

# A STRATEGY FOR POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN INDIA - AN APPROACH FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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## ABSTRACT

*Rural development has assumed global attention especially in the developing nations. It has great significance for a country India where majority of the population, around 65% of the people standing in rural areas. The present strategy of rural development in India mainly focuses on poverty alleviation i.e., for better livelihood opportunities, provision of basic facilities like infrastructure through innovative programmes of self-employment and salary. I describe the role and function of the Government and its' programmes for rural development in India. The technology interventions in the field of rural development have been discussed briefly and efforts being made to give an innovative idea. The poverty alleviation programmes were not successful in most parts of India but still government putting efforts to make strategy successful. Especially to cover the lack of proper implementation and right targeting, overcome the overlapping of schemes, control population to renders the scheme ineffective, try to reach the deserving poor. Poverty alleviation is one of the guiding principles of the planning process. The role of economic growth in providing more employment opportunities to the population has been clearly recognized. Poverty rates in India have declined over the last decade, but the incidence of poverty remains high. So this paper is an attempt to study national schemes and programmes for poverty alleviation in India.*

**Keywords:** Poverty, Plans, Programmes, Poverty alleviation.

## 1.Introduction

For the growth of the Indian economy, rural development is the most important factors as India is an agriculture based country. Agriculture contributes nearly one-fifth of the gross domestic product in India so that there is increase in the growth of agriculture. Government proposed several programs and schemes pertaining to rural development in India. The Ministry of Rural Development in India is the apex body for formulating policies, regulations and acts pertaining to the development of the rural sector. Agriculture, handicrafts, fisheries, poultry, and diary are some contributors to the rural business and economy. Rural development in India has witnessed of several changes over the years in its approaches, strategies and programmes. It has assumed a new dimension and perspectives as a consequence. Rural development can be more meaningful only through the participation of clientele of development. Just as implementation is the touchstone for planning, people's participation is the centre-piece in rural development. People's participation is one of the foremost pre-requisites of development process both from procedural and philosophical perspectives. By improving rural people's livelihoods in an equitable and sustainable manner, both socially and environmentally, better through access to assets (natural, physical, human, technological and social capital), and services, and control over productive capital (in its

financial or economic and political forms) that enable them to improve their livelihoods on a sustainable and equitable basis.

### **Role and function of the Government**

The various Government's policy and programmes have laid emphasis on poverty alleviation, generation of employment and income opportunities along with provision of infrastructure and basic facilities to meet the needs of rural poor. The Ministry of Rural Development in India is the apex body for formulating policies, regulations and acts pertaining to the development of the rural sector. Agriculture, handicrafts, fisheries, poultry, and dairy are the primary contributors to the rural business and economy. The introduction of Bharat Nirman, a project by the Government of India in collaboration with the State Governments and the Panchayati Raj Institutions is a major step to improve the rural sector. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 was introduced by the Ministry of Rural Development, for improving the living conditions and its sustenance in the rural sector of India. The Ministry of Rural Development is engaged in legislations for the social and economic improvement of the rural people. The ministry can broadly be elaborated as to encourage, promote and assist voluntary action in the implementation of projects for the enhancement of rural prosperity, strengthen and promote voluntary efforts in rural development with emerging technologies which act as national nodal point for co-ordination of all efforts at generation and dissemination of technologies relevant to rural development in its wide sense to assist and promote programmes for conservation of the environment and natural resources. However, various ministries in the central government are engaged directly or indirectly for implementation of many programmes and schemes for the development of rural areas like Ministries of Agriculture, Health and Family Welfare, New and Renewable Energy, Science and Technology, Women and Child Development and Tribal affairs etc. In addition, to strengthen the grass root level democracy, the Government is constantly endeavoring to empower Panchayat Raj Institutions in terms of functions, powers and finance. Grama Sabha, NGOs, Self-Help Groups and PRIs have been accorded adequate roles to make participatory democracy meaningful and effective.

