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INSIDE

Photo credit:
Tamil Nadu Empowerment and Poverty Reduction Project (TNEPRP)

Stitching Dreams: In Tamil Nadu, Rural Women Show the Way to Start Up India

In our travels across rural Tamil Nadu we met many women who had a great deal of experience in working in the large garments factories of the state – in Tiruppur and Chennai. But, after getting married their family responsibilities forced them to leave their jobs and return to their villages. Now these young women have put their years of experience to use and are setting up small enterprises in their home villages, sewing garments for India's huge domestic market. It is a win-win situation for all. Working out of thatched huts and refurbished cowsheds, the newly-minted women entrepreneurs not only turn in a tidy profit but also create much-needed employment for others.

The large garment manufacturing companies, faced with crippling shortages of skilled labor, now outsource orders to these units. Today, these fast-growing women's enterprises have not only opened up new avenues for rural women to work, boosting female labor force participation, but also added a new grassroots and gender dimension to the idea of Start Up India.

As we entered the small hut of rammed earth thatched with coconut leaves, the sounds we heard belonged to a different world. Amidst the whir of industrial sewing machines, nine young women were busy stitching bolts of fabric into men's shirts, destined for India's vast domestic market for low-cost garments.

Once a large cow shed, a garment unit today

This was Inam Koilpatti village in India's southern state of Tamil Nadu. Even though many villages in the state were rapidly urbanising, this village still had many huts, and prosperity was yet to arrive.

Two young women, Indhurani and Gurupakkiam, ran this tiny unit. Born with an entrepreneurial spirit, these women have unwittingly given a much-needed boost to the idea of 'Start Up India' in this poor region.

"We were both working at a company in Thalavaipuram," they began. (Thalavaipuram is

an emerging garments hub nearby.) “But, with family responsibilities it was getting hard for us to travel 20 km to work. Three years ago we approached our employer with a proposition. We would set up a unit in our village, if he would give us orders,” they narrated.

Persuading their manager was not difficult. The women were known for their good work, and besides, the state’s garment industry was in the grip of crippling labor shortages.

Once their manager agreed, the women dipped into their meagre savings, bought two old industrial sewing machines, and got them refurbished. Since there was little money left, they converted a part of their small thatched homes into the factory floor.

After reinvesting their profits, the women were now operating nine machines, employing ten women, and running the unit year around. The home had been vacated and the small hut was entirely a shop floor now.

The garments industry is one of the dominant industries in Tamil Nadu. And Tiruppur, its main center, has earned a place on the global map for garment manufacturing. The industry, however, faces huge shortages of skilled labour. “Twenty thousand people are needed in Tiruppur alone,” said the leader of the garments association.

On the other hand, there is an abundance of skilled labor in the countryside. Many of Tamil Nadu’s rural women have rich experience working in large garment factories, but

marriage and family responsibilities have forced them to return to their home villages. Our project – the World Bank’s Tamil Nadu Empowerment and Poverty Reduction Project (TNEPRP) – had also trained large numbers of village women in tailoring, a trade that was popular among them.

But despite these thousands of skilled women, there were very few tailoring enterprises in the villages – just a few tailoring shops catered to village demand, or for the seasonal need for uniforms from local schools.

A bridge needed to be built between the industry and the skilled workforce, each separated from the other by geography.


EFFICIENCY
60% - 69%
PRICE
TICKET

Setting the stage for change

But how? Indhurani and Gurupakkiam were showing us the way. Their lack of education did not prevent the flowering of their enterprise. Or maybe it spurred them on!

Who, then, would build this bridge? Shunmugaraj, the TNEPRP project's district manager in Virudhnagar district took up the challenge in great earnest. He had seen the hunger for work in the eyes of the rural women, and was convinced that companies could double their annual turnover if only they could somehow employ them. Markets were not a problem – exports to the Middle-East were growing and the scope for further expansion was huge.

There was one stumbling block, however. The managers of the big garment units in the Thalavaipuram hub nearby were not keen to outsource work to these simple village women. To them, a village exuded an air of inefficiency and disorderliness, and they felt that poor and little-educated rural women could not be good managers.

Step-by-step Shunmugaraj convinced these reluctant managers, telling them that for every woman who worked with them, there were at least two more who could work out of their villages. What's more, some of these women were very enterprising, and the project could help them set up small manufacturing units with financing and mentoring.

A customer operated unit in the heart of the village.

An idea whose time has come

At first, three managers agreed to experiment. If the village garment units were able to reach the performance levels required of them, they would place their orders with them.

Three months later four units emerged and hit the required performance levels. Six months later the number grew to twenty. And, applications from another twenty are pending. Shunmugaraj and his team had done an excellent job of bringing the community and industry together.

Carefully identifying those with entrepreneurial ability, the project helped the women set up small garment units.

For the first three months the project provided the women with handholding, introduced customers, facilitated financing from government departments and banks, helped get mandatory registrations and certifications, located machinery suppliers, provided training in entrepreneurship, and mobilized labor. After three months, the women were largely on their own, a condition that had been agreed upfront with them.

Today Virudhnagar district has 20 small garments units that employ more than 200 women, many of whom have switched from farming or unskilled jobs, or from hazardous jobs in fireworks units. With well-paying jobs available near their homes, the women now enjoy a vastly better lifestyle, and work in a profession they have always aspired for.

A room in a home converted into a garment unit.

Creating brands of their own

When the experiment began, Bhanu, an entrepreneur, had told us, "I would like to have my own brand one day." A year later, while Bhanu still manufactures for a few large

companies, she has also launched a brand of her own. As is often the case with start-ups, her business partner, Fathima Beevi, has split amicably, but by setting up her own unit, has generated further employment.

Andal, another entrepreneur, started with just five machines and within six months had expanded them to twelve. Elsewhere, ten women have come together, pooled their resources, and set up a 10-machine unit that is doing good business.

