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HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

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Research Programme on Inclusive Development in Bihar



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Bihar's Development Challenge

For many years, Bihar lagged behind as India's growth accelerated, and poverty declined more slowly in Bihar than in India as a whole. In recent years, there are some signs of change, with more effective state policy and faster growth, but the challenges are enormous. There are governance and institutional constraints, underdeveloped infrastructure, low levels of human development, lack of local non-farm employment opportunities, etc. Above all, the state is still caught in the classical vicious circle of poverty with acute shortage of investable resources. All of these have to be overcome. An inclusive growth path is required which creates opportunities for Bihar's 10 crore people to share in India's economic success. This calls for both public and private action and a much better understanding of the economic and social mechanisms responsible for underdevelopment.

The IHD Research Programme

The wide-ranging programme of research of the Institute for Human Development (IHD) in Bihar aims to support policy design and implementation for inclusive development at local, state and national levels. It includes a cluster of individual projects on key aspects of development, carried out by IHD and partner institutions. These are designed to deliver:

- Increased information and understanding of the pattern of growth and its determinants.
- Better assessments of policy measures to raise productivity and employment and reduce poverty and social exclusion.
- Wider debate and dialogue on Bihar development issues.

A common theme in all of these projects is the development of public and private institutions, and enhancing the quality of governance. Recent progress can be seen in government programmes which are starting to reach all communities at village level; these advances need to be studied and understood if they are to be replicated.

The programme draws on IHD's extensive expertise in research and policy analysis in Bihar.

IHD Bihar Research, Phase 1 (2009-14)

The first phase of IHD Bihar research (2009-14) conducted research projects on the pattern of rural development and growth in Bihar and the emerging policy framework; the dynamics of development, poverty and employment and Bihar; rural-urban links, urban growth and industrialisation; and, status of women in Bihar; exploring transformation in work and gender relations.

This work was primarily funded by the United Nations Development Programme, the International Labour Organisation, Indian Council of Social Science Research, National Bank of Agriculture and Rural Development and Action Aid.

Books and monographs

- Gerry Rodgers, Amrita Datta, Janine Rodgers Sunil K. Mishra and Alakh N. Sharma, *The Challenge of Rural Development in Bihar* (Manak Publications, Delhi, 2013).
- Amrita Datta and Preet Rustagi, *Status of women in Bihar: Exploring Transformations in Work and Gender Relations* (Institute for Human Development, New Delhi, 2013)
- Alakh N Sharma, Amrita Datta and Joyita Ghosh, *Development Research in Bihar, 2000-2010: A Compendium* (Institute for Human Development, 2012)

Chapters in Book

Three articles in a volume edited by Himanshu, Praveen Jha and Gerry Rodgers, *Longitudinal research in village India: Methods and findings* (OUP, Delhi, 2015, forthcoming):

- Gerry Rodgers, Sunil K. Mishra and Alakh Sharma: "Four decades of village studies and surveys in Bihar"
- Janine Rodgers: "Changes in Rural Labour Markets in Bihar: 1981-2011"
- Amrita Datta: "Migration from Rural Bihar: Insights from a longitudinal study (1981-2011)"

Articles in journals

- Gerry Rodgers and Janine Rodgers, 2011. "Inclusive Development?"
- Migration, governance and social change in rural Bihar", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XLVI, No. 23.
- Amrita Datta, Gerry Rodgers, Janine Rodgers and B.K.N. Singh: "Contrasts in development in Bihar: A tale of two villages", *Journal of Development Studies*, 50 (9)
- Amrita Datta and Sunil Mishra, 2012. Glimpses of women's lives in rural Bihar: Impact of male migration, *The Indian Journal of Labour Economics*, 54(3). July - September.

Institute for Human Development Working Papers

WP 01/2010 Alakh N Sharma: "Political Economic of Poverty in Bihar: Nature, Dimensions and Linkages"

- WP 03/2010 Gerry Rodgers and Janine Rodgers: " Inclusion or Exclusion on the Periphery? Rural Bihar in India's Economic Growth"
- WP 05/2012 Amrita Datta, Gerry Rodgers, Janine Rodgers and B.K.N. Singh: "A Tale of Two Villages: Contrasts in Development in Bihar"
- WP 04/2012 Janine Rodgers: "Labour Force Participation in Rural Bihar: A Thirty-year Perspective based on Village Surveys"
- WP 01/2012 Gerry Rodgers: "Understanding Unequal Economic and Social Outcomes in Rural Bihar: The Importance of Caste, Class and Landholding"
- WP 03/2013 Shivani Satija: " Violence Against Women in Rural Bihar-A Case Study of Four villages"
- Gerry Rodgers and Alakh N Sharma: "Agrarian Change and Development in Bihar" (forthcoming)

IHD Bihar Research Programme, Phase 2, 2015 – 18

Current and Planned Projects

The second phase of IHD Bihar research programme includes projects in the areas of: Political Economy of Development; Poverty and Change in Bihar; Urbanisation; Migration and Development; Health and Nutrition; Food Security; Education; Conflict and Development; and, Governance and Institutions.

