

Participation and Empowerment of women : A Study of MGNREGA

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ABSTRACT

This paper has highlighted the impact of women participation in MGNREGA.

The national Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) was part of the commitments made by the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government in its Common Minimum Programme and came in to force in February 2006- initially in 200 selected districts. It has been hailed as a landmark and has attracted national and international attention with its diverse objectives. On the other hand, through providing guarantee employment in rural areas, it also seeks to improve labor market outcomes. This paper reviews India's approach to social protection since independence and places the NREGA within the broader social protection discourse. It looks at how gender concerns have been addressed within public works, and specifically in the NREGA guidelines.

The last section of the paper presents some preliminary findings from online sources .It suggests that the level of women's participation has been strongly influenced on the demand side by male-female wage differences in the markets, and between market wages and minimum wages .On supply side, It has been influenced by the commitment of the district officials of Udaipur, Rajasthan State Government and efficient management along with enhanced savings, an upward movement of the female market wages; and an increase in men's contribution to household management .Challenges remain, and these have been noted.

Keywords : Empowerment, Employment, Women Participation, Market Wages.

INTRODUCTION

Women constitute about 48% of the total population of the country. Participation of women and their increasing contribution for development of society have been focused in this paper. Rajasthan is recognized as feudal society with gender discrimination which is directly related to women's health, financial status, literacy level and political involvement. Since 1970s the attempts redefine development for women and her productive role has increased where empowerment is necessary.

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Women empowerment is the capacity of women for making and implementing decisions that directly affect their lives. Empowerment is a process where a group of individuals, here we are talking about women, show significant important

participation to the society, decision making power, financial security. Empowerment, which evolved in the 1990s, has been interpreted in terms of policy making and planning process. Women empowerment programmes are run by the organizations of women which are self help groups (SHGs) with provision of micro finance.

In 2001, The National Policy for Empowerment of women was adopted in India.

The policy prescription is: Judicial legal systems, decision making, mainstreaming a gender perspective in development process and economic empowerment of women which includes poverty eradication, micro credit, women and economy, globalization, women and agriculture, women and industry, support service.

To empower women socially the following factors are included as, education, health, nutrition, drinking water and

sanitation, science and technology, right of girl child for the empowerment of women. International commitments are convention on all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW), convention of right of child (CRC), International conference on population and development (ICPD+5).

Ministry of Rural Development is implementing various schemes like Indira Awas Yojana (IAY), Restructured Rural Sanitation Programme, Accelerated Rural Water Supply programme (ARWSP) Swarnagayanti Grameen Swarazgar Yojana (SGSY), by National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP), the (erstwhile) Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), the (erstwhile) Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) and the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) These are the schemes having women's component and the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) is one of the most progressive legislations enacted since independence.

MNREGA

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act came into force on 2nd February, 2006 in 200 backward districts of India then after from 1st April, 2008 all districts in country were covered. MNREGA ensure 100 days of guaranteed security of wage which include skilled and unskilled labor's statistics on MNREGA shows that women constitute more than 70% of the beneficiaries.

The adult members of house or any of any of the member have to submit their identity information to the gram panchayat, the gram panchayat registers and issue a job card. The key attributes of the scheme are time bound guarantees, labour intensive work, decentralized participatory, women's empowerment, work site facilities, transparency and accountability through the provision of social audit and the right to information.

MNREGA is not only simply an employment generation scheme but also development effort that can take the economic and social structure of the country.

Employment-generation programmes introduced in India, 1979-2005

Sl. No.	Name of programme	Year of introduction	Objective(s)
1	Employment Guarantee Scheme (EGS)	1979	Providing gainful employment & creating durable assets
2	National Rural Employment Programme (NREP)	1980	Creation of supplementary employment for agricultural workers
3	Rural Landless Employment Programme (RLEP)	1983	Improving & expanding employment opportunities for rural landless
4	Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY)	1989	Generating gainful employment for unemployed & underemployed in rural areas
5	Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS)	1993	Ensuring efficiency in development delivery system & generating greater employment opportunities
6	Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY)	1999	Creating demand-driven rural Infrastructure
7	Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGSY)	2002	Integrating EAS & JGSY
8	National Food for Work Programme (NFWP)	2004	Creating supplementary employment & rural community assets in backward districts
9	National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS)	2005	Creating rights-based & demand driven employment opportunities of 100 days per household in rural areas.

