

033 Comilla Co-operative Experiment

(Published in November, 1999)

a) Researcher's Identity

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b) Objectives

- i. To assess the effectiveness of comilla co-operative model; and
- ii. To find out the replicability of the model.

c) Executive summary

The Comilla Co-operative Project was started in the year 1959-60 as an experiment of the Pakistan Academy for Rural Development, Comilla with the specific object of finding out a system which will provide answers to the problems of rural East Pakistan. Therefore, the basic questions were (i) what system of co-operation was suitable for the existing condition of East Pakistan (ii) what problems could be solved through co-operation

A new rural co-operative system has been evolved in Comilla through a process of evolution. The village has been accepted as the primary unit at the base and to support the primary units a Thana Central Co-operative Association has been organised.

In order to test the validity of the new Co-operative System evolved in Comilla three other projects such as Natore in the district of Rajshahi, Gaibandha in the district of Rangpur and Gouripur in the district of Mymensingh were opened. The responses of the people were found encouraging. Their confidence in the programme was reflected in terms of their attendance in the training classes, purchase of shares of the Co-operative Societies and making regular weekly deposits. Having observed Comilla and other three Thanas the programme was expanded to seven Thanas of the Comilla district under the Comilla District Integrated Rural Development Programme. These Thanas were Chandpur, Hajiganj, Laksham,

Chandina, Kasba, Brahmanbaria and Sarail. Results so far obtained in the new areas confirmed the belief that the Comilla system could be made workable in all other Thanas of the province.