Some of the top garment manufacturers in Thalavaipuram now partner with all fifteen of these small women's enterprises. And, mortality among these new units has been low.

Building on this success, the World Bank's proposed Tamil Nadu Rural Transformation Project is seeking to carry on the good work by integrating more rural women into the value chains for other industries – horticulture, food and agro-processing, dairy, leather and handicrafts – and scaling up their enterprises across the state.

As India struggles to generate jobs and increase female labor force participation in the country, Indhurani and Gurupakkiam's pioneering enterprise is showing the way. Clearly there are some enterprising 'jewels' among India's forgotten billion. All they need is a chance to shine their light in their full glory, and take others along in the process.

Contributed by Samik Sundar Das, Senior Rural Development Specialist, World Bank and Yuvaraj Galada, Consultant, World Bank.

Authors acknowledge contributions by Shouvik Mitra, World Bank consultant for the case studies and data.

Tackling poverty in India: In building and agri boom, rural wage lift

Real wages have risen across India in the past two decades, but the increase was especially marked among rural unskilled workers. Three drivers – falling rural female labor force participation, a construction boom, and favorable agricultural terms of trade – help explain why unskilled rural workers fared better than their urban counterparts or workers with more education. Going forward, in light of lower agricultural prices and slower growth in the construction sector, some of the factors that contributed to the increase in relative wages for unskilled labor during this period may not be sustained over time, say Hanan Jacoby, Lead Economist, Agriculture and Rural Development, World Bank and Basab Dasgupta, Economist, Water Global Practice, World Bank

Over the last two decades, India's workers have seen their wages rise substantially relative to the cost of living. Although real wages have risen across all of India and for all demographic groups (educated/uneducated, old/young, male/female), the rise has been especially marked among the rural unskilled workers – those with less than full secondary education. This was particularly so between 2004/05 and 2011/12. While this phenomenon helps explain the fall in rural poverty during this period, it begs the question: what were the economic forces that drove the rise in real wages during this time?

To answer this question it helps to narrow it, by shifting our gaze from the overall rising-tide of higher real wages nationwide and asking instead why some "boats" have risen faster than others; for example, why the wages of rural workers lacking secondary education (concentrated in sectors like agriculture and construction) have risen faster than those of their urban counterparts. Here are three key findings on how the relative wages of different groups have changed between 2004/05 and 2011/12:

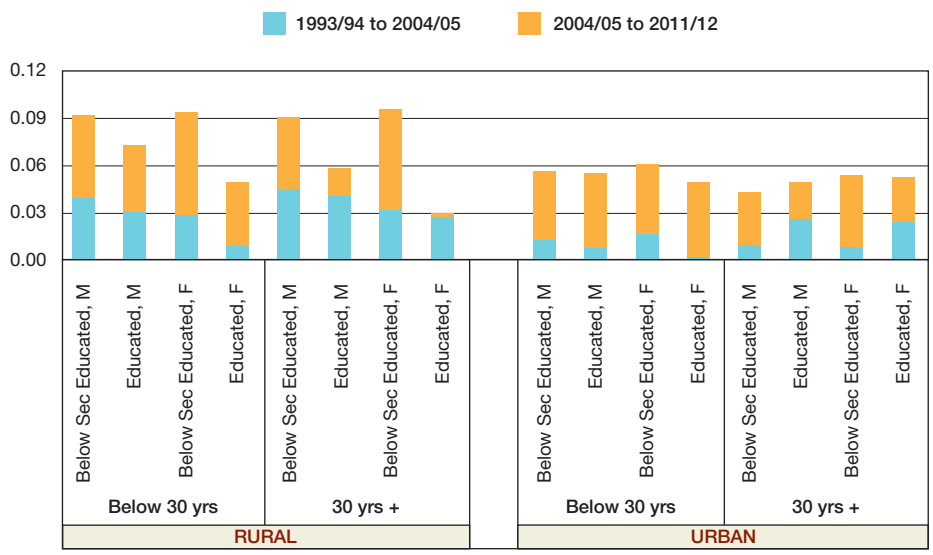
First, an expanding construction sector stands out as the key driver of relative wage growth for unskilled men. States in which the rural construction sector grew faster than the urban construction sector, such as Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka, saw faster relative wage growth for men with less than complete secondary education. What this means is that the wages of these men grew faster in rural areas of the state than in urban areas. There is no such effect on women's wages. In contrast to the construction sector, relative growth in services, such as wholesale and resale trade, is unrelated to relative wages for either males or females.

Second, falling female labor force participation has played a role in helping raise wages, but only for women. States in which rural women withdrew from the labor force faster than urban women experienced a greater rise in the wages of rural unskilled women. This pattern is essentially absent for males, suggesting that women's unskilled labor is not a very close substitute for that of men.

Figure 1:

Changing wage structure in India during 1993/94 - 2011/12

(Annualized log real wage changes by demographic group)



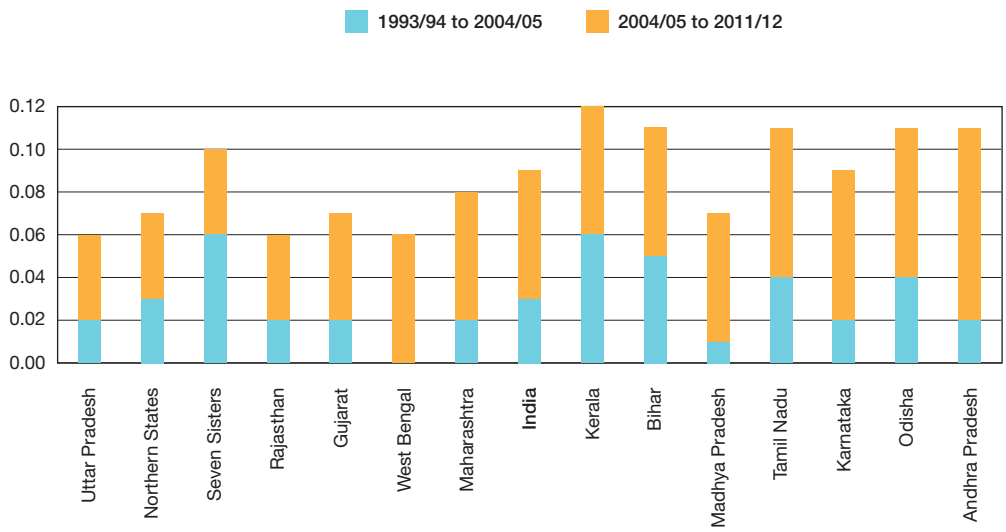
Note: "Educated" workers refers to those who completed secondary school or above

