

## Chapter 6

### PRODUCTIVITY INCREASES FROM FURTHER AGRICULTURAL DIVERSIFICATION

Much of the preceding discussion has focused on increasing the production of West Pakistan's traditional crops. We have seen, for example, that there are large potential benefits from increased supplies of water and from an integrated application of all the factors of production.

While increased crop output is an important aspect of rural development, it is by no means the only way in which development can proceed. In many areas, new kinds of agricultural enterprises could make possible improved diets and increased incomes.

It would be naive, however, to believe that further agricultural diversification will be easy to obtain in West Pakistan. Identification of new alternatives will require extensive research at agricultural experiment stations and at centers of economic and social research; furthermore, numerous farm trials will have to be made before new production programs can be recommended for widespread use. At the farm level, diversification will involve innovation and reorganization. In a rural economy where incomes are low, where indebtedness is high, where uncertainty is a major consideration in farm planning, where cultural factors condition economic values, and where self-sufficiency in food production has been the key to survival, farmers must overcome many constraints if they are to change traditional production patterns. Because wrong production decisions are very costly to them, the farmers place a high premium on what they know with certainty—even though new production patterns may offer the prospect of increasing their incomes.

In spite of these difficulties, diversification could play an increasingly important role in West Pakistan's agricultural development. Implementation of the plan described earlier should create a more favorable environment for innovation. For example, the control of waterlogging and salinity, and the application of increased physical inputs such as water and fertilizer, will allow the widespread production of crops that otherwise could not have been grown successfully. Secondly, increased communication with farmers through farm budgeting processes, demonstration plots, rural education, and other means can help to make farmers better informed and more receptive to new production alternatives. Finally, the increased farm output