

## MGNREGA - Current Scenario in Rajasthan

Dr. Nimish Gupta, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Business Administration, Government College, Jaipur, Rajasthan

### Abstract

The implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in Rajasthan is discussed in this paper. Examining two specific factors: the role of the Gramme Panchayat leader/Sarpanch and the role of civil society organisations (CSOs) in making work accessible to rural poor. Because of the dry and difficult climate in Rajasthan, as well as the difficulty of finding other suitable jobs close to home, MGNREGA is an important source of income for the rural poor. This paper discusses the role of the Sarpanch from an institutional, top-down perspective and CSO involvement from a bottom-up perspective, based on interviews and a case study of a Gramme Panchayat in Rajasthan. I believe that if the Sarpanch does not initiate MGNREGA and engage people to work under the programme, MGNREGA will not be implemented. Institutional structures have not reached the lowest levels of government, where the rural poor follow a person rather than a state in their daily lives. CSOs can help the government implement MGNREGA by collaborating with them or by acting as an independent monitor and evaluator of the programme. In this paper, we will look at MGNREGA and the current situation in Rajasthan.

**Keywords:** National, Rural Employment, Guarantee Act, Organizations, Gram Panchayat, Leader, Government, Scheme, Budget Estimate, Development

### Introduction:

In 2005, the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act [NREGA], also known as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Act [MGNREGA], was enacted. On August 23, 2005, the UPA government of former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh passed this act. The scheme, with the primary goal of alleviating poverty, was implemented 17 years ago, and many states have performed admirably, while others have lagged due to poor administration implementation. Many economists have also criticised the scheme as an inefficient tool for shifting income to the poor. [1]

### Current Status of MGNREGS:

The Government of India has allocated Rs. 73,000 crores for MNREGS at the Budget Estimate stage for the current fiscal year 2021-22, an increase of Rs. 11,500 crores over the Budget Estimate for the fiscal year 2020-21.

Under MGNREGS, 6.51 crore people have been employed and more than 130.9 billion person-days have been generated in the current fiscal year 2021-22.

A total of Rs. 41,187.06 crore has been set aside in the current fiscal year 2021-22 (as of 20.07.2021) for programme implementation.

The Act also requires a 60% investment in assets directly related to agriculture and related activities, such as the development of land, water, and trees. Agriculture and allied works have accounted for 73% of total expenditure in the current fiscal year 2021-22. [2]

MGNREGA aims to change the relationship between the rural poor and the state by engaging the poor and allowing them to decide when and how much work they need. However, the reality on the ground does not always correspond to the MGNREGA concept. For many, the shift has not occurred because there is still a tendency among the rural population to refrain from criticising the Sarpanch and instead wait for state benefits. The focus of this paper is the implementation of MGNREGA in Rajasthan. I'll look at how different levels of personal commitment and civil society involvement influence the implementation process. [3]

### Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme Rajasthan:

In 2006, Rajasthan was one of the first states to launch this programme. Since the inception of MGNREGA, the state has a history of relief work and the benefit of an active civil society involvement. The state requires a scheme similar to MGNREGA. With more than three-quarters of the population living in rural areas, the state is overwhelmingly rural. Geographical, ecological, and social dimensions differ in the state, making it difficult to provide people with basic services such as health, education, and water. The west and north-west parts of the state, which account for approximately 61 percent of the total area of the state, are either desert or semi-desert. With droughts in the background, MGNREGA is a boon to the state. [4]

MGNREGA was initially implemented in six districts. During the fiscal year 2008-09, the third and final stage of MGNREGA was launched in Jodhpur. As a result, MGNREGA is currently operational in all districts of Rajasthan. The MGNREGA has been in effect in the state for 12 years. This scheme has been universalized and is now in effect in all of the state's Gramme Panchayats. The Rajasthan government proposes a 150-day employment guarantee in its 2013-14 budget estimates. The state government has also created its own programme, known as the "Rajasthan Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme" (RREGS). According to the State Government, Rajasthan is one of the states with the best scheme implementation. [5]

