

## **WILL MNREGA ENSURE SECURITY AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT? : A STUDY OF DISTRICT GARHWAL**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Since independence, Government of India has launched many poverty eradication and employment generation program as SGRY, JRY, SJGSY etc. In spite of these programmes, the condition of poverty and unemployment of India is not so far better. Government of India passed a bill in parliament and launched a new program National Rural Employment Guarantee Program (NREGA) from 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2006 for eradicating the poverty and generation of employment in rural areas of India. Again on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2008 on eve of Mahatma Gandhi Jayanti the scheme launched as a Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA), which is truly homage to Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of rural development. MNREGA gave rural people an opportunity to improve their financial conditions to boost standard of living and socio-economic condition of rural masses through this scheme. In this paper an attempt has been made to analyse to show the analysis of this programme by indicating employment generation, 100 days of employment achievement, proportion of women including SCs, gap between demanded employment and provided employment and average number of employment in a year through MNREGA in District Garhwal.

**KEYWORDS:** SGRY, JRY, MNREGA.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) is a historic legislation passed by the Government of India in September 2005. It was enacted in order to address the crucial issues of unemployment and poverty in rural India. The MNREGA guarantees a hundred days of unskilled employment to each household in every financial year at an equal wage rate for both male and female workers. Additionally, it guarantees the "right to work" as a legal right of every able-bodied adult in rural India. It is fundamentally different from all other wage employment programmes operating since 1980 in that these programmes do not guarantee employment as a legal right. A well-designed employment guarantee programme can, under favorable circumstances, promote job creation, gender equality and pro-poor development. The MNREGA has great potential for increasing the volume of employment among the rural unemployed and underemployed. It provides ample opportunities for creating rural public assets, which has been largely neglected. It helps to enhance the purchasing power of rural households, thereby contributing to poverty alleviation. It also has the capacity to tap the hitherto under-utilized labour of women in rural India.

MNREGA was launched in two hundred selected districts on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2006 in Phase I and was extended to 130 more districts in 2007-08 in Phase II. It was further extended to the remaining 285 districts from 1st April 2008 onwards, in Phase III. The responsibility has been assigned primarily to Local-Self Governments function the programme.

**The basic objectives of MNREGA are:**

- (i) Providing wage employment opportunities,
- (ii) Creating sustainable rural livelihoods through regeneration of the natural resource base i.e. augmenting, productivity, and supporting creation of durable assets and
- (iii) Strengthening rural governance through decentralization and processes of transparency and accountability.

**Main elements of MNREGA**

- Adult members of a rural household, willing to do unskilled manual work, may apply for registration in writing or orally to the local Gram Panchayat
- The Gram Panchayat after due verification will issue a Job Card. The Job Card will bear the photograph of all adult members of the household willing to work under MNREGA and is free of cost
- The Job Card should be issued within 15 days of application.
- A Job Card holder may submit a written application for employment to the Gram Panchayat, stating the time and duration for which work is sought. The minimum days of employment have to be at least fourteen.
- The Gram Panchayat will issue a dated receipt of the written application for employment, against which the guarantee of providing employment within 15 days.
- Employment will be given within 15 days of application for work, if it is not then daily unemployment allowance as per the Act, has to be paid Liability of payment of unemployment allowance is of the States.
- Work should ordinarily be provided within 5 km radius of the village. In case work is provided beyond 5 km, extra wages of 10% are payable to meet additional transportation and living expenses
- Wages are to be paid according to the Minimum Wages Act 1948 for agricultural labourers in the State, unless the Centre notifies a wage rate which will not be less than Rs. 60/ per day. Equal wages will be provided to both men and women.
- Wages are to be paid according to piece rate or daily rate. Disbursement of wages has to be done on weekly basis and not beyond a fortnight in any case.
- At least one-third beneficiaries shall be women who have registered and requested work under the scheme.
- Work site facilities such as crèche, drinking water, shade have to be provided.
- The shelf of projects for a village will be recommended by the gram sabha and approved by the zilla panchayat.

