

Rural Development and MGNREGA

Vikas Yadav^{[a],*}

^[a] Research Scholar, Department of Sociology, Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapith, Varanasi, India.

*Corresponding author.

Received 20 October 2022; accepted 15 December 2022

Published online 26 December 2022

Abstract

It is an important question for developing countries to face the problem of rural development. When the countries are free from imperialist power, then the people ignore the government to accelerate the process of development stalled under foreign rule, so that development benefits the majority of rural people. be able to reach In a country like India, rural development was started in a systematic and planned manner, in which various schemes played an important role. It was further strengthened by the 73rd amendment in 1992 by arranging for the formation of village panchayats, but after 60 decades of independence, keeping in mind the honorable aspect of development to remove unemployment and poverty in the villages, by introducing the National Employment Guarantee Scheme. People were given the right to work.

Key words: Development; Rural development; MGNREGA scheme

Yadav, V. (2022). Rural Development and MGNREGA. *Higher Education of Social Science*, 23(2), 108-112. Available from: URL: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/hess/article/view/12897>
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/12897>

INTRODUCTION

India is a country of villages, according to the 2011 census, out of the total population of 121.07 crores of India, 834 crores live in 597485 villages. Therefore, it is necessary for the development of India that villages should be developed. Keeping this in mind, priority was given to rural development in various five year plans of India.

Solitary development is not beneficial to any society, region or country but is harmful. Therefore, according to the new development strategies, the main objective of development was to remove the inequalities of social, economic life by providing more opportunities to the neglected and different people of rural society, as well as to improve rural life from the basic needs. Related facilities in which food, clothing, housing, education and health etc. were also developed. In fact, giving priority to rural development programs for the people living in rural areas is rural development. Under which changes in agricultural development, rural house construction, health, education, communication, social, economic structure have been included.

“MGNREGA has strengthened health, education along with social, economic empowerment by providing employment to rural families and providing them additional income. It gives the right to 100 days of fixed employment to the rural family, in case of non-availability of work, arrangement for fixed unemployment allowance has also been made.”^[1]

India is a country of villages, about 70 percent of its population still lives in villages. Due to which the village of India has always remained a topic of discussion. Mahatma Gandhi has also accepted that the path of India's development goes through the village. That is, the villages of India should be kept at the center in the policies made for the development of India. “Scholars like Gandhi, Vinoba Bhave gave the name of GramSwaraj to the governance of these villages, in which the last person living in the village will be able to ensure his active and creative participation in the mainstream of national development by attaining sovereignty.”^[2] Sustainable development can mobilize resources as a central element for its living, while preserving its identity and culture and lifestyle in the mainstream of this national development.

After independence, the path of development was adopted in a planned manner, due to which India provided the pace of development on the one hand, but

in this period of development and due to the increasing population, a long army of unemployed was created. Emphasizing on the speedy resolution of the unemployed at this time, Swaminathan said that “Assams and Biharis are on the rise for jobs today and the time is not far when the struggle for jobs will break out across India.” In order to remove this unemployment, the Government of India has run many schemes providing employment for rural and urban areas, but due to corruption due to improper implementation, all these schemes have not been able to reach their goal.

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO MGNREGA

MGNREGA is the first international law under which there is an unprecedented system of employment. The main objective of MGNREGA is to provide supplementary opportunities for employment. On 2 February 2006, UPA Pilot implemented by the Prime Minister of the country Manmohan Singh from Bandopali in Andhra Pradesh to 200 districts of the country and gradually in 5 years aimed to expand this scheme to the entire districts of the country and by 2008 all 604 districts of the country. implemented in the districts.

CONCEPT, DECLARED PURPOSE AND EXPANSION

Some of its goals and objectives have been declared in the Act. Now the employment of the seekers is a statutory entitlement. like:

- “To enhance and improve the livelihood security of households in rural areas of the country by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in every financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. empowered or for matters incidental thereto.”^[3]

- ‘adult’ means a person who has completed the age of 18 years.

- ‘household’ means the members of a family related to each other by blood, marriage or adoption and generally residing together and sharing food or having a common ration card;

- “Creation of durable assets and strengthening the base for the resources of the rural poor is an important objective of the scheme.”^[4]

OBJECTIVE

- To provide 100 days guaranteed scheme during the financial year to every family in rural area whose adult members are willing to do unskilled manual work.

- Creation of fixed assets in rural areas that increase livelihood.

