



Online Journal

ISSN : 2347 - 9671 www . epratrust.com

## CHANGING CONTOUR OF RURAL FOOD SECURITY AND LIVELIHOOD ISSUES THROUGH MGNREGS: A PERSPECTIVE

**Dr. Sunitha V Ganiger\***

*\*Assistant Professor and Co-ordinator, Department of Studies and Research in Sociology, Tumkur University, Tumkur, Karnataka*

### ABSTRACT

The agricultural sector has reached the saturation point as far as employment generation is concerned. People no more would like their future generation to continue with their traditional or hereditary occupation, whether it is agriculture or any other occupation as it is hardly promising in future. Food security, climate change, employment, agricultural development and sustainability are presently being debated as emerging issues in rural development. Sociology and economical issues are becoming pertinent in the process of socio-economical development and particularly in agriculture and rural development. MGNREGS has addressed to various sociological and economic issues and has thereby created an avant-garde status in rural society. The paper makes an attempt to understand the role played by MGNREGS in enhancing the livelihood of villagers.

**KEYWORDS:** Livelihood, employment and sustainable development

### INTRODUCTION

Food security, climate change, employment, agricultural development and sustainability are presently being debated as emerging issues in rural development. Sociology and economical issues are becoming pertinent in the process of socio-

economical development and particularly in agriculture and rural development.

The concept of food security pertains to economic accessibility, availability, vulnerability, utilization, the necessary purchasing power to buy food and also the

biological absorption of food in the body. A large population of the world is underfed and is suffering from malnutrition. Under nutrition is more than just access to food. Women and children from the weaker sections of the population are the worst sufferers. The major reasons of food insecurity are increasing in population, a low rate of growth in the agricultural sector, over-exploitation of natural resources, malfunctioning of the public distribution system and natural calamities such as droughts and floods. Therefore, food security can be enforced by ensuring an increase in production and productivity of agricultural sector, better targeting of the public distribution system, increase the purchasing power of the weaker sections, control of population explosion, to peck environmental degradation, liberal food export-import policy etc.

Climate change is a major challenge for agriculture and rural livelihood issues as our Indian agriculture is predominantly dependent upon the climate and weather. Production, distribution and consumption all have a direct impact on agriculture due to the changes in climate. Consistent warming trends, intense extreme weather perforation all have led to the increase in risks and vulnerabilities, and compelling rural people to migrate to cities as there is a guarantee of at least a meager income for a decent living which is sufficient enough to meet the basic demands of food, clothing and shelter. This in turn gives a drastic effect on both rural and urban development with under population in rural areas and overpopulation in urban areas.

The agricultural sector has reached the saturation point as far as employment generation is concerned. People no more would like their future generation to continue with their traditional or hereditary

occupation, whether it is agriculture or any other occupation as it is hardly promising in future. The Gen-X is compelled to come out and search their employment for their livelihood as their future life seems to be dim. Expansion of rural non-farm sector is the only hope and alternative for rural development in the future. The rural population is diversifying into non-agricultural enterprises. The non-firm rural activities include food processing, handicraft, handloom and textiles, repairing shops, telephone booths, tourism, stationary shops, consumer durable shops, construction, trade and commerce, transport and other services The Economic Census 2005, identifies 17 non-farm activities like mining and quarrying, manufacturing, electricity, gas, water, supply, construction, maintenance and repair, wholesale and retail trade, hotels and restaurants, transport and storage, financial intermediation, health and social. The share of rural non-farm enterprises is constantly increasing as regards to their number, employment generation and its contribution to GDP. The most critical factors for rural non-farm enterprises are the lack of created education, skill and training.

However, there are many challenges before these rural non-agricultural enterprises. The major challenges are:

- 1) Inadequate awareness, lack of knowledge and skill.
- 2) Lack of initiative and interest.
- 3) Less coverage in media and government policy
- 4) Multiplicity of interventions and their spread of resources
- 5) Lackluster stakeholders' participation

- 6) Lack of proper monitoring and management information system
- 7) Inadequate machinery for programme delivery.