- At least 50% of works will be allotted to Gram Panchayats for execution.
- Permissible works predominantly include water and soil conservation, afforestation and land development works.
- A 60:40 wage and material ratio has to be maintained. No contractors and machinery is allowed.
- The Central Government bears the 100 percent wage cost of unskilled manual labour and 75 percent of the material cost including the wages of skilled and semi skilled workers.

### **Objectives of the study**

1. To study the mandays employment and percentage of women including SCs in employment given through MNREGA in District Garhwal.
2. To study the achievement of 100 days of employment of MNREGA in district Garhwal.
3. To find out the average number of employment per family given through MNREGA in district Garhwal
4. To find out the gap between demanded job and provided job through MNREGA in district Garhwal.

### **Significance of the study**

Significance of this study can be understand by following points-

1. This study will show the position of employment given to rural people and will show the employment generation through MNREGA.
2. The result obtained from this study will help the MNREGA official of state of Uttarakhand and Government of India to improve the condition of MNREGA.
3. This study will show the condition of 100 days of employment goal targeted through MNREGA.
4. This study will show that effectiveness of MNREGA on SCs and Women of rural people of district Garhwal.
5. Finally this study will help the future researches on MNREGA and give the researcher a path of research on MNREGA.

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Natural Resource Management and Livelihood Unit (2008) found out in its study that the Act has not been able to generate the kind of employment demands as expected. It has created at an average 43 days of employment in whole India in 2006-07.

NFIW (2008) stated that MNREGA is significant for various reasons, it is one of the few experiments in the world to provide alternative source of livelihood which will have an impact on reducing migration, growth in education and healthcare spending.

It has been claimed that the sustainable livelihood is possible only by initiatives like NREGS. NREGS becomes the major employment assuring initiative during non-agriculture season. It has been claimed that Raghavan, et.al (2008) in their paper, concluded that MNREGA is providing

opportunity to the poor and unskilled rural persons of India to earn their livelihood in a sustainable way and to create sustainable community assets by providing 100 days employment.

Jaiswal (2008) concluded in her study that NREGS is a very good step from the Government to reduce unemployment, but if the conditions will go like this and there will be so many drawbacks in implementation, it is not going to sustain. M.S. Swaminathan (2009) described MNREGA as the world's largest ecological security programme, which can successfully strengthen the ecological foundations for sustainable agriculture.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Study Area**

Uttarakhand became the 27<sup>th</sup> state of the Republic of India on Nov 9<sup>th</sup> 2000. The state shares common boundaries with Tibet (China) to the north and Nepal to the east. Uttarakhand is situated in the north eastern Himalayan region of India and geographically lies between 28°43' N to 31°27' N latitude and 77°34' E to 81°02' E longitude. It has an area of 53483 sq.km. The atmospheric temperature of the state is min -3.0<sup>o</sup>c and maximum 43.2<sup>o</sup> and the population is 10,116,752 (2011). The male population of the state is 5,154,178 and female population is 4,962,574. The population density of the state is 189 per Sq. Km (2011). The capital of the state is Dehradun. Literacy rate of Uttarakhand in 2011 was 79.63% in which male and female literacy was 88.33 and 70.70% respectively. It has 13 districts, 78 blocks and 16826 villages.

Pauri Garhwal, a district of Uttarakhand state encompasses an area of 5230 sq. km and situated between 29° 45' to 30°15' Latitude and 78° 24' to 79° 23' E Longitude. The District is administratively divided into nine tehsils. Population of Pauri district is 6, 86,527 (2011) in which males are 3, 26,406 and females are 3, 60,121. Literacy rate of Pauri Garhwal in 2011 was 82.59% in which male and female literacy were 93.18 and 73.26% respectively. The main occupation of the population is agriculture. Some large and small industrial units have been established around Kotdwara, i.e, SIDCUL. There are no major industries in the hilly part of the district due to lack of required infrastructure and industrially unsuitable geography.

