchayat data with data collected by the Foundation for Agrarian Studies in the two villages.



REVIEW OF AGRARIAN STUDIES

The Review of Agrarian Studies is the peer-reviewed journal of the Foundation for Agrarian Studies (www.ras.org.in). 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, New Delhi, one of India's most important publishers of books in the social sciences.

The journal is rendered online, and the print edition typeset, by TNQ Books and Journals (www.tnq.co.in), one of India's leading providers of scholarly publishing services worldwide.

We are grateful to the Indian Council of Social Science Research for a publication grant for the journal. During 2013-14, two issues of the journal were published online and in print.

The Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung supported research on articles on the focal theme titled, "Interviews with Leaders of Peasant Movements in India" carried in Vol. 4, No. 2.

VOLUME 4, NUMBER 1 (FEBRUARY- JUNE, 2014)

RESEARCH ARTICLES

Climate Change and Agriculture: Current and Future Trends, and Implications for India
T. Jayaraman and Kamal Murari

Bank Credit to Agriculture in India in the 2000s: Dissecting the Revival
R. Ramakumar and Pallavi Chavan

Homestead Farming in Kerala: A Multi-Faceted Land-Use System
Jacob John

Intergenerational Occupational Mobility in Rural India: Evidence from Ten villages
A Bheemeshwar Reddy and Madhura Swaminathan

Research Notes and Statistics

Scheduled Tribe Households: A Note on Issues of Livelihood
Brinda Karat and Vikas Rawal

Book Reviews

Climate Change and Food Production Systems
Tejal Kanitkar

RESEARCH ARTICLES

Rural Economy Outcomes in China After Two Decades of Policy Reform

Paul Bowles, Hongqin Change, and Xiao-yuan Dong

Cotton Cultivation in India Since the Green Revolution: Technology, Policy, and Performance

A Suresh, P. Ramasundaram, Josily Samuel, and Shwetal Wankhade

Farmers' Suicides in India: Magnitudes, Trends, and Spatial Patterns, 1997-2012

K. Nagaraj, P. Sainath, R. Rukmani, and R. Gopinath

RESEARCH NOTES AND STATISTICS

Climate Changes and Development: Implications of the US-China Joint Announcement on Climate Change

T. Jayaraman

US Intervention in Indian Agriculture: The Case of the Knowledge Initiative on Agriculture

V. Sridhar

INTERVIEWS

The Interviews : An Introduction

R. Ramakumar

Agrarian Issues, Local and National: Extracts from Conversations with P. Ramamurti

V. K. Ramachandran

Aspects of the Peasant Movement in Malabar: An Interview with E. K. Nayanar

R. Ramakumar

Contextualising Land Reform in West Bengal: An Interview with Benoy Konar

Aparajita Bakshi

CONFERENCE

“On Agrarian Issues”: A Report on the Tenth Anniversary Conference of the Foundation for Agrarian Studies

Aparajita Bakshi, Aditi Dixit, and Deepak Kumar

Questions about Concepts, Questions about Trends: Reflections on the Tenth Anniversary Conference

John Harriss

Reflections on the Tenth Anniversary Conference of the Foundation for Agrarian Studies

Venkatesh Athreya

BOOK REVIEWS

Can Political Ecology Comprehend Climate Change?

T. Jayaraman

LIBRARY



An important feature of the Foundation is its Library. The current collection of the Foundation covers some 10,000 books, reports, working papers, dissertations, back issues of journals and other documents and publications. These publications are housed mainly in a recently constructed library wing of premises owned by the Managing Trustee of the Foundation and located in Thrissur, Kerala.

At the core of the collection is a gift to the Foundation of about 5,000 books and other publications by Yoshifumi Usami, retired Professor of Economics at the University of Osaka Prefecture, Japan. The collection of books covers the Indian economy and agriculture, including agronomy, agricultural economics (including price policy, agricultural wages, the green revolution, and food policy) and demography. This part of the collection also includes related official serial publications, such as the Farm Management Studies (a complete set), Rural Labour Enquiry Reports, reports from the series titled Agricultural Wages in India, Agricultural Price Commission Reports, National Sample Survey Reports, and publications of the Census of India. There are also miscellaneous reports on agriculture- and rural development-related topics issued by the Government of India, State Governments, and other official agencies.

Economic history is a major area of Professor Usami's interest and research, and various Commission Reports, statistics and other Government documents of the colonial period, including Famine Commission Reports, and

reports of the Royal Irrigation Commission, Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee, Royal Commission on Agriculture, some Land Revenue Settlement Reports, Provincial and District Gazetteers, and publications of the Board of Economic Enquiry, Punjab, are also part of the collection. There is a subsection of books on the history of Punjab, and further books on the Partition of Punjab and the urban development of Delhi are being shipped in a year. Books and publications in the Usami collection cover the period from the late nineteenth century to about 2010.

