

## Rural Environmental Scenario: A Need For Sustainable Development



### Management

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### ABSTRACT

*This paper highlights the protection of environment in the rural areas and suggests measures to improve the position of natural resources. The most dangerous common problem to the world countries is degradation of environmental resources at present. In the name of economic development, human beings are exploiting natural resources without considering ecological balance and neglecting future generation's needs. The degradation of environment shows adverse effect on human beings, live stock, bio-diversity etc. As climate changes the availability of natural resource becomes very difficult in rural areas. This leads to migration of people to the urban areas for employment. After recognizing the danger of environment pollution the world countries are giving priority to protect environment. India is also implementing different programmes for the development of rural areas, but there is less importance for protection of environment in the programmes. So priority should be given for the protection of environment and policies and programmes should be made by keeping the people's participation and services of NGO's and other like minded organizations. Then there is possibility for the sustainable rural development.*

### "India lives in villages"----- Mahatma Gandhi

Brief history of Rural Development: The concept of Rural Development in India is not new concept. From British onwards efforts have been taking by the government for the development of rural areas. Mahatma Gandhi also proposed some schemes for rural development. Earlier five year plans had been prepared based on the theme of rural development along with priority to rural development. The expectations of economists collapsed as the failure of Trickle down effect which refers that the fruitful results of economic development reach to bottom from top. So, in 1974 department of Rural development came into force as a part of ministry of Food and Agriculture. On the 18th August, 1979 new ministry of Rural reconstruction was emerged. It was renamed as ministry of Rural development on 23rd of January 1982. Later Rural Development Ministry was converted into a part of Agriculture ministry in 1985. In 1991 on July 5th Rural development was announced as separate ministry. Again in 1995, it was formed as ministry of Rural areas employment and poverty alleviation. In 1999 finally it was formed as ministry of Rural development. For the development of rural areas the ministry of Rural development has been implementing number of programmes focusing on the elements like health, education, safe drinking water, housing and roads.

Meaning of Rural Development: There is no comprehensive definition for rural development. "Overall development of villages is called Rural development. This refers development of agriculture and allied sectors, rural industries and rural infrastructure. As majority population lives in villages, their backwardness stands for backwardness of economy as whole. So, Rural development has emerged as " a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of a specific group of a people i.e. rural poor. It involves extending the benefits of development to the rural population who seeks a livelihood in the rural areas.

Objectives of Rural Development: In the Indian context Rural development programmes have aimed at achieving the following objectives.

1. To change the attitude of rural people towards development.
2. To promote democratic leadership by setting up local self government.
3. To provide basic needs such as drinking water, health care, sanitation, housing and employment i.e. to improve standard of living
4. To improve communal harmony and unity among rural people
5. To develop farming and non- farming activities without adversely affecting the environment.

Programmes introduced for Rural Development: For the development of any country proper utilization of natural and human resources is inevitable. The developing countries not

in apposition to utilize natural resources as they have lack of advanced technology. India is also not except to this as developing economy. The land mark in the history of rural development is introduction of Community Development Programme on October 2nd, 1952. After that for the elimination of poverty and unemployment in the rural areas, the programmes like Small Farmers Development Agency (SFDA), Marginal Farmers and Agriculture Labour Development Agency (MFADA), Minimum Needs Programme (MNP), Food for Work Programme (FWP), Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA), Training for Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM), Ganga Kalyan Yojana (GKY), Jawahar Rojgar Yojana (JRY) Swarna Jayanthi Swagram Yojana (SJSY), Anthyodaya Programme etc. Besides this, NABARD, RRB, SBI and other commercial banks are helping for the development of rural areas. During 1995-96 Rural Infrastructure Development Fund was established and maintained by NABARD. The budget expenditure for Rural Development during 2007-08 is 32,508 crores. In the plans Expenditure on Rural development has been increasing. In the 11th plan the government has target that an increase in forests and cover tree by 5 percent and provision of safe drinking water by 2009. But in the programmes there was no much more priority for the protection of environment.

Degradation of Environment: At present, the most dangerous common problem to mankind in the world is degradation of environment. In order to make comfortable life, human beings are going to exploit natural resources by applying modern technology and on the other side, totally neglecting future generation's needs. Industrialization, massive deforestation and urbanization result in downfall of quality in land, water, air and depletion of ozone layer, acid rains, green house effects, global warming etc.

Environmental Degradation is decrease in the quality of environment. In other words it refers a visible reduction in the availability of goods and services from the physical environment and the renewable natural resource base. The degradation of environment affects badly on every one on the planet and different fields. Poverty still remains a basic problem at the root of several environmental problems. So there is necessity to protect environmental resources in rural areas for future generation's needs.

