



NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GENERATION GUARANTEE SCHEME IN INDIA ON RURAL POVERTY

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Abstract:

India has become the second most popular the most poverty-stricken countries. Seventy percent of people live in rural area. Poverty is widespread in India, with the Nation; developing economies including India have been plagued by skewed distribution of nation's resources leading to poverty, illiteracy, low consumption and investment, lagged growth and the like. Economic reforms were introduced in India in 1991, after which there is a great deal of discussion on its impact on growth, employment and poverty in rural areas. Rural poverty and unemployment in India have grown in an unprecedented Manner during the last few decades. Rural poverty and unemployment in India have grown in an unprecedented manner during the last few decades. , the number of the programmes had increased and while some of the programmes provided for administrative costs of the DRDAs, others did not. There was no uniformity among the different programmes to administrative costs. Keeping in view, the need for an effective agency at the district level to co-ordinate the anti-poverty effort from Central or State Governments. They also ensure whether the accounts are properly maintained including the funds allocated to fund Employment generation central government

Key Words: Employment Generation MGNREGA Rural Employment

1. Introduction:

India has been plagued by skewed distribution of nation's resources leading to poverty, illiteracy, low consumption and investment, lagged growth and the like. Development economists have often cautioned that unless poverty is eradicated, growth potential of an economy cannot be harnessed justifiably. The key to the redistribution of resources lies in the creation of employment opportunities for the poor. In the context of poverty and unemployment, welfare programmes have been an important tool to alleviate the above in developed as well as developing countries for many years. In countries with high unemployment rates, transfer benefits from welfare programmes can prevent poverty from worsening, especially during lean periods. Eradication of poverty in India is generally only considered to be a long – term goal. Since 1950s, the Indian Government and non – governmental organizations (NGO) have initiated several programmes to alleviate poverty, including subsidizing food and other necessities, increased access to loans, improving agricultural techniques and price supports, and promoting education and family planning. India has a long history of direct and targeted interventions to fight poverty through it. Economic reforms were introduced in India in 1991, after which there is a great deal of discussion on its impact on growth, employment and poverty in rural areas. Rural poverty and unemployment in India have grown in an unprecedented manner during the last few decades.

District Rural Development Agency (DRDA):

The District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) has traditionally been the principal organ at the District level to oversee the implementation of different anti-poverty programmes. Since its inception, the administrative costs of the DRDAs were met by way of setting apart a share of the allocations for each programme. However, of late, the number of the programmes had increased and while some of the programmes provided for administrative costs of the DRDAs, others did not. There was no uniformity among the different programmes to administrative costs. Keeping in view, the need for an effective agency at the district level to coordinate the anti-poverty effort, a new Centrally Sponsored Scheme for strengthening the DRDAs was introduced with effect from 1st April, 1999. Accordingly, the administrative costs were fulfilled by providing a separate budget provisions. This scheme which is funded on a 75:25 basis between Centre and States, aims at strengthening and professionalising the DRDAs.

Act and Scheme:

Why is it important to have an Act, and not just an employment "scheme"? An Act provides a legal guarantee of employment. This places a judicially enforceable obligation on the state, and gives bargaining power to the labourers. It creates accountability. By contrast, a scheme does not involve any legal entitlements, and leaves labourers at the mercy of Government officials. There have been numerous employment schemes in the past: the Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS), National Rural Employment Programme (NREP), Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY), Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY), National Food for Work Programme (NFFWP), among others. Most of them have failed to bring any security in people's lives. Often people are not even aware of them. There is another important difference between a scheme and an Act. Schemes come and go, but laws are more durable. A scheme can be trimmed or even cancelled by a bureaucrat, whereas changing a law requires

Poverty Eradication Programmes:

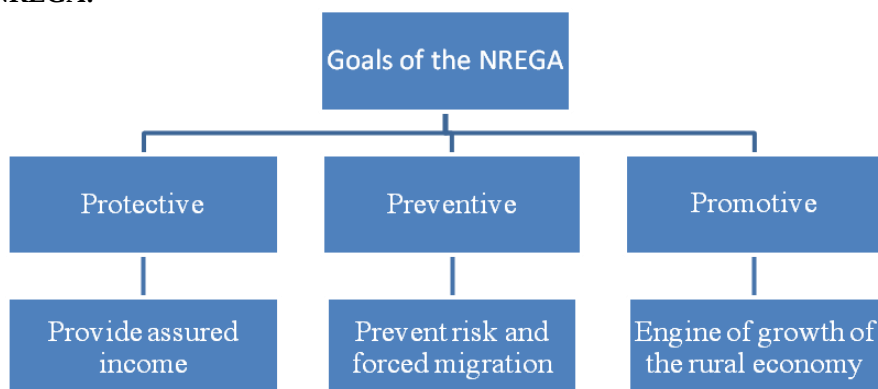
As the foundations of Indian freedom movement were built upon economic Nationalism conceptualized around the correlation between colonization and pauperization in the planning for reconstruction of Indian polity and economy after freedom, the Gandhian of Hind Swaraj (1909) was an important basis of the approach of rural development movement spread in different parts of post – colonial India under the leadership of Vinoba Bhave under the umbrella of Sarvodaya.

