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Catastrophic Healthcare Financing and Poverty: Empirical Evidence from Nigeria

H Eme Ichoku and William M Fonta

Abstract

The random nature of ill-health requires that policy-makers protect society, particularly the most vulnerable groups, against unforeseen extraordinary healthcare expenditures. The object of this paper is to analyse the incidence and severity of catastrophic healthcare financing using different definitions of catastrophic healthcare and to examine the links between this phenomenon and poverty. The study uses data drawn from Nigeria, a country with healthcare market structure and financing arrangements very similar to the competitive market model. We find that the incidence and intensity of catastrophic healthcare payment are very high among the Nigerian population but its contribution to the national poverty profile is relatively low, suggesting that the tendency for catastrophic healthcare expenditure may be more prevalent among the rich rather than the lower income households.

A Model for Sustainable Urbanisation: The Case of Karnataka

G S Sastry

Abstract

The emerging issues of on-going urbanisation in developing countries - such as top-heavy, city-region disparities, regional disparities, primacy, transport corridor-based urbanisation and distorted hierarchy - have been demonstrated for a rapidly urbanising state of Karnataka in India. To promote balanced urban development in Karnataka, a model of sustainable urbanisation has been evolved by combining the development processes of small and medium towns and large cities through i) sustaining the growth of large cities using the top-down approach, and ii) promoting the growth of small and medium towns using the bottom-up approach by identifying the potential growth centres in terms of their high growth performance, functional specialisation and associated resource base.

Emerging Issues in the Process of Watershed Implementation: A Comparative Analysis of Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan

U Hemantha Kumar and S S P Sharma

Abstract

This paper seeks to establish the various issues involved in the implementation of watershed development programmes and aims to ascertain how the different stakeholders act collectively to reduce poverty. In the context of the Common Guidelines 2008, the role and responsibilities of the different stakeholders at different levels, namely, district, intermediate panchayat and grama panchayat on the one hand, and the Project Implementing Agency (PIA), Watershed Development Team (WDT) and Watershed Committee (WC) on the other, are relevant. Some of the issues addressed in this study include different dimensions and levels of participation by the stakeholders to ensure livelihood security. In the context of the people's participatory approach advocated by the different watershed guidelines right from 1994-95, our analysis of seven select watersheds in the two states of Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan highlights the potential of watershed development in enhancing livelihoods. It brings out clearly the importance of the involvement of the different stakeholders in the processes of watershed implementation.

On Assessing the Fiscal Scenario in Goa

Mihir K Mahapatra

Abstract

The paper attempts to examine the fiscal scenario in Goa during the reforms period. Empirical evidence reveals an erosion in the fiscal health of the state's economy from the closing years of the previous decade. This is reflected in the quantum leap in the fiscal deficit, deterioration in the quality of the deficit and the growth of outstanding liability leading to a rise in the debt service burden. The root of the state's fiscal malaise lies in the growth of non-developmental expenditure during this period. In response to the fiscal crisis, the state government embarked on various fiscal measures including enactment of Fiscal Responsibility Act, creation of Debt Management Unit and design of Medium-Term fiscal Policy. No doubt, there has been improvement in the fiscal health of the Goan economy during the last few years but sustaining this trend without compromising on allocation of resources for the social sector will be a major challenge. The impact of the recommendation of the Sixth Pay Commission on revenue expenditure and the terrorists' attack in Mumbai on revenue receipts (from the tourism sector) will be distinctly visible in the state Budget. This suggests an urgent need for an aggressive approach to sustain sector-specific growth momentum (with focus on the tourism sector) and identification of untapped potential sources of both tax and non-tax revenues.

Technical Progress and its Bias in Motorcar Manufacturing in India during 1997-2005

Ritwik Mazumder and Maniklal Adhikary

Abstract

This paper observes the pattern of technical progress and its input bias in the motorcar manufacturing industry in India during 1997-2004 based on firm-level data, by estimating a time-varying transcendental logarithmic production function with two inputs – fixed capital and labour. The trans-log rate of technical progress was found positive but declining with bias in favour of fixed capital. Statistical tests for specification of the production function indicate that the underlying technology in the car manufacturing sector in India was non-homogeneous and exhibited rising elasticity of scale during 1997-2005. The performance of this industry was found satisfactory in terms of the growth rate of value added and technical progress, although it declined over time. The study further reveals that rising returns to scale in this sector in recent years has been mostly due to rise in partial output elasticity with respect to fixed capital.