



Greetings from the Foundation.

We just got over a busy but fulfilling quarter at the Foundation.

We successfully conducted the final three seminars under the **FAS Young Scholars' Online Seminar Series 2023-24**, This was the second edition of our online seminar series. Young scholars from different parts of South Asia, including Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, presented their research on this platform. The Seminar Series has been successful in building a platform of young researchers working in the fields of agrarian studies and on socio-economic life in rural regions in different parts of the developing world. We are now in the process of thinking about the next edition of the Seminar Series, and welcome feedback and suggestions, if any.

The other major activity undertaken by us in this period pertains to dissemination of scientific and dispassionate analysis of different aspects of agricultural policy in India. We organised an online discussion on '**Agriculture and Budgets in India**'. In the backdrop of this event, we also prepared a social media post series #PublicSpendingOnAgriculture which highlighted some important trends on public spending on agriculture in India. These discussions will be a regular feature of our activities in the year.

The most recent issue of Review of Agrarian Studies, **Volume 13, Number 2**, the open access, peer-reviewed journal of the Foundation came out in print during this quarter. The issue is a tribute to M. S. Swaminathan, India's most distinguished agricultural scientist and one of the world's greatest policy experts, and institution-builders in the spheres of food, agriculture, and agriculture-related activities.

During this quarter, we also hosted a number of Indian as well as international researchers. The visits were an enriching experience for us, and we look forward to opportunities of collaboration in future.

Sandipan Baksi  
Director  
Foundation for Agrarian Studies



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## Processing of the UP Survey Data

The processing of the data collected from two villages of Uttar Pradesh -- Mahatwar in the Rasra tehsil of Ballia district, and Harevli in the Najibabad block of Bijnor district -- is near completion. The analyses of the data will begin shortly.

These villages were first surveyed in 2006 by the Foundation as part of our **Project on Agrarian Relations in India (PARI)**, followed by the recent **resurvey in June, 2023**. The analyses will highlight the changes that have taken place in the socio-economic conditions of the villages over a decade-and-a-half.

## Science and Technology in Agriculture

The Foundation is developing a project on Science and Technology in Agriculture. The topic has always been an integral part of the Foundation's vision. The Foundation has consistently published works that deal with different aspects of this issue.

Our first annual lecture by Professor M.S. Swaminathan was on "Science Shaping the Future of Agriculture." More recently, we have conducted an online lecture series where prominent agricultural

scientists discussed several important topics such as Seed Science, Soil Science, and Transgenic and CRISPR Technology, to name a few. In this quarter, an inhouse workshop was conducted as a first step towards developing a dedicated project that deals with some aspects of the question of science and technology in agriculture.



## REPORTS

### Trends in Costs and Incomes from Crop Production in India

FAS undertook a research project that analyses the trends in Costs and Incomes from Crop Production in India over a period of 20 years. The project was conducted in association with the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI). The report of this project was recently released.

This study is based on data from the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) to examine the component-wise and State-wise trends in costs of cultivation, prices, and incomes from 2000-01 to 2019-20 for a selection of agricultural commodities in India.

### Trends in Gender Division of Work and Wages in Rural India

A **working paper** of our project titled "Trends in Gender Division of Work and Wages in Rural India" was released in this quarter. This project was conducted by the Foundation in association with the Evidence Module of the CGIAR GENDER Impact Platform led by the International Rice Research Institute.

This study used detailed gender-disaggregated data on labour absorption, forms of labour, and agricultural operations for a diversity of crops from eight villages spread across five States in distinct agro-ecological regions of India, to examine the effect of various factors like agro-ecology, cropping pattern, level of mechanisation and gender division of labour, on gender wage gap.

## **Review of Agrarian Studies Volume 13, No 2**

The print edition of the latest issue (Vol 13, No 2) of our open access, peer-reviewed journal, Review of Agrarian Studies was published in this quarter.

The main highlight of this issue is the Tribute Section, which features twenty articles by renowned agricultural scientists, and social scientists, among others paying respect to Professor M.S. Swaminathan's legacy.

This issue begins with an Editorial on International Year of Millets. It features two Research Articles - 'Downturn in Wages in Rural India' by Arindam Das and Yoshifumi Usami; and 'Changing Rural Labour Markets in India' by B.Satheesha. The review article section of this issue carries an article by John Harriss titled 'Revolution in a Chinese Village: Ten Mile Inn'. The issue also consists of two book reviews, by Anupam Kumar and Venkatesh Athreya.

For further details, visit [ras.org.in](https://ras.org.in).

## **BLOGS**

### **Limited Options, Low Wages: The Working Lives of Dalit Women Workers in Rural Uttar Pradesh**

This blog discusses the salient features of women's work, especially Dalit women workers in the two villages of Uttar Pradesh, that were resurveyed by the Foundation in June, 2023.

