

Role Of Mgnrega for Sustainable Development In Tamil Nadu

J. SAKTHIVEL

Ph.D Research Scholar

Dr. R. SIVAKUMAR

Associate Professor & HOD
Department of Political Science
Thiruvalluvar Government Arts College,
Rasipuram Tk, Namakkal Dt

Introduction

Economical growth is an indispensable to all kinds of development. There are number of Policies and Programme is being implemented for the betterment of People. Significantly to eradicate poverty and remove inequalities among the people, government at all levels have been implementing many poverty alleviation Programmes. Rural Development is an important segment of India's economic development. Since independence, a serious of schemes has been adopted both by the central and the state governments to provide wage employment to the poor in rural India¹.

In India, the following poverty alleviation Programmes were implemented to improve Livelihood of the People. National Rural Employment Programme (NREP), Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP), Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY)² Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment (TRYSEM)³. Among all these programme MGNREGA is a major initiative of the Government of India towards poverty reduction and income generation among rural poor families. The act is distinguished from all other rural employment schemes by certain unique features. It intends to provide legal guarantee of employment to anyone who is willing to do casual unskilled manual labour at the statutory minimum wage. Any adult who applies for work under the act is entitled to being employed on public works without delay. Thus the act provides a universal and enforceable legal enforcement of the most basic form of employment⁴. In the present paper, an attempt has been made to study on the role of MGNREGA for sustainable development in Tamil Nadu.

NREGA'S role in poverty alleviation programme in India

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act popularly known as NREGA is an important Programme for the Poverty alleviation in independent India. This National Rural employment Guarantee act enacted on August 23, 2005 as a Legal instrument to address the challenges of unemployment and Poverty. It came into force in 200 districts of India in 2006⁵. Under the MGNREGA, majority works are focuses on water and soil conservation. The most significant fact of this act is that it has given priority to the rural people to demand for work those who are willing to do unskilled manual work for their livelihood. The MGNREGA provide a legal guarantee for wage employment .The MGNREGA overcome problems of targeting through its self -targeting mechanism of beneficiary selection that is a large percentage of poorest of the poor and marginalized people who seeks employment under the scheme⁶. The Ministry of Rural Development, Mahatma Gandhi Rural

Employment Guarantee Act (Mahatma Gandhi MGNREGA) aims at enhancing livelihood security of household in rural areas of 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. The MGNREGA has become a powerful instrument for inclusive growth in rural India through its impact on social protection, livelihood security and democratic governance. MGNREGA is the ever law internationally that guarantees wage employment at an unprecedented scale⁷.

The importance of the MGNREGA lies in its nature. Unlike many other rural employment scheme envisaged by the government, it is demand driven. it creates a justifiable right to work for all households in rural India. Under the MGNREGA rural households have a legal right to get not less than 100 days of unskilled manual labour on public works in each financial year.⁸ In the financial year 2022-23 14.93 crore active workers are involved in all over India. As per schedule 1 of the act the focus of the MGNREGA shall be on the following works:

1. Water Conservation and water harvesting
2. Afforestation and tea plantation
3. Irrigation cannels related works
4. Renovation of traditional water bodies
5. Land development to land owned by households belonging to SC_s/ST_s
6. Rural Connectivity⁹

All these works very closely related to sustainable development of the country. Sustainable development has been defined as development that meets the needs of present without compromising the ability of future generation. To achieve the sustainable development, it is very essential to harmonize three core elements: economic growth, Social inclusion and environmental Protection¹⁰.

To eradicate Poverty in all its forms, Poverty alleviation and economic development Programmes are playing a pivotal role. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act is one of the important programme to eradicate poverty and economic development. MGNREGA is a platform for implementing different Sustainable development schemes effectively and executed within the Parameters of MGNREGA and it plays an important role for implementing different schemes for rural development. India since the implementation of MGNREGA has made significant Progress in reducing Poverty and inequality for achieving sustainable development. The MGNREGA is multidimensional scheme which is able to enhance the social, environmental and economical aspects in rural areas.

History of MGNREGA in India

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 was published in the Gazette of India on 7th September, 2005 and was renamed as MGNREGA on 2nd October, 2009. MGNREGA is the largest employment providing Scheme in the world. The Act was notified in 200 districts in the first phase with effect from February 2nd 2006 and then extended to additional 130 districts in the financial year 2007-2008 (113 districts were notified with effect from April 1st 2007, and 17 districts in UP were notified with effect from May 15th 2007). The remaining districts have been notified under the NREGA with effect from April 1, 2008¹¹.

