

Impact Assessment of MGNREGA: Study of Pauri Garhwal District of Uttarakhand, India

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Abstract

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 (NREGA) renamed as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is the most pragmatic approach to the problems of rural poverty and unemployment. In fact, the Scheme ensures the economic security of the rural poor by providing guaranteed wage employment. MGNREGA has positive impact on employment pattern of women. MGNREGA works are largely focused on land and water resources which include: water harvesting and conservation, soil conservation and protection, irrigation provisioning and improvement, renovation of traditional water bodies, land development and drought proofing. The study is an attempt to assessment the impact on implementation and effectiveness of the Act in district Pauri Garhwal, Uttarakhand, during the financial year 2013-14.

Keywords: Employment, MGNREGA, Poverty; Water Scarcity

Introduction

National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) 2005 is a unique policy intervention by the State for providing 'livelihood security' to the resource poor people in rural India. Under the Act, the Governments are legally bound to provide 100 days guaranteed manual employment on local public works to every rural unskilled adult (job-card holder) who is willing to work at the prevailing minimum statutory wage rate. In the absence of employment they would be paid unemployment allowance. The Act came into force on February 2, 2006 and was implemented in a phased manner. In Phase I it was introduced in 200 of the most backward districts of the country. It was implemented in an additional 130 districts in Phase II in 2007-2008. The Act was notified in the remaining 285 rural districts of India from April 1, 2008 in Phase III. The Scheme offers a statutory minimum wage of Rs. 142 for each job holder per day in 2013 prices.

In Uttarakhand, the NREGA was initially launched in 3 districts i.e., Chamoli, Champawat and Tehri in 2006-07 (Phase-1). In second phase (2007-08), two additional districts, i.e., Haridwar and Udhamsingh Nagar were added. In the last phase, all the remaining districts have been notified under the NREGS.

MGNREGA was applied to district PauriGarhwal in the third phase and the implementation of MGNREGA scheme in the district commenced on April 1, 2008. The registration for job card commenced from January 1, 2008. In the first year the NREGA teams were constituted

in the District, equipment was procured and the necessary infrastructure for the programme established. The Act also seeks to create durable assets to augment land and water resources, improve rural connectivity and strengthen the basic needs of the rural poor. MGNREGA works are largely focused on land and water resources which include: water harvesting and conservation, soil conservation and protection, irrigation provisioning and improvement, renovation of traditional water bodies, land development and drought proofing. These MGNREGA have the potential to generate environmental benefits such as ground recharge, soil and water conservation, drought and floods.

Objectives

The present study was mainly focused on the impacts of MGNREGA related to natural resources include soil, water etc. The anther objectives were to create wage employment for the rural sustainable livelihood to raise productive capacity of the economy. The paper also analyzes the extent of women participation.

Review of Literature

Das (2013) evaluates the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) according to criteria viz. average number of days of employment per household; percentage of households completing 100days of employment under NREGS; percentage of expenditure

against total available funds etc. Performance across the first two criteria has been disappointing and has deteriorated over time. Percentage of expenditure against total available funds has risen sharply. Finally, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that the NREGS has not performed well, Sivasankari and Bharathi (2012) analyze the awareness of beneficiaries on Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). The results of the study indicate that the beneficiaries have adequate awareness in Registration for employment, Employment, Wage payment, Facilities at the workplace and Records in workplace except Casualty at work site and Grievance Redressal mechanism. In addition, the beneficiaries who have studied higher secondary level have more awareness on MGNREGA than others, Garje (2012) study the impact of NREGS wages on poverty, agriculture, non-agriculture sector and food inflation, and see the importance of NREGA work and need of high wages in unorganized sector to reduce the impact of poverty and migration in rural India, Singh and Nauryial (2009) assessed the impact of MGNREGS in three districts of Uttarakhand and reported that NREGS activities were found to be supplementing income of the household to the extent of 10-20 per cent and hence no significant improvement in their income and employment levels. Further, marginal improvement in curtail of migration and indebtedness were found. Increase in consumption levels and savings were also marginally improved among the sample households. The report indicates that lack of procedures, low levels of awareness and weak PRIs etc. were the reasons for low performance of MGNREGS in the sample districts, Mukherjee S. and GhoshSaswata (2008): In their paper "What Determiners the Success of 100 Days Work at Panchayat Level? A Study of Birbhum district in West Bengal", they critically examined the NREGA Scheme in Birbhum district. Their major findings were most of the rural households applied for job cards and everybody knows about NREGA. They suggested some formal training regarding NREGA at GP level to achieve the common goal, Subbarao (1997) concluded that, the level of the wage rate is critical in determining the distribution of benefits from the program, as well as how much of the program is targeted towards the poor.

