

Rural Development Schemes/*Yojanas* Focusing on First Common Review Mission: A Discussion

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ABSTRACT

In 2016, Department of Rural Development, Ministry of Rural Development, the Government of India has reviewed some of the rural development programmes. The review Report under the title of “First Common Review Mission” as thematic report has been published by the Ministry and based on this Report few issues are presented here for the benefit of readers. So this article is purely based on secondary sources covered four schemes/*yojanas* viz., Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM), Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojna –Grameen (PMAY-G), Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY).

The review was carried out in eight states in 2016 and the states are Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan and Tripura. Again from each state, two diverse districts were selected for the study based on the criteria of agriculturally backward, high level of poverty, tribal dominated areas vis-à-vis industrially advance or located in coastal areas. In each state four CRM members visited in two diverse districts from 5th May to 9th May 2016. Based on the study and the discussions carried out by the officials and local persons, Report was prepared under the title of “First Common Review Mission”. This author based on the Report few issues pertaining to MGNREGS, DAY-NRLM, PMAY-G and PMGSY has presented for the benefit of readers and scholars.

Key words: CRM, Rural Development, Yojana/Scheme.

Introduction:

The rural development schemes/*yojanas* in India may be categorized into four main blocks viz., employment generation (self and wage), infrastructure creation, social security (pension etc.) and housing.

The Government of India has launched time to time different schemes/*yojanas* for the welfare of the rural inhabitants and time to time, these schemes/*yojanas* were reviewed/evaluated for its better implementation and in many

occasions these were rechristened or merged with one another. Recently, Department of Rural Development, Ministry of Rural Development, the Government of India has reviewed some of the rural development *yojanas*/schemes (this type of review is first in the country). The review Report under the title of “First Common Review Mission” as thematic Report has been published by the Ministry and based on this Report few issues are presented here. So this article is purely based on secondary sources. The author has highlighted Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), *Deen Dayal Antyodaya Yojana* - National Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM), *Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna –Grameen (PMAY-G)*, *Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)*.

This ‘First Common Review Mission’ (CRM, henceforth CRM will be used) was conducted in eight states viz. Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan and Tripura in 2016. Again from each state, two diverse districts were selected for the study based on the criteria of agriculturally backward, high level of poverty, tribal dominated areas etc., vis-à-vis industrially advance or located in coastal areas. In each state four CRM members visited in the two districts from 5th May to 9th May 2016.

Based on the study and the discussions carried out with local the officials and local persons, Report was prepared under the title of “First Common Review Mission”. It is also observed from the Report that before visiting the areas 1-day workshop was organized for orientation and after the study, again 1-day workshop was held to share the findings with senior officials of the Ministry which is undoubtedly commendable measure. One can see the entire Report in the Ministry’s website, if interested. This author has penned down following issues pertaining to the schemes/*yojanas* based on the Report.

MGNREGS: This wage employment scheme was launched in the country under the Act known as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 (MGNREGA) as scheme it is known as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS).

The mandate of the Act is to provide at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. The few of the important goals are:

i) Social protection for the most vulnerable people living in rural India by providing employment opportunities.

- ii) Livelihood security for the poor through creation of durable assets, improved water security, soil conservation and higher land productivity
- iii) Drought-proofing and flood management in rural India
- iv) Empowerment of the socially disadvantaged, especially women, Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Schedules Tribes (STs), through the processes of a rights-based legislation
- v) Strengthening decentralized, participatory planning through convergence of various anti-poverty and livelihoods initiatives
- vi) Deepening democracy at the grass-roots by strengthening Panchayati Raj Institutions
- vii) Effecting greater transparency and accountability in governance

Thus, MGNREGA is a powerful instrument for ensuring inclusive growth in rural India through its impact on social protection, livelihood security and democratic empowerment

(nrega.nic.in/Circular_Archive/archive/Operational_guidelines). Based on the CRM Report, following few issues are cited.

In Andhra Pradesh, MGNREGS workers were organized in groups known as *Shrama Shakti Sangham*. These groups facilitate to mobilize the workers vis-à-vis administration and thus monitoring is carried out smoothly indicating less

corruption. The case of Maharashtra portrays different picture as drought affected district like *Ahmednagar*, 18 *Gram Panchayats* (GPs) had no work. In Rajasthan labour budget was not prepared at GP level and no minutes through register were shown to the team members. In Madhya Pradesh when the team visited tribal districts, observed no *panchayats* were provided with computer. In the state of Karnataka the team observed that approved shelf of projects was about 150 percent of job demand. And women participation was quite high as it was hovering around 85 percent. In Jharkhand since demand for work was quite high in the months of April, May and June so state Government has opened two or more MGNREGS works in each *panchayat*.

