GOOD GOVERNANCE INNOVATIONS BASED MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE ACT (MGNREGA).

Dr. Sunil Kumar  
Lecturer : Department of Commerce  
Marwar Business School Gorakhpur

Abstract

Good Governance is an indeterminate term used in development literature to describe how public institutions conduct public affairs and manage public resources in order to guarantee the realization of human rights. Successful implementation of MGNREGA seriously depends on the establishment and operationalization of a proper computer based Management Information System (MIS) that interconnects all the Gram Panchayats, Blocks, Districts, States and the Union Ministry through an ICT network. A web enabled MIS www.nrega.nic.in has been developed. This makes data transparent and available in the public domain to be equally accessed by all.

Keywords:

Good Governance, MIS, MGNREGA, Employment
Introduction

Good Governance is an indeterminate term used in development literature to describe how public institutions conduct public affairs and manage public resources in order to guarantee the realization of human rights. Governance means the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented). Governance can be used in several contexts such as corporate governance, international governance, national governance and local governance. Good governance ensures that political, social and economic priorities are based on broad consensus in society and the voices of the poorest and the most vulnerable are heard in decision making over the allocation of development resources.

As per the ‘Census of India, 2011’, country’s population has crossed over 121.02 crore, with decadal population growth (2001-2011) of 17.64%, density of population 382 per sq km, sex ratio 940 females per 1000 males and literacy rate 74.04%, which is growing fast on sustainable basis and creating a serious problem in 21st Century for job opportunity. Infact, our 65% population lives in rural areas, depending on agriculture for their livelihood.

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) w.e.f. 2006 aims at enhancing the livelihood security of people in rural areas by guaranteeing hundred days of wage-employment in a financial year to a rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. MGNREGA has a Right based framework, unlike earlier employment generation programmes. Its demand based entitlements stem from the fundamental right “to live with dignity” and sets it apart from other cash conditional transfers, as well as a social safety net, dependent on Government benefaction.

The basic objective of the Act is to enhance livelihood security in rural areas by providing at least 100 day of guaranteed real wage employment @ Rs. 120 per day now in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual labour. It has a bifocal lens as the, instrumentality of works generates employment and productive assets. The process of implementation seeks to strengthen decentralized democratic governance, promote equity and empower rural communities. MGNREGA was notified on February 2, 2006 in 200 districts, extended to additional 130 districts in April 2007 and thereafter notified in the remaining rural areas of the country in April 2008, The Act spans 619 Districts, 6400 Blocks, 6 lakh Villages and around 2.35 lakh Village Panchayats.
Performance of ‘MGNREGA’-

The performance / progress of MGNREGA (w.e.f. 2006-07 to 2010-11 i.e., within 5 years) was appeared good to enhance livelihood security of households in rural areas of the country. This can be expressed as Table.

Performance of MGNREGA-National Overview in All Districts in India
(w.e.f. 2006-07 to 2010-11 i.e. within 5 years)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>2006-07</th>
<th>2010-11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Households Provided employment (in crore)</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>5.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person days generated (in crore)</td>
<td>90.5</td>
<td>257.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shara of SCs/STs in total person days generated(%)</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average wage rate per person day (Rs.)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>100 (now 120)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage shara of women in total person days generated (%)</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average person days of employment per household (numbers)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure on wages in total expenditure (%)</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of water conservation works (%)</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Measures for Governance Reform and Transparency

A number of measures towards governance reform have been imitated as summarized below: (1) Strengthening administrative systems through additional dedicated personnel, (2) Strengthening the Gram Panchayat (GP) through funds and functionaries, (3) Streamlining financial systems, (4) Opening workers’ accounts in Banks and Post Offices (About 90 million such accounts have been opened), (5) Intensive monitoring, (6) Imitating district Ombudsman, (7) Attempting to make social audits more inclusive, (8) Setting up a web-based MIS etc. The large scale of operations, the limitations of outreach of various services and the need to handle large volumes of information in a transparent manner necessitated the use of ICT in programme delivery. ICT facilities both to support Gram Panchayat and Block Officer of Programme Officer (PO) as well as public access to information and online transactions are being promoted.

