

# **Early Extension Efforts in India**

(Part-1)

**Dr. Hitesh Budania**

## **Class outline:**

1. Scheme of Rural Reconstruction
2. Servants of India Society
3. Economic Conference of Mysore
4. The Gurgaon Experiment
5. Marthandam Attempt
6. Shriniketan Attempt

## **Scheme of Rural Reconstruction (1903)**

- **Sir Daniel Hamilton** formulated a scheme for creating **model village** in an area of **Sunderban** in West Bengal on co-operative principles.
- In 1934, a Rural Reconstruction Institute was also established which provided training facilities in cottage industries.

### **Limitations:**

- Scheme was organized by an individual without financial support of government.
- Area of operation was small and activities were also limited.
- Involvement of people was not adequate.
- The staff employed were untrained.

## **Servants of India Society (1905)**

- This was founded by **Gopala Krishna Gokhale** as a political society at **Poona**.
- It laid strong emphasis on socio-economic and educational activities.

### **Limitations:**

- Scheme was organized by an individual without financial support of government.
- Involvement of people was not adequate.
- The staff employed were untrained.

## **Economic Conference of Mysore (1914-18)**

- This was launched by **Dr. M.S. Visweswarya** as the Divan of **Mysore** state.
- It was a purposeful and methodical plan for achieving improvements over a wide range of subjects.
- Agriculture was one of the main points in this scheme

## The Gurgaon Experiment (1920 & 1933)

- Mr. F.L. Brayne, the then Deputy Commissioner of Gurgaon district of old Punjab started this.
- He introduced such improvements into the villages as the construction of manure pits and ventilators, and the use of improved agricultural implements.
- For the purpose of disseminating new knowledge among the villagers, Mr. Brayne introduced the idea of having a “village guide” in each village who served as channels for information from outside.
- He also encouraged the education of women.
- After transfer of Mr. Brayne, the scheme didn't make any headway.
- In 1933, Mr. Brayne was again appointed as Commissioner of Rural Reconstruction in Punjab and his work was further expanded.
- The Punjab Government aided the work financially in 1935-36, and later the reconstruction work was transferred to the Cooperative Department, and “Better Living Societies” were organized for work in the villages.

## Limitations:

- Village guides were not technical men. They were inexperienced and untrained.
- Work lost its momentum as soon as the central figure was transferred from the place.
- Attempts were limited to few villages.

## Marthandam Attempt (1921)

- This project was started in 1921 by **Dr. Spencer Hatch**, an American Agriculture expert at **Marthandam** (Place near Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu).
- It was run by **YMCA** (Young Men's Christian Association).
- The main objectives of this project were five fold viz. mental, spiritual, physical, economical and social development.
- The essential technique of the centre was “**self help with intimate expert counsel**”.
- He started a multipurpose cooperative with poultry, bee-keeping, seeds, animal husbandry and other projects.
- It kept prized bulls and goats, model beehives, demonstration plots for improving grain and vegetable seeds, poultry, a weaving shed etc.

- The most successful project was the **Egg-selling club**.
- There were honey clubs, bull clubs and weavers' clubs.

### **Limitations:**

- There was neither adequate funds nor government backing for the work.
- There was no continuous contact with the villagers.
- The programme was sponsored by a religious institution and hence co-operation of the villagers was partial.



## Shriniketan Attempt (1921)

- The famous poet and Nobel Laureate **Rabindra Nath Tagore** established a Rural Reconstruction Institute more popularly known as **Shriniketan** in 1921.

### Objectives:

- To take a real interest in village welfare.
- To help the villagers to develop their resources by teaching them better methods of cultivation, improvement of livestock, encouragement of cottage industries and inculcation of the benefits of co-operation.
- To study rural problems and translate the conclusion to action.
- To improve village sanitation and to make villagers sanitation conscious.
- To work out practically an all round system of elementary education in the villagers based on the scout idea (**Brati Balika**).
- To encourage a spirit of service.
- To train students and leaders in rural matters.

## **Limitations:**

- The institute didn't get much help from the government.
- The work was confined to eight villages only.
- The programme was organized by a single person.