

A Move Towards Rural Development in India: An Overview

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Abstract: *The fact is that the rural development in India has always been remained the focus point of the economic development and growth during the entire planning period. Therefore, the Government of India has launched and initiated many poverty alleviation programs and schemes to combat the hindrances in the way of rural development. Despite the many moves towards rural developments, it has been observed by many studies that there are many hindrances in this process. However, the first initiative was taken as Panchayati Raj on 02 October 1959 from Rajasthan. Further, to eradicate rural poverty and strengthen of rural development some of the schemes such as: IRDP, PMGSY, SGSY, SGRY, IAY, JGSY, EAS & MGNREGA have been implemented. These plans and schemes have been implemented through the*

Panchayati Raj Institutions in the country. The present research paper highlights the Government of India's efforts to ensure rural development through poverty alleviation schemes in rural India.

Keywords: Rural Poverty, Rural Development, Poverty Alleviation, Panchayati Raj,

Introduction: We know the fact that rural development has always been one of the priorities of our development policy since the implementation of five years plans. To develop the rural areas, some of the well-planned efforts are made by the government at the state level as well national level. However, this work at the district level is made possible through the District Rural Development Agencies (DRDA) which are at work throughout the country in the present development scenario.

Actually, DRDA is visualized and specialized agency capable of managing anti poverty programs of Ministry of Rural Development. The rural development programs are made for the betterment of rural masses. The objective of such programs is sustainable growth that could be achieved through empowering local communities, awareness building and participation of rural people in the development activities. The ultimate purpose of the democratic decentralization and Panchyati Raj has always been to ensure a fair standard of living to the rural masses.

It is therefore essential to know the efforts made by the Government of India to combat the rural poverty. It is clear that the rapid rural development process is very essential to reduce the rural poverty level and to grant benefits of rural poverty alleviation schemes implemented by the government in the area of health, education, water, sanitation and nutrition. Since 1959 almost all the rural development departments executed their plans and schemes made for rural development

through Panchyati Raj Institutions. It is true that at the close of 70's it was realized that the size of rural problems was very enormous. Therefore, the Government of India took some ready collections to combat rural poverties and implemented many plans and schemes for rural developments. Some of them are as under:

- **Integrated Rural Development Program (IRDP):** IRDP is a strategy designed to bring about an improvement in the life style of rural masses. The fact is that the rural poor constitute of a bulk of over population and to make them free from evils arising from socio-economic inequalities would largely depend upon the extent to which transformation in rural economy occurs. It is thought that a regular flow of benefits of rural development to the rural masses could increase the income of rural strata in the rural areas. The major constituent of this population are small and marginal farmers, partitions and landless labourers. Therefore the objective of the rural

development cannot be confined to a particular segment of the society. Broadly speaking the aim of anti-poverty allevation programs made for rural development are related to minimum acceptable level of food, shelter, education and health problems in rural areas.

The IRDP was initiated on 02 October 1980 in all the 5011 blocks in the country. During the five years from 1980 to 1985, in each block 600 poor families were benefited through the program, in this way a total of 15 million families of about 75 million persons below the poverty line were benefited. The allocation of funds was shared between the centre and states in the ratio of 50:50 bases. However, this program was based on a graded scheme of subsidies which amounted to 25 percent of the capital cost of small farmers, 25 percent for marginal farmers, agricultural laborer and rural artisans and remaining 50 percent for tribal peoples. Following the principle of *Antyodaya*, it was

intended to reach the poorest household first in order to strengthen the weakest segments of the society. It was a multi-level, multi-sector and multi-section program which was started at all levels i.e. Village, Block and District. In term of multi sector concept it included development of various sector of rural economy such as agriculture, industry, economic infrastructure and many social services. Finally in the perspective of multi-sections program it aimed at to combat the rural poverty including the small and marginal farmers, artisans, landless labourers, schedule caste and schedule tribes in rural India.

- **Indira Awas Yojana (IAY):** This scheme was started in 1980 to aimed at providing houses at free of cost to the members of the SC/ ST and freed bonded labourers in India. From 1933 to 1934, IAY was extended to the other poor categories as well. It is one of the six components of Bharat Nirman. The permissible expenditure for

each house was fixed Rs 14000/- which was enhanced Rs. 20000/- from 01 August 1996. Moreover, under the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana, during 1990 to March 2001 a total of 67.5 Lakh houses were built with a total expenditure of 11324 crore. During 2012-13 as against a physical target of 30.10 lakh houses, 25.35 Lakh houses were sanctioned under the scheme and 13.88 lakh houses were constructed as on 30th Dec. 2012. Furthermore this scheme was revised from 01st April 2013 and construction cost was extended for both plain as well as hilly areas. Since 01st April 2013 total share of the construction cost is shared by the centre and state in the ratio of 50:50.