Management Information System

Successful implementation MGNREGA seriously depends on the establishment and operationalization of a proper computer based Management Information System (MIS) that interconnects all the Gram Panchayats, Blocks, Districts, States and the Union Ministry through an ICT network. A web enabled MIS www.nrega.nic.in been developed. This makes data transparent and available in the public domain to be equally accessed by all.
Vision and Objective of the Project:

(1) NREGA soft implementing e-Governance across State, District and three-tiers of Panchayati Raj Institutions. (2) It empowers the common man using the information technology as a facilitator. (3) NREGA soft provides information to citizen in compliance with the Right to Information Act (RTI Act 2005). It makes available all the documents like; Muster Rolls, registration application register, job card/employment register / muster roll issue register, muster roll receipt register which are hidden from public otherwise. (4) Facilitate faster inform on exchange between the various stakeholders through the network.

Benefits availed through NREGA MIS: E-Governance for Masses:

(1) Computerisation of all NREGA activities, (2) All information available for public access, (3) Accuracy ensured in payment of wages to workers, (4) Lodging of complaints through Grievance Redressal System, (5) Facilitation of Social Audit. Assists Gram Panchayats in NREGA Implementation: (1) Tracking of 100 days of employment to a household, (2) Generates documents as per NREGA guidelines, (3) Tracking of funds from the Ministry to the worker, (4) Provides status of available funds in accounts of Panchayats/Blocks/Districts, (5) Provides details of unfulfilled demand, works which can be taken-up and the unemployment allowance.

Use of ICT and Biometric project:

MGNREGA workers are largely illiterate, poor and at the bottom of the social hierarchy. They cannot articulate their demands 'formally' in writing. The absence of written application for employment, non-issuance of dated receipts, non-payment of unemployment allowances or compensation for delay in wages are not on account of administrative lapses in record keeping, but reflect the social undercurrents and dynamics that prevent workers from exercising their rights in
demanding work from the Gram Panchayat in an equitable manner. The large scale of operations, the limitations of outreach of various services and the need to handle large volumes of information in a transparent manner necessitates the use of ICT in program delivery. The use of ICT devices and biometrics for authentication will bring in transparency and efficiency.

**MGNREGA Help Line:**

(1) Department of Rural Development (DRD), Government of India proposes to establish a network of Help lines under MGNREGA at the National, State, District and Block levels for facilitating the redressal of grievances in relation to the implementation of the MGNREGA Scheme. The Help-line consists of a toll free MTNL number (1800110707) that will be used by the MGNREGA households and other individuals and groups to raise their questions, submit their grievances and complaints and seek guidance from the Department of Rural Development. (2) On receipt of the calls, Department of Rural Development intends to resolve the grievances by requesting the field level MGNREGA Authorities to take suitable remedial action and obtain feed-back. Action on each complaint needs to be ensured and pending complaints need to be closely monitored. The operations will run with the use of latest information and Communication technology to provide solutions to complainants on a real time basis. (3) The Helpline consists of a toll free MTNL number (1800110707). The operations will run with the use of latest information and communication technology (ICT) to provide solutions to queries and/or complainants on a real time basis.

**Smart Cards, Biometric Scanning for Signatures and Handheld Devices:**

In view of enormous size of the MGNREGA programme, it is necessary to make best use of latest Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). This will not only help in ensuring effective implementation and proper management of the Programme but will also bring transparency and thereby credibility. Since, it is a right based programme, Smart Cards / Hand held device can be used as IT tool to ensure rights and entitlements. Smart Cards have the potential capture details of the Workers, Work and Wages (WWW) including the muster rolls and the job cards.

**Conclusion:**

Based upon the above information and achievements so far in MGNREGA w.e.f. 2006, it can very well be concluded in nutshell as given ahead:

(i) MGNREGA—a flagship programme of Government of India (GOI) and a key to rural area development aims at enhancing livelihood security of household in rural areas of the country by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household @ 125 per day per adult person volunteer to do unskilled manual work. Infact, it is a scheme to augment wage employment in rural areas—a dire need in 21st Century in the country.

(ii) Infact, MGNREGA has successful raised the bargaining power of agricultural labour, resulting in higher agricultural wages, improved economic outcomes, reduction in distress migration and finally scope for improvement through skill development.
Overall, MGNREGA is, in fact, appears good to strengthen transparency and accountability in its implementation and shown a good scope for improvements like; focused planning, shifting to permanent asset and infrastructure building activities, skill up gradation for enhanced employability, reducing transaction costs, better monitoring, avoiding peak seasons in agriculture and extension to urban areas.

Hopefully the links cited here will provide us with some good starting points for understanding the BRICS countries—that they are and why they are important, as well as what implications this has for the, changing balance of global power.

**References**

6. nrega.nic.in
7. mgnrega.up.nic.in