

Chapter 9

Epilogue

Where Do We Go From Here?

Poverty continues to persist. Economic, social, structural, institutional, cultural, and several other rigidities exist and prevent sections of the poor from entering the development circle. New entrants keep joining the ranks of the poor due to natural and developmental disasters and processes. Many also move out of poverty. This includes those who are in and out of poverty in cycles. There is hope for each of the poor.

The very positive outcome of the PPAs, which are based on a feedback from the poor, is that they endorse some of the current directions in policy and approaches to poverty reduction. The PPAs show that fresh opportunities have been created and the poor have availed themselves of these, thus pulling themselves out of the mire of poverty. This is very encouraging.

The PPAs also point to consolidating some priorities which will go a long way in carrying the mission forward:

- Provision of Credit and financial sector reforms to promote inclusiveness which has been identified as a major priority by the poor
- Skill formation and training in sectors that are emerging drivers of growth based on the impoverishment of those in dying conventional trades and low paid manual employment.
- Proper identification of the poor
- Focus on enhancing on farm productivity and off farm opportunities
- High priority to drinking water and sanitation

- Strengthening local institutions, with stress on participation and accountability,
- Fostering better expenditure patterns among the poor to ensure that the demand side dynamics of poverty is also taken care of along with the supply side.

More can clearly be done by keeping the poor at the center stage of the development process by harnessing their potential and facilitating and supporting their development (through governmental and nongovernmental, public and private initiatives) to close existing gaps and to create a proper enabling environment to eliminate poverty and deprivation. We are grateful to all the poor and other stakeholders who have shared their experiences through the participatory poverty assessments. We hope that the directions of development will throw up opportunities for accelerated movement out of poverty.