Sustainable Development: The present world countries both developed and under developed countries realized the danger of environmental degradation and spending more funds to prevent and abatement of environmental pollution. The concept of Sustainable Development conveys the message that environment and economic development are closely interdependent and mutually supportive. It deals with quite simply the largest and most extreme problem ever faced by humanity. The term Sustainable Development was probably coined by Barbara Ward (Lady Jackson), the founder of the International Institute

for Environment and Development, who pointed out that Socio-Economic Development and environmental protection, must be linked. The World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) 1987, headed by Brundtland defined Sustainable Development as follows.

**“Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generation’s to meet their own needs.”**

In economic terms Sustainable Development is defined as “Economic system in which the number of people and the quantity of goods are maintained at same constant level, which is ecologically sustainable overtime and meet at least the basic needs of total population.” So In the name of Sustainable Development world countries are trying to protect environment.

**Rural India Environmental problems:** Rural India is facing the severe problem of degradation of environment. The problems like lack of sanitation, shortage of safe drinking water, ill-designed habitats and kitchens, living of animals and human in close proximity etc. are very common. Besides this, human beings are misusing natural resources like soil, water, forests etc indiscriminately. The farmers and agricultural labours are suffering from soil erosion, chemical seeding, chemical fertilizers, pesticides spraying etc. Unscientific agriculture is also causing for environment problems in rural areas.

India is sixth largest and second fastest growing producer of green house gases (GHG) in the world. According to Tata Energy Research Institute, India is losing 10% of national income due to environmental degradation and the availability of fresh water declined by two-thirds. The water requirement of major water consuming industries such as agro-based industries, refineries petro-chemicals, and fertilizers has grown 40 times, but these are not yet treating the huge waste water generated. 2.5 million Pre-mature deaths have been recording due to indoor and outdoor air pollution. Regarding soil pollution in the country, out of 329 million hectares of total geographical area, 144 million hectares are subject to water and wind erosion and 30 million hectares through salinity, water logging etc. Recently noise pollution is also becoming as major environmental hazard in rural areas. There is a forecast that there will be more pressure on water and other natural resources in India by 2020. Apart from this improper implementation of Land reforms and Green revolution which is benefited for large farmers badly affected rural environment scenario.

There are some hurdles to the Sustainable rural development. The factors like improper participation of people in the programmes, too much political interference, much dependency on executive officials, corruption, wrong records of rural particulars, lack of integration among the rural poor etc show their adverse impact on rural scenario.

#### **Policy Measures for Sustainable Rural Development:**

For the overall development of the country in the long run, protection of environmental resources, particularly in the rural areas

as is needed. India has two-tier system for combating pollution i.e. Central Pollution Control Board (1974) and State Pollution Control Board. In this regard, the Indian Constitution adopted the articles like 48A, 51A(g) and 253. On the basis of these articles, the Indian Parliament enacted Water Act of 1974, the Prevention and Control of Pollution Act (Air Act) 1981, the Environmental Protection Act 1986, The Public Liability Insurance Act 1991 have been made for the protection of environment resources. But the performance of Boards and the implementation of acts should be improved. The following measures are useful to protect environment especially in rural areas.

1. To educate and train the politicians, bureaucrats, NGOs and policy makers who are responsible for making and implementation of laws over environmental degradation in rural areas..
2. Vanasamrakshna Samithis are to be upgraded with knowledge, mission and vision.
3. The sarpanches or administrators of villages and their ward member are given exposure to environmental protection and their merits for agriculture.
4. A strong dose of advertisements would be given in press and electronic media about degradation and result of sustainability in rural.
5. Environmental clubs in schools, colleges, universities are to be prompted and make it mandatory in villages..
6. Environment budgeting and auditing is to be introduced in village panchayats.
7. Promote the good habits among people to grow a tree, to nurture a pet animal.
8. Public participation is needed for sustainable development. For this motivation of the people about the importance of sustainable development is needed.
9. Wind, solar, bio-gas, hydel power are to be promoted than fossil fuels.
10. World environment day, earth day, etc. are to be celebrated seriously and sincerely which, reminds the importance of environmental resources among rural people.
9. The literacy rate should be improved as it is key factor to change their attitude.
10. Brining awareness among the farmers regarding agriculture allied activities to undertake them at suitable environment by using the services of NGO and other voluntary organizations

#### **Conclusion**

For the prosperity of any economy either in Developed or Underdeveloped country sustainable rural development is required. Though governments are implementing number of programmes there is more focus on elimination of poverty and unemployment and less priority to protection of environment. It is necessary that by taking the strategies of developed countries, India has to go to achieve sustainable rural development.

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