- To protect the forest, water and environment of the villages

- Empowerment of women.

- To curb migration from villages to cities.

- Ensuring social equity and equality.

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS

The summary of the main features of Mahatma Gandhi Employment Guarantee Scheme 2005 is as follows:

- This scheme is being implemented by making a program under the legal framework.

- The scheme is now applicable in the entire rural area, so all the rural adult citizens of India can get the benefits of this scheme.

- To take advantage of the scheme, it is necessary for the family, family member to register in their gram panchayat, for which such family will have to apply in writing to the local gram panchayat.

- After doing due diligence, the Gram Panchayat issues the job card to the applicant. This job card contains the details, name, address of the applicant along with the photo. It is given free of cost.

- This scheme is not supply based but demand based like the earlier employment schemes.

- The applicant has the right to provide 100 days of employment in a financial year on demand of employment. The state can provide employment for more than 100 days from its own resources.

- On demand of work by the applicant, the receipt receipt is provided to the applicant by the Gram Panchayat.

- Application for work can also be done for individual.

- Gram Panchayats have a greater role in the implementation of the plan. There is a provision to get at least 50 percent of the work done through these.

- The work to be done under the scheme is done by human labor, the work by machines is prohibited.

- If the applicant is not given work by the Panchayat within 15 days, then he will be entitled to get unemployment allowance.

- It is necessary to provide employment to at least one third of the women in the works to be done under the scheme.

- There is a system to give employment to the applicants in their village itself, if they are made to work 5 km away from their village, then they will be given 10 percent additional wages.

- Wages are paid to the workers on the basis of the task performed by them.

- It is mandatory to pay the wages within 15 days after the worker has completed the work. Wages will be credited to the applicant’s account. In case of non-payment of wages within the stipulated period, he will be entitled to damages.

- There will be equal wages for men and women.

ROLE OF GRAM SABHA

The Gram Sabha is expected to oversee the works under MGNREGA and participate in planning. Prioritize them among the possible tasks to be done under it. Prominence will be given to the resolutions passed by the Gram Sabha under the Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme of the Gram Panchayat and Program Officer. The Gram Sabha will perform the following responsibilities:

- To recommend projects to the Gram Panchayat and to decide the development plan and series of possible works (priority).
- Supervision of works under Gram Panchayat.
- To conduct regular social evaluation (audit) of all the projects under the Gram Panchayat.

FINANCING

The following expenditure is borne by the Central Government under the scheme –

- i. 100% of the wages of unskilled workers
- ii. Under the scheme, the ratio of labor and material is fixed at 60:40.

The following expenditure is borne by the State government under the scheme-

- i. Fixed ratio of labor and material.
- ii. Unemployment Allowance.

WORK PERMITTED UNDER THE SCHEME

After the changes made in Schedule 1 and 2 of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA Act 2005, the following work is done in Schedule 1 of the Act - Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India on 03.01.2004 -

1. Category - A: Public Works Related to Natural Resource Management.

- Underground dams, earthen dams, stagnant dams, with special focus on refined groundwater including drinking water sources, stop dams, such as water conservation and hydrology for the augmentation and improvement of groundwater;
- Comprehensive treatment of water harvesting resulted in watershed management works like trench profiling, ledge ditch, buttress boulder barrier, pipe structure, waterfall shed department.
- Micro and minor irrigation works also creation, rejuvenation and maintenance of irrigation canals and drains.
- Plantation, tree growing and horticulture in forest land in common and forest lands, road frontiers, canal closures, cisterns, banks and coasts by duly granting title to households covered in paragraph 5.
- Land development work in common land.

2. Category – A: Individual Assets for Weaker Sections

- To improve the productivity of the land of the households specified in paragraph 5 through land development and by providing suitable infrastructure for irrigation including dug wells, agricultural ponds and other water harvesting structures.
- To improve livelihoods through horticulture, sericulture, plantation and agro-forestry.
- Development of fallow or barren land as defined in paragraph 5 to bring it under tillage. Unskilled labor in construction of housing scheme or such other State or Central Government scheme.
- Creation of infrastructure for promotion of livestock like poultry shelter, goat shelter, pig shelter, cattle shelter, fodder trough.
- To create infrastructure for promotion of fisheries like fish drying yards, storage facilities, fisheries and seasonal water bodies on public land.