### **Data collection technique**

The data for this study has collected from the secondary sources as Government departments and websites related to MNREGA.

### **Population and Sampling**

The population for the study comprises of the job card holders existing in the District Garhwal. For studying the performance of employment through MNREGA in District Garhwal, we have selected 10 out of 15 blocks of district Garhwal. The selection criteria adopted for block is - 5 blocks (Thalisain, Bironkahl, Duggada, Yamkeshwar, Nainidanda) are chosen as the highest number of households and 5 (Pauri, Jaiharikhal, Kot, Pokhra, Khirsu) on the basis of lowest number of household who have been issued the job card.

### Tools of Data Analysis

On the basis of tabulation, the data has been analyzed by the Average method.

### Data Analysis and Interpretation

#### ❖ Condition of employment generation in District Garhwal

MNREGA provides the employment to rural people and provide them an opportunity to improve their financial condition. It focusses upon SCs and Women of rural areas. Table 1 shows the condition of employment generation in District Garhwal in the financial year 2012-13.

**Table 1. Condition of employment generation in District Garhwal 2012-13**

Block	Employment generated				
	Total Days	SC	Women	% of Employees day for SC	% of Employee days for Women
Thalisain	225401	23314	116386	10.34	51.64
Bironkhal	165378	23389	107531	14.14	65.02
Duggada	180309	23594	87403	13.09	48.47
Yamkeshwar	112507	6535	65099	5.81	57.86
Nainidanda	199593	20009	122501	10.02	61.38
Pauri	166125	37958	103833	22.85	62.50
Jaiharikhal	114129	9600	59759	8.41	52.36
Kot	124121	33744	77477	27.19	62.42
Pokhra	86408	8780	53267	10.16	61.65
Khirsu	93435	9974	53899	10.67	57.69
Average				13.27	58.10

Source: nrega.nic.in

Table 1 shows that to provide more than 33% employee days to women (above 33%) is against the provision of MNREGA while the percentage of SCs in selected 10 blocks is highest in Kot block and lowest in Yamkeshwar in financial year 2012-13 that is below the provision of MNREGA act. Thus the average persondays employment of SCs and Women is 13.27% and 58.10% in District Garhwal respectively. So we can conclude that the percentage of women in employment in District Garhwal is very good but percentage of SCs is not according to provisions of MNREGA.

#### Position of 100 days of employment given through MNREGA in district Garhwal

MNREGA guarantees 100 days of employment in a year to every household (HH) who demands for the job or employment. Table 2 shows the percentage the HHs who gained the 100 days of employment given through MNREGA.

**Table 2 Position of 100 days of employment given through MNREGA in District Garhwal 2012-13.**

Block	Total no. of HH who have been provided the employment	No. of HH who have gained 100 days of employment	% of HHs who gained 100 days of Employment
Thalisain	6538	79	1.21
Bironkhal	5556	128	2.30
Duggada	3882	84	2.16
Yamkeshwar	3662	49	1.34
Nainidanda	5047	14	0.28
Pauri	3584	115	3.21
Jaiharikhal	3106	69	2.22
Kot	2728	197	7.22
Pokhra	2682	55	2.05
Khirsu	2420	129	5.33
		<b>Average</b>	<b>2.44</b>
		<b>National Average</b>	<b>8.26</b>

**Source: nrega.nic.in**

Table 2 shows that the condition of 100 days of employment in district Garhwal is not good. The percentage of 100 days of employment from the households who have been provided the job is very low and it is highest 5.33 in Khirsu and average to whole block District Garhwal is only 2.44, the national average is 8.26. This shows that MNREGA is far away from providing 100 days of employment in a year to every job card holder.

**Gap between demanded job and provided job given through MNREGA in district Garhwal**  
MNREGA provides the job to every household who demand for the job and if it fails to provide the job, the unemployment allowance is given to them. Table 3 shows the gap between demanded job and provided job.

