



Research Paper

Poverty and food insecurity in eastern India: A disaggregated regional profile of West Bengal

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ABSTRACT : With the United Nations' Millennium Declaration adopting eight major development goals on 8 September 2000, the question of reduction in poverty and food insecurity has received major policy focus in several developing countries the world over. The paper intends to study the nature of income inequalities, food security and poverty among different sub-groups of population in Eastern India. It has been found that inequalities in terms of share of total income and population exist both in case of agricultural and non-agricultural income irrespective of sub-groups. The contribution of agricultural income in the income profile is less than that of non-agricultural income which exhibits the deplorable condition of agriculture and thereby the non-agricultural sector has an immense scope for reduction of income inequality even the fact remains that about 65 per cent of the rural population engages in agriculture. The population of India increased at an exponential rate of 1.64 per cent year on year (YoY) during 2001-11 and for West Bengal it's 1.31 per cent. On continuing with conventional production, the per capita availability of cereals would be 390 g per day in 2032 for West Bengal and 568 g per day for India. The adjusted R^2 of fit is 78 per cent for West Bengal and 96 per cent for India. There is a steady decline in growth of cereal production in India and the decline is more striking in West Bengal.

KEY WORDS : Inequalities, Food insecurity, Poverty, Food insecurity gap, Poverty gap

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