

## Andhra Pradesh Micro Irrigation Project (APMIP)- A boon for the economic empowerment of agriculturists-success stories of Chittoor district

K. JAYACHANDRA REDDY

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### ABSTRACT

The backbone of India's economy is agriculture because of its high share in employment generation and livelihood creation notwithstanding its reducing contribution to the nation's GDP. Agriculture and rural development have remained an essential focus of India's economic policy. Among others the growth and development of agriculture mainly depends on the well structured irrigation management. India's agriculture sector is facing a severe problem of inefficient irrigation system from the gross root level and the irrigation sector is the largest user of water – almost 80 per cent of the water in India is taken up for agriculture. Water is a scarce and precious national resource to be planned, developed, conserved and managed as such, and on an integrated and environmentally sound basis, keeping in view the socio-economic aspects and needs of the states. The policy makers and agricultural scientists thought that micro irrigation is panacea for majority of the problems of irrigation due to scarce water resources. The Andhra Pradesh Government launched the AP Micro Irrigation Project (APMIP) in the year 2003 with attendant subsidies besides from a subsidized supply of power. The present paper highlights the success of micro irrigation project in Chittoor district.

**Key words :** Micro irrigation project

The pace of the economic development of a nation mainly depends on the balanced development and growth of all the constituent sectors like agriculture, industry and service. Since the dawn of history the agricultural sector had been playing a pivotal role in India's development in different dimensions than the other sectors. Agricultural sector is the mainstay of the rural India's economy around which socio-economic privileges and deprivations devolve and any change in its structure is likely to have a corresponding impact on the existing pattern of social equity. Sustainable agricultural production depends on the judicious use of natural resources such as soil, water, livestock, plant-genetic, fisheries, forest, climate, rainfall and topography in an acceptable technology management under the prevailing socio-economic infrastructure. In addition to the natural resources components, it is also essential to combine natural resources with capital resources, institutional resources, and human resources for sustainable agricultural development. Since the dawn of independence, the independent India's agricultural sector struggled a lot and reached various greater heights because of the importance given in the five year plans by the Government of India. The agricultural sector is

playing an important role in the India's economy and it provides employment to about 52 per cent of the labour force, accounts for 27 per cent of Gross Domestic Product, contributes 12 per cent of total exports and raw material to several industries.

Agriculture is the backbone of India's economy because of its high share in employment generation and livelihood creation notwithstanding its reduced contribution to the nation's GDP. The share of agriculture in the gross domestic product has registered a steady decline from 36.4 per cent in 1982-83 to 15.7 per cent in 2008-09. Yet this sector continues to support more than half a billion people providing employment to 52 per cent of the workforce. It is also an important source of raw material and demand for many industrial products particularly fertilizers, pesticides, agricultural implements and a variety of consumer goods. Growth of agriculture over a period of time is decelerating trend, the main cause for concern.

The speed of growth and development of agriculture largely depends on the well structured irrigation management. The India's agriculture sector is facing severe problems and inefficient irrigation system from the gross root level being one of them. Indian farmers gain access to irrigation from two sources- surface water *i.e.* water from surface flows or water storage reservoirs and groundwater *i.e.* water extracted by pumps from the groundwater aquifer through wells and tube wells. Surface irrigation is largely provided through large and

### Correspondence to:

K. JAYACHANDRA REDDY, Department of Commerce,  
S.V. University Post Graduate Centre, Kavali, NELLORE  
(A.P.) INDIA