The NREGA has a multiplicity of objectives, and is seen as an intervention to stimulate local development as much as a means of social protection. Expected outcomes include:

- an increase in employment and purchasing power
- women's participation in the workforce
- The strengthening of rural infrastructure through the creation of durable assets
- Regeneration of natural resources that provide the livelihood resource base of the local rural economy.
- An increase in productivity
- A reduction in distress migration

SOCIAL PROTECTION IN INDIA

In India, social security is mandated by articles 32 of the constitutions, and supports the idea of universal coverage for specified situations: The State shall, within the limit of its economic capacity and development, make effective provision for securing the right to work, to education, and public assistance in case of unemployment, old age, sickness, disablement and other un deserved want.

A two-pronged approach was taken in implementation of this mandate, through the provision of 'social security' on the one hand and 'social welfare' on the other. Social security was designed for workers employed on a regular basis in the organized sector. It included an employees' insurance, and a provident fund scheme. The coverage of this scheme has been gradually expanded over the years. Social welfare was seen as a women, children, youth, family, scheduled caste (SCs), scheduled tribes (STs), other 'backward' classes, the physically disabled and others. While originally designed as a welfare approach, this scheme gradually gave way to a development-oriented and then an empowerment approach.

THE IMPACT OF EGS ON WOMEN

In a seminal study of Udaipur, Rajasthan EGS and women's participation, it is reported that a higher percentage of women than men were seen on the sites, that more women came to work than were registered, that the majority were between 30-50 years of age, and that they were principally landless or small or marginal farmers lacking any other work. The women reported an improvement in family food/nutrition as a result of the EGS work.

Female employment under the scheme as a percentage of total employment in person days was reported as 68 percent in 2012-13. It increased to 69.19 in 2014-15

Micro studies have shown that wealth in the form of total

assets was very strongly and inversely related to participation in EGS for women. More women from households with low or no assets participated in the scheme than from land-owning households (Krishnaraj, 2003).

GENDER AND THE NREGA

The NREGA, with its guarantee of 100 days of unskilled work for every household, has been envisaged as a gender sensitive scheme. It allows for crèche facilities on work sites, insists that one-third of all participants are women, do not discriminate between the sexes. However, a gendered analysis of the programme is necessary to make rural assets generation an inclusive process and address the crises underlying an increasing feminization of poverty in

India. The main way in which social protection seeks to be 'gender sensitive' - and this is true also of the NREGA - it is to suggest that a certain percentage of beneficiaries must be women.

While providing employment, priority shall be given to women in such a way that at least one - third of the beneficiaries shall be women who have registered and requested for work under the scheme. (NREGA, Schedule II, Section 6:19)

Given that agriculture is increasingly dependent on women cultivators, as more men move out of agriculture, the availability of NREGA work is expected to be especially beneficial to women. Today 53 per cent of all male workers but 75 per cent of all female workers, and 85 per cent of all rural female workers, are in agriculture. Women constitute 40 per cent of the agricultural workforce and this percentage is rising. Also an estimated 20 per cent of rural households are de facto female-headed, due to widowhood, desertion, or male out-migration.

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

As the data obtained from the online source Employment Generated During the Financial Year 2012-2013, 2013-2014 and 2014-15 where job card issued, provided employment and cumulative person-days generated are given category wise i.e. SC, ST, Other and women

Table (given Appendix) are according to financial year 2012-2013, 2013-2014 and 2014-15 where the ratio of women out of total is more compared to other. This shows that women are being more benefited through such a scheme and being empowered socially and financially

Table 1. Shows 68 percent of women participation compared to men. Table 2. Shows 68.09 percent of participation and

table 3. Show 69.19 percent of participation of women which show increase of women participation that lead to empowerment of women. Table 4 show the progress of women participation out of total is increased from 2013 to 2015.

CONCLUSION

Public policy and public works in India have generally tried to include women as a percentage of beneficiaries, but have not paid enough attention to gender sensitive design. The NREGA in its design in its design has attempted some gender

sensitivity. Udaipur district have being found progressive percentage of women participation compare to men. The employment schema here is benefited to empower the women which are from tribal belt. Women in such area are hardly having their own position in society , such schema are found use full to empower them Overall, preliminary findings confirm that the NREGS has the potential to stimulate local development, if the management and delivery are good; and that women's weak position in the labour market has been greatly helped.