3. Category - E: Rural Infrastructure

- To provide rural sanitation related to works like individual household toilets, school toilet units, Anganwadi toilets as per the schemes of Government departments to become open defecation free.
- Construction of all-weather roads connecting the rural road to the main road, construction of paved internal roads and lanes in the village, including lateral drains and culverts.
- Construction of Playgrounds.
- Improving disaster preparedness, including flood control and protection works, repair of flood waterways, choir restoration, construction of storm water drains for coastal protection.

FUNDING

Expenditure borne by the Central Government under the scheme –

- i. 100% of the wages of unskilled workers.
 - ii. 75% of the material item which includes wages of skilled/semi-skilled workers.
 - iii. Administrative and management expenses to the extent prescribed.
- by the State Government -
- i. 25 percent of the material item borne by the state government under the scheme.
 - ii. Unemployment allowance .
 - iii. Expenditure incurred on S.E.G.C.

MGNREGA AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The subject of rural development has attracted the attention of Indian policymakers and people for the past few decades, mainly because development issues have increased the awareness of the rural people, because without rural development, the population of rural areas

can be affected. A better life cannot be provided. For this, there is a need for systematic development, giving important place to both economic and social aspects in the rural structure. “Rural development through rural communities was introduced through community development programs in 1950. In which special attention was paid to the construction of infrastructure in rural areas through public participation.”^[5] But due to not paying special attention to rural areas by the industrial development of the government, till now the development of rural areas has not happened to the level at which it should have been. There are serious problems like

unemployment, migration, health, education etc. Keeping these problems in mind, the Government of India started MGNREGA scheme in 2006, to provide employment at the local level in rural areas. Along with this, it is also noted that the work done in this scheme can also lead to the development of rural infrastructure so that people can get sustainable benefits so as to increase the livelihoods of the weaker sections of the population as well as create sustainable assets. The government is continuously increasing the budget of MGNREGA so that people can get benefits from creation, natural resource management and water conservation in the coming times as well.

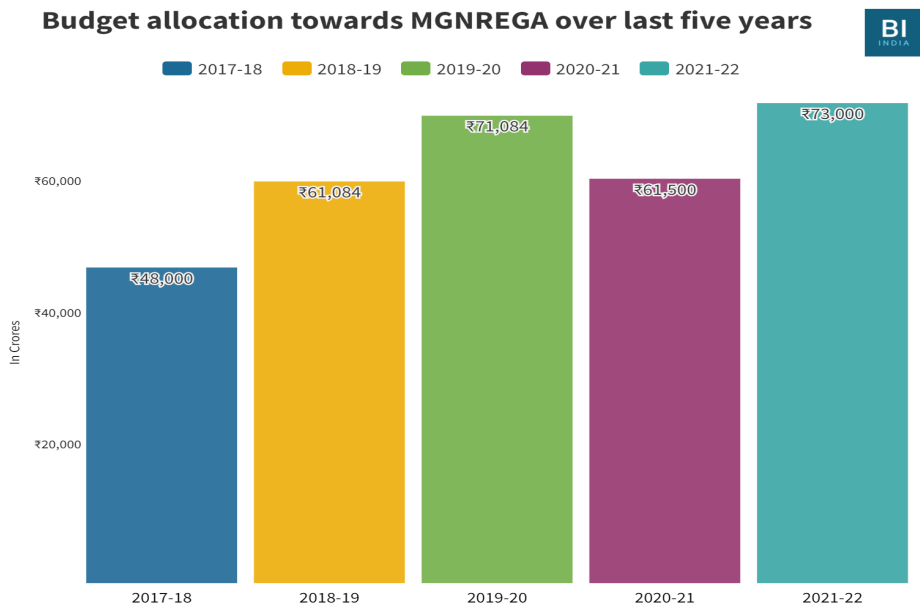


Figure 1
Budget Allocation towards MGNREGA (2017-22)

Simultaneously, there is also a substantial increase in the utilization of funds by the State Governments, which has increased to 73000 crores in 2021-22, the highest ever utilization of funds. Rural development cannot be possible without improvement (development) in the agriculture of the villages. Agricultural produce of the people should

be increased so that their income increases, as well as the disillusionment of the farmers with agriculture can be removed, for this, agriculture and agricultural allied works were given an important place in the works under MGNREGA. The expenditure on these works from the part of the budget is being increased continuously.