As observed by the team, in Andhra Pradesh and Odisha the demand for work was more in summer season as it is difficult to get employment in other sectors. As per the Report in terms of physical and financial achievements, Tripura is an outlier and has performed extra ordinarily well. The State achieved 5.38 crore person days (average 94 person days) spending Rs.940 crore (70%) on wage and Rs.398 crore (30%) on materials and Rs.55 crore (4.02%) on administrative expenditure.

Regarding planning for works, the Report portrays that the same was in order in Andhra Pradesh, Tripura, Jharkhand, Odisha and Karnataka and Rajasthan but critical gap was observed in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. Lastly the team observed strong convergence in all the states except Maharashtra which should focus more on this issue.

DAY-NRLM:

The *Deen Dayal Antyodaya Yojana*– National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM) is a self-employment *yojana* where women under the umbrella of self-help groups (SHGs) carrying out income generation activities for improving their households' economic conditions. The women under SHGs, Village Organisations (VOs) and Cluster Level Federations (CLFs) have evolved transformational social capital that is changing gender relations, access to services and participation in Gram Sabhas and Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs). The *yojana* has given confidence to the women to seek bank loans for economic activity after developing skills and competencies. Of course, Community Resource Persons (CRPs) have been helping them to plan and nurture the projects for livelihood diversification. It is pertinent to mention that presently around 1.50 lakh women Community Resource Persons (CRPs), who

themselves have come out of poverty, are the greatest agents of change in promoting sustainable agriculture, providing banking services, book keepers and accountants to women's collectives, and most importantly an agent for social transformation of villages. DAY-NRLM implements its *yojana* along with (i) *Mahila Kisan Shaskatikaran Pariyojana (MKSP)* as farm sector (ii) Non-Farm Livelihoods include *inter alia* with Startup Village Entrepreneurship Programme (SVEP) and (iii) Self-employment through Rural Self-employment Training Institute (RSETI).

In the farm sector DAY-NRLM focuses primarily on promotion of sustainable livelihoods in agriculture, livestock (including fisheries) and non-timber forest produce (NTFP). Convergence with Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), value chain development and creating market linkages are integral part of the intervention strategy. In the non-farm sector, *yojana* focuses on enterprise development in the villages under Startup Village Enterprise Programmes (SVEP). Convergence with *Deen Dayal Upadhaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY)* is encouraged for earning of wages. In addition, DAY-NRLM intervenes in other

non-farm sectors like traditional skills such as weaving, handicraft and arts and crafts

Since the inception of the *Yojana* in 2011, women members of SHGs have gain accessed to Rs. 1.06 lakh crore as bank credit. For example, in the year 2014-15, SHGs bank credit went up from Rs. 20,000 to more than Rs. 30,000 in 2015-16. Till February 2017, a little more than Rs. 29,000 crore have been disbursed and it is expected that Rs. 35,000 crore to Rs. 38,000 crore will be mobilized as credit in 2016-17(pib.nic.in/newsite).

As per the CRM Report, economic activities supported through SHG bank linkage were mostly in animal husbandry (milch animals and goaterly) and in non-farm activities *inter alia* include micro enterprises, grocery, tailoring, etc. It may be mentioned that around Rs.70 crore was disbursed in 2015-16 to SHGs in Jharkhand as bank credit which is about 50 percent higher than the previous financial year indicating slowly gaining momentum. The officials pointed out that there was indeed a huge potential for bank linkages but more time is required to prepare the projects so that SHGs can avail the credit for livelihood activity in a meticulous way. It is observed from the Report that more steps are sine qua non for improving bank linkages in Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tripura

and Madhya Pradesh. However, silver lining here is that in Madhya Pradesh, many women SHG members reported that they stopped borrowing from money lenders.

PMAY-Grameen:

As housing scheme *Indira Awaas Yojana* (IAY) was launched by the Government of India in 1985 and was restructured as Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Grameen (PMAY-G) in 2016. The unit cost of a house at present in plain area has been fixed as Rs. 1.20 lakh and in hill states and difficult areas (including IAP districts) it will be Rs. 1.30 lakh. The beneficiary is entitled to get 90-95 days of unskilled labour from MRNREGS fund. In PMAY-G, built up area would be 25 square meters with toilet for which additional Rs. 12000 is given for construction of the same.

Thus PMAY-G beneficiaries are provided with resources from various sources. When CRM study was carried out that time PMAY-G was in nascent stage so Report virtually could not focus on PMAY-G, but the team has highlighted few issues on earlier *Indira Awaas Yojana* (IAY).