M: Male; F: Female

Source: Authors' calculation from various rounds of NSSO data

Figure 2:

Average annual change in log real wage changes for unskilled workers



Note: Split states clubbed with parent states

Source: Authors' calculation from various rounds of NSSO data

Third, states that grew crops whose prices rose more sharply during the 2004/05-11/12 period saw rural wages for unskilled labor, both male and female, rise faster than urban wages. Thus, against the backdrop of the overall decline in agricultural employment in India, states that benefitted from the agricultural commodity boom saw a greater demand for farm labor, and hence rising wages for unskilled farm work.

While we cannot run a statistical 'horserace' to find the dominant force behind the recent changes in India's relative wage structure, these three drivers do help us understand why unskilled rural workers have fared better than their urban counterparts. Going forward, in light of the recent moderation in agricultural prices and slower growth in the construction sector, it is already clear that some of the factors that contributed to the increase in relative wages for unskilled labor during this period may not be sustained over time. As a matter of fact, the rate of growth in real wages has slowed over the past few years, with potential implications for the pace of poverty reduction in the country.

These findings are based on a standard decomposition of wage growth into growth due to supply shifts (changing group employment shares), growth due to demand shifts (changing industrial composition biased for or against a particular group), and growth due to wage-premia shifts (essentially, movements into or out of structurally low-paying jobs). The portion of relative wage growth attributable to these three factors can then be extracted for each state, or groups of smaller states, and finally correlated with various economic changes at the state level. The key findings represent statistically significant correlations.

Reference:

Jacoby, Hanan G., and Basab Dasgupta. 2015. "Changing Wage Structure in India in the Post-Reform Era: 1993-2011." WPS 7426, World Bank, Washington DC.

Read more: https://tinyurl.com/y8yf5hfz

This blog was originally published in the Indian Express on 22nd June, 2016.

Interview

"School enrolment numbers high in the last decade…Students in schools but not learning enough"

Earlier this year India announced that it would be ending its almost decade-long boycott of the Programme for International Students Assessment (PISA), organised by the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to rank countries based on learning levels of 15-year-olds in reading, mathematics and science. The last time Indian students participated in this global assessment in 2009, they stood 72nd out of 74 participating countries. During his recent visit to India, Senior Director for Education and Peru's former Education Minister Jaime Saavedra spoke about India's re-entry into PISA, why the Indian education system needs to shift focus from quantity to quality and what we can learn from other countries:

When will India participate again in PISA, which ranks countries based on learning levels of 15-year-old students?

India last participated in PISA in 2009 but the minister for human resources and development has announced that India will participate again in 2021. This is a very good move because international testing is critical to understand where a country stands. This is especially important for India because it aspires to be a competitive economy and be a part of the big league.

How does India fare when compared to China, which also took PISA for the first time in 2009?

China's performance was considerably better but it is unfair to compare the two countries. It is true that India will have to make a much faster progress than what we have seen in the past and it needs to take intermediate steps. India sees a much higher incidence of teacher absenteeism and that has to stop. Classroom practices also have to improve and that's where the two countries diverge. But India has already identified the challenges. It can now only move ahead.

What has changed since India's last participation in PISA in 2009?

I think a strong culture has emerged where India is not scared to know

where it stands, but instead wants to know its standing so that it can narrow disparities. More important than just PISA is the fact that India will now implement an annual National Assessment Survey (NAS), starting 2017.

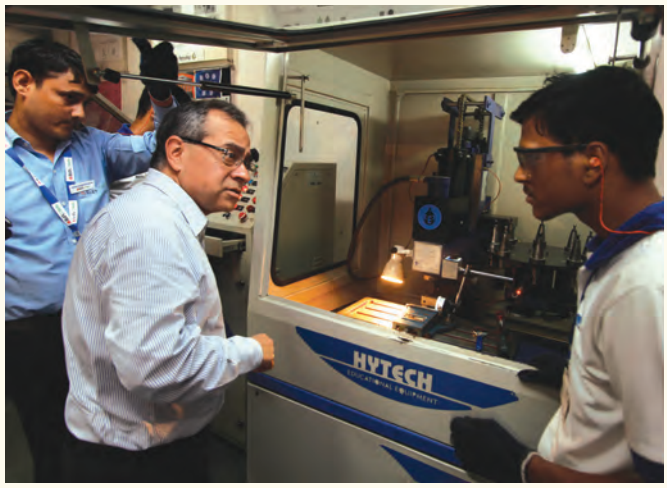
There have been some very positive changes in education under this government because the NAS samples will now not be collected at the state level but at the district level. With this, the local capacities are going to improve because the approach is not generic any more. Authorities will now be able to use the NAS results at micro levels to customise and improve education.

What are some of the success models that can be incorporated to bring education in India on par with the international levels?

When Peru first participated in PISA in 2012, it ranked last among 65 countries. This was a wakeup call for everyone because we knew where we stood. So, a strong four-pillar reformation system was implemented, focussing on teachers, pedagogical training programmes, management and infrastructure. In 2015, Peru's improvement was the fourth fastest in the world, which was very significant.