□ **Jawahar Gram Smridhi Yojana (JGSY):** The Jawahar Rozgar Yojana has been re-casted as the JGSY w.e.f. 01 April 1999 to impart a thrust to creation of rural infrastructure. The Gram Panchayat can effectively to determine their infrastructure needs and responsibilities of the scheme. The

funds are directly released to the Gram Panchyat by the DRDA / Zila Parishad. Its funding ratio is shared by the centre and states in the proportion of 75:25. Its primary objective is the creation of demand driven community village infrastructure including durable assess at the village level and to enable the rural people to increase the opportunities for sustainable employment. The secondary objective of the scheme is the generation of supplementary employment for the BPL families.

□ **Swaran Jyanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY):** This scheme was launched on 01st April 1999 to restructure many development schemes into single self-employment program by amalgamation of six schemes:

- (i) Integrated Rural Development Program. (IRDP)
- (ii) Training of Rural Youths for Self –Employment. (TRYSEM)

- (iii) Development of Women and Children in Rural Area (DWCRA)
- (iv) Supply of Improved Tool-Kits to Rural Artisans (SITRA)
- (v) Ganga Kalyan Yojana (GKY)
- (vi) Million Well Schemes (MWS).

The main objective of this scheme was to bring the existing poor families above the poverty line by providing them income generating assets through a mix of bank credit and government subsidies and to ensure that an assisted family has a monthly net income of at least Rs. 2000/-. The families of below poverty line including artisans identified through the BPL census to make the rural people eligible for financial assistance under the scheme. To provide financial credit to rural poor such as: SC, ST, OBC, Women and disabled, the SGSY is conceived as a holistic program of micro-enterprises covering all aspects of self-employment including the rural poor into self-help groups including the

various development agencies such as DRDA, Banks, Panchyati Raj Institution, Non-Government Organization (NGOs) and such other semi-government organization. Subsidy under this scheme is at uniform rate of 30% of the project cost and a maximum of Rs. 7500/-. In respect of SC and ST, it is 50 percent and a maximum of Rs. 10,000/- for the group the subsidy is 50 percent subject to a ceiling of Rs. 1.25 lakh; but there is no limit on subsidy for irrigation projects. This scheme is funded by centre and state in the ratio of 75:25.

- **Pradhanmatri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY):** This scheme was launched in Dec. 2000 which was a fully funded and sponsored by the centre with an objective of providing connectivity to the unconnected rural areas and to create a road network with a population of 500 persons or above in the plain areas and 250 persons and above in the hilly areas, tribal areas, desert areas. Since inception, projects totaling about 4, 74, 525 km of roads were

constructed to upgrade the level of road connectivity in the rural areas. A sum of Rs. 1,02,68 crore was released to the states and about Rs. 96,939 crore were spent by Dec. 2012. Its main objectives are defined as under:

- To create sustainable employment for the rural masses.
 - To create community and social assess.
 - To creates assets in favor of the rural poor for their direct and continuing benefits.
 - To produce positive impact on wage levels and to bring about overall improvement in quality of life in rural areas.
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- **Sampooran Gramin Rozgar Yojana (SGRY):** This program was launched on 20th Sept. 2001 with an annual outlay of Rs. 10,000 crore by merging the either to schemes such as NREP, RLEGP, JRY, EAS and JGSY. This program is in operation for more than 3 years and thousands of crores of Rs. have been invested

along with millions of tons of food grains during the initial phase of this scheme. Basically the scheme aims at providing additional and supplementing wage employment providing food security and improvement in the nutritional level in all rural areas of the country. Further it aims at to create the durable community, social and economic assets including the infrastructural development in rural areas as the secondary objective.

- **The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA):** This scheme was enacted by the government of India on 25 August 2005. It provides a legal guarantee for 100 days of employment in every financial year to adult member of any rural family related to unskilled man workers in rural India. Its attempt is to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor and one third of the stipulated work force is given to the women workers. Since its initial stage it covered 200 districts from 2 February 2006. The government

announced the addition of another 130 districts in the financial year 2007-08 with the budgetary support of Rs. 11300 crore. The Congress led UPA government decided to extend this scheme across the country at the wake of the financial year 2008-09. Consequently in April 2008, it was expanded to cover the entire India. This scheme provides for the enhancement of livelihood security to the rural people by providing them at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment.

Conclusion: To conclude we can say that Government of India has initiated many programs and schemes for rural development targeting the poverty alleviation in rural India. In the present study, the IRDP was the first program which was introduced to eradicate the rural poverty and MGNREGA is the last which aims at to accelerate the pace of rural development in rural India. Actually this program is a key foundation of rural economy and flagship program of UPA government. After the

formation of BJP led government (NDA) in 2014, the Government of India is committed to extend its aims and objectives. Recently it is known as a major program for rural development which empowers the rural poor people. However some of the short comings have been observed by the various research scholars; therefore, here it is an urgent need to combat the corrections in MGNREGA and to ensure the target of rural development through Panchayati Raj Institution.

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