India is agriculture based rural economy. It is the biggest sector of the economy and sustains about 60 per cent of its population. After independence India launched massive agricultural and rural development programmes. However, the traditional institutions of caste, family, village, tribe and other loyalties were in the process of conflict with the process of economic development. There was slow growth and the desired results in rural development could be achieved, but at a slower pace. Thus, thriving of agriculture and rural sector is critical for India's growth and global competitiveness. At present, agriculture growth has reached to the optimum level of its land and water resource availability. The rate of growth in this sector is lagging behind the other sectors of the economy. Experts are now suggesting the need for a second green revolution to make agriculture an attractive and a viable economic activity.

The sustainable development can be achieved only through sustainable agriculture and rural development. The main objectives of sustainable agricultural development include a steady increase in agricultural productivity, enhancement of food production and security of food supply, development of rural economy, increase in income and improvement of backward conditions in rural areas.

The Five Ms needs to be developed for a sustainable rural development.

- 1) Man
- 2) Money

- 3) Material
- 4) Market
- 5) Machine

#### **MGNREGS: Ab-initio**

Several employment-generation programmes are also being implemented by the government. The four most important programmes are:

- 1) Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)
- 2) Indira Awas Yojna (IAY)
- 3) Swaran Jayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) and
- 4) Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA).

MNREGA is the most important and ambitious of all the rural development programmes. Courante of employment, involvement the Panchayati Raj Institutions and creation of productive assets in the main features of MNREGA - These programmes are being periodically reviewed to remove the defects and introduce new measures.

In the words of Bagchi KK "The MNREGA is a multiplier-based demand stimulus in this time of recession. To explain, the multiplier is the Keynesian concept where the money put in the hands of the people results in greater output through each consecutive round of spending. The rural population has a higher propensity of consume; so, the effect of the multiplier is greater. This, combined with public investment through the NREGA would stimulate private investment through the accelerator. The accelerator is another Keynesian concept where a spiraling output also ends up resulting in higher rates of

private investment. This typical multiplier accelerator interplay would affect the impact of NRECA. Such synergy would lead to a spiral of growth that is sustainable in economic and ecological terms". ( Bagchi K, K)

## PROCESS

Adult members of rural households will submit their name, age, address with photo to the Gram Panchayat. The Gram Panchayat registers households after making an inquiry and issues a job card. The

job card contains the details of adult member rolled and his/her photo. The registered person can submit an application for work in writing (for at least fourteen days of continuous work) either to Panchayat or to Program Officer. The Panchayat/ program officer will accept the valid application and issue dated receipt of application, a letter providing work will be sent to the applicant and also displayed in Panchayat office. The employment will be provided within a radius of 5 km: if it is above 5 km extra wage will be paid

**TABLE No: 1 - MGNREGS: A GLANCE**

	FY 2013-2014	FY 2012-2013	FY 2011-2012	
<b>Total no of Districts</b>	644	636	635	
<b>Total No. of Blocks</b>	6576	6568	6378	
<b>Total No. of GPs</b>	247643	247643	247643	
<b>Total no of Villages</b>	778134	778134	778133	
<b>Total No. of HH Registered (In Cr)</b>	12.9	12.9	12.6	
<b>Total No. of Workers in Job Card (In Cr)</b>	28.3	28.6	27.8	
<b>Number of GPs with NIL exp</b>	36165	25761	25065	
<b>Number of Ongoing Works (In Lakhs)</b>	98.7	80.2	53.2	
<b>Total No. of Works Takenup (New+Spill Over) (In lakhs)</b>	109.4	106.5	80.8	
<b>Total Exp (In Cr)</b>	Wages (Rs. In Cr.)	17237.8	27133	24306.2
	Material and skilled Wages (Rs. In Cr.)	5585	10377.2	10650.5
	<b>Adm Exp:</b>			
	GP Level	136.3	307.6	301.8
	Block Level	696.7	1327.8	1191.7
	District Level	282.6	482	514.4
	State Level	87.561	32.936	108.055
	Total Adm Expenditure	1203.2	2150.4	2116
	Total Exp (Rs. in Cr.)	24026.1	39660.6	37072.7
	Labour Vs Material(%)	75.5	72.3	69.5
	Admin Exp(%)	5	5.4	5.7
<b>Wage Employment Provided(in lakhs)</b>	Households	372.6	498.3	506.4
	Individuals	542.1	796.2	820
	Men	276.2	421.6	446.6
	Women	265.9	374.7	373.3
	SCs	127.4	181.3	185
	STs	93.2	142.6	147.4
	Persons with Disability	3.4	4.1	4
<b>Person days(In Cr)</b>	Total as per LB	259.4	278.7	199.6
	Persondays Generated so far	129.7	230	218.8
	% of Total LB	50	82.5	109.6
	% as per Proportionate LB	62.8	105.7	155.8
	SC persondays	30.4	51.1	48.5
	ST persondays	20.1	40.8	40.9
<b>Average Wage rate per day per person</b>	129	121.4	114.5	
<b>Average days of employment provided per Household</b>	34.8	46.1	43.2	
<b>Total No of HHs completed 100 Days of Wage Employment(In Lakhs)</b>	12.1	51.5	41.7	
<b>% payments generated within 15 days</b>	68	58	57.8	
<b>% of payments Disbursed through EFMS</b>	15.9	0.9	0	

