



STATE LEVEL PERFORMANCE OF THE MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME (MNREGS) WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO TAMIL NADU

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Abstract

The government of India initiated many development generating programmes to address unemployment problem in rural area, however it remains major challenges to India's development. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) is one of major flagship initiative which enhances the employment opportunity at rural area. The MGNREGA aims at to enhance livelihood security in rural areas by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. Many research studies revealed that programmes have major impact on rural area, present paper outline the state level performance of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGS) in Tamil Nadu.

Key words: Employment, Livelihood, Rural, Programme.

Introduction

The notion that public works programs can provide a strong social safety net through redistribution of wealth and generation of meaningful employment has been integral to the Indian policy-making agenda. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) 2005 is currently a major part of this agenda. The Act was enacted at a point in time when more than a decade of sustained high growth in GDP experienced in the 1980s and the 1990s was perceived not to have made a sufficient dent in poverty in the rural India. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act was enacted in September 2005. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme was launched on 02.02.2006 and was initially implemented in six districts, viz., Cuddalore, Dindigul, Nagapattinam, Sivagangai, Tiruvannamalai and Villupuram from 02.02.2006 onwards and in four more districts viz. Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, Tirunelveli and Karur from 01.04.2007 onwards. From 01.04.2008 onwards, the scheme was extended to the remaining twenty districts of the State which are; 1. Ariyalur, 2. Dharmapuri, 3. Perambalur, 4. Pudukottai, 5. Ramanathapuram, 6. Namakkal, 7. Vellore, 8. Thoothu kudi, 9. Virudhunar 10. Salem, 11. Erode, 12. Tiruchirapalli, 13. Kancheepuram 14. Theni, 15. Tiruvallur, 16. Madurai, 17. Nilgiris, 18. Kanniyakumari, 19. Coimbatore and 20. Krishnagiri and 21. Tiruppur.

Objectives of the Scheme

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 (MGNREGA) guarantees 100 days of employment in a financial year to any rural household whose adult members are willing to do unskilled manual work. This Act is an important step towards the realization of the right to work. It is also expected to enhance people's livelihoods on a sustained basis, by developing the economic and social infrastructure in rural areas. The Village Panchayat will issue job cards to every registered individual. Payment of the statutory minimum wage and equal wages for men and women are the notable features of the scheme.

Salient Features of the Act

Salient features of the Act are summarized below:

- Adult members of a rural household may apply for employment if they are willing to do unskilled manual work.
- Such a household will have to apply for registration to the local Gram Panchayat, in writing, or orally.
- The Gram Panchayat after due verification will issue a Job Card to the household as a whole. The Job Card will bear the photograph of all adult members of the household willing to work under NREGA. The Job Card with photograph is free of cost.
- A Job Card holding household may submit a written application for employment to the gram Panchayat, stating the time and duration for which work is sought. The minimum days of employment have to be fifteen.
- The Gram Panchayat will issue a dated receipt of the written application for employment, against which the guarantee of providing employment within 15 days operates.
- Employment will be given within 15 days of application for work by an employment seeker.
- If employment is not provided within 15 days, daily unemployment allowance, in cash has to be paid. Liability of payment of unemployment allowance is of the States.
- At least one-third of persons to whom work is allotted work have to be women.



- Wages are to be paid according to minimum wages as prescribed under the Minimum Wages Act 1948 for agricultural labourers in the State, unless the Centre notifies a wage rate which will not be less than Rs. 60/ per day
- Disbursement of wages has to be done on weekly basis and not beyond a fortnight.
- Panchayat Raj Institutions [PRIs] have a principal role in planning and implementation.

Goals of MGNREGA

Long-term objectives of the Act include: 1. Enhancement of livelihood security in rural areas by guaranteeing 100 days of wage employment in a financial year to every registered household. 2. Creating productive assets. 3. Protecting the environment. 4. Reducing migration. 5. Empowering rural women and the poor through the provision of a right-based law. 6. Fostering social equity. 7. To create strong social safety net for the vulnerable groups by providing employment source, when other alternative are inadequate. Thus MGNREGA has 3 distinct goals: 1. Protective, 2. Preventive, 3. Promotive. It protects the rural poor from vulnerabilities by providing them demand based employment. It prevents risk associated with agricultural investment and forced migration of rural poor. It brings prosperity in rural economy via increased consumption demand. Thus MGNREGA can be considered as a growth engine.