Dalit women are central to the agricultural work force in Uttar Pradesh, as in many other parts of India. However, options of employment available to them are limited to agriculture, and restricted within the boundaries of the village. The blog discusses the arduous and unfair conditions of agricultural, non-agricultural, and care work that define the lives of these women. The absence of alternative employment opportunities constrains their economic mobility and social development.

## **Unequal Work: Explaining the Recent Increase in Female Workers in Rural India**

In this blog, Nancy Agrawal and Soham Bhattacharya explain the recent trends in female workforce participation rate in India, as depicted by the Periodic Labour Force Survey.

While an increase in women's labour force participation may seemingly reflect progress, a closer look reveals underlying disparities, particularly those marred with societal norms of gender and caste-based discrimination. The authors caution against an "uncritical celebration of the increased workforce participation for women".



## **Young Scholars' Online Seminar Series 2023-24**

During this quarter, the Foundation organised the last three seminars of the second edition of the Young Scholars' Online Seminar Series. All the seminars of this series were chaired by Professor Barbara Harriss-White, Emeritus Professor of Development Studies, University of Oxford.

## **Seminar on Caste Discrimination and Economic Outcomes: Evidences from a Backward Region of Maharashtra**

The fifth seminar of the series featured Dr. Nageshwar Bansode, Assistant Professor, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar School of Economics University, Bengaluru. It was held on Thursday, January 25, 2024.

Nageshwar presented his work, “Caste Discrimination and Economic Outcomes: Evidences from a Backward Region of Maharashtra”. His study draws on primary data from two villages in Marathwada region of Maharashtra. The study brings out the discriminatory structure and exclusionary practices, particularly in the market sphere, and their impact on the economic condition of households.

Dr. Shamsheer Singh, Assistant Professor – Sociology, FLAME University, Pune was the discussant for the session.

## **Seminar on Navigating Power Structures: Examining Women’s Agency and Empowerment in Contract Farming in Bangladesh**

In the sixth seminar of this series, Bisakha Dewan, PhD Scholar, University of Queensland, Australia presented her work, “Navigating Power Structures: Examining Women’s Agency and Empowerment in Contract Farming in Bangladesh”.

In this research, she examined how power dynamics affect women’s empowerment arising from their participation in contract farming activities. Using qualitative interviews, this study adapts a conceptualisation of empowerment from the development literature.

Dr. Itishree Pattnaik, Associate Professor – CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru served as the discussant for the session.

## **Seminar on Livelihood, Production Organisation, and Accumulation: A village study from Bihar**

The seventh, and the last seminar of the series featuring Mrityunjay Pandey, PhD Scholar, University of Hyderabad, was held on Thursday, March 28, 2024.

Mrityunjay's presentation was titled, “Livelihood, Production Organisation, and Accumulation: A village study from Bihar”. In this study, he examines the current development trajectory of the agrarian economy of Bihar, by analysing livelihood conditions, and strategies of landless labour households, production organisation of cultivator households, and sources of surplus and accumulation strategies of surplus-appropriating households. This research is based on an in-depth study of a village in North Bihar.

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The discussant for this seminar was Dr. Nelson Mandela S,

Assistant professor, Department of Economics at GITAM (deemed to be university), Hyderabad .

## Webinar - Agriculture and Budgets in India

To discuss the concerns about the falling levels of public spending on agriculture in India, the Foundation organised an online discussion on "Agriculture and Budgets in India." Professor R. Ramakumar from the School of Development Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, in a conversation with Dr. Deepak Johnson, a JSPS Postdoctoral Researcher, Institute of Economic Research, Hitotsubashi University, Japan, discussed some important questions pertaining to the topic.

Some of the questions included : What lies at the root of these trends? What are their implications for the different components of agricultural development in the country? How are they affecting the different sections of the farming populations?

The discussion was based on the findings of a report recently released by the Foundation. The report titled "Public Spending on Agriculture in India : 2010-11 to 2019-20" can be accessed [here](#) .



The Foundation hosted a number of visitors from India and abroad during this quarter. Some of them are listed below, to learn more about these visits, follow the hyperlinks.

- [Dr. Vijesh Krishna from CIMMYT.](#)
- [Professor Daizo Sugimoto from Meijo University, Japan.](#)
- [Tanuj Chawla from Tata Cornell Institute, New York.](#)
- [Dr. Asuka Yamamoto from Kyushu University, Japan.](#)
- [Dr. Yukiko Nakamura from Yokohama National University, Japan.](#)

These visits were an enriching experience for our researchers and we look forward to long term collaboration with these researchers.

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**Stay tuned with us!**