Appendix: Table 1

State: RAJASTHAN District: UDAIPUR(2012-2013)

1	2	3				4	6	7	9					10	11	12
		A	b	c	d				a	b	c	d	e			
S.No	Block	Cumulative No. of HH issued jobcards				Cumulative No. of HH demanded employment	Cumulative No. of HH provided employment	No. of HH working under NREG A during the reporting month	Cumulative Persondays generate					Cumulative No. of HH completed 100 days	No. of HH which are beneficiary of land reform/IA Y	No. of Disabled beneficiary individuals
		SCs	STs	Others	Total				SCs	STs	Others	Total	Women			
1	Jhallaara	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	Kurabad	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	Lasadia	542	16806	2872	20220	9719	9017	3497	7249	330151	30090	367490	228627	489	0	2
4	Phalasiya	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	Rishabhdeo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	Sayra	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7	Semaari	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8	Kotda	128	35406	6154	41688	26584	24569	6284	856	1004695	102857	1108408	605722	1832	1	3
9	Kherwara	1213	56165	8782	66160	38040	36255	13914	19031	1195653	157368	1372052	1027014	860	102	9
10	Girwa	1890	31446	18282	51618	25358	24373	8189	46466	1085294	340924	1472684	1039688	2770	0	27
11	Gogunda	3485	21836	18390	43711	29442	28515	12014	144679	1070374	527740	1742793	1183365	3366	2	15
12	Jhadol	704	35239	8158	44101	29856	28553	11953	15176	1240759	196352	1452287	917129	2756	8	8
13	Badgaon	2284	10522	9717	22523	3731	3361	989	10710	106998	46469	164177	139295	211	1	2
14	Bhinder	3643	5738	34419	43800	14417	13271	5064	53434	114529	482661	650624	505241	946	2	8
15	Mavli	4659	9577	21493	35729	5067	4237	1300	26859	63751	81812	172422	150019	217	0	1
16	Sarada	1284	40939	11857	54080	30879	29524	10865	27162	1320772	229683	1577617	1077768	2931	7	33
17	Salumber	2244	25337	14565	42146	15621	14498	4135	37690	546271	96109	680070	483173	1072	16	11
Total		22076	289011	154689	465776	228714	216173	78204	389312	8079247	2292065	10760624	7357041	17450	139	119

Table 2
UDAIPUR (2013-2014)

1	2	3				4	6	7	9					10	11	12
		a	b	c	d				a	b	c	d	e			
S.No	Block	Cumulative No. of HH issued jobcards (Till the reporting month)				Cumulative No. of HH demanded employment (Till the reporting month)	Cumulative No. of HH provided employment (Till the reporting month)	No. of HH working under NREGA during the reporting month	Cumulative Persondays generate(Till the reporting month)					Cumulative No. of HH completed 100 days (Till the reporting month)	No. of HH which are beneficiary of land reform/IA Y	No. of Disabled beneficiary individuals
		SCs	STs	Others	Total				SCs	STs	Others	Total	Women			
1	Jhallaara	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	Kurabad	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	Lasadia	544	16816	2875	20235	8575	7594	1750	5267	231606	26029	262902	153348	254	0	3
4	Phalasiya	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	Rishabhdeo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	Sayra	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7	Semaari	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8	Kotda	128	35573	6156	41857	20806	19224	3709	682	598851	52320	651853	372950	1015	1	1
9	Kherwara	1213	56176	8781	66170	38952	36697	10073	17142	1014016	100494	1131652	826005	453	88	11
10	Girwa	1850	31367	17581	50798	23276	21899	9598	29360	1056298	273808	1359466	959943	4073	0	31
11	Gogunda	3441	21507	17940	42888	27149	25894	9614	113417	776331	369050	1258798	860895	1680	2	19
12	Jhadol	703	35254	8146	44103	25603	23891	6270	8121	793667	116912	918700	586794	1017	7	7
13	Badgaon	2284	10525	9727	22536	3495	3018	1383	9204	76520	33251	118975	99225	153	1	2
14	Bhinder	3645	5758	34414	43817	11814	10422	4311	38282	78202	312991	429475	330565	623	2	5
15	Mavli	4661	9577	21492	35730	4227	3423	1327	19869	49443	67350	136662	121569	193	0	2
16	Sarada	1288	41077	11979	54344	28811	26803	12151	23153	989513	197474	1210140	782715	2251	12	31
17	Salumber	2244	25336	14563	42143	13838	12476	4305	28608	439043	98051	565702	381797	1030	15	8
Total		22001	288966	153654	464621	206546	191341	64491	293105	6103490	1647730	8044325	5475806	12742	128	120