Funding Pattern

The cost of the scheme is shared between the Centre and the State in the ratio of 90:10.

The Central Government will bear the following costs:

- The entire cost of wages for unskilled manual workers.
- 75 percent of the cost of material and wages for skilled and semi-skilled workers.
- Administrative expenses, which will include, inter alia, the salary and allowances of Programme Officers and their support staff and work site facilities.
- Administrative expenses of the Central Employment guarantee Council.

The State Government will bear the following costs:

- 25 percent of the cost of material and wages for skilled and semi-skilled workers.
- Unemployment allowance payable in case the State Government cannot provide wage employment within 15 days of application.
- Administrative expenses of the State Employment Guarantee Council.

Priority of Works

Taking into account the field conditions in Tamil Nadu, the works are being taken up in Tamil Nadu in the following priority

- Formation of new ponds.³
- Renovation of existing Ponds, Kuttais, Kulams, Ooranies, Temple tanks etc.
- Desilting of channels.
- Desilting and strengthening of bunds of irrigation tanks.
- Formation of new roads.
- Other water conservation/soil conservation measures/flood protection measures.

Objectives of the Study

- To review the working and functioning on NREGS in Tamil Nadu.
- To examine the performance of NREGS in Tamil Nadu and to identify the obstacles in the path of the implementation of the scheme.
- To suggest suitable measures for the effective implementation of the scheme.

Methodology

This study uses mainly secondary data. The sources of the data are published and unpublished sources like books, journals, reports, publications, unpublished doctoral dissertation and concerned web sites etc. For assessing the performance of MGNREGS in Tamil Nadu, data relating MGNREGS are compiled from the secondary sources and the study covers Performance in Tamil Nadu during 2015-2016.



Table 1 Showing the Major Achievements of MGNREGS in India during The Financial Year Of 2015-16 – A Snapshot

S.No	States/Union Territories	Number of households benefited through individual assets creation (in lakh)	Outcome/ area benefited through natural resource management (in lakh Hectares)
1	ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR	0.01	0.00
2	ANDHAR PRADESH	13.06	2.89
3	ARUNACHAL PRADESH	0.00	0.00
4	ASSAM	0.03	1.67
5	BIHAR	1.36	0.11
6	CHHATTISGARH	0.07	3.63
7	GOA	0.00	0.00
8	GUJARAT	0.00	1.12
9	HARYANA	0.00	0.02
10	HIMACHAL PRADESH	0.14	1.41
11	JAMMU AND KASHMIR	0.05	1.87
12	JHARKHAND	0.17	2.97
13	KARNATAKA	2.83	1.23
14	KERALA	0.68	1.88
15	LAKSHADWEEP	0.00	0.00
16	MADHYA PRADESH	0.75	0.18
17	MAHARASHTRA	0.37	1.66
18	MANIPUR	0.01	0.23
19	MEGHALAYA	0.01	0.09
20	MIZORAM	0.06	0.45
21	NAGALAND	0.06	0.07
22	ODISHA	3.32	0.75
23	PUDUCHERRY	0.00	0.00
24	PUNJAB	0.00	0.09
25	RAJASTHAN	0.20	1.81
26	SIKKIM	0.29	0.12
27	TAMIL NADU	1.88	1.92
28	TELANGANA	0.11	0.14
29	TIRURA	0.09	0.60
30	UTTARA PRADESH	5.53	4.63
31	UTTARAKHAND	1.54	0.47
32	WEST BENGAL	1.29	14.54
TOAL		33.90	46.57

(Source: Mahatma Gandhi NREGA Division, Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India,(www.nrega.nic.in).

