



National Rural Livelihoods Mission – Progress Towards Rural Upliftment In India

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ABSTRACT

Our country is one of the fastest growing economies with annual growth rate of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of over 9 percent in the recent past. In spite of this rapid growth rate 41.8% of the rural population continue to live below poverty line (poverty estimates of the Tendulkar Committee for the year 2004-05). The success of achieving the goal of sustainable development of our country lies in empowering rural India where 69 per cent of its population resides. Realizing the significance of rural development, India has adopted various innovative strategies and approaches for ensuring the basic rights of the rural population. Rural development in India has witnessed tremendous changes over the years. The Government of India has formulated various programmes and schemes focusing towards the rural upliftment. The strategy of rural development has aimed at alleviating poverty, promoting educational access in rural India, ensuring better livelihood, opportunities for rural poor, making provision for basic amenities and providing suitable infrastructure facilities through innovative wage and self employment programmes. The National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) is, perhaps, the largest poverty reduction programme for women, in the world aiming to reach nearly 70 million rural households. The World Bank will fund the programme with US\$ 1 billion through its National Rural Livelihoods Project (NRLP) a largest single investment in a poverty reduction program.

KEYWORDS: Rural Upliftment, Poverty Reduction, NRLM and World Bank

INTRODUCTION

The success of achieving the goal of sustainable development of our country lies in empowering rural India where 69 per cent of its population resides. Realizing the significance of rural development, India has adopted various innovative strategies and approaches for ensuring the basic rights of the rural population. Rural development in India has witnessed tremendous changes over the years. The Government of India has formulated various programmes and schemes focusing towards the rural upliftment. The strategy of rural development has aimed at alleviating poverty, promoting educational access in rural India, ensuring better livelihood, opportunities for rural poor, making provision for basic amenities and providing suitable infrastructure facilities through innovative wage and self employment programmes. This article envisages the schemes which are in vogue to tap rural entrepreneurial growth by promoting the formation of institutions beyond the community level. In this regard, the Government has implemented the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) to support rural people living below poverty line.

OBJECTIVES

1. The article highlights the following objectives:
2. To trace out the origin of National Rural Livelihoods Mission.
3. To highlight the salient features of the scheme.
4. To analyze the funding pattern of the scheme.
5. To portray the organizational structure of NRLM.
6. To reveal the physical and financial progress of NRLM.

HISTORY OF NRLM

Before the advent of economic liberalization several rural employment schemes or self employment opportunities were fostered by the authorities encompassing all facets like employment generation, organization of rural poor into Self Help Groups (SHGs) provide training, infrastructure development, financial assistance through bank credit, subsidy and marketing support. The Government of India had restructured the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) and launched a new programme titled "Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana" (SGSY) on April 1, 1999. The funds for this programme were shared between the Centre and States in the ratio of 75:25, except in the case of North Eastern States where it is 90:10 basis. The programme was started aiming to benefit rural poor families living below poverty line. The corner stone of the SGSY strategy was that the poor need to be organized systematically so that they can access self employment opportunities. In the last 10 years of implementing SGSY, there has developed a universal acceptance in the country of the need for poor to be organized into Self Help Groups as a prerequisite for alleviating poverty. Subsequently several shortcomings like

regional variations in mobilization of rural poor, inadequate investments for building community institution and weak linkages with banks were identified. In addition to this, many states were not able to avail funds under SGSY due to lack of dedicated human resources with matching delivery system.

To overcome the shortfalls in the SGSY, a high powered committee under the chairmanship of an eminent economist Prof.P.Radhakrishna was setup to look into credit and other related issues of SGSY. The committee came out with the following recommendations:

1. The rural poor living below poverty line need continuous financial support for at least 6-8 years and this has to be met with their own organizations.
2. A minimum assistance of one lakh rupees per family should be given.

Based on the above recommendations, the Government of India had restructured SGSY as the "National Rural Livelihoods Mission" in the year 2010 to be implemented in a mission mode across the country by building on the core strengths of the SGSY.