What are some inherent flaws in the Indian education system?

India has made huge progress in bringing children to school. So, school enrolment numbers have been very high during the last decade, particularly at the elementary level. In global terms, India is very important because of its size. So, for the world to do well, we need India to do well. But today we see that there is a learning crisis here. Increasingly, students are going to schools but they are not learning foundational skills that can help them in an increasingly competitive world. This happens because of several factors like lack of infrastructure, teachers, proper training programmes, etc.



How can the government overcome these flaws?

Not just in India but even globally, investment in education has been used to set up the basic infrastructure and to ensure the presence of teachers. But that is only the first step. India faces several challenges but the main issue is the quality of teachers. We need to promote the right interaction between teachers and students, improve the academic programmes, school management, decrease student dropout rates. But teacher training is the most important because we have to ensure that teachers have the right working environment where they have the scope for growth, the right professional development and proper incentive.

This interview was originally published in the Times of India on 4th September, 2017

GST and the remapping of India

By Junaid Ahmad, Rakhi Basu, and Pravin Krishna

The coming into force of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) will unify the nation into a common economic market, obviating the need for goods to be taxed each time they cross a state border. Much of the current discussion about GST has focused on the tax structure and the complexities surrounding the implementation of the new system.

Less appreciated is the fact that GST, by changing all aspects of business, from the location of production and investments to logistical and supply-chain optimisation, could fundamentally alter the economic geography of India. To paraphrase the writer Pearl S. Buck, "In our changing world, nothing changes more than economic geography".

Prior to GST, the internal movement of goods was subject to a number of barriers. First, and most directly, there were taxes on the inter-state movement of goods and cross-state differences in VAT structures. Second, there were cumbersome inspections, especially at state borders.

A recent World Bank-funded study, undertaken by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, used GPS-time-stamped data of freight trucks (collected by the innovative Bengaluru-based logistics company, Blackbuck) to suggest that roughly 20 per cent of the transit time is spent at the border on verification of documents.

Indeed, anecdotal evidence suggests that trucks have been taking longer and circuitous routes to avoid inefficient and sometimes corruption-laden border-crossings across some states. GST will eliminate taxes on inter-state movement and harmonise the VAT structure across states (except for exempted goods). Border inspections should be significantly reduced – although, since inspections of cargo (to ensure GST compliance) and vehicles (for licences and compliance with technical standards, for instance) are still permitted, there remains a concern that harassment by inspectors and corruption may persist.

That said, GST is expected to result in a significant increase in internal trade – by as much as 30 to 40 per cent, according to some estimates.

Beyond the increase in internal trade, other economic factors are at play that can significantly alter the economic map of the country. The work of economist Paul Krugman has shown that when the costs of producing a good are lowered with scale in production, there is an incentive to geographically concentrate such production. If additionally, there are large transport costs, production benefits by locating itself near the largest market to minimise transportation costs (the well-known "home-market" effect).

In this setting, a reduction in transport barriers, as is the case with GST, can change the location of production within a country quite dramatically – away from the largest market to low production-cost locations, thus diluting the home-market effect. This also holds true in an international setting. Indeed, the relocation of production away from the United States to China in the last couple of decades was driven in significant part by the lowering of transport costs.

With the removal of barriers within India, another related outcome is the geographic centralisation of production and warehousing. This could mean that economic activity will increase in centrally located states such as Madhya Pradesh. Yet another possibility is the agglomeration of economic activity in the more productive states. Thus, with GST, the economic map of India will evolve – possibly in quite complex ways.

As economic corridors change, the demand for new investment in transport and logistics

infrastructure will increase. Supplying this demand will require a nimble reading of where markets will grow and where new investments will be necessary. This is crucial as even prior to GST, Indian economic growth implied a near tripling of freight traffic over a decade, with transport infrastructure not quite keeping pace. The costs of inefficient logistics are not inconsiderable.

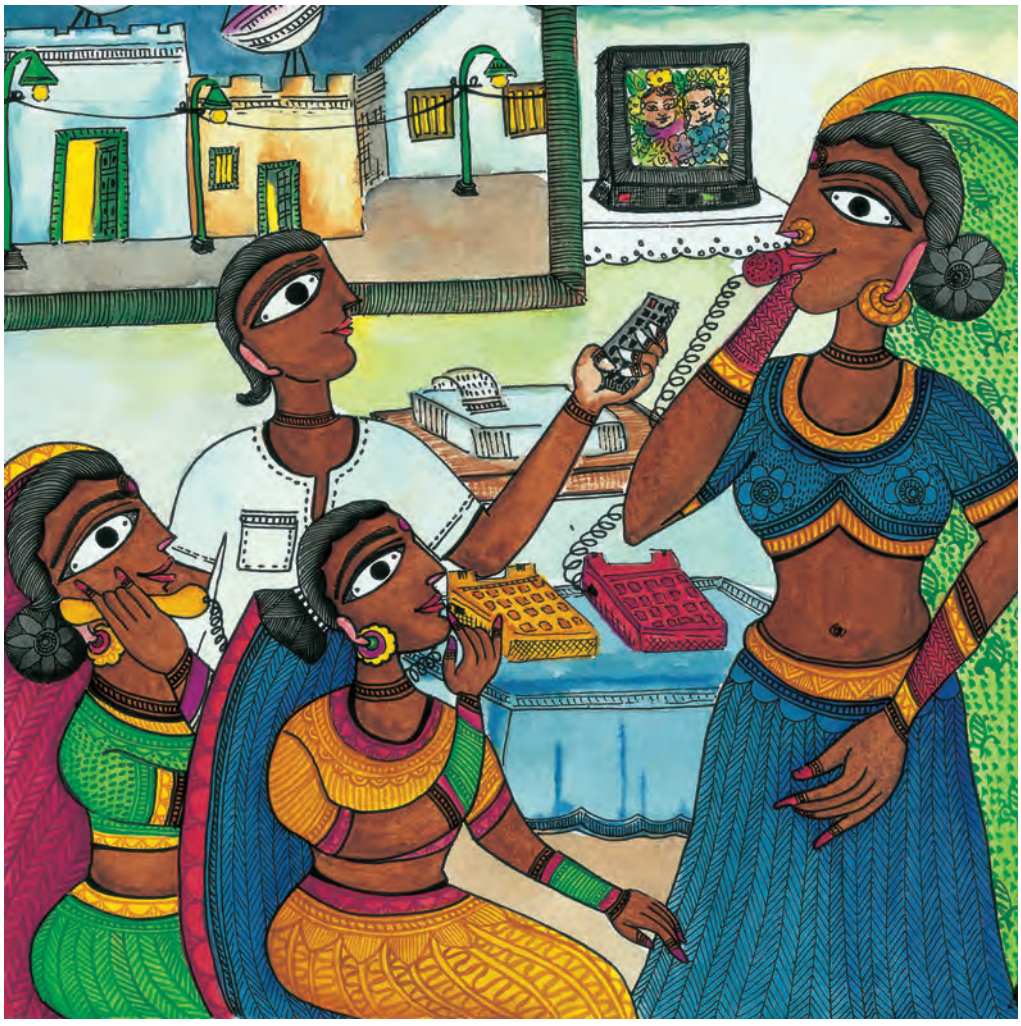
The McKinsey study, *Building India: Transforming the Nation's Logistics Infrastructure*, estimated that logistical inefficiency in India amounts to around 4 per cent of the GDP – this could well increase as the GST intensifies logistical needs Infrastructure is often identified as a "binding constraint" to growth. Perhaps nowhere is this truer than it is in India today.

