

ANNUAL REPORT  
2009 - 2010

# 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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# PROJECTS



## PROJECT ON AGRARIAN RELATIONS IN INDIA

This Project 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; and
- to report on the state of basic village amenities and the access of the rural masses to the facilities of modern life.

The study is to be conducted over a period of about five years. The villages studied will represent a wide range of different agro-ecological regions in the country. Each year, one or two States will be selected and two to four villages surveyed in different agro-ecological regions.

On the basis of consultations with the All India Kisan Sabha, it was decided to conduct surveys in three villages of Karnataka as part of the Project on Agrarian Relations in India for 2009-10. The aim was to select one village from the irrigated paddy growing region of the State, one from the unirrigated northern region of the State and one from an area of mixed cultivation. The three villages that were selected were Albujanahalli, Siresandra and Zhapur.

Alabujanahalli is in Maddur taluk, Mandya district. The village is located at a distance of 15 km from Maddur and Mandya. Our survey covered 248 households resident in the village. A significant fraction of the households are Vokkaliga, the major land owning caste, while many of the remaining households are Dalit households. This is a village belonging to the Cauvery-irrigated region of South

Karnataka. Channels leading from a system tank that is fed by canals from the Krishnarajasagar dam irrigate the village. The major crops grown are sugarcane, rice and ragi. The village is located very near to a major sugar factory of the district. The sugarcane produced in the village is procured by the sugar factory as raw material, and the factory and its owners have a substantial hold on the village economy. A large number of households practice sericulture and livestock-raising, which contribute significantly to household incomes.

Siresandra is in Kolar taluk, Kolar district. The nearest town, Kolar, is at a distance of 20 km from the village. Our survey covered 81 households resident in the village. The major caste group in this village is Vokkaliga, which is the major land-owning caste in the village. This village belongs to the semi-dry rainfed region in southeastern Karnataka. Cultivation in the village is mainly rain-fed, supplemented by irrigation by means of borewells and drip irrigation. The cropping pattern includes kharif ragi, followed by vegetables (potato, tomato, carrot, cauliflower, beetroot, radish, fodder maize and fodder grass and other vegetable, condiment and tree crops). Ragi is often intercropped with jowar, red gram, and sesamum. Sericulture and dairying are also important occupations, and contribute substantially to household incomes.

Zhapur is in Gulbarga taluk, Gulbarga district. The village is located at a distance of 13 km from Gulbarga town. Our survey covered 113 households resident in the village. The majority of households are Dalit. The dominant land-owning caste is Lingayat. There are also Kuruba and Scheduled Tribe households resident in the village. This village falls in the dry rainfed region of north Karnataka. Cultivation in the village is mainly rainfed. The

cropping pattern followed is that of a single mixed crop of rainfed cereals and oil seeds. Most cultivators grow red gram intercropped with maize, sesamum, bajra and green gram. They also cultivate jowar and safflower either as pure crops or as mixed crops. Bengal gram is also grown as a mixed crop with safflower. Apart from cultivation, many workers are employed as daily labourers in a stone quarry located partially on the boundaries of the village. This is a major source of non-agricultural employment for manual workers from Zhapur.

## WEST BENGAL HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT

The Principal Coordinator of the West Bengal Human Development Report, Professor Jayati Ghosh requested FAS to prepare a background chapter on agriculture and land use issues in West Bengal. The first part of the background paper has been communicated.

The first section of the background paper discusses the pattern of agricultural growth and development in West Bengal. The West Bengal path to agricultural growth has been unique in post-Independence India. As Abhijit Sen has noted, "West Bengal, with a growth rate of over 7 per cent per annum in agricultural value added -- more than two-and-a-half

times the national average -- can be described as the agricultural success story of the eighties" (Sen, 1992). Agricultural growth in West Bengal was made possible because of the removal, by means of land reform and the establishment of panchayati raj, of institutional fetters to growth. The paper provides detailed estimates of growth in food grain area, yield and production. The estimates were also prepared for the district level and for different crops.

The second section has some case studies on aspects of human development based on surveys of seven villages from different agro-ecological regions of the State that were conducted in 2005. The case studies pertain to literacy and school education, to sanitation, availability of drinking water, and access to health care services.

## FAS - JAPAN COLLABORATIVE PROJECT

The Foundation has collaborated successfully with universities and individual academics in Japan since 2007. Two collaborative projects are in progress.

### Statistics for Local Level Planning: A Study of Panchayat-level Data Bases

This is a collaborative paper being written by Jun-ichi Okabe (Yokohama National University, Japan), Aparajita Bakshi and Niladri Sekhar Dhar. The objective of the paper is to study panchayat-level data bases and their potential use in local-level planning and policy implementation. It is a case study of two

reliable quality and can they be used for effective implementation of development schemes?

