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THE SUCCESSFUL JOURNEY TOWARDS INCLUSIVE GROWTH OF MGNREGS IN TAMIL NADU

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Abstract

Mahatma Gandhi NREGA is a powerful instrument for inclusive growth in rural India through its impact on social protection, livelihood security and democratic empowerment. In Tamil Nadu, the MGNREGS is so far known for its high participation of women and socially marginalised groups. Now, there is one more reason for its popularity. The state has consciously included the eligible differently - abled persons in the wage employment programme. This is a measure to reduce poverty among households with differently - abled persons, and indirectly boosting the self-confidence of the individual to be able to contribute to the family income. Out of the 55 lakhs households given wage employment, nearly 1.25 lakhs are differently - abled. Consistent efforts are on to identify left-out eligible differently-abled persons with the help of the District Rehabilitation Officers for inclusion. Though, there are issues on the flip side of MGNREGS implementation in the state, the overall observations at the ground is quite satisfactory. The state has created exemplary models for effective implementation of the scheme which may be replicated in other parts of the country. The state over a period of time has experimented lot of strategies which yield the finest result since 2006-07 to till now. The study also depends on the reports published by the Government of India. Performance of MGNREGA was evaluated for the period 2006-07 to 2015-16 by considering number of persons employed, categories of persons employed.

Key words: Poverty, Unemployment, Inclusive growth and Differently-abled

1. Introduction

In Tamil Nadu, the MGNREGS is so far known for its high participation of women and socially marginalized groups. Now, there is one more reason for its popularity. The state has consciously included the eligible differently-abled persons in the wage employment programme. This is a measure to reduce poverty among households with differently-abled persons, and indirectly boosting the self-confidence of the individual to be able to contribute to the family income. Out of the 55 lakhs households given wage employment, nearly 1.5 lakhs are differently-abled. Consistent efforts are on to identify left-out eligible

differently-abled persons with the help of the District Rehabilitation Officers for inclusion.

2. Objectives

The present study is undertaken to assess the following objectives:

- 1) Growth of total employment generated by MGNREGS in Tamilnadu.
- 2) Growth in the share of women by MGNREGS in Tamilnadu.
- 3) Growth in the Share of SC/ST Households by MGNREGS in Tamilnadu.
- 4) Growth in the Share of Disabled by MGNREGS in Tamilnadu.

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3. Methodology

The present study relies on secondary sources for information to analyze and infer the conclusions. The study also depends on the reports published by the Government of India Performance of MGNREGA is evaluated for the period 2006-07 to 2015-16 by considering number of persons employed, Total job card issued, Employment provided to household categories of persons employed and Average person-days per household, Percentage of SC's/ST's, Disabled and Women.

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS):

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) was conceptualized and enacted as an Act in the Parliament in September 2005 to give a statutory backing to the scheme. The objective of the Act is to enhance the livelihood security in rural areas by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. The primary objective of the Scheme is to augment the wage employment and the auxiliary objective is to strengthen natural resource management through works that address causes of chronic poverty like drought, deforestation, soil erosion, etc., and thus encourage sustainable development.

Coverage of Districts in Phases under MGNREGS in Tamilnadu

The state is composed of 31 Districts, 385 Blocks, 12524 Gram Panchayats, In Tamil Nadu, the Scheme was extended in a phased manner. First notified on 2.2.2006 in 6 districts of the State, viz., Cuddalore, Dindigul, Nagapattinam, Sivagangai, Tiruvannamalai and Villupuram and in four more districts viz. Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, Tirunelveli and Karur from 01.04.2007 onwards. From 01.04.2008 onwards, the scheme was extended to the remaining twenty one districts of the State which are; 1. Ariyalur, 2. Dharmapuri, 3.

Perambalur, 4. Pudukottai, 5. Ramanathapuram, 6. Namakkal, 7. Vellore, 8. Thoothu kudi, 9. Virudhunagar 10. Salem, 11. Erode, 12. Tiruchirapalli, 13. Kancheepuram 14. Theni, 15. Tiruvallur, 16. Madurai, 17. Nilgiris, 18. Kanniyakumari, 19. Coimbatore and 20. Krishnagiri and 21. Tiruppur.