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is an employment generation scheme of the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India (GOI), that primarily aims to improve rural households' livelihood security by providing 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a fiscal year. For the fiscal year 2019-20, the MGNREGA annual budget is INR 60,000 Crore. The scheme currently has -130.4 million households registered as beneficiaries and annually supports the livelihoods of over 50 million households.<sup>1</sup> The Environmental Benefits through Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGAEB) Project is a bilateral project funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by GIZ India from April 2013 to March 2019. The primary project areas are located

in three states: Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Rajasthan. The following areas are covered by the project:

- Improving policymakers', project implementation staff's, and communities' knowledge of natural resource management and the environmental benefits of MGNREGA.
- Improving access to information for all stakeholders on the potential environmental impacts of MGNREGA on water security, green cover, and soil protection.
- Assisting with gender-sensitive MGNREGA planning, design, and implementation.
- Developing novel models for holistic watershed and landscape-based MGNREGA activities that appear to provide tangible environmental benefits.
- Creating and institutionalising mechanisms for regular maintenance and management of MGNREGA assets. [6]

### **Review of Literature:**

The Indian government has created a number of welfare programmes to help the rural poor find work. This is significant because nearly 70% of India's 1.3 billion people live in rural areas (Pradhan, 2016). The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), now in its tenth year, represents a shift in Indian welfare policies by making work a right. Under the MGNREGA, anyone living in rural India has the right to 100 days of work per fiscal year. [7]

MGNREGA is important to research because, according to India's Finance Minister, Arun Jaitley, the way to include the rural population in economic growth "is to boost public spending in rural sectors to economically empower the people to achieve higher growth targets" (Press Information Bureau, 2016). MGNREGA is a boost that has the potential to improve rural people's lives by providing them with a secure income. It is also the largest work programme in the world. [8]

MGNREGA became law in 2005, and implementation began in 2006. MGNREGA is the culmination of a series of employment schemes, some of which date back to India's independence. The first scheme guaranteeing work appeared in Maharashtra in the early 1970s and was based on self-selection<sup>2</sup>. Several schemes were designed by the central government using Maharashtra as a model. The Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) was established in 1993, with the goal of eventually providing rural poor with 100 days of employment (Das, 2013). The various schemes that followed EAS laid the groundwork for today's MGNREGA. [9]

A study conducted by Sharma (2009), which was funded by the National Council on Applied Economic Research and the Public-Interest Foundation, found that leakages in Jharkhand, Orissa, and Uttar Pradesh ranged from "one-third to half of the stipulated wages," adding that

because the leakages are concealed by the addition of fictitious names to the muster rolls, employment generation is also exaggerated. Furthermore, funds flow disproportionately to poorer households as opposed to richer households, and there is strong evidence that funds reach vulnerable individuals. [10]

Furthermore, effective implementation of MGNREGA necessitates both vertical and horizontal coordination across levels of government within states. Rural local bodies, particularly village Panchayats, can engage in the following activities to ensure effective implementation of this act: (i) demand-based budgeting; (ii) advance planning to offer work on demand; and (iii) holistic and intersectoral project planning to avoid duplication. With the spatial dimension of implementation in mind, the importance of a smooth flow of funds for project implementation in accordance with demand, capacity building at the village level, right to information to enable effective social audit and accountability of functionaries, and an effective grievance redressal mechanism becomes critical. (P S Vijay Shankar, 2006) [11]

### Objectives:

- Promoting local economic development with a focus on poverty and unemployment reduction in rural areas.
- Spreading development throughout the region.
- Increasing investment in rural areas.
- Long-term planned development of rural habitat from a spatial perspective.

### Research Methodology:

This study's overall design was exploratory. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme was developed by the government of India with an emphasis on inclusive growth and enacted as a law in 2006. The act promises 100 days of employment to improve the living conditions of the rural poor. The current study evaluates the effects of MGNREGA on employment, saving, and overall social-economic conditions of workers using a survey and questionnaire method. The research is of the descriptive variety. The study concludes that the scheme performs better in Rajasthan than in Haryana after analysing many demographic and socioeconomic variables. The study found that overall employment, saving, socioeconomic condition, and standard of living had improved. [12]

### Result and Discussion:

#### Socio-Economic Factors for MGNREGA Beneficiaries:

Participation in MGNREGA is determined by a variety of factors, the majority of which are governed by socioeconomic factors. Age, sex ratio and family composition, family size, economic category, and social group are all socioeconomic factors that contribute to the study area's grinding poverty. [13] Table 1 shows the results of an analysis of respondents' socioeconomic conditions.