Much economic and political effort will be required to arrive at optimal investment choices – on the modal mix, the balance between road and rail, air and water, on the location of the vaunted multi-modal logistics "parks", on technology adoption and on the setting of standards (for instance, on containerisation) to support inter modal transport inter alia – and to achieve efficient funding.

India's economic destiny will crucially rely on its ability to anticipate, support and leverage its evolving economic geography. As China's economic trajectory could teach us, productivity and growth require intention and provisioning. They are never mere accidents, they never happen serendipitously.

Junaid Ahmad is India Country Director, World Bank, Rakhi Basu is Transport Specialist, World Bank, and Pravin Krishna is Chung Ju Yung, Distinguished Professor, John Hopkins University

This opinion piece was originally published in the Indian Express on 11th August, 2017.



Recent Project Approvals

National Agricultural Higher Education Project

The World Bank Board of Executive Directors have approved a $82.50 million National Agricultural Higher Education Project to help the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and participating agricultural universities provide relevant and better quality higher education to students.

The Project will support ICAR's efforts to transform the agricultural universities into centers of excellence for higher education by improving student learning outcomes; raising their prospects for future employability, particularly in the private sector; and aligning their academic curricula with the skill sets being demanded in the agriculture and allied services sector.

It will target 75 institutions, consisting of state agricultural universities (63), deemed universities (five), central universities with agricultural faculty (four), and central agricultural universities (three).

Odisha Higher Education Program for Excellence and Equity Project

The World Bank Board of Executive Directors have approved the $119 million Odisha Higher Education Program for Excellence and Equity Project to support the Government of Odisha in improving the quality, equity and governance of higher education institutes in the state.

The Project will help the state improve access to quality higher education for students from all backgrounds, particularly from scheduled tribes (ST) and other disadvantaged groups, strengthen the overall governance and management of these institutes and provide updated pedagogical training to its teachers.

Government, government-aided, and block grant colleges that have an accreditation from the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) are eligible to apply for grants under the Project. Their Institutional Development Plan (IDP) will be evaluated by a committee comprising eminent academics from inside and outside the state. The first round of selection has already begun and the committee has selected 70 colleges and six state universities based on their IDPs. Another 70 will be selected in the second round which will commence after 12 to 18 months. The remaining about 660 colleges that do not receive the institutional grant will directly benefit from a faculty development program and the anticipated governance reforms.

In all, about 630,000 higher education students and about 21,000 faculty staff and 11,000 administrative staff at the colleges and universities will benefit from the project.

Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project

The $200 million Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project, approved by the World Bank Board of Executive Directors will facilitate agri-business investments, increase agriculture productivity and market access, and enable small farm holders produce crops that are resilient to recurrent floods or droughts in Assam.

The project will be implemented over 16 districts of Assam. Over 500,000 farming households will directly benefit from the project. At least 30 percent women are expected to participate in project activities. Specific focus will be given to women-led enterprises and their participation in the decision-making process of farmer producer organizations.

Recent Project Signings

Ecosystem Services Improvement Project

The Government of India, the Governments of Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh, the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education and the World Bank have signed a $24.64 million grant from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to improve forest quality, sustainable land management and benefits from Non-Timber Forest Produce for forest dependent communities in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh.

The Project will support the Government of India's Green India Mission's (GIM) goal of protecting, restoring and enhancing India's forest cover and responding to climate change.

It will improve the quality and productivity of the existing forest in about 50,000 ha. Another 25,000 ha will be used to scale up Sustainable Land and Ecosystem Management (SLEM) practices to prevent land degradation and desertification and increase above-ground forest carbon stock. This will help some 25,000 small and marginal farmers arrest the challenge of land degradation through sustainable land management.

ICR Update

This is a short summary of the Implementation Completion Report (ICR) of a recently-closed World Bank project. The full text of the ICR is available on the Bank's website. To access this document, go to ***www.worldbank.org/reference/*** *and then opt for the Documents & Reports section.*

Karnataka Panchayats Strengthening Project

Context

Karnataka had a long history of active rural local governments. However, its effectiveness and efficiency were limited, which led to disparities in service delivery and considerable delays.