Since then scheme has got lot of popularity in Tamilnadu. The participants in the scheme are rising. Presently MGNREGS is as the Total number of job cards issued are 83.96 Lakhs, Total number of workers was 129.48 Lakhs, SC worker as of total workers was 29.76 %, ST worker as of total workers was 1.6 %, Total number of Active Job Cards is 71.49 Lakhs, Total number of Active workers are 88.95 Lakhs, SC worker as of total workers was 29.6 % and ST worker as of total workers was 1.46 %.

Salient Features of the Scheme Specific to Tamil Nadu

1. Provision of 100 days of guaranteed wage employment for all registered households of the Village Panchayat.
2. The Central Government bears 100 % wage cost of unskilled manual labour and 75 % of the material cost including wages of skilled and semi-skilled workers.
3. No contractors or machineries are allowed.
4. The wage and material component ratio has to be maintained at 60:40. In Tamil Nadu, 100 % labour intensive works alone are taken up under MGNREGS.
5. As per the guidelines, the shelf of projects for a Village should be recommended by the Grama Sabha and 50 % of the works should be allotted to Village Panchayats for execution. In case of Tamil Nadu, only the Village Panchayats execute the works.
6. Adult members of rural households willing to do unskilled manual work may register in writing or orally, with the Village Panchayat.
7. The Village Panchayat will issue a job card, bearing the photo and register number, free of cost.



8. Job card was issued within 15 days of application / oral request.
9. Job card holders may apply for employment in writing. In such cases, the Village Panchayat will issue a dated receipt which will stand as a guarantee to provide employment within 15 days.
10. The worksite is ordinarily within a radius of 5 kms of the Village Panchayat and if the distance exceeds 5 kms, additional wage of 10 % of existing wage rate is payable to meet the additional transportation and living expenses.
11. The wages are paid according to the Minimum Wages Act 1948, for agricultural labourers in the State.
12. Wages are equal to both men and women.
13. Disbursement of wages is normally done on weekly basis and should be paid within 15 days.
14. One third of the beneficiaries should be women.
15. The wage notified by GOI per person per day is Rs.119/- till 2011-12. GOI has increased and notified the wage as Rs.132/- for the year 2012-13. The notified wage rate from 2013-14 is Rs.148/-.
16. Work site facilities such as drinking water, first aid kit, shade, etc., are provided.
17. Grama Sabha conducts the social audit in respect of MGNREGS through Village Social Auditors.
18. Grievance redressal mechanism is in place to ensure quick response and a Toll free Help line (1299) has also been provided.
19. All accounts and records of the Scheme are available for public scrutiny.
20. Under Section 12 of the MGNREG Act, Government of Tamil Nadu has constituted State Employment Guarantee Council to advise, evaluate and monitor the implementation of the Scheme.

Permissible Works

The permissible work as per the GOI operational guidelines are as follows:

a) 100 % Labour Intensive works

1. Water conservation and water harvesting including contour trenches, contour bunds, boulder checks, gabion structures, underground dykes, earthen dams, stop dams and springshed development;
2. Drought proofing including afforestation and tree plantation;
3. Irrigation canals including micro and minor irrigation works;
4. Provision of irrigation facility, dug out farm pond, horticulture, plantation, farm bunding and land development on land owned by households belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes or Below Poverty Line families or the beneficiaries of land reforms or the beneficiaries under the Indira Awaas Yojana of the Government of India or that of the small or marginal farmers as defined in the Agriculture Debt Waiver and Debt Relief Scheme, 2008, or the beneficiaries under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 (2 of 2007).
5. Renovation of traditional water bodies including desilting of tanks;
6. Land development;
7. Flood control and protection works including drainage in water logged areas including deepening and repairing of flood channels;
8. Rural connectivity to provide all weather access (Earthen Roads); and
9. Works in coastal areas like belt vegetation, rural drinking water related works such as soak pits and recharge pits.

b) Negative List

1. Works like boulder, pebble or shrub removal, silt application and similar activities are not permissible as stand alone activities except



when they are part of tasks in projects for converting uncultivable and barren / fallow lands into cultivable lands through one time land development and wherever land development is taken up, it may follow an area approach preferably a micro-watershed and not confined to a few individual holdings.