FEATURES OF NRLM

The National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) is, perhaps, the largest poverty reduction programme for women, in the world aiming to reach nearly 70 million rural households. NRLM will be launched in the 12 states that account for 85 per cent of the rural poor households in India. The Government of India will invest US\$ 5.1 billion in NRLM over next seven years including expected allocation for 12th Five year plan. The World Bank will fund the programme with US\$ 1 billion through its National Rural Livelihoods Project (NRLP) a largest single investment in a poverty reduction program. The salient features of NRLM are:

1. Universal social mobilization of rural Below Poverty Line (BPL) families and formation of SHGs and their federations at various levels to ensure that at least one member of each rural BPL family household, preferably a woman member is brought under the scheme;
2. Universal financial inclusion of the rural BPL households;
3. Training and capacity building of the beneficiaries;
4. Support for infrastructure creation and marketing of products of the beneficiaries;
5. Setting up of dedicated support infrastructure from the national to sub-district level.

FUNDING PATTERN

In order to be eligible for funding under NRLM the following conditions are to be fulfilled by the States:

- i) State level agencies, district and sub-district level units are to be set up;
- ii) Professional staff has to be trained and placed;
- iii) State level poverty alleviating strategy to be formulated.

NRLM will aim at universal social mobilization and bring all seven crore or 70 million rural BPL families under the SHGs network in a phased manner over a span of next ten years. Besides, Rural Self Employment Training Institute (RSETIs) would be set up in each district in the country to impart short-term training to rural BPL youth for taking up self employment or skilled wage employment.

PROGRESS OF NRLM IN INDIA

The physical and financial progress of NRLM of all states in our country is shown in the following table:

Table 1
Physical and Financial progress of NRLM for the year 2011-2012

Sl. NO	STATES/UTs	Central Funds (In Lakhs)		Total No. of Swarozgaris Assisted	
		Central Allocation	Central Releases	Target	Achievement
1	Andhra Pradesh	13557.00	12338.51	116974	66830
2	Arunachal Pradesh	692.00	371.00	5375	466
3	Assam	17988.00	14259.70	139636	94451
4	Bihar	29872.00	9882.90	278264	105927
5	Chhattisgarh	6635.00	5595.77	61814	32853
6	Goa	200.00	70.60	1881	337
7	Gujarat	4727.00	4327.02	44034	33909
8	Haryana	2781.00	2800.37	25902	14808
9.	Himachal Pradesh	1171.00	908.29	10903	7365

10.	Jammu & Kashmir	1449.00	643.05	13497	1738
11.	Jharkhand	11264.00	5811.40	104932	91926
12.	Karnataka	9482.00	6690.35	88327	58843
13.	Kerala	4255.00	3780.61	39633	26334
14.	Madhya Pradesh	14214.00	12544.23	132407	65032
15.	Maharashtra	18744.00	15444.94	174609	89949
16.	Manipur	1206.00	575.52	9365	773
17.	Meghalaya	1351.00	455.38	10491	6188
18.	Mizoram	313.00	313.00	2429	2792
19.	Nagaland	927.00	525.89	7194	3537
20.	Orissa	14363.00	10127.65	133803	66820
21.	Punjab	1351.00	1193.76	12581	9418
22.	Rajasthan	7200.00	4926.26	67072	37488
23.	Sikkim	346.00	173.00	2688	1064
24.	Tamil Nadu	11103.00	10963.32	103430	89561
25.	Tripura	2177.00	2267.00	16900	27861
26.	Uttar Pradesh	43006.00	30374.50	400612	280465
27.	Uttaranchal	2264.00	1824.57	21090	12796
28.	West Bengal	15962.00	15265.42	148696	50395
29.	A & N Island	25.00	35.84	176	157
30.	Daman & Diu	25.00	-	176	-
31.	D & N Haveli	25.00	-	176	-
32.	Lakshadweep	25.00	25.00	196	-
33.	Pondicherry	300.00	400.00	2300	1138
Total		239000.00	174915.85	2177563	1281221

Source: Statistical Report on NRLM, 2011-2012.

CONCLUSION

As the implementation of the NRLM is in a mission mode, this enables a shift from the existing allocation based strategy to a demand-driven strategy enabling the States to evolve their own livelihoods based poverty reduction action plans, besides focusing on targets, outcomes and time bound delivery.