The core of this research is based on longitudinal datasets being developed at the Institute for Human Development, New Delhi. Over the past 30 years, a series of surveys of 36 villages in Bihar has collected a broad range of data on economic and human development. The first set of surveys was carried out in seven rounds in 1981-83 at the A.N. Sinha Institute of Social Studies, Patna and the International Labour Organisation. A second set of surveys undertaken by Institute for Human Development, New Delhi, cover the same villages in three rounds in 1998-2000, and a third set in two rounds in 2009-11. These surveys cover the same villages, carefully selected as representative of rural Bihar, and a stratified random sample of households within them. Since 1998, the same households and their successors have been tracked. Detailed village level data is also being collected.

Project 1: Political Economy of Development, Poverty and Change in Bihar

This research project covers several inter-related themes covering development, poverty, livelihood and patterns of change therein. The first theme, **poverty, vulnerability and well-being**, addresses the following questions: what have been the changes in the levels of poverty and well-being in rural Bihar? How do households slip into poverty, how do they emerge out?

What are the factors which facilitate movement out of poverty? What are the factors that impede it? Which are the most vulnera-

ble households in rural Bihar? What is the role of land, caste, class and other social variables in defining and perpetuating vulnerabilities? How can household well-being be measured on the basis of variables such as land, housing, assets, education, consumption and livelihood status? What have been the changes in household well-being overtime?

In a state with large presence of casual and migrant workers, the second theme, **labour markets and employment** is of crucial importance as access to employment and active participation in the labour market is one of the most important routes of development, poverty eradication and social inclusion. The main questions addressed here are related to the changes in the level of employment overtime, the role of education and skill, nature of youth unemployment in the state, changes in occupations, wage systems and institutions, changes in patterns of migration, and impact of migration, among others.

Gender relations are crucial to understand the persistence of poverty and are important instruments of development and change in a society like Bihar with huge gender gap and low levels of human development. The third theme, **gender, poverty and work** addresses the changes in the status of women in rural Bihar since 1980s in terms of various social, economic and political indicators, women's access to and control over public and private resources, changes in the incidence of women's work, and the impacts of increasing education and male migration on women, men and families.

An important aspect of inclusive development is social inclusion and participation of various sections in the growth process. This is important for development process among developing economy as a whole, but for a society like Bihar it assumes crucial importance. The fourth theme, **social exclusion and participation** dwells on questions such as the distribution of benefits of development among various caste and classes, men and women, rich and poor; role of social relationships and hierarchies, governance structure, economic constraints such as credit, technical factors, skills and education and other structural obstacles to faster and more inclusive growth, etc.

Project 2: Urbanisation and Development

In the absence of a strong non-agricultural sector, despite a large population, the urbanisation rate in Bihar is very low (11 per cent). In this backdrop, research on urbanisation in Bihar aims to: characterise the overall trend and pattern of urbanisation; explore the reasons for this low urbanisation in the state, and identify its regional pattern across the State and its economic and social characteristics; undertake case studies of towns/cities that will bring out the specific nature of urban development in towns of different types, and the patterns of inclusion and exclusion that result. The project also aims to explore the overall pattern of urbanisation and rural-urban linkages in Bihar using both primary and secondary data.

Project 3: Health and Nutrition

Food insecurities in Bihar continue to persist notwithstanding recent achievements in poverty reduction and improvement in few other social indicators. Combining rich longitudinal data collected under the IHD Bihar Research Program (IHD-BRP) on livelihoods, agricultural production and practices and typical issues such as migration with fresh household survey data on different dimensions of food insecurity and access to and utilisation of major public programs and social safety nets, this project aims to provide important insights into identifying the origins of the gradient of food insecurity, and how can public safety nets be leveraged to mitigate risks for the vulnerable, and improve food security outcomes at an aggregate level.

In addition, the quality of public and private healthcare services in Bihar will be studied for a better understanding of health system capabilities and responsiveness. The aim of this research would be to provide nuanced understanding of the complex dimensions determining the quality of primary health care services in Bihar, particularly in the rural areas. A systematic and comparative assessment of quality of care will be conducted, of both public and private health care providers, involving the key domains of provider competence and capabilities, motivational factors, technical dimensions of quality such as infrastructure and availability of drugs and other medical procedures on the one hand, and combin-

ing with experiences of care by patients, or the population at large. Government health facilities in the population would be covered, along with a convenient sample of private providers using respondent-matching methods. About 150 physicians would be covered from an equal number of facilities/clinics and about 10 exit-patient interviews would be conducted at each facility. The results of the project is expected to shed important insights into the behavioural and technical dimensions of quality of primary health care, and serve as inputs in possible reforms of the health system.