The Library has received a bequest of more than 200 books in the field of agrarian studies from the family of the late Jayati Gupta, Reader in Sociology at the Delhi School of Economics. In addition, the Library has a few thousand books in the areas of agrarian studies, development economics, and related social sciences.

The collection is unique, one of the best of its kind in India, and a valuable resource for scholars working in the field of agrarian studies and rural development, and, more generally, in related social sciences.

The Foundation is currently seeking financial and technical assistance and collaboration for cataloguing, housing, preserving, and partially digitising the collection in its Library, and for extending shelf space in order to accommodate the collection.

VISITORS

International

Urs Geiser, *University of Zurich, Switzerland*
Florian Hollen, *Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, Germany*
Jun-ichi Okabe, *Yokohama University, Japan*
Junko Shindo, *University of Yamanashi, Japan*
Kazuyazu Miyata, *Hokkaido University of Education, Japan*
Chikha Kazuyazu, *Edinburgh University, United Kingdom*

India

S. Ramachandran Pillai, *All India Kisan Sabha, New Delhi*
A. Vijayaraghavan, *All India Kisan Sabha, New Delhi*
Vijoo Krishnan, *All India Kisan Sabha, New Delhi*
Birendra Singh, *Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, New Delhi*
Carsten Krinn, *Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, New Delhi*
Pragya Khanna, *Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, New Delhi*
Vinod Koshti, *Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, New Delhi*
Rajiv Kumar, *Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, New Delhi*
H. S. Jayakumar, *Free Software Movement Karnataka, Bengaluru*

Student Interns

Ranjini Basu, *Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai*
M. P. Yuvaraj, *Bangalore University, Karnataka*

PERSONNEL

The Team

V. K. Ramachandran - *Honorary Managing Trustee*

Aditi Dixit - *Programme Coordinator*

Arindam Das - *PARI Coordinator*

Pinki Ghosh - *Accounts Coordinator*

Neha Mujumdar - *Publications Coordinator*

Research Staff

Sanjukta Chakraborty

Yasodhara Das

Amalendu Das*

Chiranjit Poddar*

T. Sivamurugan

Vijaykumar

Jeeva J*

Secki P. Jose*

Kavya Murty*

Anshu Srivastava

Shamsher Singh

Office Secretary

Divya S Devadiga

Office Assistant

Jaya Mary

Collaboration with Research Scholars

Shamsher Singh, *Indian Statistical Institute, Bangalore*

Biplab Sarkar, *Indian Statistical Institute, Bangalore*

Deepak Kumar, *Indian Statistical Institute, Bangalore*

Collaborating Persons and Institutions

The Foundation draws on institutional support of the following organisations:

TNQ Books: *The journal is rendered online, and the print edition typeset, by TNQ Books and Journals, one of India's leading providers of scholarly publishing services worldwide.*

Tulika Books: *The print edition of the Review is published jointly by the Foundation for Agrarian Studies and Tulika Books, New Delhi.*

Noopur Verma: *Ms. Noopur Verma provides HR Consultancy Services to the Foundation*

Free Software Movement Karnataka (FSMK): *FSMK provides technical support to the Foundation.*

Sudip Shetty & Co.: *Financial and accounting support is provided by Sudip Shetty & Co.*

External Collaboration

FAS and the Review of Agrarian Studies draw on the voluntary services of academics across India. They include:

Venkatesh Athreya, *M S Swaminathan Research Foundation, Chennai*

Aparajita Bakshi, *Tata Institute of Social Sciences*

R. V. Bhavani, *M S Swaminathan Research Foundation, Chennai*

Indira Chandrasekhar, *Tulika Books*

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Niladri Sekhar Dhar, *Tata Institute of Social Sciences*

Kamal Murari, *Tata Institute of Social Sciences*

Vikas Rawal, *Jawaharlal Nehru University*

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V.K. Ramachandran, *Indian Statistical Institute*

R. Ramakumar, *Tata Institute of Social Sciences*

Abhijit Sen, *Jawaharlal Nehru University and Member, Planning Commission*

Madhura Swaminathan, *Indian Statistical Institute*

Yoshifumi Usami, *The University of Tokyo*

*Left during this year



FOUNDATION FOR AGRARIAN STUDIES
514, First Floor, 16th Cross, Indiranagar II Stage,
Bangalore, India - 560038

www.fas.org.in

agrarian_studies@vsnl.net

(+91) 080-40952150 / (+91) 080-25252625

Foundation for Agrarian Studies

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