

## Poverty

10.6 As per the latest estimates of poverty by the Planning Commission, based on the 55<sup>th</sup> round of NSSO covering the period July 1999 to June 2000, in the last two decades there was a significant decline in proportion of people living below poverty line, from 51.3 per cent in 1977-78 to 26.1 per cent in 1999-2000. In absolute terms, the number of the poor declined from 328.9 million in 1977-78 to 260.3 million in 1999-2000 (Table 10.5).

10.7 Results of two annual surveys of household consumer expenditure conducted by NSSO for 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 have also become available. As per the results of the 57<sup>th</sup> NSS round, at the all-India level the proportion of chronically hungry households (not getting enough to eat during any month of the year) has declined to 0.5 per cent in rural areas and 0.1 per cent in urban areas. As for seasonal hunger, 16 per thousand households in rural areas and 3 per thousand households in urban areas reported getting enough food only in some months of the year.

10.8 Though poverty has declined at the macro-level, there are wide rural-urban and inter-state disparities in the improvement pattern (Figure 10.1). In 1999-2000 Bihar and Orissa continued to be the two poorest States. In 1999-2000, 20 States and Union territories had poverty ratios below the national average. Significant declines in the incidence of poverty were witnessed in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Punjab and West Bengal. Haryana and Punjab have been successful in reducing the incidence of poverty by following a strategy of high agricultural growth, Andhra Pradesh succeeded in implementing its public distribution programme for food grains, West Bengal's success came from empowerment of Panchayats and implementation of land reforms, and poverty was impacted in Kerala by a clear focus on human resource development. The Tenth Plan (2002-07) has set a target of reduction in poverty ratio by five percentage points to 19.3 per cent by 2007 and by 15 percentage points by 2012. The targets for rural and urban poverty in 2007 are 21.1 per cent and 15.1 per cent respectively.

**Table 10.5 : Estimates of incidence of poverty in India**

Year	Poverty ratio (per cent)			Number of poor (million)		
	Rural	Urban	Combined	Rural	Urban	Combined
1977-78	53.1	45.2	51.3	264.3	64.6	328.9
1983	45.7	40.8	44.5	252.0	70.9	322.9
1987-88	39.1	38.2	38.9	231.9	75.2	307.1
1993-94	37.3	32.4	36.0	244.0	76.3	320.3
1999-00	27.1	23.6	26.1	193.2	67.1	260.3
2007*	21.1	15.1	19.3	170.5	49.6	220.1

\* Poverty projection for 2007  
Source : Tenth Five-Year Plan

Fig. 10.1

Poverty ratio at the State level