The NREGA offers hundred days of work to unemployed families in rural areas. The two conditions for the adults of a household to apply are:

1. They must be living in a rural area.
2. They must be willing to undertake unskilled manual labour for which they would receive the minimum wage.

The details that need to be furnished are their name, age and address. These are submitted to the Gram Panchayat, which issues the household their job card, which contains details of adult members of the household. All registered members of the household are then entitled to a maximum of 100 days employment for the entire household in a given financial year¹². The Prime object is to provide guaranteed wage employment to rural poor by creating community assets¹³.

Major Aims of the MGNREGA

1. Employment generation
2. Asset creation
3. Increase in agricultural wages
4. Empowerment of women
5. Upliftment of Marginalized sections SCs and STs
6. Reduction in distressed migration
7. Reduction in rural Poverty financial inclusion of Poor
8. Creation of sustainable assets

MGNREGA and Sustainable Development in India:-

As Part of Poverty reduction efforts, India's Ministry of Rural Development emphasized that MGNREGA supports the achievement of three Millennium Development Goals:-

- Goal-1 : Eradicate extreme Poverty and hunger,
 Goal-3 : Promote gender equality and empower women
 Goal-7 : Ensure environmental sustainability

India has signed to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development. National institute of Transforming India (NITI Aayog) is the National Coordinating agency for SDGs. Ministry of statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI) has developed the national SDG indicators to better capture the context of India and its needs. The SDGs and targets have been mapped to Various nodal Ministries and Flagship Programmes by the NITI Aayog. Ministry of Rural Development is the designated nodal agency for achieving

- SDG-1-No Poverty and MGNREGAs has been recognised as "Core of the Core" Scheme for achieving SDG.
- SDG goal-5-Gender Equality, SDG-8-Decent work and Economic Growth and SDG-10-Reduced inequalities¹⁴.
-

Goals of Sustainable Development:-

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) also known as the Global Goals, were adopted by all United Nations Members states in 2015 as a universal cell to end Poverty, Protect the Peace and Prosperity by 2030. The 17 SDGs are integrated-that is, they

recognize that action in one area will affect outcomes in others, and that development must balance social, economic and environmental sustainability¹⁵.

Sustainable Development Goals in Tamil Nadu:-

SDGs is achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions economic, social, environmental in a balanced and integrated manner. In Tamil Nadu, the Government have constituted a High Power Committee with the chairmanship of Chief Secretary to Government to oversee the implementation of SDGs. The implementation of Sustainable Development Goals in Tamil Nadu is carried out in association with all the Departments. The heads of Department one member in the working groups constituted to review and monitor the achievement of goals and targets of Sustainable Development Goals. The State Specific indicators have been identified in consultation with the departments pertaining to the goal and target¹⁶.

MGNREGA in Tamil Nadu:-

In Tamil Nadu, it has been implemented in three stages. First Stage in 2006 it was implemented in Six backward districts namely Cuddalore, Dindigul, Nagapattinam, Sivagangai, Thiruvannamalai and Vilupuram. In the second Phase in 2007, it was implemented in four districts namely Tanjavur, Thiruvarur, Thirunalveli and Karur. In the Final Phase, it was implemented in all the next 21 district in 2008¹⁷.

Importance of MGNREGA:-

Effective water Conservation for harvesting has been given due consideration and active Participation of People, Especially the Vulnerable sections of Society like SCs, STs and Women. In many Parts of the country, tremendous Success has been noted at the community and individual level in terms of natural resource, conservation and regeneration, improvement in rural connectivity, reduced wage discrimination, rural to urban migration etc.,

This scheme has been described revolutionary as it had generated mass employment opportunities to the rural labour force helped in a major way by building infrastructure and enhancing growth in rural areas. It has increased the purchasing power of rural house holds, promoted gender equality and rural women empowerment. It provided sufficient Opportunities for creation of rural Public assets, which had been increased the employment among the rural unemployment and unemployed, it prevented rural migration of Population, thereby enabling the rural Livelihoods to manage their risks effectively.

MGNREGA and Assets Creation:-

MGNREGA focuses on strengthening natural resource management and development through afforestation, drought proofing flood control, water conservation, renovation of traditional water bodies, land development, etc. to reduce environmental degradation as well as development of infrastructure in the rural areas. Independent studies like the one conducted by Indian Institution of Science, Bangalore, have indicated that the implementation of MGNREGA generate multiple environmental benefits leading to improved water availability, soil fertility and increased crop production¹⁸.

