

APPRAISAL OF LAND USE AND AGRICULTURE IN ERSTWHILE MARWAR STATE OF RAJPUTANA

Balak Ram and J.S. Chauhan
Central Arid Zone Research Institute, Jodhpur- 342 003 (Rajasthan)
E Mail: dr.brmayank@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Marwar the largest kingdom in Rajputana was established in 6th century. The state spread over 91124 km² has 22 Parganas. Based on available old records from 1657 AD onwards, administrative and census reports and maps, the tenancy system, land use and agriculture of erstwhile Marwar State has been assessed. Abolition of Jagirs and development of land tenure and land reforms are highlighted. Marwar State map of 1939 was digitized and map showing parganas and villages of different legal status has been prepared. Historical development in land use, irrigation and cropping system are worked out and mapped by analyzing data from 1900-01 to 2009-10.

INTRODUCTION

Critical look at land use legacies are helpful for preservation of aboriginal values, knowledge, language, relationship with land and resources as well as socially sanctioned roles and responsibilities. Such studies are essential to understand the impacts of human activities in the past and projecting the trends of human impacts for the future. Marwar, the largest kingdom in Rajputana and the 3rd largest of the Indian kingdoms after Kashmir and Hyderabad, was established in 6th century. With a total area of 91124 km² and 22 Parganas, this state was governed by feudal *jagirdari* system under aristocratic setup. There were no land tenancy laws and entire land was vested either to state (*Khalsa*) or *jairdars* (*Jagir*) who collected revenue from farmers in cash (*hasil*) or in form of produce. Farmers had no rights and as such land use and agriculture was in very poor stage. Farming was totally traditional and subsistence. Irrigation from dug wells with traditional water lifting devices was confined in limited villages along the younger alluvial plains and valley fill regions. No land records data was available except for *khalsa* villages on few aspects only. After independence and merger of Marwar state into Rajasthan, the *jagirs* were abolished and farmers were made owner of the lands they were cultivating. Survey, classification and preparation of land records and settlement of land was undertaken; land revenue fixed for different category of land; ownership and use of land documented; various land reformation and agricultural development processes started.