**Table 3. Gap between job demanded and job provided job through MNREGA in district Garhwal (2012-13).**

Block	Total no. of HH who demanded for the job	Total no. of HH who have been provided the job	Gap between job demanded and job provided
Thalisain	6539	6538	1
Bironkhal	5590	5556	34
Duggada	3892	3882	10
Yamkeshwar	3686	3662	24
Nainidanda	5051	5047	4
Pauri	3584	3584	0
Jaiharikhal;	3106	3106	0
Kot	2769	2728	41
Pokhra	2690	2682	8
Khirsu	2444	2420	24
<b>Average</b>			<b>14.6</b>

Source: nrega.nic.in

Table 3 shows that MNREGA provided the job to almost all the household who have demanded the job in district Garhwal but in the Bironkhal and Kot block the condition needs to be improved. Thus the gap of job provided and job demanded in District Garhwal is 14.6. This situation may be stated satisfactory.

#### **Average no. of employment per family given through MNREGA in District Garhwal**

The goal of MNREGA is to provide the 100 days of employment to every household. The average number of employment per household put out from total number of mandays employment divided by total number of HHs who have been provided the job. Average number shows the number of employment days given through MNREGA in a year to every worker.

**Table 4. Average no. of employment per HH given through MNREGA District Garhwal 2012-13**

Block	Total no. of HH who have provided the job (A)	Total no. of Man-days employment generated (B)	Average no of employment per HH B/A
Thalisain	6538	225401	34.48
Bironkhal	5556	165378	29.77
Duggada	3882	180309	46.45
Yamkeshwar	3662	112507	30.72
Nainidanda	5047	199593	39.55
Pauri	3584	166125	46.35
Jaiharikhal;	3106	114129	36.74
Kot	2728	124121	45.50
Pokhra	2682	86408	32.22
Khirsu	2420	93435	38.61
<b>Average</b>			<b>38.04</b>
<b>National Average</b>			<b>43.20</b>

Source: nrega.nic.in

Table 4 shows that the number of employment days given to every household who demanded the job is very low in each block. Thus MNREGA is not providing 100 days of employment in a year to every household in district Garhwal and it is far from the goal of providing 100 days employment. The national average of employment days given to household is 43.20 which is above the District level.

#### **Percentage of Households (HHs) who have demanded the job under MNREGA**

MNREGA provides work on demand of job card holder. The job through MNREGA is only given to those households who demand for the job but due to different reasons the number the household do not demands for the job or employment and remain deprive from the job or employment.

**Table 5 Percentage of HHs who have demanded the job under MNREGA 2012-13**

Blocks	Total no. of job cards issued	Total no. of HHs who demanded employment	% of HHs who have demanded the job
Thalisain	11159	6539	58.60
Bironkhal	10614	5590	52.67
Duggada	9738	3892	39.97
Yamkeshwar	8488	3586	43.43
Nainidanda	7822	5051	64.57
Pauri	5964	3584	60.09
Jaiharikhal;	5932	3106	52.36
Kot	5591	2769	49.53
Pokhra	4901	2690	54.89
Khirsu	4511	2444	54.18
<b>Average</b>			<b>53.08</b>
<b>National Average</b>			<b>36.90</b>

**Source: nrega.nic.in**

Table 5 shows that the percentage of household who have demanded the job from the total job card holders in selected blocks of district Garhwal is not good and only 53.08 percent of job card holders demanded the job. The job demanded in Nainidanda is highest which is 64.57% and is lowest in Duggada that is 39.97%. This is weak point of job card holders, not of MNREGA. The national level of percentage of demanded employment is lower than district level.

#### **CONCLUSION**

MNREGA is providing the employment to the people of District Garhwal and the share of Women in employment is satisfactory. MNREGA is providing the employment to almost all the households who are demanding for the job. On the other hand the performance of MNREGA is showing from other indicators as 100 days of employment goal and average number of employment given to households that is below the national average. Thus MNREGA is providing rural employment but in some development blocks there is a great scope of making society aware of MNREGA objectives.

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