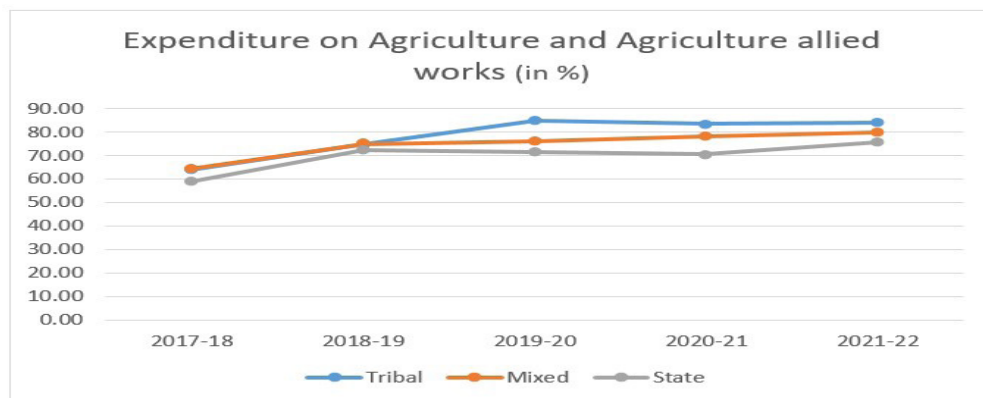


Figure 2
Expenditure on Agriculture and Agriculture allied works (2017-22)

Beneficiaries of both individual and community assets from agriculture and allied activities have experienced increased groundwater, increased crop yields and increased income. Along with this, by constructing footpaths connecting to the main road under MGNREGA, rural farmers have been provided an opportunity to connect with the market throughout the year.

MGNREGA has given rural women the facility of self-reliance and additional income by giving them work around their village so that they can increase the expenditure on their family (health, education, nutritious food) and save for the future.

SUGGESTION

For a country like India, efforts were made to complete rural development through various programs. It started with community development programmes. After this, programs like Jawahar Rozgar Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana, Indira Awas, Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana, Landless Employment Guarantee Scheme, Food for Work Scheme were run. “NREGA scheme was launched on 2 February 2006 to provide rural development and employment, which provides 100 days of employment. 64 crore was sanctioned for this scheme in 2017-18. Which is the highest amount ever.”^[6] But the government needs to pay more attention in the implementation of this scheme. In which wages should be paid to the workers within a fixed period. “Adequate arrangements should be made for grievance redressal of the scheme. Along with this, the daily wages should be increased for the reduced participation of workers in this scheme due to low wages.”^[7] The role of Gram Sabha should be ensured while completing the social audit on time.

CONCLUSION

In an article published in The Indian Express, July 2018, Jo Jean Tres pointed out four aspects related to MGNREGA that the scheme can be strengthened by focusing on-

- i. Reduced demand for work due to low wages.
- ii. Late payment and less compensation to workers.

iii. Technological interventions like National Electronic Funds Management System and Aadhaar Payment Bridge System, delay in payments.

iv. Inadequate grievance redressal system.

Along with these points, the corruption spread in MGNREGA and the government should strengthen it by paying the laborers at the right time. Due to which the economic problems of the farmers will be removed, but the lives of lakhs of landless rural families dependent on wages will be happy, so that the objectives of economic equality and inclusive development can be fulfilled. “The MGNREGA scheme has improved the creation of public assets, which has increased productivity, wages and employment. Because if there are less people providing work in the village, then they have the ability to reduce the wages of the workers, but MGNREGA has increased the wages of laborers by giving work in the village itself at the minimum wage rate.”^[8]

Overall, “MGNREGA has strengthened the human side of development by strengthening rural infrastructure, due to which the development of the village, development of rural people has also become possible because economic surveys show that the income of MNREGA job card holders has increased by 13 percent increase.”^[9]

REFERENCES

- Annual Report, 2020-21 Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India.
- Economic Survey 2021 - 22, Ministry of Finance Department of Economic Affairs, Government of India.
- Karthik Muraleedharan, March 11, 2019 Hindustan Daily Newspaper Annual Budget, Government of India.
- Mahatma Gandhi NREGA Review, 2006 - 12, Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India.
- Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Government of India (2018, Aug.). Yojana Monthly Magazine.
- Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Government of India. (2021, Sep.). *Kurukshetra Monthly Magazine*.
- National Employment Guarantee Act, Government of India, 2005.
- Trez, J., & Sen, A. (2018). *India and its Contradictions*. Rajkamal Publications.
- www.narega.nic.in/