

#### **(d) Employment and poverty**

1.51 It is well known that there was a significant decline in the poverty ratio from 36 per cent in 1993-94 to 26.1 per cent in 1999-2000. The Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-07) has set a target of reduction in poverty ratio by five percentage points by 2007 and by 15 percentage points by 2012.

1.52 Subsequently, 'thin' surveys for household consumer expenditure were conducted by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) for 2000-2001 (56th Round) and 2001-2002 (57th Round). As per the results of the 57th Round, the proportion of chronically hungry households (not getting enough to eat in any month of the year) 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.

1.53 Major initiatives taken for the social sectors during 2003-04 included: expansion of the Antyodaya Anna Yojana to cover an additional 50 lakh families; introduction of a community based Universal Health Insurance Scheme and a special pension policy called Varishtha Pension Bima Yojana; launching a National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level; launching a social security

scheme for the unorganised workers in January 2004 on a pilot basis in 50 districts; and initiating the setting up of All-India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS)-like institutions in six backward states (Bihar, Chattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, and Uttaranchal).

1.54 The Economic Survey 2002-03 reported that the rate of growth of employment, on Current Daily Status (CDS) basis, declined from 2.7 per cent per annum in 1983-1994 to 1.07 per cent per annum in 1994-2000. The deceleration of the employment growth was mainly due to near stagnation of employment in agriculture, although employment growth in all the sub-sectors within services (except community, social and personal services) exceeded 5 per cent per annum.

1.55 Some estimates of employment are available for the period beyond 1999-2000. As per the Annual Rounds conducted in July-December 2002, employment growth in the country improved to 2.07 per cent per annum in 2000-2002 as compared to 1.07 per cent per annum in 1994-2000. In absolute terms, additional employment by 84 lakh per year on an average in 2000-2002 fell short of the target of additional employment of one crore per year. However, these estimates are based on thin samples which may contain large sampling errors.