

## ANALYSIS OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

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### ABSTRACT

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*The Ministry of Rural Development in India is the apex body for formulating policies, regulations and programmes for the development of the rural sector. The rural areas are deprived of basic infrastructural facilities even after 73 years of national development. The rural masses are deprived of civic amenities, infrastructural facilities, educational opportunities, healthcare facilities, employment opportunities and other resources. The need for rural development is seldom questioned since India lives in the villages. Rural development has been the thrust area over the last 7 decades. The rural development projects basically aim at integrated rural development. The analysis of rural development programmes is furnished in this article based on qualitative research methodology.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Rural Development, rural areas, Community Development, agricultural sector*

### AN OVERVIEW OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES IN INDIA

The Community Development Programme was implemented in India in 1952 under the First Five Year Plan to achieve the goal of self-reliance by increasing employment opportunities in the rural areas. The Minimum Package Programme was implemented under the Second Five Year Plan to boost agricultural sector and increase agricultural output through access to finance, technology and other resources in the 1960s.

The Drought Prone Area Development Programme was implemented in 1971 to develop the drought prone areas which primarily depend on rain fed cultivation. The Tribal Area Development Programme was launched in 1972 to improve the social and economic status of tribal people in the Fourth Five Year Plan. The Minimum Needs Programme was also implemented during this period to fulfill the basic needs of the rural masses. The Desert Development Programme was launched in 1977-78 to control desertification through afforestation, grassland development, water management and soil conservation.

Integrated Child Development Services programme was implemented in 1975 to provide food, pre-school education, and primary healthcare to children under 6 years of age and their mothers in the rural and tribal areas. The Hill Area Development Programme was implemented during the Fifth Five Year Plan to develop agriculture, horticulture and other sectors of the isolated rural and tribal communities.

The Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas programme was launched in India in 1982-83 to achieve the welfare and progress of women and children in India. The Indira Awaas Yojana was implemented to provide housing facilities to the deserving people. It was renamed as the Pradhan Mantri Gramin Awaas Yojana in 1985. The Million Wells Scheme was launched in 1988-1989 to provide open imitation wells free of cost to rural poor, small and marginal farmers representing the weaker sections of society.

*In 1990s, several social security programmes such as National Social Assistance Program, National Old Age Pension Scheme, National Family Benefit Scheme, National Maternity Benefit Scheme and other programmes were implemented in the urban and rural areas to rehabilitate the disempowered citizens. National Social Assistance Programme was*

implemented in 1995 to provide assistance to the citizens in terms of sickness, unemployment, old age in limits of the economic capabilities.

The Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana was implemented in 1999 to facilitate self-employment opportunities to the rural poor. The National Rural Livelihood Mission was implemented in 1999 after restructuring various rural development programmes such as Integrated Rural Development Programme and Swarnajayanti Grameen Swarozgar Yojana to promote self-employment among rural poor. It is one of the world's largest initiatives to improve the livelihood of poor supported by World Bank. Total Sanitation Campaign was launched in April 1999 to provide sanitation facilities to the urban and rural people.

The Government of India also developed a network of Rural Building Centres (RBCs) in the country in the year 1999 to facilitate integrated and sustainable development in India. The Antyodaya Anna Yojana and Anna Purna Schemes were implemented in 2000 for the benefit of senior citizens and poorest of the poor in the country. The Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana was implemented in the countryside in 2001 to provide gainful employment opportunities and food security to the rural poor during drought, flood and slack periods.

The Bharatiya Agro Industries Foundation has tried to blend the livelihood programme with education, health care and moral development activities in the rural areas. The organization is helping the target groups to come out of poverty (Hegde, 2002:12). National Rural Health Mission was implemented in 2005 to provide accessible, affordable and accountable quality health services even to the poorest households of the rural areas. The Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana was implemented in 2005 for the development of rural electricity infrastructure.

The Bharat Nirman was implemented in 2005 with a view to develop rural infrastructure like irrigation, rural housing, rural water supply, rural electrification and rural telecommunication connectivity. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme was launched on February 02, 2006. The programme has been renamed as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act to provide employment opportunities to the rural families below the poverty line.