Source: navega.nic.in – the ministry of Rural Development- Government of India

Financial Year 2009-10, 45.1 million households were benefited with the scheme and by 2010, 619 districts were covered under the scheme in which 49.0 million households were benefited. In 2011-2012 635 districts were covered and in 2012-2013 636 districts are covered and the recent updates in 2013-2014 644 districts are covered. Total person days were created 2513 million, of which 737.9 million (30 percent) were Scheduled Castes, 540.3 million (22 percent) were Scheduled Tribes, 1210.5 million (49 percent) were women and 1224.8 (48 percent) were others in 2010 increased to three fold and this is evident from the above Table No.- 1. Persons with disabilities were also given importance and we find that their number accentuating.

### **IMPACT OF MNREGA ON RURAL PEOPLE'S FOOD SECURITY AND LIVELIHOOD**

Any policies and programmes has three types of impact on the society-short term, medium term and the long term. It may also affect a given society at three levels-the value system, the institutions, and the processes. MGNREGS is one of the most recent Acts of India and there are limited empirical evidences to present any observation regarding the medium term and long term effects as it is still in infancy stage. We also have insufficient basis to discuss the nature of the impact of this Act upon the values or institutions. But there are enough studies to help us in finding out the short term as well as the procession aspects of the impact this step by the Indian state in the context of empowerment of the rural poor particularly the more vulnerable sections like women, SCs and STs. This act was introduced with an aim of improving the purchasing power of the rural people, primarily semi or un-skilled work to people

living below the poverty line in rural India. Generating productive assets, protecting the environment, empowering rural women, reducing rural- urban migration and fostering social equity, among others. MNREGA fosters conditions for inclusive growth ranging from basic wage security and recharging the rural economy to a transformative empowerment process of democracy. With its tight-based framework and demand driven Impact of MNREGA on Rural People approach, giving a pivotal role to the Panchayati Raj Institutions in planning, monitoring and implementation.

The major dimensions of the impact of NREGA can be summarized as the following, that there is increased legitimacy on their rights to work and this can be a challenge to poverty as there is increased employment opportunities even during the lean or non- seasonal time. Due to no discrimination, we can find that man, women, irrespective of caste or creed there is higher participation. The better wages compared to market rate and flexible timings and choice of their time encourages various people to participate in the scheme. This scheme has declined migration as the jobs are at your door step and all basic amenities are provided at worksite along with medical facilities. Since the villagers are involved in various developmental activities they can give their fuller potentiality and thereby can create assets and this also propels the village to develop extensively. Thus MGNREGS has not only improved the livelihood but also contributed to the rural development by involving the local people in all its endeavors.

**CONCLUSION**

Thus, MGNREGS has been successful in creating employment through which it has also led to food security, increased standard of living, change in employment status, freedom for money lenders and sustainable development. Sociology and economical issues are becoming pertinent in the process of socio-economical development and particularly in agriculture and rural development.

**REFERENCES**

1. *Bhaskar Majumder Rural, Non-Farm Employment In India: A Focus On Food For Work 01 Edition Kanishka Publishiners Distributors (2007)*
2. *Ch. Krishnudu Education, Employment And Empowerment Of Rural Women In India Serials Publications (2009)*
3. *Shankar Chatterjee Employment Programmes and Rural Development in India Global Reserch Publications (serial)*
4. *Tulsi Mehta Changing structure of rural non farm employment Cyber Tech Publication (2012)*