Table 2 Shows That Physical Performance in Tamil Nadu during 2015-16

S.NO	Indicators	Values
1	Number of Households demanded employment(in lakh)	60.95
2	Number of Households provided employment(in lakh)	60.53
3	Agreed to LB(person days in lakh)	3729.90
4	Total person days generated (in lakh)[Percentge achieved against LB]	3686.76(99%)
5	Average person days per Households (No of days)	61
6	Women participation rate (Women PDs% of total ODs)	85%
7	SC participation rate (ST PDs% of total PDs)	28%
8	ST participation rate (ST PDs% of total PDs)	1.22%
9	Households Provided at least 100 days of employment (in lakh)	8.46



10	Percentage of Households Provided at least 100 days of employment	14%
11	Average wage per person day (In Rs.)	133.45
12	Average cost per person day(In Rs.)	176.30

(Source: Mahatma Gandhi NREGA Division, Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, www.nrega.nic.in)

Table 3 Shows That Financial Performance in Tamil Nadu during 2015-16

S.NO	Indicators	Values
1	Opening balance (Rs. In lakh)	118401.00
2	Central release (Rs. In lakh)	547037.47
3	State release (Rs. In lakh)	23000.00
4	Total Available Fund(Rs in lakh)(including funding from all sources)	692382.38
5	Total expenditure (Rs. In lakh)	625427.05
6	Wage expenditure (Rs.in lakh)[%]	463336.30(77%)

(Source: Mahatma Gandhi NREGA Division, Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, www.nrega.nic.in)

Work Details

Table 4 Shows the Details of Work Completion Rate during the Period

S.NO	Indicator	Taken-up	Completed	%age
1	Number of works started since inception till date	1415708	1156280	82
2	Number works started since inception till 31/03/2015	980578	925486	94
3	Number of works started in FY 2016-16	418656	229983	55

(Source: Mahatma Gandhi NREGA Division, Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, www.nrega.nic.in)

Table 5 Shows the Works to Be Completed and Benefited Area Given In 2015-16

S.No	Work category Name / Work Sub Category Name / Work Type	Completed Works	Outcome/Area Benefited in hectare
PUBLIC WORKS RELATING TO NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT			
1	Water Conservation	7,704	25,038
2	Water shed management	159	517
3	Irrigation	6,035	13,579
4	Traditional water bodies	30,234	1,48,147
5	Afforestation	991	754
6	Land development	7,193	3,660
Total		52,316	1,91,695

(Source: Mahatma Gandhi NREGA Division, Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, www.nrega.nic.in)

Initiatives / Strategies for Implementation of MGNREGA

1. Farm ponds

Creation of 15,000 farm ponds have been taken up on the lands of farmers belonging to SC / ST, small and marginal farmers of 8 delta districts. All works have been completed. Based on the positive response from the farmers in delta districts, farm ponds have also been taken up in 23 non-delta districts and 35,957 farm ponds have been completed.

2. Convergence with Fisheries Department

Interested farmers on whose lands farm ponds have been taken up were linked up with the fisheries Department for availing fish fingerlings at subsidized rates. This short-term economic activity, apart providing extra source of income, also provides sufficient feed for cattle and manure for their lands thus leading to sustenance in Agriculture. During 2015-16, 1358 farm ponds were taken up and all the ponds have been stocked with fingerlings by the fisheries department.



3. Plantation activities

Afforestation is one of the major environmental goals of the state. In order to propel this vision, three types of plantation activities under MGNRGS have been undertaken.

- Avenue plantation
- Massive tree plantation in convergence with Forest Department
- Homestead plantation

4. Anganwadi Centres

It has been proposed to take up the construction of 1000 Anganwadi Centres in convergence with ICDS during the year 2016-17.

5. Construction of IHHLs

2.83 lakh individual household latrines have been constructed during 2015-16 under MGNREGS, in the village panchayats that were proposed for saturation during the year 2015-16. At the state level, 7.5 lakh IHHLs are targeted to be constructed under MGNREGS during the year 2016-17.

Conclusion

The success of the programme depends upon its proper implementation. Much of the pitfalls of MGNREGA implementation can be overcome if proper processes and procedures are put in place. Thus, there should be continuous efforts towards creating adequate awareness on different provisions of MGNREGS amongst the people. Creating awareness is necessary not only to motivate the people to work under the scheme but also to encourage them to participate in its planning and implementation.

References

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