The beneficiaries were entitled to a minimum of 100 days of paid work each year at minimum wage. The Aam Aadmi Bima Yojana was implemented by the central government on October 02, 2007 to provide social security in the rural areas. During the Sixth Plan, though the emphasis shifted to eco-development, the general tenor of Hill Areas Development Programme remained substantially the same as that of normal State Plan following the same sectoral approach. The Seventh Plan laid particular emphasis on the development of ecology and environment, namely eco-restoration, eco-preservation and eco-development. The main objectives of the Ninth Plan were eco-preservation and eco-restoration. During the Tenth Plan, for the hill areas of Assam and West Bengal the multi- sectoral approach followed in the previous plans has continued but with increasing emphasis on watershed development and ecological restoration/preservation (Planning Commission, 2008).

The Integrated Watershed Development Programme was implemented in 2008 to ensure sustainable development including ecological balance in the rural areas. The 11<sup>th</sup> Plan

was meant to restructure policies to achieve a new vision based on faster, more broad-based and inclusive growth, and was designed to reduce poverty and focus on bridging the various divides that continue to fragment rural India (Planning Commission of India, 2012).

*Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana was implemented by the Government of India since 2011 to provide employment opportunities to the rural poor including women in India. The National Rural Livelihood Mission was implemented in 2011 to enlist the participation of women in the self-help group network and enable them to earn gainful self-employment and wage employment opportunities through microfinance.*

The Tenth Five Year Plan, 11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan and 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan laid emphasis on sustainable multi-level approaches to rural development in India. The Swachh Bharat Mission was launched on October 02, 2014 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to clean up the streets, roads and infrastructure of India's cities, smaller towns and rural areas. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana was launched on September 25, 2014 to cater to the employment needs of rural youth. Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana was implemented in 2016 as a welfare programme to provide housing to rural poor people in India.

The Government of India has laid importance to agriculture and rural development which holds the key for the growth of Indian economy (Press Trust of India, 2017). The National Health Protection Scheme (Ayushman Bharat) was implemented in 2018 to provide access to quality oriented healthcare facilities to the citizens. Prime Minister Arogya Yojana was launched on November 26, 2019 to provide housing facilities and basic amenities such as piped drinking water, electricity connection, LPG gas connection and other civic amenities to the rural poor (Virdi, 2019:23).

## **ANALYSIS OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IN INDIA**

The rural Indian population comprises about three-fourths of the total population in India. The tasks ahead for rural development with an eye to ameliorating the standard of living of the rural people are quite gigantic and arduous in the face of the country's resource crunch, slow-growing economy and politics of under-development. Furthermore, the tasks loom larger with the lapse of time, ensuing from rapid rise in population and bad governance (Singh, 2001:21). Rural Development, it is a process of improving the quality of life and economic conditions of people living in rural villages (Monizuzzaman, 2002:15).

The rural marginalization can be largely explained by unfavorable conditions and missing resources (Wiesinger, 2007:24). The rural India remains poor and malnourished despite several programmes and facilities. People's participation is one of the foremost pre-requisites of development process both from procedural and philosophical perspectives (Gangopadhyay *et al.*, 2008:10). The inequitable distribution of land-resources and vagaries of monsoon have affected the rural masses (Gandhe, 2008:09). The State is responsible for eradicating multi-faceted backwardness in the rural areas by providing target-group specific and area specific development resources and opportunities.

The rural areas are still home to near 69 percent of the India's 1.21 billion people who are deprived of basic needs, infrastructure development, gainful employment opportunities and distributive justice (Ranjan, 2011:19). Major

policies revamp and restructuring of rural areas is highly essential to build a sustainable foundation for highly productive, internationally competitive and diversified agriculture. The goals of rural development are not adequately achieved due to lack of government-private partnership in India (Dutta et al, 2012:07).

The Planning Commission of India had called upon the various stakeholders of rural development to play a critical role in achieving the objective of faster and more inclusive growth and put the economy on a sustainable growth trajectory with the growth rate of approximately 10 per cent by 2012. Mahathma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act which was implemented in 2005 could not improve the living conditions of the people in the rural settings due to lack of political will, bureaucratic corruption, social inaction and other constraints (Panda and Majumder, 2013:17). Rural entrepreneurship development is the answer to the removal of rural poverty in India.

The rural youth need to be motivated to take up entrepreneurship as a career, with training and sustaining support systems providing all necessary assistance (Das, 2014:05). Integrated development of rural areas is one of the abiding tasks before the Government of India (Ehmke, 2015:08). The programmes of rural development have benefitted the people living in relatively isolated and sparsely populated areas. The stakeholders of rural development have not approached development from a wider perspective based on production oriented to profit oriented sustainable farming.