2. Normal agriculture operations such as land preparation, ploughing, sowing, weed removal, turning the soil, watering, harvesting, pruning and such similar operations are not permissible in MGNREGA.
3. Agriculture operations of any nature are not permitted to be taken up under MGNREGA for food grain crops, vegetables, floriculture, etc. The material cost for these inputs (seeds, fertilizers, pesticide) would also not be covered under MGNREGA.
4. Removal of weeds and watering may be considered for payment under MGNREGA only for forestry plantations and horticulture limited for a duration of 2-3 years. It is envisaged that at the end of this period, the horticulture plants would become fruit bearing and thereafter, weeding, watering, etc., would become a part of normal operations. Likewise, at the end of the 2-3 years, it is envisaged that the agro forestry plantation would attain sufficient height and should be able to survive with protection from grazing which can be provided by ditch cum mound bunds along the periphery or other forms of physical structures as given in the MGNREGA Operational Guideline 2013. The State Agriculture / Horticulture/ Forest department would prescribe norms in respect of the duration and persondays for which removal of weeds and watering, etc., for horticulture and forestry may be included as cost of MGNREGA work. However, these norms should be the same as applicable to works taken up under their own departmental programme either from state funds or as part of a Centrally Sponsored Schemes.

Achievements of MGNREGS in Tamil Nadu

Government of Tamil Nadu provided key insights to the team in the design and implementation of MGNREGS in the country. Tamil Nadu is one of the best performing State in the country in terms of generating person days, ensuring women participation, absorption of fund etc., under MGNREGS. The scale of providing employment to rural households in Tamil Nadu has increased steadily since the inception of the scheme.

The State stands first in the country in terms of “Total households demanded work, Total persons demanded work, Total households allotted work, Total persons allotted work, Total households worked, Total persons worked, Total households worked (non-SC/ST), Total person-days worked (non-SC/ST), Total SC households worked, Total person-days worked by SCs, Total person-days worked by women, Total person-days, Labour exp. (disbursed, Rs. In Lakhs), Labour expenditure. (disbursed + pending, Rs. In Lakhs), Amount disbursed to bank accounts.”

Respectively the State stands second in the country in terms of “Total muster rolls filled, Total households reached 100 day limit, Total persons with disability, Total SC households over 100 day limit, and Total individual bank accounts”. And state stands third to tenth rank in respect of “Total bank accounts, Total job cards (SC), Total land reform/IAY households worked, Total households applied for job card, Total job cards issued, Total job cards (non-SC/ST), Total works, and Total ST households over 100 day limit.” (Shown in the Table No 1 & 2).

When compared to overall India, in respect of amount sanctioned for the year 2015-16, Andhra Pradesh stands first in the country but in terms of actual performance Tamilnadu shows the leading position in the country since inception of the scheme. In respect of Total households worked and Total persons worked Tamilnadu stands first whereas Andhra Pradesh stand third and second position respectively.



Table 1: Performance of MGNREGS from 2006-07 to 2010-11

S. No.	Description	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
1	Total job cards(SC)	5,72,102	9,80,500	23,54,280	27,00,881	30,08,384
2	Total job cards (ST)	32,727	37,856	91,016	1,13,852	1,44,170
3	Total job cards (non-SC/ST)	5,52,696	11,82,081	30,67,531	37,20,977	41,94,633
4	No. of Families Completed 100 days	1,824	77,053	5,08,122	7,60,689	11,02,070
5	Persondays generated to Women (In Lacs)	146	523	959	1,982	2,218
6	Total households worked (non-SC/ST) (In Lakhs.)	76	258	457	919	1,077
7	Total Employment Demanded	6,83,708	12,34,818	33,45,648	43,73,257	49,69,140
8	Total Employment Provided	6,83,481	12,34,818	33,45,648	43,73,257	49,69,140
9	Persondays Generated SC(In Lakhs.)	102	370	725	1,412	1,550
10	Persondays Generated ST (In Lakhs.)	4	17	21	60	59
11	Labour exp. (disbursed, Rs. In Lakhs)	14,628	49,891	95,900	1,71,082	2,21,453
12	Material exp. (disbursed, Rs. In Lakhs)	0	0	0	0	0
13	Total Completed	271	993	2,515	4,837	7,560
14	Total Ongoing Work	362	2,236	5,545	7,342	8,125
15	Total Ongoing Work Expenditure	524	4,020	10,289	21,631	24,446
16	Total completed Work Expenditure	371	3,436	7,212	15,302	25,361