Project Development Objectives

The Karnataka Panchayat Strengthening Project was expected to improve the effectiveness of service delivery by Karnataka's Gram Panchayats (village governments) particularly with respect to the management of public resources and the delivery of relevant services based on priorities identified by the rural community.

The project was expected to directly benefit 5,629 local governments (Gram Panchayats) across 39 most backward districts in the state.

Karnataka Panchayats Strengthening Project	
Approval Date:	29 June, 2006
Closing Date:	30 March, 2014
Total Project Cost	US$ 133.33 million
Bank Financing:	US$ 120 million
Implementing Agency:	Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Government of Karnataka
Outcome:	Moderately Satisfactory
Risk to Development Outcome:	Substantial
Overall Bank Performance:	Moderately Satisfactory
Overall Borrower Performance:	Moderately Satisfactory

Achievements

During the project period, there was a 72 percent increase in the number of Gram and Ward Sabhas (meetings) held, which exceeded the target of 60 percent. The number of sabhas increased from 4,305 to 7,444 in 2012-13. In addition to this, there was a 33 percent increase of women participants and a 21 percent increase in scheduled castes and scheduled tribes household members between 2006-07 and 2011-12.

The Project contributed to the roll-out of, and capacity building for, a financial management software – 'Panchatantra'– to help gram panchayats (GP) improve their financial management. The Project was instrumental in strengthening Panchatantra implementation by providing a desktop computer with MS office software to each GP in the state. In addition, it also supported the training of more than 10,000 GP staff on Panchatantra which accelerated its roll-out. All this ensured that panchayat budgets were executed according to plans and procedures. In addition, all GP revenues, expenditures and procurement decisions were publicly disclosed.

The Project facilitated improved access to basic services through its activities. More than 25,000 roads, 8,029 drainage lines, 1,652 community toilets, 2,947 drinking water facilities, 1,537 anganwaadi buildings and a number of other assets which were essential to address the infrastructural gaps in the communities were constructed.

Lessons Learnt

- A strong state commitment and action is critical to the success of decentralization. An understanding of the political economy of decentralization and the importance of ensuring a strong policy framework and enabling environment for decentralization is necessary to ensure success.

- It is critical that monitoring and evaluation and management information systems of decentralization projects are robust. A robust baseline and impact evaluation framework is important. The absence of a baseline in certain areas during the initial stages of the Project posed challenges for measuring progress. In addition, the key project objectives and intermediate indicators should capture the most important elements of resource management, service delivery, participation and inclusion. A flexible and responsive management information system will help track results on the ground and facilitate course corrections.

- It is important to have a performance assessment system that has good enough standards of accountability and is realistically tailored to the existing capacities of GPs in the 'backward' areas. During the initial stages of the Project most of the GPs lacked the necessary capacities to adhere to the standards, in addition to limited skills to compile relevant information. Future projects could have a simple system driven by certain Minimum Mandatory Conditions and intermediate indicators which are dynamic in line with the improving capacities of the GPs.

- Capacity building efforts would need to be better tailored and more appropriately targeted and rolled out. There is a risk that GP gains – in terms of their ability to deliver and maintain services – would not be sustained in the absence of continued and tailored capacity development support.

  In addition, such support could be better targeted towards community based organizations, facilitators, excluded groups and elected representatives. It would have been helpful if a strong capacity needs and gaps assessment was carried out prior to implementation.

New Additions to the Public Information Center

This is a select listing of recent World Bank publications, working papers, operational documents and other information resources that are now available at the New Delhi Office Public Information Center. Policy Research Working Papers, Project Appraisal Documents, Project Information Documents and other reports can be downloaded in pdf format from 'Documents and Reports' at www.worldbank.org

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India Publications

NLTA to Support Implementation of Orissa State Climate Change Action Plan

Available On-line
Published: June 2017,
Pages 252
English Version. Paperback
Working Paper: ACS15742

Odisha state is highly vulnerable to climate change owing to a vulnerable coast line, rain-fed agriculture, droughts, saline water intrusion, forest degradation and periodic natural disasters such as cyclones and flooding. Odisha will also become one of the largest contributors of Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in India due to the growing energy needs. This will also adversely impact community livelihoods and intensify water and vector borne diseases. The purpose of this document is to summarize the activities, outcomes and impact made by the World Bank's Non-Lending Technical Assistance (NLTA) to the Government of Odisha from 2014-17 for implementation of its State Climate Change Action Plan (SCAP).

South Asia Publications

South Asia's turn: Policies to boost competitiveness and create the next export powerhouse

By Gladys C. Lopez-Acevedo, Denis Medvedev and Vincent Palmade
Available On-line
Published May 2017,
Pages 181 **English Version**
Paperback
ISBN: 978-1-4648-0974-3

The report entails four case studies of critical industries: apparel, automotive, electronics and agribusiness.

It draws on relevant good practices from around the world. It shows that South Asia has great untapped competitiveness potential (including in all four industries studied).

Realizing this potential would require the governments in the region to pursue second generation trade policy reforms for firms to better contribute to and benefit from global value chains (e.g. facilitating imports for exporters), to facilitate the development of industrial clusters in secondary cities (cheaper and less congested than the metros) as well as to deploy policies to improve the capabilities of firms, especially SMEs.

India: Policy Research Working Papers

WPS 8131

Whose power gets cut? Using high-frequency satellite images to measure power supply irregularity

By Brian Min, Zachary O'Keeffe and Fan Zhang

This paper introduces a new method of tracking power outages from outer space. This measure identifies outage-prone areas by detecting excess fluctuations in light outputs. To develop these measures, the study processed the complete historical archive of sub-orbital Defense Meteorological Satellite Program's Operational Linescan System (DMSP-OLS) nighttime imagery captured over South Asia on every night since 1993.

