

MGNREGA: A HOPE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract: Unemployment and low productivity is main casus of Rural Poverty. Poverty and unemployment is basic problem of Rural India. More than 65% population lives in rural areas. India unemployment rate as per 2008 estimated as 10.4% as per 2009 it had increased 10.7%. employment generation and poverty alleviation major priorities drawing attention of the Indian Government. In order to generating employment and alleviate rural poverty Government of India has introduced MGNREGA Act in 2005 and MGNREGA Lunched in 2006 in selected district

Key Words: MGNREGA, Rural Employment, Rural Poverty

OVERVIEW

What is MGNREGA

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 (No. 42 of 2005) (hereinafter referred as NREGA or the Act) was enacted on 25th August, 2005 and it came into force on 2nd February, 2006. The NREGA was renamed the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) on October 2, 2009.

The Act aims at “enhancing livelihood security of households in rural areas of the country by providing at least one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work [1]

OBJECTIVE OF THE SCHEME

- Ø Reduction of distressed migration from the rural to urban and from one part of the rural to another part of rural areas.
- Ø Creation of durable assets in villages.
- Ø Empowerment of rural women by providing them the opportunity to earn income independently and to participate in social groups (workers).
- Ø Overall development of the rural economy.
- Ø Promotion of inclusive growth and development[2]

Differences between other employment program me and MGNREGA

Issues	Other employment program me	MGNREGA
State	Program me	Statue
Focus	Infrastructure	Employment generation
Time Frame	None	Demand based
Duration of Employment	Dependent on duration of work	Legal guarantee as many days of employment as job card holder applies for work minimum 100days
Labor	Anyone can engaged as a labor	Only one job card holder that apply for work
Name of the Work	Any work	60:40ratio of material and wages

FEATURE OF MGNREGA

Right based approach:

— All adult members of rural area household willing to do unskilled manual work have the right to demand employment.

— Such household will apply for the job card to the gram panchayat .the gram panchayat will verify the age and local domicile of the applicant.

— After verification, the gram panchant will issue a job card to the household with photograph free of cost.

— The job card must remain in the custody of the household, job card holder can apply for work to the gram panchayat which will issue him/her a dated receipt of the work application

Time bond guarantee of employment:

— Employment will be provided by the gram panchayat (local self governing body) within 15 days of work application, else unemployment allowance will be paid.

— A house hold may avail up to 100 days of guaranteed employment in a financial year depending on its need.

Permissible Work:

— Water conservation; drought proofing, flood protection; land development ;minor irrigation.

Lab our intensive work

— A ratio 60:40 will be maintained between wage and material.

— Contractors/machinery are permitted

Payment of wages

— Wages will be paid at the wages earners through their bank/post office accounts.

— Payment of wages to be made every week and in any case not than a fortnight.

Worksite management and facilities

— Citizen information boards with details of work are to be put at the worksites.

— Muster rolls to be maintained and open to inspection.

Funding

— 90% borne by central government and 10% by state government

PROBLEM AND CHALLENGES

Lack of Awareness-

Awareness about the provision of the Act is vital to exercising the demand to work and other entitlement under MGNREGA .awareness levels among beneficiaries of provisions of the act ,Such as demanding work, unemployment allowance are low ,In Madhya Pradesh 18 %beneficiaries ,in Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan less than 10%beneficiaries were aware of the legal Provision of the unemployment allowance. Rajasthan, 72%of household were that MGNREGA work can be demanded at any time during the year. but 29% household in Andhra Pradesh were aware of this .In Andhra 35%,about 28% in Madhya Pradesh and 16%in Rajasthan were not aware about any grievance redressed mechanism in MGNREGA.[4]

Lack of Focus On Objective-

Under the schedule of MGNREGA Act Contractors and machineries should not be used, but in some work place, contractors and machineries were involved.

Delay In Payments-

MGNREGA mandates that wages payments be made to beneficiaries within 15 days of work being completed delay in wage payments have been recorded by different studies across the country. Delay in wage payment are a huge disincentive for household who seek employment under the scheme, it dilutes the spirits of the Act. The NSSO survey on MGNREGA findings FY-2009-10 indicate that in Rajasthan 10% of household received payment within 15 days

Issues Of Dated Receipt-

Under the, every household that applies for work is to be issued a dated receipt .Provision of timely work is vital to ensuring social security to the poorest The CAG audit found that dated receipts of applications were not given in 282GPs across 21 states[5]..

Irregular Flow Of Funds-

The funds are allocated to state and districts based on an initial demand, at the beginning of the FY and subsequently

based on expenditure. There can be several time lags in this cycle; For instance, delay in updating expenditure records, delay in placing demand for additional fund by the districts and scrutiny of expenditure. The CAG Audit conducted in 2006 found that funds delays and procedural issues were caused due non submission of appropriate documentations by blocks while applying for subsequent installments of funds. [6]

Absence Of Efficient Grievance Redressal Mechanism -

Absence of efficient grievance mechanism is vital shortcoming under MGNREGA. It is necessary to strengthen grievance redressal systems to address issues of corruption as well as other process issues. While the Act provides that each state formulate grievance redressal rules, few state governments have done this there is dissatisfaction both the beneficiaries of the project as well as the contract staff with regard to the poor working condition and arbitrary contract appoints policies of various state governments.[7]

Payments to Fictions (Gost) Works

Field surveys and reports show that in some cases wages payments are made to workers who either have not JCs or those did not actually undertaken work at worksite

Challenges in Creating Useful Assets

Success of MGNREGA should not only be assessed in terms of employment provided but also the assets created. Village's development through productive assets creation should be important objective of this scheme. Quality of work remains a major challenges in all the projects related with MGNREGA. Though the Act focuses on the productive and durable assets creation but still the present the present quality of work done under MGNREGA needs to be reshuffled if it truly wants to adhere with objective mentioned in the act.

Adequate Worksite Facilities

No proper display of signboards at worksite is maintained. Women workers, particularly those with children, face major inconvenience due to lack of water and toilets.

CONCLUSION

The flagship Program me of the UPA Government MGNREGA has successes in reducing the poverty and regional disparity in some extent. Debate and challenges has always been a part of MGNREGA since its implementation. The challenges are there but it is for government to embark on the program me of radical economic reform. Government and NGOs must study the impact of MGNREGA in rural areas so as to ensure that this massive anti-poverty scheme is not getting diluted from actual path.

REFERENCE-

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