### An Evaluation of the Results of BPL Survey 2002

The pilot surveys for the next Census of BPL (below-poverty-line) households are due to begin. Discussions are now on to finalise the methodology for the survey, and, as the BPL Census is a matter of the subsistence and survival of hundreds of millions of India's households, it is important that we draw lessons from the experience of past BPL Censuses.

Professor Yoshifumi Usami, Biplab Sarkar, and V. K. Ramachandran have conducted a study of the reliability of the BPL Census of 2002, comparing household-level data from the MoRD website for four villages (one each in Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh) with

villages, Bidyanidhi in West Bengal and Warwat Khanderao in Maharashtra.

The paper will attempt to answer the following research questions:

- i. What are the statistical data that the gram panchayats are required to maintain? Are these maintained by the two study panchayats?
- ii. What are the schemes and programmes that are to be implemented directly by the gram panchayats?
- iii. Are the data currently available with the panchayat sufficient for the needs of planning and implementing these schemes and programmes?
- iv. Are the data available with the gram panchayat of

village-level socio-economic data collected by the Foundation for Agrarian Studies in the same villages.

A short article based on their findings is at <http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/article406431.ece>

## FAS - UNICEF PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

Negotiations are in progress for a FAS-UNICEF partnership programme on Child Wellbeing, Schooling and Living Standards. In the partnership programme, FAS will provide cross-sectional and micro-level data on the status of children from a variety of agro-ecological settings. The unique FAS-PARI socio-economic data base will be used to examine and discuss various types of deprivation among children, and the factors associated with such deprivations, in 14 villages across six states. Specifically, an attempt will be made to link deprivations among children in respect of schooling and access to basic amenities to household incomes, assets and occupations, and to the specific agro-ecological and socio-economic structure of each

village. Together, the Foundation and UNICEF will use this micro-level analysis to complement information on macro-level trends in child well-being, and will attempt to provide nuance and depth to our understanding of the well-being of rural children.

The output of this collaboration will be a series of publications – reports on villages in six States and one overview report – that deal with aspects of deprivation and living standards among women and children in rural areas.

The reports will use primary village-level data to

- document and examine the pattern of schooling and educational attainment among children of different social groups;
- relate the observed deprivations/attainments to household socio-economic factors such as incomes, assets, occupations, to household living conditions and to individual factors such as mothers' occupations and education;
- examine the incidence of child labour and identify factors at the household level and village level associated with the persistence of child labour;
- examine deprivations suffered by children on account of lack of basic civic amenities within a household, including access to safe water, electricity, toilets and quality housing; and
- identify the types of government benefits (such as government-funded scholarships) obtained by children.

These reports will help to suggest areas in which social protection policies need strengthening in order to end socio-economic deprivation among rural children. They will complement UNICEF's other analyses of poverty among children and their vulnerability in respect of socio-economic hardship.

The two-year project will be implemented in 2010-11 to 2012-13.

# WORKSHOPS AND CONFERENCES



The Foundation conducts at least one major workshop each year, to discuss and debate issues pertaining to agrarian studies with other academics and activists.

This year we conducted a training workshop on methodology of village studies, including estimation of rural household incomes for a group of 25 persons.

## INTERNATIONAL VISITORS

Several scholars and activists from peasant and worker organizations in India have visited the Foundation, and interacted with scholars and staff associated with the Foundation. In addition, we received the following international visitors.

Professor Ravi Kanbur, Cornell University, New York, visited the Foundation and is keen to visit again during our field surveys.

Dr. Gerry Rodgers, Visiting Researcher, Institute for Human Development, New Delhi, is engaged in village surveys in Bihar.

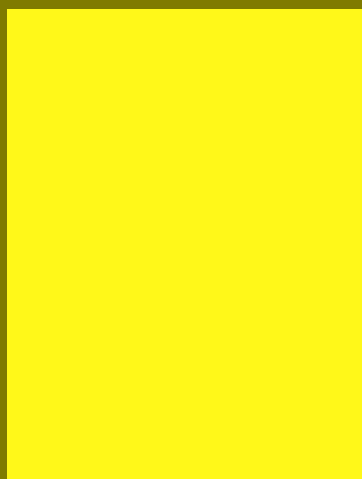
Dr. Janine Rodgers, Visiting Researcher, Institute for Human Development, New Delhi.

Professor Y Usami, College of Life and Environmental Sciences, Osaka Prefecture University, Japan, has begun some collaborative research with FAS.

Professor J Okabe, Faculty of Economics, International Graduate School of Social Sciences, Yokohama National University, Japan, is engaged in research with FAS.

Mr. D. Sakata, Research Scholar, International Graduate School of Social Sciences, Yokohama National University, Japan, visited FAS.