The recommendations of M S Swaminathan committee are not implemented due to lack of political will (Damodaran, 2016:04). There is a paradigm shift in economic development from 'growth' to 'development'. The National Rural Livelihood Mission was not implemented properly due to lack of micro planning and inadequate utilization of funds for various developmental endeavors. The stakeholders of rural development should ensure more efficient utilization of the talent available with the district administration.

The scarcity of funds, manpower, technologies and allied facilities has impeded rural development in the country. Since independence, all the wage employment programmes lacked in focus in so far as providing employment opportunities are concerned (Giri, 2017:11). Rural areas are deprived of development resources and opportunities in the post-independence era. The rural sector is not enriched in terms of financial, educational, scientific and technological resources (Didwania et. al, 2017:06). Research and development centered initiatives should be utilized in the rural areas for better transformation and progress.

The Ministry of Rural Development has extended support to the States in the maintenance management of rural roads for better connectivity (Standing Committee on Rural Development, 2018). The rural areas are denied of adequate resources and opportunities by the rulers in India. Rural employment opportunities are not increased in accordance with the rural population (Chand et. al, 2018:03). Rural infrastructure development and gainful employment opportunities are crucial for sustainable rural development in India. The growth of Indian economy is primarily dependent on rural development initiatives. The 'smart rural development' and 'sustainable rural development' are neglected by the policy makers (Beg, 2018:02). Adoption of technologically and environmentally sound approaches would boost the rural economy in India.

Self help groups have played a crucial role in rural development as principal source of financial assistance (Nagesha and Ajeya, 2018:16). Self help groups should be actively involved in the implementation of various rural development programmes. The backwardness of the rural sector is a major impediment to the overall progress of the economy. The technical developments in field of agriculture has increased the gap between the rich and poor, as the better off farmers adopted modern farm technology to a greater extent than the small farmers (Sarabu, 2018:20).

The public- private partnership is inevitable for the development of rural areas in the country (Srikanth and Kavuri, 2019:22). The government should give top priority to rural infrastructure development and secure active participation of people in the process of development. Agriculture, food systems and the sustainable use of natural resources are the key issues of rural development (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2019). The extreme poor should be the chief focus of rural development initiatives.

Livelihood diversification in rural India is not achieved to facilitate swifter structural transformation and poverty reduction. The improved access to food and nutrition is not ensured to the rural masses (Pingali et. al, 2019:18). Vocational educational facilities and gainful employment opportunities would transform the rural economy in India. The rural connectivity would increase marketing of agricultural products in the urban areas (Asher and Novosad, 2019:01). Rural infrastructure development should be undertaken by the policy makers on priority basis to boost rural development in India.

Introduction of modern and innovative strategies and methods is essential to bring about effective growth and development of the agricultural sector. Adequate programmes are not implemented to ensure the skill development of the rural youth in the countryside. The issue of youth participation in the rural development process is not addressed by the stakeholders. Youth should be actively involved in the agriculture, small-scale industries, skill development, education and employment programmes in the rural areas. Rural development has become a thrust area of national development in India. The five year plans had laid emphasis upon development of rural communities over a period of time (Kapur, 2019:13). Multi-pronged efforts should be ensured by the policy makers to bring about development of rural communities.

The Department of Rural Development under the Ministry is responsible for implementation of many major schemes in rural areas. The majority of the unutilized funds reported by the States relate to survey / re- survey which is a technology intensive activity and requires significant number of skilled human resources (Kaur, 2019:14).

## **CONCLUSION**

India is marching towards progress by registering high growth rates and affluence in science, technology, defence, industry and other sectors. The benefits of economic development have not percolated to more than two-thirds of the people living in the countryside. The rural development programmes have not empowered the marginalized sections of rural society adequately due to the prevalence of corruption, misuse of funds, malpractice in the implementation, wrongful selection of beneficiaries, absence of pro-active measures of elected representatives and officials, inadequate media publicity and advertising campaigns, low level of awareness

among the beneficiaries, lack of coordination between government and non-government agencies and failure of civil society in the assertion of rights and privileges. The country cannot achieve full fledged development in the absence of integrated rural development.

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