

Rural Development: Initiatives, Achievements and Issues

Farzana Gulzar¹ and Samiya Gul²

¹The Business School, University Of Kashmir, Hazratbal, Srinagar-190006, Kashmir

²The Business School, University Of Kashmir

E-mail: ²farzana_ls@yahoo.com

Abstract—Rural Development aims at improving the well being and self realization of people living outside the urbanized areas through collective process. As, India is a second largest populated country, the problem of poverty and unemployment are rampant; in this regard various programs have been implemented for solving these problems. After Independence a good number of programmes for rural development have been initiated by the Government of India for the overall development of the rural people. So in this regard an attempt has been made to study the various programs initiated by the Government and the various achievements and issues there in. The data has been collected from secondary sources like, books, journals, reports etc.

Keywords: Rural Development, India, Economic Development.

1. INTRODUCTION

Rural Development (RD) is a process, which aims at improving the well being and self realization of people living outside the urbanized areas through collective process. According to Agarwal (1989), rural development is a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of rural poor. **The United Nations defines Rural Development as** Rural Development is a process of change, by which the efforts of the people themselves are united, those of government authorities to improve their economic, social and cultural conditions of communities in to the life of the nation and to enable them to contribute fully to national program. Rural Development is a process of bringing change among rural community from the traditional way of living to progressive way of living. It is also expressed as a movement for progress.

2. OBJECTIVES

- To study the concept of rural development,
- To study the different schemes initiated by government and
- To study the achievement and problem of Rural Development.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The data has been primarily collected from the secondary sources of information. These secondary data are collected from various sources like articles, journals, books and reports.

4. VARIOUS SCHEMES FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT:

As, India is a second largest populated country, the problem of poverty and unemployment are rampant; in this regard various programs have been implemented for solving these problems. After Independence a good number of programmes for rural development have been initiated by the Government of India for the overall development of the rural people like Community Development programme (1952), National Extension Services (1953), Panchayati Raj (1959), Rural Works programme (RWP) (1961), Crash Scheme for Rural Employment (CSRE) and Food for Work Program (FFWP) (1970), National Rural Employment Program (NREP) and the Rural Labour Employment Guarantee Program (REGP) (1980), Jawahar Rojgar Yojana (JRY), the Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS), and the Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY) (1990), Sampurna Grameen Rojgar Yojana (SGRY) (2001).

1. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS): This 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.

2. National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM): The basic objective of the National Rural Livelihood Mission is to create efficient and effective institutional platforms of the rural poor that enable them to increase their household incomes through sustainable livelihood enhancements and improved access to financial services. It plans to cover 70 million households living below the poverty line (BPL) in rural India.

3. Integrated Watershed Development Programme (IWDP): The main objectives of the IWDP are to restore ecological

balance in a watershed by harnessing, conserving and developing degraded natural resources such as soil, water and vegetative cover, and thereby, help provide sustainable livelihoods to the local people.

4. Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY): This scheme provides financial grants to rural BPL families and the next-of-kin of defence personnel killed in action for construction of houses and upgradation of existing unserviceable kutchas.

5. National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP): The goal of this scheme is to provide adequate safe water for domestic uses on a sustainable basis.

6. Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan (NBA): The Total Sanitation Campaign, now renamed as the Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan, assists Gram Panchayats to achieve comprehensive sanitation coverage.

5. ACHIEVEMENTS OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

• Development of Infrastructure:

In order to develop an economy, the development of infrastructure, such as transportation and telecommunications, is very necessary. At the same time, there are various other factors which inhibit economic development in rural areas, such as limited access to necessary information, limited transportation and inadequate communication means (roads, public transportation services, etc.), information (such as telephones and mail routes), and electricity. The development of transportation and telecommunication infrastructure, including rural electrification infrastructure, telecommunication networks, local roads and public transportation is important. It enhances human and social capabilities. For example, rural electrification facilitates the use of medical apparatus and storage of medical supplies in health care facilities (e.g. storage of vaccines in refrigerators). In this way, infrastructure such as roads, electricity, and information systems are important elements in order to improve productivity and living standards in rural areas.

• General Health Improvement:

One aspect of poverty in rural areas is the unsatisfactory health conditions of local people. Unhealthy and ill people cannot perform to the best of their capabilities nor make efforts to improve their living conditions. The inadequate medical facilities and lack of treatment also in turn leads to other family members having to take care of the ill, lowering the productivity of the family as a whole. Oral infections are commonly seen in rural areas where access to safe water is restricted and there is a lack of adequate sewage systems. Local people and infants who are malnourished due to poverty suffer from frequent infections and may often die of a preventable illness. Infections in rural areas can be prevented through the (a) improvement of nutrition, (b) construction of safe drinking water, and (c) a clean housing environment.

• Rural Drinking Water and Sanitation Improvement:

Water quality has emerged as a growing concern, chemically due to geogenic leaching (arsenic and fluoride) and biologically due to bacteriological contamination. The fact that the same aquifer is being tapped for both irrigation and drinking water, without any coordinated management of the resource, has greatly aggravated availability of drinking water. Lack of convergence with sanitation, on the other hand, compromises water quality, even as it makes provision of improved sanitation difficult. The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation has devised a Management Devolution Index (MDI) to track and incentivise more substantive devolution of functions, funds. Various new drinking water supply schemes have been designed, estimated and implemented to take into account the various problems. All Government schools and anganwadis (in Government or community buildings) have been provided with water supply for drinking and for toilets as per relevant quantity norms.

6. PROBLEMS IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

- People related: These problems include traditional way of thinking among the rural people, the poor understanding towards the development, low level of education to understand developmental efforts and new technology, lack of confidence, poor awareness and personal ego.
- Agricultural related problems: These problems are primarily related to occupation of the rural masses and include lack of expected awareness, knowledge, skill and attitude, unavailability of inputs, poor marketing facility, small size of land holding, division of land, unwillingness to work and stay in rural areas.
- Infrastructure related problems: These problems are the most severe affecting the total quality of rural people. The various infrastructure related problems are poor infrastructure facilities like water, electricity, transport, educational institutions, communication, health, storage facility etc.
- Economic problems: The various problems are unfavourable economic condition to adopt high cost technology, high cost of inputs, underprivileged rural industries.
- Social and Cultural problems: These problems include the rituals and customs, cultural norms and traditions and conflict within and between groups, castes, religions, regions, languages.

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