

**LANDOWNERSHIP, RURAL ECONOMY AND INTEGRATED  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES : A CASE  
STUDY OF MEDZIPHEMA BLOCK IN KOHIMA  
DISTRICT OF NAGALAND**

**ABSTRACT**

**A LANUNUNGSANG AO  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**



**NORTH-EASTERN HILL UNIVERSITY  
SHILLONG - 793001 : INDIA**

**AUGUST, 1987**

## ABSTRACT

The study of Landownership, Rural Economy and Integrated Rural Development Programmes (IRDP), undertaken as a case study of Medziphema block in Kohima district of Nagaland claims to be the first of its kind. The study projects the problems of rural development, its prospects and scope with special reference to selected villages in the block, which provide the scenario of the rural development in general and Medziphema block in particular. The central theme of this study is, therefore, basically a village oriented, micro-level aspect of study basing on empirical data collected from primary sources.

The entire thesis is divided into seven chapters. The first is the introductory chapter with three units in it. The first unit describes the studies of rural development in India, followed by the approaches to the study problem. The theoretical frameworks made by different scholars were found to be useful, while formulating our model of developmental strategy for this study, which has been described in this chapter. We have selected the following villages as a case study namely: (1) Dhansiri-par - a traditional Kachari village, (2) Medziphema - an Angami traditional village, (3) Molvom - a Kuki traditional village, (4) Nihokhu - a Sema traditional village,

and (5) Diphuphar - a mixed tribal village. Diphuphar, being a mixed tribal village, has 16 Naga tribes living together and looks like a "Mini Nagaland" in terms of ethnic composition. From this village, we have selected the following dominant tribes namely, (1) Angami, (2) Ao, (3) Chakesang, (4) Lotha, (5) Rongmei, and (6) Sema for detailed study. We have considered each tribe as a unit in this study; therefore this study covers ten units which represents eight different Naga tribes living in five different villages.

The second chapter deals with the background of the area of study which describes the location of the places at four different levels viz. State, District, Block and the Village. The physical location, settings, historical background, demographic characteristics at different levels etc. have been described in this chapter. Besides that, the level of development and also the related dimensions of study issues are discussed at length in this chapter.

The third chapter is devoted to study of land and its relations. Rural development as a process of transformation needs to be understood in relations to man-land perspective. In the history of rural development, therefore, the land relations becomes crucial. With this

perspective, this chapter attempts to study the land and land relations dividing into historical background of the land, the present state of land and its relations to towards development and the ownership system etc. Medziphema block represents a peculiar system of land-man relation, which needs to be carefully examined before introducing any developmental scheme to be designed for implementation. In the history of rural development, land has been the primary productive asset, the tangible expression of economic and political power. In the Third World countries, the control of farm land is the principal key to wealth, status and power. Whatever may be the landownership system, the programme should be made in such a way that they are based on local resources and satisfy the needs of the rural poor. The ownership system of land is found to be very peculiar amongst different Naga communities.

In Nagaland, only 14.25% of the total geographical area is owned by the State Government, and 85.75% by the village community and individuals. There is no uniform system of landownership amongst the Nagas. The system varies from village to village. This aspect of ownership system has been carefully recorded in this chapter. Because of the rapid growth of population in Nagaland,

particularly in this block with the limited area of land and its pattern of use, we found that in no time an alarming situation would be developing for the Nagas. This makes us to hasten for making proper developmental planning with a view to exploiting all other available man-land potentials, which are lying unexplored in the region.

The title of the fourth chapter is the study of 'Rural Socio-economic structure' which deals with various related socio-economic aspects of life. We cannot determine the socio-economic status of the people by studying only one or two aspects. Therefore, in this chapter, we have studied the level of income and expenditure of the households and villages: occupational structure, level of education, level of the standard of living on the basis of the houses, types, modern amenities used, use of durable consumer goods in the house and the religious aspects etc. have also been carefully examined. The results of the same is presented with the help of tables, charts and figures, whenever it was found necessary. We have tried to explore and present these aspects of study comparing with different villages and communities in the block.

Some of the revealing characteristics of the socio-economic status of the people of different villages are: very poor households constitute 32.14% in Dhansiripar village, as against 17.85% in Medziphema village, 7.14% in Molvom village (table 4.1). In Diphupar village very poor households constitute 15% among the Angamis, 25% Aos, Chakesang 8.33%, Lotha 8.33%, Rongmei 16.66% and the Sema 16.66% respectively. The average annual saving per household was found to be around Rs. 1758.61 and monthly saving per household was Rs. 146.55 in the block. The highest level of saving per household was found to be Rs. 283.33 at Molvom village of Kuki tribe per month and the lowest was Dhansiripar village of Kachari tribe i.e. Rs. 25 per month per household. Like wise this chapter attempts to present a comparative analysis of the socio-economic condition of different villages and tribes.

The fifth chapter deals with social organisational and the rural authority system, amongst different Naga communities. After careful investigation of the functioning of the indigenous system of village organisation, the author concludes that the fundamentals of rural development must be based on such a social network, which should identify the positive cultural aspects attempting a successful development programme. This chapter is also sub-divided into

two units: the first unit deals with the forms of village government and its organisational structure: the place of Village Council, composition, powers and duties as parts of developmental aspect. In the second unit, we have considered the recently emerged Diphupar village, as a model of tribal commune system. We hope that this kind of new social development would be helpful for future socio-economic development of the Naga society.