Source: Available online at: <http://nrega.nic.in/>

Table 2: Performance of MGNREGS from 2011-12 to 2015-16

S. No.	Description	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Rank (For 2015-16)
1	Total households applied for job card	84,19,826	93,44,972	85,98,545	83,22,395	83,94,873	6
2	Total job cards issued	83,71,307	92,28,418	84,97,290	81,98,061	82,39,747	6
3	Total job cards (SC)	22,39,028	26,72,006	24,46,962	23,28,228	23,18,325	4
4	Total job cards (ST)	1,33,854	1,45,815	1,36,566	1,30,563	1,30,411	21
5	Total job cards (non-SC/ST)	59,98,425	64,10,597	59,13,762	57,39,270	57,91,011	6
6	Total households demanded work	63,75,637	71,05,314	63,09,175	56,81,665	53,60,443	1
7	Total persons demanded work	98,07,662	1,07,42,196	87,80,123	70,11,036	64,73,937	1
8	Total households allotted work	63,73,922	71,04,257	63,08,449	56,79,860	53,56,051	1
9	Total persons allotted work	98,04,557	1,07,40,310	87,78,265	70,07,084	64,67,325	1
10	Total muster rolls filled	6,81,767	12,43,299	49,56,480	41,18,751	29,86,525	2
11	Total households worked	63,43,339	70,61,409	62,67,704	56,57,572	53,18,294	1
12	Total persons worked	97,33,544	1,06,40,925	86,33,559	69,13,415	63,66,765	1
13	Total households reached 100 day limit	6,02,619	13,48,723	9,20,784	3,33,005	1,17,951	2
14	Total persons with disability	41,319	75,699	80,451	66,048	58,191	2
15	Total households worked (non-SC/ST)	44,72,611	48,23,756	43,45,599	39,55,771	37,15,511	1
16	Total person-days worked (non-SC/ST)	20,97,62,584	27,47,42,060	25,38,51,443	18,74,18,461	15,08,85,942	1
17	Total SC households worked	17,79,520	21,36,071	18,32,471	16,33,510	15,38,675	1



18	Total person-days worked by SCs	8,79,59,409	12,80,22,959	10,90,78,775	7,75,53,893	6,26,72,986	1
19	Total ST households worked	91,208	1,01,582	89,634	68,291	64,108	17
20	Total person-days worked by STs	38,52,578	53,79,327	47,92,364	29,92,800	24,71,421	14
21	Total land reform/IAY households worked	72,096	76,165	70,768	60,599	57,145	4
22	Total person-days worked by women	22,35,97,433	30,26,44,677	30,86,81,664	22,87,33,774	18,35,11,254	1
23	Total person-days	30,15,74,571	40,81,44,346	36,77,22,582	26,79,65,154	21,60,29,800	1
24	Total SC households over 100 day limit	1,89,734	4,43,440	2,73,556	97,842	37,387	2
25	Total ST households over 100 day limit	7,267	16,924	10,321	3,250	1,422	10
26	Total households completed 100 person-days in range:	2,00,795	76,754	5,02,127	2,11,204	69,581	2
27	Labour exp. (disbursed, Rs. In Lakhs)	2,78,482	3,94,149	3,64,088	3,12,135	2,84,277	1
28	Material exp. (disbursed, Rs. In Lakhs)	0	2	3,910	50,043	18,910	13
29	Amount sanctioned (Rs. In Lakhs)	16,47,77,137	1,47,74,56,042	1,60,50,90,846	1,09,44,53,209	33,26,67,687	12
30	Total works	1,20,029	1,87,347	3,93,688	9,18,820	7,75,733	7
31	Total bank accounts	37,41,311	72,16,774	80,58,969	84,94,418	84,97,565	3
32	Total post office accounts	553	663	406	205	205	29