**Table 1: Socio-economic Profile of the MGNREGA Beneficiaries:**

S.No.	Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percent (%)
1.	Age	Young (18-30)	18	7.5
		Middle (31-50)	172	71.65
		Old (>50)	50	20.85
2.	Gender	Male	74	30.84
		Female	166	69.16
3.	Caste	SC /ST	127	52.92
		OBC/General	113	47.08
4.	Education level	Illiterate	177	73.75
		Primary school	42	17.5
		Middle school	18	7.5
		High school	3	1.25
5.	Land holding	Landless farmers	23	9.6
		Marginal farmers (<1.0 hec)	102	42.5
		Small farmers (1.0-2.0 hec)	93	38.75
		Medium farmers (2.0>=3.0 hec)	22	9.15
6.	Family size	Low (less than 3)	19	7.91
		Medium ( 4 to 6)	100	41.67
		Large (more than 6)	121	50.42
7.	Economic Category	APL	135	56.25
		BPL	105	43.75

The results show that the percentage of female workers in the sample families is approximately 70%. It indicates that this scheme places a high value on female workers. It is correct, according to the scheme Act. [14]

### State Profile: Rajasthan

Rajasthan is known for its extreme weather, which ranges from 49 degrees in the summer to negative temperatures in the winter. The state receives little rain, and there are only two rivers that run through it. Rural areas are home to more than 75% of the country's population. Agriculture, farm labour, and other workers are the primary occupations of the rural population.

Other than the Thar desert, there are vast swaths of fallow and barren land. Females account for 48% of the state's population. In the state, there are only 928 females for every 1000 males. Men in the state have a literacy rate of 76%, while women have a rate of 44%. The majority of the state's rural women rely on agriculture or animal husbandry for a living. Aside from being economically disadvantaged, women in the state face a prejudiced and male-dominated society. [15]

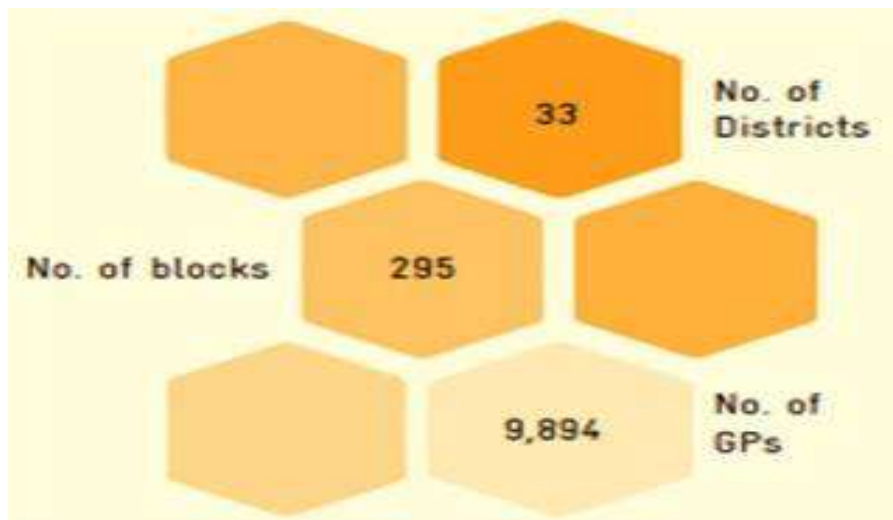


Figure 2: State Profile: Rajasthan

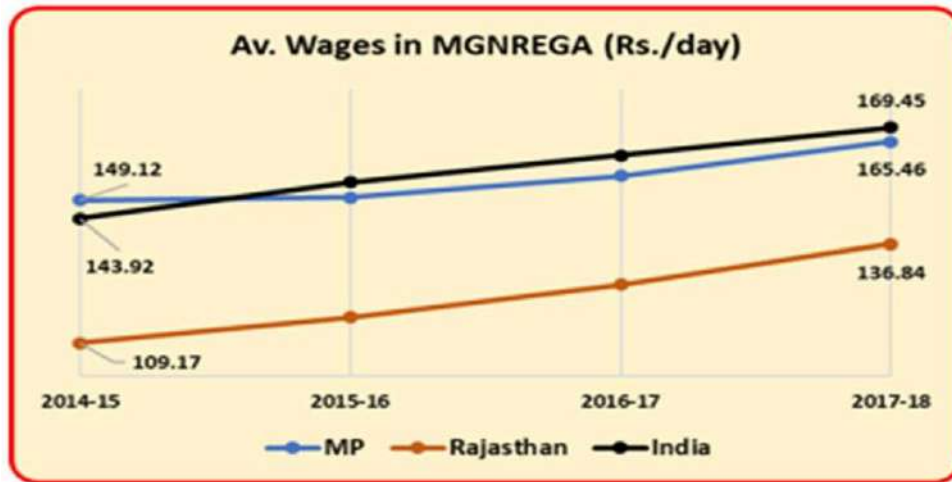
Table 2: MGNREGA Employment Generation Status in Rajasthan