Project 4: Migration and Development

Heavy labour outmigration from Bihar is a key economic and social phenomenon. This project broadly aims to study the dynamics of migration at the level of the individual, household and village economy in Bihar at both source and destination areas. This, in turn, will improve understanding of the linkages between migration and development within Bihar, and, between Bihar and rest of the Indian economy. The study will suggest policy options for taking greater advantage of migration flows to accelerate Bihar's own development. The main objective of this research are to analyse changes in the pattern of migration overtime (1998-99 to 2009-11 to 2015); to examine the impact of migration on production and distribution of income; to study the impact of migration on village economy and society, on left behind women and children; to study the use of remittances – consumption, purchase of land, assets, house repair, education, etc., and examine if they have a large potential for strengthening the rural economy by creating new demand for goods and services; to study urban-rural linkages; to examine if return migration contributes to expansion of the production frontier, and economic development in the source areas, and if it can be used to improve the skill-set of (potential and existing) migrant workers; to study the journey and processes of migration, pattern of migration, labour market absorption, nature of occupations, earnings and working conditions of migrants at destination; and, to suggest policy measures for improving conditions of migrants at destination and enabling them to leverage greater advantage from migration.

Project 5: Education

This project aims to understand the governance of education at different levels of administration and institutions such as schools, colleges and universities in Bihar; to assess the quality by some measurable yardsticks such as employees and students satisfaction and understand factors determining quality; and, to suggest measures for effective governance and sound financial system for improving quality of education in the state. It studies the major problems and deficits in various aspects of education at various levels (school and higher education) in Bihar; studies if these deficits and problems are to a large extent related to governance issues; examines problems related to funding. It explores how stakeholders of education view the quality of education, and if deficits in governance address the issues relating to quality.

Project 6: Conflict and Development

Economic and social conflict is frequent in Bihar. It is important to try to assess its impact, whether is it an important factor constraint on growth, or whether it is consequence rather than cause. The proposed project would look into both rural and urban conflict. The violence against women will be on important aspect of this research. It will attempt to examine the shifting sources, sites and emerging forms of conflicts in a changing socio-economic and political context of the state and analyze their effects on development in general and marginalized communities in particular. It will also seek to identify the changing profile of competing and conflicting groups and their stakes in conflicts. The study would combine several methods-quantitative, qualitative, oral histories, etc. In addition an extensive media analysis will be done. To address the research objectives.

Project 7: Governance and Institutions

The broader issue of public institutions and governance structure underlies many of the economic and social relations, and this is a major theme of research. Comparisons will be made across different

policy areas, in order to draw lessons on the factors which lead to operational success or failure. A specific study of the effectiveness of intermediate level institutions is also planned. Another project undertakes a rigorous impact evaluation of the Nodal Anganwadi Centre (NAWC) initiative under the Uddeepan programme, supported by the DFID, under the Sector-Wide Approach to Strengthening Health (SWASTH) programme of the Government of Bihar.

Key Outcomes

Research Results

These will be reflected in a series of publications, and the databases developed in the course of this work will be put in the public domain.

Capacity Building in Bihar

This programme will help raise capabilities, through research partnerships with institutions in Bihar, and research capacity building workshops for researchers and policy staff.

Conferences, Workshops and Policy Dialogue

Results of the programme will be presented and debated in a series of conferences and workshops for both analysts and policy-makers.

ABOUT IHD

The Institute for Human Development (IHD), a leading centre for studies on labour markets, livelihoods and human development, aims to contribute to the building of a society that fosters and values an inclusive social, economic and political system, free from poverty and deprivations. It is towards achieving its goal, it engages in analytical and policy research, teaching and training, academic and policy debates, networking with other institutions and stakeholders, and publication and dissemination of the results of its activities. The major themes of current work of IHD are: poverty, inequality and well-being; labour markets and employment; social protection; women and children; marginalised social and economic groups and lagging regions; and governance and institutions for human development.

IHD has long experience of working on various aspects of the social and economic development of Bihar. It has carried out a series of empirical research studies, conducted several development evaluations and organised high-level conferences. It has established its Eastern Regional Centre in Ranchi and a Programme Office in Patna for focused attention on Bihar and the region.

Partners and Donors

Asian Development Research Institute (ADRI)

International Growth Centre (IGC)

Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR)

International Institute for Impact Evaluation (3ie)

More partners and donors will be associated with the programme as the work progresses

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