

“Performance of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme with Special Reference to Hugli District Of West Bengal”

SOURAV DAS

Assistant Professor

Department of Geography, Asutosh College, Kolkata (West Bengal) INDIA

-----ABSTRACT-----

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act enshrines the legal right of one hundred days of paid employment to any household, on demand. Though its scope is national, there have been wide interstate as well as inter district variation in the achievement of the objectives of the act. National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) enacted by legislation on August 25, 2005 and it was renamed as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) on 2nd October 2009. The act aims eradication of extreme poverty and at making villages self sustaining through productive assets creation. In this paper an attempt has been made to focus some lights on the measures of performance of MGNREGS IN Hugli district of West Bengal. This paper investigates the status of MGNREGS in Hugli district after the implementation of the programme. However the paper finds interblock variation in some important indicators like average person days generated per household, the proportion of works completed to works taken up and the proportion of local fund spent.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is an Indian job guarantee scheme enacted by legislation on 25 th August, 2005. The scheme provides a legal guarantee for one hundred days of employment in every year to adult members of any rural household willing to do public work related unskilled manual work at the statutory minimum age. This act was introduced in Hugli district of West Bengal on 2nd April, 2007 with an aim of improving the purchasing power of the rural people, primarily semi or unskilled work to people living rural areas whether or not they are below the stipulated work force is women. The law was initially called National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) but was renamed on 2nd October, 2009. The act aims at eradication of poverty and at making villages self sustaining through productive asset creation. The government has referred to it as an “**Act of the people, by the people and for the people**” In a context of poverty and unemployment, workforce programme interventions in developed as well as developing countries for many years. These programmes typically provide unskilled manual workers with short term employment on public works such as irrigation, infrastructure, afforestation, soil conservation and road construction.

II. STUDY AREA

The study area covers whole Hugli district of West Bengal. India. The area is located in the southern part of West Bengal. Its latitudinal extension is 22° 39' 32" N-22° 01' 20" N and longitudinal extension is 87°30' 15" E - 88° 30' 20" E. The study area is bounded on the northwest and north by the districts of Bankura and Bardhaman, on the south Haora district is located, on the east by the meandering Bhagirathi river demarcating the district of Nadia and on the West and south west by the district of Purba Medinipur The total area of Hugli district is 3149 Sq. Km. It Has 4 broad subdivisions, 23 police stations, 1886 inhabited villages, 1915 mouzas, 18 blocks, 12 municipalities, one corporation, 207 Gram Panchayet. According to 2011 census total population of Hugli district is 5520389. Male population is 2819100 and female population is 2701289 so the male female ratio is 51:49 .

III. OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of the study are as follows-

- [1] To focus some lights on the measures of performance of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in the Hugli district located in the West Bengal.
- [2] To find out the level of achievement of the main motive of this scheme in consistent with the main provisions.
- [3] Enumerate the main challenges as far MGNREGA is concerned.
- [4] This paper investigates the status of MGNREGS in Hugli district after the implementation of the programme.
- [5] To examine the interblock variation in some important indicators like average person days generated per household, the proportion of works completed to works taken up and the proportion of local fund spent.

IV. METHODOLOGY

Methodology is the way of achieving the goal through the drawing of inference by observation, collection and differential analysis of relevant data relating to the study of performance of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme with special reference to Hugli district of West Bengal. The statistical data for the study has been mobilized both from the primary and secondary sources. Primary data has been collected from the Hugli district through a well designed questionnaire and the necessary secondary data has been collected from different government and non government agencies, different reports published by Panchayet and Rural Development Department (Government of West Bengal), official website of NREGA and official website of Hugli district. Collected data was tabulated and analyzed based on different cartograms and quantitative techniques which is followed by interpretation.

V. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS:

Table 1. Persondays Generation (in lakhs)

Year	Persondays
2010-2011	113.27
2011-2012	133.23
2012-2013	170.70
2013-2014(till reporting)	0.48

Source: <http://nrega.nic.in>

From Table No 1 it is observed that in 2010-11 person days generation was 113.27 lakhs but in the financial year 2012-13 it has been raised to 170.70 lakhs i.e. Increased by 150% comparing to 2010-11. Obviously we can say that Hugli district has shown consistent performance as per person days generation is concerned.

Table 2. Persondays Generation of SC, ST AND Women (in lakhs)

Year	SC	ST	Women
2010-2011	6032443	1129094	3708944
2011-2012	6875801	1572534	4559656
2012-2013	8529492	1633483	6193359
2013-2014(till reporting)	25207	4656	18544

Source: <http://nrega.nic.in>

From Table No 2 it is observed that in the financial year 2010-11 person days generation among SC, ST and Women counterpart were 60.32 lakhs, 11.29 lakhs and 37.08 lakhs respectively. But in the financial year 2011-12 the figures augmented to 68.75 lakhs, 15.72 lakhs and 45.59 lakhs respectively. During the next financial year of 2012-13 figures increased to 85.29 lakhs, 16.33 lakhs and 61.93 lakhs respectively. The increased percentage of SC, ST and Women counterpart are 41%, 44% and 66% respectively. From the calculated percentage it is seen that the enhancement rate in the case of women person days generation is the highest in comparison to SC and ST people of Hugli district in West Bengal. The rate of enhancement of person days generation in case of SC is the lowest in this regard.