As per the Report, since inception of the rural housing *yojana*, 351 lakh houses were constructed, incurring a total expenditure of Rs.105,815.80 crore. Further, six states namely Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and

Rajasthan have their own housing scheme, where state government provides additional amount. Based on CAG report, CRM team has brought out the following issues.

CAG report on IAY-2014:

The issues brought out by the CAG Report are as follows:

a. In 22 states, 36,751 non-BPL families were given assistance of Rs.89.15 crore indicating non-eligible households have been provided with house.

b. In eight states, 1,654 beneficiaries received assistance to the tune of Rs.5.37 crore who already had *pucca* houses.

c. In eight states, altogether 5,824 beneficiaries were selected more than once and thus a sum of Rs.14.67 crore was paid to them.

d. The Working Group of Planning Commission had fixed the targets of construction of 170 lakh houses during 2008-13. Against this backdrop, only 128.92 lakh houses (75% of target) were constructed depriving thousands of households.

e. The *yojana* envisaged convergence activities with other schemes of the Government of India which *inter alia* include Total Sanitation Campaign for construction of sanitary latrines in the IAY houses; Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidhyutikaran Yojana for providing

electricity; National Rural Water Supply Programmes for providing drinking water; Differential Rate of Interest scheme for availing loan facility; Insurance Policies for rural BPL families and rural landless families and job cards under MGNREGA. Against this background, the Audit noted that sanitary latrines were constructed only in 25.48 lakh (23.68 per cent) out of 107.58 lakh houses during the period 2009-10 to 2012-13. In 21 states, the IAY was not converged with RGGVY for providing free electric connections. And in 24 states/UTs, IAY beneficiaries were deprived of the benefits of NRWSP.

PMGSY

With a view to provide connectivity by way of all-weather road, Government launched the *Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana* on 25th December, 2000 to provide all-weather access to eligible unconnected habitations.

The *Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana* (PMGSY) is a 100% Centrally Sponsored Scheme. The primary objective of the *yojana* is to provide connectivity, by way of an all-weather road (with necessary culverts and cross-drainage structures, which is operable throughout the year), to the eligible unconnected habitations in the rural areas with a population of 500 persons and above in plain area. In the hill states (North-East, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu &

Kashmir and Uttarakhand), the Desert Areas (as identified in the Desert Development Programme), the Tribal (Schedule V) areas and selected tribal and backward Districts (as identified by the Ministry of Home Affairs and Planning Commission), the objective was to connect eligible unconnected habitations with a population of 250 persons and above (omms.nic.in/PMGSY_Guidelines).

From 2000 to march 2016, under PMGSY around 1.46 lakh habitations by constructing 4.78 lakh kilometers road have been completed. As per the Report, most of the states under CRM study tried to use green material in PMGSY roads. Karnataka has successfully implemented 23 roads (1900 kms) using uncommon items such as cold bitumen, plastic mix etc. Madhya Pradesh

too has experimented using plastic waste in PMGSY roads with reasonable success. Odisha has experimented with cold bitumen as a pilot project. It is also found from the Report that few PMGSY roads had roadside plantations in case of all the eight states which was taken up in convergence with MGNREGS with the forest Department. However, the team members noted that maintenance of these plantations was neglected resulting in high mortality rate.

The Report has further stated that in general in India nine states require to increase their capability of road construction. Out of nine, three were under the CRM study team (Jharkhand, Rajasthan and Odisha). The table-1 vividly portrays the picture.

Table 1 Scaling up PMGSY

S.No.	States	Target length per day (Peak for the next 3 years) kms	Length per day Achieved in 2015-16 (kms)	Scale up needed (no. of times)
1.	Assam	22.5	2.3	10
2.	Bihar	20.4	10.2	2
3.	Chhattisgarh	6.2	5.1	1
4.	J & K	8.0	1.3	6
5.	Jharkhand	20.2	3.7	5
6.	Rajasthan	12.5	6.6	2
7.	Odisha	18.9	10.3	2
8.	Uttarakhand	7.7	3.3	2
9.	West Bengal	10.0	6.6	2
	Total			

Source: CRM Report

Although the table is self-explanatory but it is observed that scale up needed in nine states in the range of 10 times to 1 time and in three study states of CRM (Jharkhand, Rajasthan and Odisha), scale up ranges from 2 to 5 times.

Conclusion and Suggestions:

This type of review was carried out first time by the Ministry of Rural Development and only eight states were covered with reasonable short time. It is also observed from the Report that before visiting the areas 1-day workshop was organized for orientation and after the study, again 1-day workshop was held to appraise the findings with senior officials of the Ministry which is undoubtedly praiseworthy step. In view of this it is suggested that such type of study may be carried out in rest of the states so that all the 29 states can be covered.

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