Methodology

Data were collected from various secondary sources like from District web site (www.pauri.nic.in), different reports of government, published and unpublished sources like books, journals, reports, publications, unpublished doctoral dissertation and from www.nrega.nic.in. The study covers during the year 2013-14.

Study Area

District PauriGarhwal, is the 4th largest District of Uttarakhand state in respect of area. The district covers

an area of 5,230 sqkms and situated between 29° 45' to 30°15' Latitude and 78° 24' to 79° 23' E Longitude. The District is administratively divided into nine tehsils, viz., Pauri, Lansdown, Kotdwara, Thalisain, Dhumakot, Srinagar, Satpuli, Chaubatakh and Yamkeshwar and fifteen development blocks viz., Kot, Kaljikh, Pauri, Pabo, Thalisain, Bironkh, Dwarikh, Dugadda, Jaihrikhal, Ekeshwar, Rikhinikh, Yamkeswar, Nainidanda, Pokhra and Khirsu and 1214 Gram Panchayats comprising 3423 villages, as per 2011 census. According to the census report of 2011, the total population of this district was 6,87,271 of which 3,26,829 were males and 3,60,442 were females. But in 2001 census, the total population of this district was 697078 of which 331061 were males and 366017 were females. The total area of the district is 5329 sq. km. The density of population was 129 per sq.km in 2011 and 131 in 2001. According to 2011 census 16.40 % live in urban region in this district. In actual figure a total of 112703 live in urban areas out of which 58800 are males and 53903 are females.. The over-all sex ratio and child sex ratio in urban region in this district were 917 and 860 respectively. The child population (0-6 ages) in urban region in this district was a total of 12731 out of which 58800 were males and 53903 were females. The literacy rate was 82.02% (male 92.71% and female 72.60%). The rural literacy rate was 80.37% (male 92.43% and female 70.15%) and urban literacy rate was 90.36% (male 93.91% and female 86.51%). During the period 2001 to 2011 the growth rate of population was -1.41% per annum while the same figure in the last decades was 3.91%. The sex ratio of the district in 2011 was 1103 females" per1000 males and the figure in 2001 was 1106.

Results and Discussion

According to Nation Rural Development site in the Uttarakhand year 2013-14 the total employment provided to households were 3.975 lakhs and the person's man days was 16.562 lakhs. Among which SCs were 3.086 lakhs, STs were 4.304 lakhs, Women were 74.33 and others were 130.45 lakhs . The number of families complete 100 days works were 0.28Lakhs.