Short Coming of the Employment Programmes in India:

These Programmes have generated much needed wage employment for the unemployed and poor. However, they have suffered from the following shortcoming.

- ✓ The allocation of funds is low and utilization is even lower.
- ✓ Minimum wages are not paid due to high productivity norms under piece rated work
- ✓ There are also huge delays in wage payment.
- ✓ The number of person – days of wage employment provided per family is also very low, inadequate to help the beneficiaries to derive a sustainable livelihood and become non – poor.
- ✓ Village level monitoring and vigilance committees are usually not constituted in most places, which resulted in very little accountability and transparency.
- ✓ No attention is given to capacity building of the local functionaries and workers at the village level. Where the works are executed by contractors, the problem of non – payment of minimum wages and delayed wage payment is even more severe.
- ✓ There is top – down bureaucratic approach in implementation and planning.
- ✓ Women's participation in planning and works has been low and their tasks at worksites are invisible, unpaid and subsumed under the overall labour process.
- ✓ These are supply – driven programmes.

Goals of MGNREGA:



Source: Report of the IIT (Kharagpur) for ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, New Delhi.

The choice of works suggested in the Act address causes of chronic poverty like drought, deforestation, soil erosion, so that the process of employment generation is on a sustainable basis.

- ✓ To initiate new ways of doing business, as a model of governance reform anchored on the principles of transparency and grass root democracy.

Salient Features of the MGNREGA:

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is the first ever law internationally, that guarantees wage employment in an unprecedented scale. Salient features of the Act are summarized below.

- ✓ Adult members of a rural household, willing to do unskilled manual work, may apply for registration in writing or orally to the local Gram Panchayat.
- ✓ The Gram Panchayat after due verification will issue a Job card.
- ✓ The Job card will bear the photograph of all adult members of the household willing to work under MGNREGA and is free of cost.
- ✓ A job card holder may submit a written application for employment to the Gram Panchayat (GP) stating the time and duration for which work is sought.
- ✓ The Job Card should be issued within 15 days of application.
- ✓ The period of employment shall generally be at least fourteen days continuously with not more than six days in a week.
- ✓ After accepting the valid application for work, the Gram Panchayat shall issue a dated receipt to the applicant.

- ✓ Employment will be given within 15 days of application for work. If an applicant for employment has been sought in the case of an advance application, whichever is later, he/she shall be entitled to a daily unemployment allowance.
- ✓ Unemployment allowance will be within the liability of the State Government and shall be paid to the applicants of a household subject to the entitlement of the household at such rate as may be specified by the state government.
- ✓ Unemployment allowance rate shall be less than one-fourth of the wage rate for the first thirty days during the financial year and not less than one-half of the wage rates for the remaining period of the financial year.
 - Water conservation and water harvesting
 - Drought proofing (including plantation and a forestation)
 - Irrigation canals including micro and minor irrigation works.
 - Flood control and protection works
 - Minor irrigation, horticulture and land development on the land of SC/ST/BPL/IAY (Indira Awas Yojana) and reform beneficiaries.
 - Renovation of traditional water bodies including desisting of tanks
 - Land Development
 - Rural Connectivity.
- ✓ A 60:40 wage and ma Since MGNREGA scheme have been sponsored by the Central Government; the State Government does not show a keen interest in successfully implementing them. The District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) is manned by State Government employees. Hence, they are not motivated enough to work hard for the success of this scheme. They tend to concentrate more on State sponsored scheme financed by State level financial institutions.

Conclusion:

India embarked on an ambitious attempt to fight rural poverty. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act of 2005 created a justifiable "right to work" for all households in rural India through the National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme. Poorer States of India have more demand for work under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. However, we find considerable unmet demand for work on the scheme in all States and more so in the poorest ones, where the scheme is needed most. Nonetheless, the scheme is reaching the rural poor and backward classes and is attracting poor women into the workforce. District Rural Development Agencies (DRDA) came into existence from 01.04.1980 and studied many rural development programme to create employment and to tackle special regional or individual problems for the economic prosperity of the rural people. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act

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