### **Strategies and programs for rural development**

The rural economy is an integral part of the overall Indian economy. As majority of the poor reside in the rural areas, the aim of rural development is to improve the quality of life of the rural people by alleviating poverty through the instrument of self-employment and wage employment programmes, by providing community infrastructure facilities such as drinking water, electricity, road connectivity, health facilities, rural housing and education and promoting decentralization of powers to strengthen the Panchayati raj institutions etc. The various strategies and programs of the Government for rural development are discussed below: Integrated Rural Development Program (IRDP): Introduced in 1978-79, IRDP has provided assistance to rural poor in the form of subsidy and bank credit for productive employment opportunities through successive plan periods. With, Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM), Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA), Supply of Improved Tool Kits to Rural Artisans (SITRA) and Ganga Kalyan Yojana (GKY) all these introduced as sub-programs of IRDP to take care of the needs of the rural people. Wage Employment Programs: It is like anti-poverty strategies, for assistance of the rural poor families to bring them above the poverty line by ensuring appreciable sustained level of income through the process of social mobilization, training and capacity building. Wage Employment Programs have to achieve multiple objectives. They not only provide employment opportunities during lean agricultural seasons but also in times of floods, droughts and other natural calamities. They create rural infrastructure which supports further economic activity. It encompasses Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) and National Rural

Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) etc. NREGA is an act of parliament. It is not merely a scheme or policy. It aims at enhancing the livelihood security of the people in rural areas by guaranteeing hundred days of wage employment in a financial year, to a rural household whose members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. The objective of the Act is to create durable assets and strengthen the livelihood resource base of the rural poor. Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS): EAS was launched in October 1993 covering 1,778 drought-prone, desert, tribal and hill area blocks. Which was later extended to all the blocks in 1997-98. The EAS was designed to provide employment in the form of manual work in the lean agricultural season. Food for Work Program: This Work program was started in 2000-01 as a component of the EAS in eight notified drought-affected states of Chattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Maharastra and Uttaranchal. The program aims at food provision through wage employment. Food grains are supplied at free of cost. Rural Housing: Initiated in 1985-86, the IAY is the program for providing free housing to families of rural areas. It targets scheduled castes (SCs)/scheduled tribes (STs), households and freed bonded laborers. The rural housing program has certainly enabled many BPL families to give pucca houses. The coverage of the beneficiaries is limited given the resource constraints. The Samagra Awas Yojana (SAY) was taken up in 25 blocks to ensure convergence of housing, provision of safe drinking water, sanitation and drainage facilities. The Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) has extended its activities to the rural areas, providing loans at a concessional rate of interest to economically weaker sections and low-income group households for construction of houses. Social Security Programs: Democratic decentralization and centrally supported Social Assistance Programs were two major initiatives of the government in the 1990s. The National Social Assistance Program (NSAP), launched in August 1995 marks a significant step towards fulfillment of the Directive Principles of State Policy. The NSAP has three components: a) National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS); b) National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS); c) National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBS). Land Reforms: In this agro-based economy, the structure of land ownership is central to the wellbeing of the people. The government has strived to change the ownership pattern of cultivable land, the abolition of intermediaries, the abolition of zamindari, ceiling laws, security of tenure to tenants, consolidation of land holdings and banning of tenancy are a few measures undertaken. Furthermore, a land record management system is a pre-condition for an effective land reform program.

### **Science and Technology for rural development**

Ministry of Science and Technology plays a pivotal role in promotion of science & technology in the country. The departments has many activities ranging from promoting high end basic research and development of cutting edge technologies on one hand to serving the technological requirements of the common man through development of appropriate skills and technologies on the other. Appropriate rural technology focuses mainly on those technologies which are simple and within the reach of the ordinary people for their own benefit and the benefit of their community and harness the local or regional capacity to meet local needs without increasing dependence on external factors. A large number of governments, public and private non-government organizations are involved in developing technologies for rural areas. However, these technologies have hardly touched the lives of the rural population. Apparently, the problem lies not only in the generation, diffusion and adoption of technologies but also in poor documentation. Recently, efforts have been made by several organizations like NRDC, CAPART, TRCS, NIRD, DST, DBT, CSIR, ICAR, KVKs and other voluntary organizations etc. to bring out a compendium of technologies for rural areas for wide information dissemination and public awareness. A brief account of technologies which are low cost, energy-efficient and environment-friendly as well as appropriate and sustainable for application in rural areas is presented in the Appendix I.