Table 3. No of Household Provided 100 Days Employment

Year	Number of Household
2010-2011	394919
2011-2012	433558
2012-2013	456121
2013-2014(till reporting)	5410

Source: <http://nrega.nic.in>

From Table No 3 it is observed that during the financial year 2010-11 394919 number of households got 100 days employment. It enhanced in the financial year 2011-12. In the last financial year of 2012-13 Hugli district provided 100 days employment to 456121 numbers of households through this scheme.

Table 4. Year wise Women Participation (in percentage)

Year	Women Participation (in percentage)
2010-2011	32.74
2011-2012	34.22
2012-2013	36.28
2013-2014(till reporting)	38.63

Source: author's calculation

From Table No 4 it is observed that year wise women participation from 2010 to 2013 ranges between 32% to 38% which is higher than the state average. The average women participation of the state is only 26.57%. Therefore it can be said that Hugli district is showing gradual consistent performance as per women participation is concerned. Women are becoming more independent through successful implementation of this scheme.

Table 5. Comparison between expenditure in 2010 and 2011

	2009-2010	2010-2011
Total Fund availability	8846.56	18464.11
Total Expenditure	8323.17	16939.03
Total Household Provided Employment	196779	387399
Total Number of Job Cards	540731	583638
Total Man Days	5909956	10926884
Women Participation	31.45%	34.02%

Source: <http://nrega.nic.in>

Table 6. Comparison between financial statements

Year	Opening Balance	Fund Received	Total Availability	Expenditure (as per MPR)	Expenditure (as per MIS)	Other Wages	Expenditure On Material	Other Expenditure
2009-10	526.69	8319.87	8846.56	8416.65	7934.47	5507.71	2470.32	220.19
2010-11	419.77	18044.34	18464.11	16939.02	16862.84	11591.04	4359.33	488.76

Source: <http://nrega.nic.in>

From Table No 5 and 6 it is noticed that in the financial year 2009-10 fund utilization against the fund availability was 94% whereas in the next financial year of 2010-11 it was slightly decreased and came down to 92% but it can be said that the pattern of overall utilization of fund is good. In the financial year 2009-10 more than 54 lakhs households got job card and in the next financial year the figures raised to more than 58 lakhs. So it can be said that Hugli district is showing consistent performance in this context.

Table 7. Presently Approved Sector Wise Schemes (Number) and percentage of Expenditure

Name of scheme	Number of Scheme	Percentage of Expenditure
Rural Connectivity	6801	29%
Flood Control	2015	9%
Water Conservation And Water Harvesting	1917	11%
Drought Proofing	1982	2%
Micro Irrigation	1277	5%
Renovation of Traditional Water Bodies	6955	42%
Land development	597	2%

Source: <http://nrega.nic.in>

From the records of approved sector wise schemes and percentage of expenditure it is observed that more emphasis has been given on renovation of traditional water bodies where 6955 number of schemes have been taken up. On the other hand 29% and 11% of total expenditure have been incurred for the purpose of rural connectivity and water conservation and water harvesting.

VI. CONCLUSION:

After the analysis of different information and data regarding MGNREGA of Hugli district in West Bengal it can be concluded that the level performance of Hugli district is satisfactory. Number of household provided 100 days employment is very much satisfactory. Women participation rate is above than the State level. Presently 90% fund has been utilized for planning, implementation and monitoring of MGNREGS. This district is giving more emphasis on renovation of traditional water bodies and rural connectivity which is very much essential for overall upliftment of Hugli district. The overall impact of MGNREGS works have been reflected in the following areas-

- [1] Better rural communication.
- [2] Decline in flood affected areas.
- [3] Increase of agricultural production.
- [4] Increase in ground water level.
- [5] Increase in women participation rate.
- [6] Decline in rural unemployment.
- [7] Even distribution of wealth among male and female.
- [8] Declining tendency of gender bias.
- [9] Increase financial activity of women.
- [10] Decline out migration.

So, finally it can be concluded that MGNREGA is not just employment but for sustainable solution to all major problems. MGNREGA is bringing about a silent revolution in rural areas. The civil society actors have

contributed significantly in the efforts to shape and make their programme a role model for public service delivery in rural areas. In West Bengal administrative machinery is responding very positively and proactively. The success of MGNREGA need not to be measured just in terms of employment generation, even though it has created a success record for better than other programme. MGNREGA is a model for innovation starting from providing land based employment to the wage earner, MGNREGA has had innovative initiatives like financial inclusion, social security provisioning for workers in the unorganized sector and identification of poor. Many households have been included in the financial network for the first time. The main benefits are illustrated in the following table-

Intervention	Main benefit	Labour intensive activities
Combating soil erosion (Land development ,MGNREGA)	Maintained productivity of land	Construction of earth structures, planting of vegetation
Water harvesting(MGNREGA)	Increased productivity of ground water	Construction of weirs and other structures such as underground tank, ponds, renovation of traditional water bodies
Rehabilitation of degraded land	Restores ability of the land to provide ecosystem services such as water harvesting, purification and provided habitat to endangered species.	Planting native vegetation, removal of alien vegetation and other man introduced structures, restoring streams and wetlands.

Source: UNDP (2009a)

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