# PUBLICATIONS



## Socio-Economic Surveys of Three Villages in Andhra Pradesh: A Study of Agrarian Relations

Edited by V. K. Ramachandran, Vikas Rawal and Madhura Swaminathan, New Delhi: Tulika Books, 2010. ISBN 978-81-89487-67-6

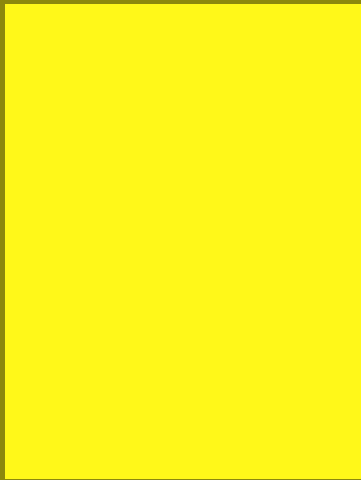
### Research and Writing

Madhura Swaminathan	Vikas Rawal	R. Ramakumar
Niladri Sekar Dhar	Pallavi Chavan	Biplab Sarkar
Shamsher Singh	Aparajita Bakshi	Paramita Ghosh
Navpreet Kaur	Meghna Dutta	V. K. Ramachandran

This volume is a field report on surveys of agrarian relations in three villages in Andhra Pradesh conducted by scholars of the Foundation for Agrarian Studies. The study villages are Ananthavaram village in Kollur mandal, Guntur district; Bukkacherla village in Raptadu mandal, Anantapur district; and Kothapalle village in Thimmapur L.M.D. Mandal, Karimnagar district.

This volume presents an analysis of statistical data collected through the village surveys with a special focus on differences across socio-economic classes and social groups. There are separate chapters on land and asset inequality, tenancy, household incomes, crop incomes, employment and wages, indebtedness, literacy and school education, and household amenities.

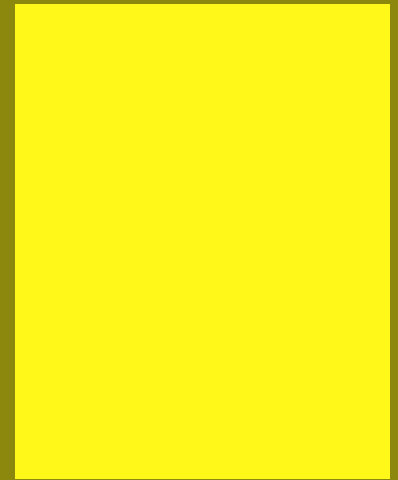
The report attempts to contribute information, statistical data and analysis to the discussion on agrarian relations and economic distress in contemporary rural Andhra Pradesh and India.



Ramachandran, V. K. (2009), "Dungariya Village, Southern Rajasthan: A Field Report". Paper to be presented at International Workshop on Environment, Agriculture and Socio-economic Change in Rural India organised by Kyungpook National University and University of Tokyo (and forthcoming in Critical Asian Studies).



Rawal, Vikas, and Osmani, Siddiq-ur (2009), "Economic Policies, Tenancy Relations and Household Incomes: Insights from Three Selected Villages in India". This paper was written during a visit by Vikas Rawal to the Social and Policy Research institute, University of Ulster  
Ulster on the ICSSR-ESRC Bilateral Collaboration Programme for Exchange of Scholars.



Ramachandran, V.K., and Rawal, Vikas (2009), "The Impact of Liberalisation and Globalisation on India's Agrarian Economy". Paper presented at the conference on Globalization(s) and Labour: China, India and the West' organised by University of Northern British Columbia and Simon Fraser University, and published in Global Labor Journal, Vol 1, No 1.

# JOURNAL AND WEBSITE



## JOURNAL : REVIEW OF AGRARIAN STUDIES

In 2009-10, work began for launching of our journal in early 2011.

The Review of Agrarian Studies is the peer-reviewed journal of the Foundation for Agrarian Studies ([www.agrarianstudies.org](http://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 will carry theoretical and empirical articles on social, economic, historical, political and scientific and technological aspects of agriculture and rural societies. The Review also accepts photographic, audio and video material.

The Review will publish online first and aggregate online content into a print edition every six months. Rich media content (photographic, audio and video material, hyperlinks and interactivity) will be made available only online.

The print edition of the Review will be published jointly by the Foundation for Agrarian Studies and Tulika Books, one of India's most important publishers of books in the social sciences.

## WEBSITE

During 2009-10, the Foundation further developed its website, and has now an updated website with written material and photographs that may be of use to scholars of agrarian studies ([www.fas.org.in](http://www.fas.org.in) and [www.agrarianstudies.org](http://www.agrarianstudies.org)).

# PERSONNEL

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

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

S. Mahendra Dev, Vice Chancellor, Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research

Venkatesh Athreya, Professor (retd.), Bharathidasan University

C. P. Chandrasekhar, Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University

K. Nagaraj, Professor, Madras Institute of Development Studies and Asian College of Journalism

Indira Chandrasekhar, Tulika Books

V. K. Ramachandran, Professor, Indian Statistical Institute

Madhura Swaminathan, Professor, Indian Statistical Institute

Vikas Rawal, Associate Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University

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Arindam Das

Nabanita Adhikari

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Santanu De Roy