Status of MGNREGA in Tami Nadu

Total No. of districts	37
Total No. of Blocks	388
Total No. of Gram Panchayats	12.525
Total No. of Job Cards issued (In Lakhs)	92.66
Total No. of Workers (In Lakhs)	133.62
Total No. of Active Job Card (In Lakhs)	74.87
Total No. of Active workers (In Lakhs)	91.49

Sources: [https://mnregaweb2.nic.in/netnrega/-Tamil Nadu](https://mnregaweb2.nic.in/netnrega/-Tamil%20Nadu)

Sustainable development has become an inevitable concept in the world. In the present paper an attempt has been made to study on the role of MGNREGA for sustainable development in Tamilnadu. The main goal of MGNREGA is to generate employment opportunities for the livelihood of rural people. For sustainable development environmental protection, water conservation and employment opportunities are playing vital role. MGNREGA has become one of the main programme in India working towards sustainable development, is concerned environment sustainable development water sustainability and economic sustainability has become task of MGNREGA. SDG is achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions economic, social and environment in a balanced and integrated manner¹⁹.

Brundtland's report 1987 has clarify the definition of sustainable development as "Sustainable Development is a development that will meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to own needs"²⁰

The works which have been taken up under MGNREGA are water conservation, cleaning water bodies, creating Community assets, poverty alleviation and employment generation. MGNREGA has become one of the important programme to work to achieve Sustainable Development. The Ministry of Rural Development is a nodal agency for achieving sustainable development goal 1 no poverty. MGNREGS has been recognised as 'core of the core' scheme for achieving SDG. Among the 17 sustainable goals 8 goals are included in the MGNREGS. The goals such as Social protection, livelihood security, rejuvenate Natural Resources, Wage employment, Social and women empowerment, Democracy, Asset creation and participatory planning are merged with MGNREGS.

In this context, the present paper makes an attempt to study on role of MGNREGA to achieve Sustainable Development Goals in Tamil Nadu. Among the eight goals of MGNREGA, livelihood security, wage employment, women empowerment and assets creation are the most popular goals of MGNREGA working towards to attain sustainable goals in Tamil Nadu.

Conclusion

To sum up, the concept of sustainable development is a global phenomenon. It has became important aspects in the development of each and every countries in the world. As far as India is concerned many poverty alleviation programmes have been implemented for the betterment of the economically, socially downtrodden peoples, among the various

programmes MGNREGA is one of the very effective poverty alleviation programme in rural India, especially for the empowerment of women, wage employment and livelihood of the poor people MGNREGA is playing a vital role to achieve targets of sustainable development.

References:

1. Joyati Bhattacharya, *Impact of the MGNREGA on the Empowerment of Women: A Case Study in Northeast India*, EBH Publishers, Guwahati, 2019, p.3
2. Abdul Azeez.N.P, *Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA): Provisions, Implementation and Performance*, New Century Publications, New Delhi, 2015, p.1
3. Patgiri,Rimki.(2018). *Poverty Alleviation and MGNREGA: A Right Based Policy*. Highbrow Scribes Publications, New Delhi,2018,p.3
4. Joyati Bhattacharya, *op.cit.*, p.5
5. Abdul Azeez. *op cit*, pp 2-3
6. Ashthos Vyas, *Sociological Analysis of MGNREGA*, Book Enclave, Jaipur, India, 2018, p.25.
7. *Ibid.*,p.23
8. Joyati Bhattacharya, *op.cit.*, pp1-2.
9. Ashok Purohit, *MGNREGA & Rural Development*, Dominant Publishers & Distributors Pvt Ltd, New Delhi, 2014, pp-28-29.
10. <https://www.un.org/sustainable-development>
11. Kumar. P and Chakraborty, D. *MGNREGA: Employment, Wages and Migration in Rural India*, Routledge, (2016),pp.6-7
12. Ashok Purohit, *op.Cit.*, pp.92-93.
- 13 Abdul Azeez. *op cit*, pp. 21
14. <https://mnregaweb4.nic.in/netnrega/SDG.Dashboard/index.html>
15. <https://www1.undp.org/content/oslo-governance-centre/en/home/sustainable-development-goals.html>
16. <https://tnsdg.tn.gov.in/>
17. <https://behthamopen-com/>
18. Patgiri,Rimki.(2018). *Poverty Alleviation and MGNREGA: A Right Based Policy*. Highbrow Scribes Publications, New Delhi,2018, p.81
19. <https://tnsdg.tn.gov.in/>
20. Jahangir Ahmad Bhat & Dr. Pushpender Yada, MGNREGA, "A Pathway for achieving Sustainable Development" International journal of Engineering Technology, Management and applied Science, Vol.3,Special Issue, 2015,p.339.