The analysis computes annual estimates of the Power Supply Irregularity index for all 600,000 villages in India from 1993 to 2013. The Power Supply Irregularity index measures are consistent with ground-based measures of power supply reliability from the Indian Human Development Survey, and with feeder-level outage data from one of the largest utilities in India. The study's methods open new opportunities to study the determinants of power outages as well as their impacts on welfare.

WPS 8120

Unheard voices: The challenge of inducing women's civic speech

By Ramya Parthasarathy, Vijayendra Rao and Nethra Palaniswamy

This paper evaluates the impact of the Pudhu Vaazhvu Project on women's civic participation in rural Tamil Nadu. Using text-as-data methods on a matched sample of transcripts from village assembly meetings, the analysis finds that the Pudhu Vaazhvu Project significantly increases women's participation in the gram sabha along several dimensions – meeting attendance, propensity to speak, and the length of floor time they enjoy. Although women in the Pudhu Vaazhvu Project villages enjoy greater voice, the study finds no evidence that they are more likely than women in control villages to drive the broader conversational agenda or elicit a relevant response from government officials.

WPS 8119

Deliberative inequality: A text-as-data study of Tamil Nadu's village assemblies

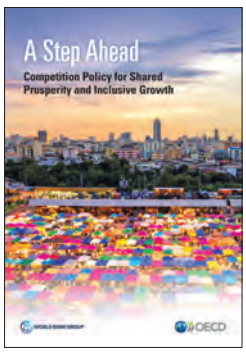
By Ramya Parthasarathy, Vijayendra Rao and Nethra Palaniswamy

Drawing on normative theories of deliberation, this analysis identifies a set of clear empirical standards for "good" deliberation, based on an individual's ability both to speak and be heard, and uses natural language processing methods to generate these measures.

The study first shows that these assemblies are not mere "talking shop" for state officials to bluster and read banal announcements, but rather, provide opportunities for citizens to challenge their elected officials, demand transparency, and provide information about authentic local development needs. Second, the study finds that across multiple measures of deliberative influence, women are at a disadvantage relative to men; women are less likely to speak, set the agenda, and receive a relevant response from state officials. Finally, the paper shows that although quotas for women on village councils have little impact on the likelihood that they speak, they do improve the likelihood that female citizens are heard.

India Publications

A Step Ahead: Competition Policy for Shared Prosperity and Inclusive Growth



By Martha Martinez Licetti, Georgiana Pop, and Tania Priscilla Begazo Gomez
Available On-line
Published: June 2017
Pages 252 **English Version**
Paperback
ISBN: 978-1-4648-0945-3

Sustainable economic development has played a major role in the decline of global poverty in the past two decades. There is no doubt that competitive markets are key drivers of economic growth and productivity. They are also valuable channels for consumer welfare. Competition policy is a powerful tool for complementing efforts to alleviate poverty and bring about shared prosperity. An effective competition policy involves measures that enable contestability and firm entry and rivalry, while ensuring the enforcement of antitrust laws and state aid control. Governments from emerging and developing economies are increasingly requesting pragmatic solutions for effective competition policy

implementation, as well as recommendations for pro-competitive sectoral policies.

Innovative Experiences in Access to Finance: Market-Friendly Roles for the Visible Hand?

By Augusto de la Torre, Juan Carlos Gozzi, and Sergio L. Schumukler
Available On-line
Published: June 2017
Pages 296 **English Version**
Paperback
ISBN: 978-0-8213-7080-3

Interest in access to finance and awareness of its importance have increased significantly since the early 2000s. Growing evidence suggests that lack of access to credit prevents many households and firms from financing high-return investment projects, which has an adverse effect on growth and poverty alleviation.

This report highlights recent innovative experiences in broadening access to credit in Latin America.

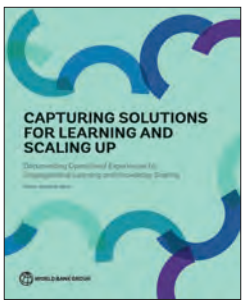
The little green data book 2017

By World Bank Group

Available On-line
Published June 2017
Pages 251 **English Version**
Paperback
ISBN: 978-1-4648-1034-3

The Little Green Data Book 2017 is a pocket-sized ready reference on key environmental data for over 200 countries. Key indicators are organized under the headings of agriculture, forestry, biodiversity, oceans, energy, emission and pollution, and water and sanitation.

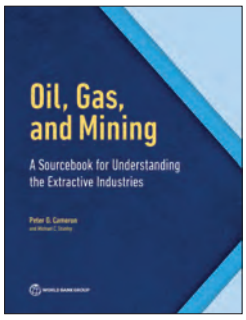
Capturing Solutions for Learning and Scaling Up: Documenting Operational Experiences for Organizational Learning and Knowledge Sharing



By Steffen Soulejman Janus
Available On-line
Published: June 2017
Pages 124 **English Version**
Paperback
ISBN: 978-1-4648-1114-2

This report shows you how to systematically capture operational experience and use it to inform decision making, support professional learning, and scale up successes. The captured lessons—knowledge assets, the central element needed for learning—are consistently formatted documents that use operational experience to answer a specific question or challenge.

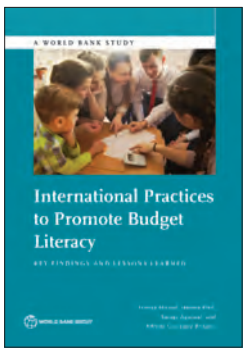
Oil, gas, and mining: A sourcebook for understanding the extractive industries



By Peter Duncanson Cameron and Michael C. Stanley
Available On-line
Published June 2017
Pages 321 **English Version**
Paperback
ISBN: 978-0-8213-9658-2

This report illuminates the spectrum of integrated policy interventions necessary to transform natural resource wealth into sustainable development, ranging from the allocation of resource extraction rights to the use and distribution of revenues. It recognizes and emphasizes the importance of the political and institutional context.