Table 1: NREGA Statistics of PauriGarhwal Districts

Employment provided to households	46867
Total person days	1591514
SCs	206993
STs	3336
Other	401573
Women	979612
Total work taken up	3409
Works completed	2332
Works in progress	1077

Source: www.nrega.nic.in

The table-1, shows that in the district the year 2013-14 the total employment provided to households 0.469

Table2: works under NREGS during 2013-14

Category of natural resource conservation works	Work Taken up	Work completed	Ongoing Works
Flood Control and Protection	607	307	290
Drought Proofing	47	31	16
Water Conservation and Water Harvesting	132	99	33
Irrigation canals	64	46	18
Renovation of Traditional Water bodies	50	36	14
Land Development	975	719	256
Rural Connectivity	1508	1071	437
Other work	26	13	13
Total	3409	2332	1077

Source: www.nrega.nic.in**Table 3:** Cast wise registration under MGNREGA at different block of PauriGarhwal, Uttarakhand

S.No	Name of Block	No. of Registered		SC		ST		Other		Male	Female
		H.H	P.Day	H.H	P.Day	H.H	P.Day	H.H	P.Day		
1	Bironkhel	10657	105178	1540	15964	1	0	9116	89214	37041	68137
2	Duggada	10120	90629	1772	9503	319	1462	8029	79664	47207	43422
3	Dwarikhel	7747	90155	996	13386	0	0	6751	76769	33809	56346
4	Ekeshwar	6971	138584	702	15432	0	0	6269	123152	44856	93728
5	Kaljikhel	7370	110506	1625	27088	6	88	5739	83330	34632	75874
6	Khirsu	4584	85020	592	10621	0	0	3992	74399	36908	48112
7	Kot	5631	68880	1227	17209	2	0	4402	51671	21785	47095
8	Nainidanda	7889	146956	816	14223	0	0	7073	132733	52505	94451
9	Pabau	7796	103842	184	1944	8	237	7604	101661	30142	73700
10	Pauri	6080	114310	1340	30495	25	463	4715	83352	41735	72575
11	Pokhra	5028	135466	445	13697	44	868	4539	120901	45310	90156
12	Rikhnikhel	6335	71093	819	9564	2	51	5514	61478	35068	36025
13	Thalisain	12010	95446	1427	11022	7	87	10576	84337	50254	45192
14	Yamkeshwar	8602	142090	439	9844	4	80	8159	132166	56114	85976
15	Zahrikhel	6052	93359	425	7001	5	0	5622	86358	44536	48823
	Total	112872	1591514	14349	206993	423	3336	98100	1381185	611902	979612

Source: www.nrega.nic.in

Lakhs and person's man day was 15.92 lakhs. Among which SCs were 13.01 %, STs were 0.21%, other was 25.23 % and women were 61.55 %. This also indicates that there is large women participation under this scheme. STs are significantly low participation in the district. The number of total works taken up was 3409 among which works completed were 2332 and works in progress were 1077. The number of family completed 100 days works is 1139.

Water is the essential component of life. Scarcity of water is the main problem in the hilly rural areas. This water scarcity can be solved through this scheme by digging new ponds or renovation, water recharge and storage. These pond water can be used multipurpose fully like in agriculture, some domestic propose etc. Hence through the operation of this scheme a multiplier employment generation may be solved in the long-run. From the above analysis it is clear that women participation has remarkably increased through NREGA scheme. Some people from general caste category are also included in this scheme and there is no caste bar. Each household has one job card for any caste. This simply develops to work jointly with various community people i.e. there is reduction gap among the owner and the labouring class. The scheme has a vital role to reduce

poverty and unemployment. Through the implementation of the scheme the income of the rural people of the district definitely raised and hence their livelihood.

Conclusion

Though there are some limitations the study indicates that the introduction of the programme of MGNREGA had a clear positive impact on the rural economy through employment and income generation and also through raising the standard of living and socio-economic performance of the rural community of the district. So it is recommended that the present programme should be further spread in the rural areas by means of proper planning, adequate supervision, effective implementation and better monitoring. The MGNREGA scheme should not be confined into 100 day's work for wage earners income only.

Suggestions

The implementation of MGNREGA works under the scheme such as water conservation, drought proofing, irrigation, renovation of traditional water bodies, storage of ground water etc. The scheme can be a very important

role on renovation of traditional water bodies through enhancement work on water conservation and drought proofing works for the scarcity of water in the hilly areas of the hilly region.

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