Table 3
Employment Generated During The financial Year 2014-2015

1	2	3				4	6	7	9					10	11	12
		a	b	c	d				a	b	c	d	e			
		Cumulative No. of HH issued jobcards (Till the reporting month)							Cumulative No. of HH demanded employment (Till the reporting month)	Cumulative No. of HH provided employment (Till the reporting month)	No. of HH working under NREGA during the reporting month	Cumulative Persondays generate(Till the reporting month)				
SCs	STs	Others	Total	SCs	STs	Others	Total	Women								
1	Jhallaara	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	Kurabad	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	Lasadia	457	15716	2932	19105	11835	11155	7194	9129	417166	57478	483773	278211	460	0	4
4	Phalasiya	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	Rishabhdeo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	Sayra	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7	Semaari	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8	Kotda	128	35641	6200	41969	21802	19691	12054	445	630273	53618	684336	389828	648	1	3
9	Kherwara	1213	56179	8786	66178	36163	33519	22617	17725	1094518	110127	1222370	888656	734	82	11
10	Girwa	1847	31352	17492	50691	20483	18714	10030	23681	686903	172824	883408	652428	1612	1	35
11	Gogunda	3441	21523	17940	42904	24681	23184	16235	89538	667328	267937	1024803	717566	1292	2	23
12	Jhadol	700	35215	8103	44018	24561	22226	13408	6478	854880	110637	971995	622584	1361	3	5
13	Badgaon	2285	10529	9730	22544	4280	3731	1788	14064	112010	46188	172262	144331	363	1	3
14	Bhinder	3644	5757	34401	43802	11241	9970	5785	37004	90668	306275	433947	331689	532	1	7
15	Mavli	4665	9586	21519	35770	6943	5418	2753	48270	106123	119935	274328	241486	797	0	6
16	Sarada	1289	40930	12038	54257	27997	25399	15975	24043	982145	184103	1190291	793102	1667	10	31
17	Salumber	2329	26526	14578	43433	14391	12575	7218	28094	415643	92604	536341	387163	726	16	9
Total		21998	288954	153719	464671	204377	185582	115057	298471	6057657	1521726	7877854	5447044	10192	117	137

Table 4 (Rajasthan)

Progress	FY 2015-2016	FY 2014-2015	FY 2013-2014	FY 2012-2013
Approved Labour Budget[In Lakhs]	2116.95	2071.1	2334.66	2225.08
Persondays Generated so far[In Lakhs]	570.86	1684.98	1838.54	2202.38
% of Total LB	26.97	81.36	78.75	98.98
% as per Proportionate LB [Click here for Average Performance of levels above]	49.37			
SC persondays % as of total persondays	18.85	19.71	19.85	19.67
ST persondays % as of total persondays	33.11	26.38	26.17	24.23
Women Persondays out of Total (%) [Click here for Average Performance of levels above]	69.21	68.25	67.76	68.95
Average days of employment provided per Household [Click here for Average Performance of levels above]	25.22	45.73	50.86	52.25
(i)Average PersonDays for SC HouseHolds	23.87	45.01	50.59	52.44
(ii)Average PersonDays for ST HouseHolds	29.05	50.21	56.17	55.19
Total No of HHs completed 100 Days of Wage Employment	6,450	2,81,019	4,46,095	4,21,730
% payments generated within 15 days [Click here for Average Performance of levels above]	49.61	40.67	14.95	53.08
Total Households Worked[In Lakhs]	22.63	36.84	36.15	42.15
Total Individuals Worked[In Lakhs]	29.5	51.39	50.21	57.89
% of Men Worked	33.55	37.66	37.55	37.22
% of Women Worked	66.45	62.34	62.45	62.78
% of SC Worked	18.71	19.13	19.12	18.91
% of ST Worked	32.82	27.15	27.07	25.61
% of Disabled Persons Worked	0.09	0.08	0.06	0.06

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