International practices to promote budget literacy: Key findings and lessons learned



By Harika Masud, Helene Pfeil, Sanjay Agarwal and Alfredo Gonzalez Briseno
Available On-line
Published June 2017
Pages 233 **English Version**
Paperback
ISBN: 978-1-4648-1071-8

The presented findings and lessons seek to inform the efforts of practitioners, including policy makers, educational specialists, curriculum experts, fiscal transparency advocates, and civil society organizations interested in improving education or civic engagement and accountability in budget processes.

This book presents 35 case studies from 34 countries on the basis of a stock-taking exercise of practices promoting budget literacy. A broad range of curricular content, pedagogical approaches, and learning outcomes for budget literacy are documented. Twenty-seven of the case studies focus on school-based initiatives, and eight on beyond school initiatives.

India Project Documents

Restructuring Paper Disclosable: Elementary Education III

Date 13 August 2017

Project ID P144447

Report No. RES27002 (Project Paper)

National Agricultural Higher Education Project

Date 11 July 2017

Project ID P151072

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Project ID P096021

Report No. SFG3501 (Resettlement Plan)

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Date 01 July 2017

Project ID P132418

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Mumbai Urban Transport Project – 2A

Date 27 June 2017

Project ID P113028

Report No. ICR4109 (Implementation Completion Report)

Uttarakhand Water Supply Program for Peri Urban Areas Project

Date 27 June 2017

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Report No. 117865 (Environmental Assessment)

West Bengal PRI

Date 22 June 2017

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Report No. Implementation Completion Report Review

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Date 16 June 2017

Project ID P160331

Report No. 116524 (Environmental Assessment)

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Date 27 June 2017

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Report No. ICR4109 (Implementation Completion Report)

Tamil Nadu Rural Transformation Project

Date 12 June 2017

Project ID P157702

Report No. SFG3427(Environmental Assessment)

Madhya Pradesh Urban Development Project

Date 27 June 2017

Project ID P155303

Report No. Project Agreement

Orissa Community Tank Management Project

Date 01 June 2017

Project ID P100735

Report No. Implementation Completion Report Review

From the Blogworld

And a river runs through it

By Atul Agarwal and Karla Gonzalez Carvajal

Integrating the Brahmaputra's innumerable ferries into Assam's wider transport network

Anyone who has visited Assam cannot help but being struck by the mighty Brahmaputra. The river straddles the state like a colossus, coursing through its heart, and severing it into two – the northern and southern banks. During the monsoon, so vast is the river's expanse – almost 20 km in parts – that you cannot see the other side. And so fearsome can be its waters that the Brahmaputra is India's only river to have a masculine name; all the others have feminine appellations. Yet, just four bridges, including India's longest bridge that was recently inaugurated on its tributary the Lohit – and one more under construction – span the state's entire 900 km stretch of river.

Given this formidable natural barrier, most of Assam's towns have developed on the river's southern flank, where the plains are wider. With little connectivity, the northern side remains cut off from the mainstream, and is largely underdeveloped.

What's more, small communities who live on the river's hundred or so inhabited islands, remain isolated. It can be quite frustrating to see a school or a medical center on the other side and not be able to get to it! Only Majuli, the world's largest riverine island and an administrative district by itself, supports schools and some form of medical facilities for its more than 100,000 residents.

Read more: https://tinyurl.com/ydcb67ty

Karnataka Becomes India's First State to Safely Dispose Biomedical Waste at all Public Health Facilities

By Suresh Mohammed and Anupam Joshi

What happens when infected needles, syringes, plasters, surgical gloves and intravenous sets are disposed of carelessly? Well, for a start, they spread hepatitis and HIV, not only among the poor rag-pickers who unsuspectingly handle them, but also infect all the waste around, multiplying the hazard manifold. Then, when the waste is not properly incinerated, it causes further damage, polluting the very air we breathe. Liquids wastes are particularly harmful; they can leach into the soil and contaminate the water supply, with often devastating consequences.

Yet it is heartening to see how a few dedicated individuals can make a difference.

Read more: https://tinyurl.com/y824ztoq

From the Blogworld

Chart: Globally, Over 1 Billion People Lack Access to Electricity

By Tariq Khokhar

In 2014, around 15 percent of the world's population, or 1.1 billion had no access to electricity. Nearly half were in rural areas of Sub-Saharan Africa and around a third were rural dwellers in South Asia. Just four countries – India, Nigeria, Ethiopia and Bangladesh are home to about half of all people who lack access to electricity. Read more in the 2017 Atlas of Sustainable Development Goals and in a new feature on "Solar Powers India's Clean Energy Revolution."

Read more: https://tinyurl.com/yananmad

Is technology the way forward for addressing mental health among youth?

By Varalakshmi Vemuru and Samhita Kumar

After an accident at his workplace, Bhoomi, a 26-year-old from rural Tamil Nadu, India, lost interest in work and isolated himself from everyone. His neighbors were at a loss to understand the change in his behavior. He was labeled a "lunatic," which worried his parents and propelled them to seek help.

Mental illness or disability can be a debilitating experience for an individual as well as his or her family.

Read more: https://tinyurl.com/y6vhaukt

Flooded rivers: Taking a bird's eye view

By Zuzana Stanton-Geddes and Brendan Chia

Floodplains are attractive areas for development, with over 2 billion people living within the world's 10 largest river basins. Yet, they are also at particular risk from overflowing rivers. Globally, river floods affect more than 21 million people. By 2030, due to climate change, population growth, and rapid urbanization, this number could rise to 54 million.

How can we enjoy the benefits these locations bring, without putting ourselves at unnecessary danger from floods?

While it is impossible to fully eliminate flood risk, actions can be taken to minimize the impact. A proactive river basin-wide approach to flood risk management may be one of the solutions.

Read more: https://tinyurl.com/yd4nnpsr

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By Hai-Anh H. Dang and Paul W. Glewwe

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