### **Government schemes focusing on Science and Technology are**

S&T Application for Rural Development (STARD): This application facilitating development of promising S&T based field groups and innovative technologies related to rural development. S&T for Women: To promote research, development and adaptation of emerging technology. In fact for empowering women it helps to improve the life style, working conditions and opportunities for profitable employment of women especially in rural areas. S&T Application for Weaker Sections (STAWS): This application aims at the development of economically weaker sections of the society. Tribal sub-plan: Aims application helps in improving living conditions of scheduled tribes based on sustainable science and technology activities. Special Component Plan (SCP): This let in improving the lot of the poor sections of SC community through intervention of Science & Technology.

### **Rural Development as Destination (A Significant achievements by CSIR)**

- Swaraj- India first indigenous tractor which facilitate mechanized agriculture.
- Value addition for rural population through post-harvest technologies like essential oil / menthol production.
- Cheapest water purification technology which includes terracotta purification disc, portable arsenic detection kit, ultrapore membrane-based purifiers for removing virus & bacteria.
- Over 365 technologies passed on to the rural masses through which publications, training sessions, etc.
- Construction of around 30,000 dwelling units using cost-effective construction technologies.
- Reverse Osmosis plant for desalination in Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu.

It needs to be mentioned here that in a project jointly initiated by the Andhra Pradesh Government and Council of Scientific and Industrial Research in Karim Nagar, Central Food and Technological Research Institute, where Mysore played a key role in establishing small-scale agro-based industries in district for better livelihoods of the rural communities and promote the setting up and modification of existing rice mills units at Mulkanoor for better yields. Rural Development is the main pillar of Nation's Development. In spite of rapid urbanization, a large section of Indian population still lives in the villages. Secondly, rural India has lagged behind in development because of many historical factors. There is still exists a big challenge to correct the developmental imbalances and priority to development in rural areas.

### **Implementation of programmes**

Ministry of Rural Development is implementing many programmes targeted at sustainable holistic development in rural areas. The thrust of these programmes is on all round economic and social transformation in rural areas. proposed target and strategy plan have been highlighted and presented below.

#### **- Review Five Year Plan**

- An expenditure incurred during the plan and for implementation of those various schemes/programmes government provide fund for expenditure. Target of constructing 2.83 lakhs houses was fixed. Against this target, 3.10 lakh houses were constructed under Indira Awas Yojana. Under which 2.11 lakh families have been benefited under Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana. Out of this, 1.23 lakh beneficiaries i.e. about 58 % are from SC/ST category. Under Integrated Wasteland 89 Development programme, 82 projects were sanctioned for 3.93 lakh hectare of land. Out of this, 1.50 lakh hectares land was treated

- There is also 1466 Micro Water sheds were sanctioned and 4.28 lakh hectares land has been treated. In Sampoon Grameen Rojgar Yogn , the GOI has allocated 17.28 lakh MT of food grains out of which 15.04 lakh MT food grains have been utilized, also 176.23 lakh mandays were generated.
- Under PMGSY 13,500 Kms roads were completed. In Rastriya Sam Vikas Yojana, 12,504 works were sanctioned. Out of this, 11,496 works were completed. Under .
- The state has been a frontrunner in implementation of DDU-GKY, Gramin kaushal yojna for youth and target provide them employment

## 2. Conclusion and Suggestions

Although several concerned efforts have been initiated by the Government of India through implementing several plans and measures to alleviate poverty in rural India. But still remains much more to be done to spread prosperity in the lives of the people in rural areas. At present, technology dissemination is uneven and slow in the rural areas. Good efforts of government and developing technologies, devices and products for rural areas could not yield high success as population impact every time. Experiences of many countries suggest that technological development fuelled by demand has a higher rate of dissemination. However, in India, technology developers like internet of things, for rural areas have been catering to needs (with small improvement), rather than creating demand. Besides, there is also an imbalance between strategies and effective management programmes to improve the condition of rural people. Propagation of technology/schemes or programmes for rural development is slow and there is a lacking in wider participation of different stakeholders. An ideal approach may therefore, include the government, panchayats, village personals, researchers, industries, NGOs and private companies ie, CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY to not only help in reducing this imbalance, but also to have a multiplier effect on the overall economy.

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