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LEARNING FROM THE POOR

Findings from Participatory
Poverty Assessments in India



Asian Development Bank

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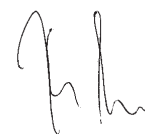
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Foreword

Since the late 1990s, policy makers, donors, NGOs and researchers have become increasingly interested in participatory poverty assessments and participatory evaluation of development initiatives for the poor. As poverty is multidimensional with economic, social, cultural, psychological, and other dimensions, issues surrounding poverty are best described by the poor themselves.

Keeping in mind the learning value of such initiatives, the Asian Development Bank had along with the Government supported two phases of participatory poverty assessments in seven Indian states. The studies were supported by the Department for International Development (DFID) and spread across 78 districts and 842 locations covering over twenty thousand poor people. Completed in 2005, the studies brought forth a multitude of perspectives on the issue of poverty. The synthesis report, **Learning from the Poor**, cuts across the studies to highlight common threads that emerge.

The participatory poverty assessments point to initiatives that have benefited the poor. They also point to priorities that emerge in the development agenda. The assessments encompass income, non income and expenditure aspects of poverty. They point to directions that will help in getting the poor to the centre-stage of the development process, by harnessing their own potential and facilitating and supporting their development through governmental and non-governmental, public and private initiatives, to close existing gaps and to create a proper enabling environment to eliminate poverty and deprivation. This book attempts one more angle to understanding and addressing the poverty challenge – first hand ‘learning from the poor’.



Kunio Senga
Director General
South Asia Regional Department

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Abbreviations

ADB	–	Asian development bank
BPL	–	below poverty line
DC	–	district collector
GDGP	–	Grambashider Dara Gram Parichalona
GDP	–	Gross domestic product
IAY	–	Indira Awaas Yojana
MDA	–	municipal development authority
MFP	–	minor forest produce
NGO	–	non governmental organisation
NTFP	–	non-timber forest produce
PDS	–	public distribution system
PHC	–	primary health centers
REGP	–	Rural Employment Guarantee Program
SGRY	–	Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana
SGSY	–	Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana
SHG	–	self help group
TPDS	–	Targeted public distribution system

About the Asian Development Bank

ADB aims to improve the welfare of the people in the Asia and Pacific region, particularly the nearly 1.9 billion who live on less than \$2 a day. Despite many success stories, the region remains home to two thirds of the world's poor. ADB is a multilateral development finance institution owned by 67 members, 48 from the region and 19 from other parts of the globe. ADB's vision is a region free of poverty. Its mission is to help its developing member countries reduce poverty and improve their quality of life.

ADB's main instruments for helping its developing member countries are policy dialogue, loans, equity investments, guarantees, grants, and technical assistance. ADB's annual lending volume is typically about \$6 billion, with technical assistance usually totaling about \$180 million a year.

ADB's headquarters is in Manila. It has 26 offices around the world and more than 2,000 employees from over 50 countries.

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