Source: Available online at: <http://nrega.nic.in/>

Table 3: Performance of SC, ST, Women and Disabled for the year 2015-16

S. No.	State Name	Total person-days worked by SCs	Total person-days worked by STs	Total person-days worked by women	Total persons with disability	Amount sanctioned (Rs. In Lakhs)
1	Andaman and Nicobar	7	0	26,645	10	13,37,51,072
2	Andhra Pradesh	3,30,43,472	1,61,86,208	8,13,37,750	68,545	1,91,87,54,79,682
3	Arunachal Pradesh	700	14,99,887	5,46,872	57	2,63,83,647
4	Assam	10,36,147	34,29,293	59,74,367	1,829	25,20,50,617
5	Bihar	54,99,099	4,07,596	91,95,950	1,324	2,21,89,16,693
6	Chhattisgarh	22,33,101	1,04,40,313	1,16,24,754	8,068	26,09,59,726
7	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	0	0	0	0	2
8	Daman & Diu	0	0	0	0	0
9	Goa	2,701	16,550	58,929	1	11,75,158
10	Gujarat	4,73,066	19,28,433	27,23,215	2,428	37,61,00,213
11	Haryana	13,15,774	338	12,18,610	137	77,39,497
12	Himachal Pradesh	30,84,499	9,75,860	72,84,400	945	44,71,17,961
13	Jammu and Kashmir	2,18,567	5,33,571	5,89,222	344	49,79,96,907
14	Jharkhand	38,87,804	1,13,24,890	1,00,35,661	3,962	15,01,59,080
15	Karnataka	22,64,312	12,61,818	61,24,392	1,718	61,85,70,339
16	Kerala	65,85,011	16,12,612	3,42,53,997	1,574	23,70,53,807
17	Lakshadweep	0	1,201	585	3	1,249
18	Madhya Pradesh	57,80,305	1,15,02,900	1,48,07,152	18,296	23,66,06,873
19	Maharashtra	36,13,970	63,19,466	1,72,49,608	14,102	3,79,34,98,086
20	Manipur	54,770	8,94,508	8,57,085	698	42,05,96,978
21	Meghalaya	20,928	45,50,074	19,29,910	72	21,31,93,897
22	Mizoram	1,329	62,95,997	23,79,372	114	3,64,213
23	Nagaland	1,03,317	1,10,27,835	36,88,806	117	65,57,50,155
24	Odisha	52,43,218	1,33,58,987	1,18,06,791	2,581	15,42,64,905
25	Puducherry	1,72,389	408	4,22,544	28	2,215



26	Punjab	49,30,843	1,902	37,29,544	512	5,71,66,083
27	Rajasthan	2,57,87,286	3,10,69,262	8,13,43,586	4,265	11,43,09,775
28	Sikkim	57,713	4,55,902	5,83,625	85	4,08,52,050
29	Tamil Nadu	6,26,72,986	24,71,421	18,35,11,254	58,191	33,26,67,687
30	Tripura	49,82,991	1,33,02,322	1,48,26,536	9,226	16,10,60,255
31	Uttar Pradesh	3,37,93,603	10,53,949	2,83,96,166	7,955	3,69,70,63,179
32	Uttarakhand	12,96,417	3,74,127	32,08,581	375	13,83,00,399
33	West Bengal	2,68,79,034	67,27,046	3,53,12,381	38,853	3,61,17,34,623
Total:		23,50,35,359	15,90,24,676	57,50,48,290	2,46,415	2,10,73,08,87,022

Source: Available online at: <http://nrega.nic.in/>

The participation of SC and women is very important for diversified and inclusive growth for which also Tamilnadu is the top state in India. (Shown in the Table No:3)

Making MGNREGS Disabled friendly

Special initiative was taken in the State to bring persons with disabilities under MGNREGS to ensure inclusiveness. Time motion study was conducted in pilot districts to arrive at quantum of work and suitable activities for differently-abled. The list of activities includes distribution of drinking water at worksite, helper in worksite creche, Assistant to the worksite facilitator in pre-marking and also in minor works related to desilting activities. The guidelines for disabled friendly activities were prepared after considering the physical and mental capabilities of the people. Drawing inspiration from the Tamil Nadu experience, Government of India has called other States to emulate Tamil Nadu model for inclusion of the differently-abled in the scheme. In order to implement the Provisions of the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 in MGNREGS, the Government of Tamilnadu has ordered for special provisions for the disabled vide G.O (Ms).No.52 RD&PR.

5. Conclusion

Though there are issues on the flip side of MGNREGS implementation in the State, the overall observations at the ground is quite satisfactory. The State has created exemplary models for effective implementation of the scheme which may be replicated in other parts of the

country. The State over a period of time has experimented lot of strategies which yield the finest result since 2006-07 to till now. Central Government should give priority to Tamilnadu to strengthen the scheme for inclusive growth for the following years. MGNREGS is serving as an important measures to reduce and remove poverty, unemployment. And this schemes is also important for women and Differently-abled for social inclusion in the employment.

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