As discussed earlier, Diphupar, abode of 16 Naga tribes may be illustrative of creating a Naga tribal commune system for future. It has emerged from the level of a traditional agrarian base, which reflects the significant changes in the socio-economic scene of the traditional Naga villages. The pattern of social organisational set-up in this village is on the traditional tribal leagues. Unlike other Naga villages, the village council of Diphupar is a unique one, composed of seven different tribal hohos (assemblies). It represents a federal type of assembly system at the grass-root level. The application of a unified system of customary laws and custom and prevalence of the different tribal hohos at various levels in the same village is interesting. During time of investigation, we found that 30.55% of the cases were finalised at the Village Council level, 41.66% at Tribal Hoho level, 27.77% at

the hands of the Gaonbura and the Village Council Members alone on the spot without referring them to the higher courts. In the light of the judicial and administrative systems evolved at this multi-ethnic village a new model may be patterned as per the special Constitutional provision of the article clause 371(A) for the Nagas.

Besides an inter-ethnic model of development, large scale inter-ethnic marriages, use of a common language amongst the various tribes and freedom of different religious practices with ten different churches are notable achievements of this village. It also has six Primary Schools run by different tribes and three High Schools for all the communities besides other formal bodies. The inter-ethnic co-existence and experiment in living together may provide a way out for the future Naga indigenous social commonwealth. This chapter suggests the possibility of a new tribal socialism for the Nagas drawn on the Diphupar experience.

Chapter sixth attempts to examine the level of village development through traditional approaches of rural development like the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) towards eradication of the poverty from the face of the country side. The IRDP as an individual oriented target group programme has started in Nagaland since

1980; and it was merged with the previous programme known as the Small, Marginal and Agricultural Labourers Development Agency. We have tried to examine the concept, objectives, programme content and the strategies of development planning in this chapter. The IRDP is found operating in all the Government recognised villages in Nagaland through the Village Development Board (VDB). The VDB is a new concept, designed out of the experience of the functioning of Village Council in Nagaland and it is also known as the "Mini-Planning Commission" at the village level. It prepares the village development plans every year and also implements them.

Rural development programmes without the participation of the people at different levels will not be feasible. In this regard, VDB provides the answer, at the grass-root level. The limitations of the VDB, though it is too early to assess, have briefly been analysed in the chapter. We have found that the poverty alleviation programmes like IRDP as the very minimum-needs-approach of development have very limited scope for bringing about a positive change. It is mainly because of the fact that present developmental strategy has not taken the felt-needs of the people into account. When one examines the objectives, guidelines and programme strategies, one feels that they can be achieved

without the active participation enthusiasm of the projected targets groups. Thus, the IRDP does not benefit the targeted groups because of numerous defectives as identified in this chapter. Thus, taking the past and the present developmental approaches in view, we have suggested alternative strategy development for the future Naga society.

The "Naga Model of Development Strategy" is the concluding chapter in which we have drawn certain conclusions. As the Nagas are passing through a phase of an identity crisis, they are not likely to accept new innovations easily, which may strike off their identity. Thus, the present development strategy needs for a complete stop and it must infuse new inputs in taking accounts of their traditions and identities and, at the same time, the new scientific and socio-cultural base technological innovations are introduced from within. Our presentation so far on Naga scenario leads us to conclude that the Nagas will face the challenges of contemporary transformation positively only when the existing socio-economic structures are re-organised in the light of their customs and traditions. Such a restructuring attempt can be made by taking the advantage of the existing Naga system of commune, giving due role to the intermediate structures and tribal

identity through various institutional arrangements without which no meaningful development could be feasible. Thus, we introduce a new Naga model of socio-political structure at the grass-root level for the purpose of attaining positive socio-economic transformation. This model is based on the various principle enunciated by the scholars such as of "people's initiative", "maximum decentralisational approach, and "let them develop".

We anticipate two reactions in operating this model. Firstly, there may be resistance from the existing power structure, which may even lead to an explosive and conflicting situation, without which we cannot expect a positive change. The second reaction may be to bring about the solution to social, economic, and political problems and paving the way to a self-reliant society of their own. This will bring a thorough transformation as a part of general development and enrich the philosophy and objectives of rural development in a novel way. Besides these two reactions, the proposed innovation may have some other controversies, which will be justified because they shall be based on the principle of people's participation.

This concluding chapter claims that there is no other realistic model for rural development for the Nagas

beyond this model. However, the possibility of such an ideal type of development strategy designed in Naga way depends on various factors such as people's understanding and willingness to accept the idea rationally. Another aspect would be the creation of mass awareness, mobilisation and a gradual process of people's involvement in a planned manner. We have built up a thesis from which the NAGA MODEL OF DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY emerges. It is upto the people to accept, modify or reject it as a way out of the present ongoing decadence.

---

**NEHU LIBRARY**  
Acc. No. 103514  
Acc. to .....  
Date .....  
Class by 4-7-05  
Sub. Heading by .....  
Enter by .....  
Transcribed by .....