

# Status of Food Security across Major States of India: An Empirical Analysis

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## 1. Introduction

The concept of food security in the earlier times particularly in the 1970s concentrated upon building up national or global level food stocks is highlighted the importance of the physical availability of food stocks (Frankenberger and Maxwell, 1992). Thus in the 1970s, food security was understood as the 'availability at all times of adequate supply of foodstuffs' (UN, 1975). However the concept has undergone considerable modifications in recent years. Amartya Sen (1981) added a new dimension to food security and emphasized 'access' to food through what he called 'entitlements'- a combination of what one can produce and exchange in the market, along with the state or other socially provided supplies. Subsequently, Sen and other scholars put much stress on the aspects of adequate nourishment and adequate healthiness in achieving food security. Accordingly, there has been a substantial shift in the understanding of food security, and the 1995 World Food Summit declared, 'Food security at the individual, household, national, regional, and global level exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life' (FAO, 1996).

The available literatures on food security, in the context of India, have mostly addressed the issue by analysing these dimensions separately but much work has not been done on the construction of a composite food security index which would be of great help in analysing the status of food security under the combined umbrella of all the dimensions. S Swaminathan Research Foundation (2008) have only attempted to construct Food Security Index (FSI). Institute for Human Development (2008) has constructed a food security index for the state of Chattisgarh following Max-Min approach adopted by the index. However, the index does not have a normative basis.

# MEASURING SUSTAINABILITY OF SELF-HELP GROUPS

## A Case Study from Rural Assam

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### Introduction

Micro finance through Self-Help Groups (SHGs) is considered as an important tool of poverty reduction and employment generation for the poor (Basu and Srivastava, 2005). The SHG Model has registered a tremendous success in meeting various needs of the vulnerable sections of the society. The access to credit through SHGs has also helped women to meet their consumption as well as production needs (Galab and Chanderasekhar, 2003). "But the question that is being raised with increasing frequency in recent times is whether this mode of providing financial services to people of small means is sustainable" (Srinivasan, 2008). Despite its widespread outreach, triumphant savings mobilization and credit disbursements and high loan repayment rates, sustainability of self-help groups has not been clear and comprehensive. To avail persistent benefit from micro finance groups in financial intermediation, group sustainability has wider concern for donor agencies, practioners, policy makers and

## Measuring Sustainability of SHGs: A Case Study from Karimganj District of Assam

*Manash Roy*

### **Introduction**

A widespread impression has been formed that SHGs under SHG-Bank Linkage Model, when linked to banks form a sustainable model for providing access to financial services for India's low income families. The general perception, reinforced by many bankers themselves, is that SHGs are profitable clients for banks, and that SHGs are the vehicles through which banks can most effectively reach out into rural communities. However, fundamental question remains about the sustainability of the SHGs as a model for the supply of micro credit to low income families (Christen, 2005). Despite its widespread outreach, triumphant savings mobilisation and credit disbursements and high loan repayment rates, sustainability of self-help groups has not been clear and comprehensive. To avail persistent benefit from micro finance groups in financial intermediation, group sustainability is having wider concern in donor agencies, practitioners, policy makers and academicians (Shetty and Madheswaran, 2008). Sustainability of SHGs both at institutional and financial level is a prerequisite condition for ensuring real positive impact of micro finance on the lives of the poor (Shetty and Madheswaran, 2008).

The literature on the sustainability of SHGs is very limited and those which are available have mostly addressed the theoretical aspects of group sustainability. Studies made by Christen (2005), Thanka (2002), Nair (2005), Schreiner (1997), Srinivasan (2008) etc. have dealt with the conceptual and policy related issues of SHG sustainability without really going for its measurement aspects. National Council of Applied Economic Research (2008) has tried to measure group sustainability only in terms of drop-out rate of the group members and repayment of loan but has ignored the other important organisational and financial aspects. The present paper attempts to fill up this gap by developing a methodology for the measurement of group sustainability. Researcher have also conducted a case study of thirty SHGs under NABARD sponsored SHG-Bank Linkage Model in rural Assam to look into the issue of sustainability of SHGs

## Inter Household Variation in the Level of Human Development: A Case Study in Hailakandi District of Assam

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### Abstract

*The studies carried out on human development issue so far throw light only at macro level but remain silent about rural household based human development. The present paper is an attempt to develop a rural household based human development index, which would be of great help in measuring household based human development in rural areas. A primary survey of 90 households is also conducted in Nitainagar village of Hailakandi district of Assam to look into the status of human development for rural households empirically. The empirical findings indicate that the level of human development is very poor in the village and there exist a strong inter household variation in the level of human development. It is also found*

# Food Security in the Hills and the Plains of India

An Empirical Analysis

*Manash Roy*

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## **Introduction**

Indian states are characterised by diverse ecosystems in terms of varied topography and other biophysical characteristics. This feature has created locational advantages as well as disadvantages for the hill and plain area dominated states. The states in the hill are relatively more blessed with natural ecosystem services that are important for local, regional, national and international well-being in the context of sustainability. The hill areas, therefore, face unique challenges in addressing their developmental needs in a manner that takes care of conservation concerns for sustainable development. However, the hill states in India also seem to be at a disadvantage in terms of multiple social and economic indicators as compared to the rest of India. They face the dual challenge of maintaining their natural resource base and simultaneously striving for a development process which requires creation of jobs and income generation, sustaining local resource based livelihoods and ensuring a quality of life at par with other states in the economy (Rao, 2007).

In view of the hill-plain disparities in developmental status, as evidenced by socio-economic indicators, the present chapter attempts to address the issue of food security within the hills and also between the hills and the plains empirically. The prime motto behind this empirical exercise is to assess the nature of food security across the hill states and also to make a relative comparison between the hills and the plains in