MGNREGA Employment Generation Status in RJ	
% of Active Job Cards with respect to Issued Job Cards	63.8
% of Active Workers with respect to Total Registered Workers	43.1
% SC worker against active workers	19.4
% ST worker against active workers	23.1
Total number of households completed 100 Days of Wage Employment in 2017-18	2,28,084
Total Person days Generated (lakhs) in 2017-18	2397.7
% Women Person days of Total in 2017-18	65.3

Rajasthan has approximately twenty-three large and small schemes aimed at various aspects of women's social, personal, and economic well-being. [16]

A combination of funding constraints and political aversion has prevented lakhs of people from obtaining MGNREGS jobs, despite the fact that wages are extremely low.

Rajasthan governments, which have boasted about their ease of doing business and investment opportunities for big business, and have set market borrowing records, have become perversely tight-fisted when it comes to spending on key welfare programmes like the MGNREGS. The chart below, which shows the average wages provided for MGNREGS work, provides chilling evidence for this.



**Figure 4: Daily Wages in MGNREGS Work**

Last year, both states paid daily wages in MGNREGS work that were lower than the national average. Rajasthan has one of the lowest rates in the country, at Rs.136.84 per day, while MP charges Rs.165.46. Last year, the national average was Rs.169.45, a disgraceful figure. [17]

#### **Conclusion:**

According to the study, comparatively backward ethnic groups consistently participate in greater proportions in MGNREGA works, while general and other -backward caste people also make up a larger share. The traditional concept of joint households in rural areas is being disrupted by the program's implementation, as a proportion of job cards are held by smaller households equal to large households. Beneficiaries' education levels were discovered to be lower. According to the study, the socioeconomic condition of the households that regularly work under the MGNREGA scheme is significantly poor in the rural area. They are the most vulnerable. Despite the fact that socioeconomic conditions have improved.

#### **References:**

1. MGNREGA - The People's Scheme Completes 17 Years Updated: Jun 19 <https://www.thegeostrata.com/post/mgnrega-the-people-s-scheme-completes-17-years>
2. What Is the Current Status of Mgnregs <https://byjus.com/ias-questions/what-is-the-current-status-of-mgnregs/>
3. Ambasta, P. (2012). MGNREGA and rural governance reform. Growth with inclusion through panchayats. In A. K. Pankaj (Ed.), Right to work and rural India. Working on the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) (pp. 335-368). New Delhi: Sage Publications.
4. Dr. Prasad KVS. Performance of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA): An Overview, ISSN: 2230-9519 (Online) [ISSN: 2230-2463, IJMBS. 2012;
5. Dr. Vilas M. Kadrolkar, An Impact Assessment Study of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantees Act\* (MGNREGA) In Karnataka, Global Research Analysis, ISSN No 2277-8160. 2012; 1(4).
6. Environmental Benefits of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA-EB) (<https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/29773.html>)
7. Pradhan, B. (2016). Agony in Rural India Prompts Modi U-Turn on Policy He Mocked. Retrieved 24.02.2016, from Bloomberg Business <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-02-21/agon-y-in-india-dust-bowl-prompts-modi-u-turn-on-policy-he-mocked>
8. Press Information Bureau. (2016). Government is committed to strengthen MGNREGA, says Jaitley. Rural job scheme witnessed a record fund allocation of Rs 37,000 crore. Retrieved 13.05.2016 <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=136005>
9. Das, S. K. (2013). National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005. In S. K. Das (Ed.), India's rights revolution: Has it worked for the poor? (pp. 103-160). New Delhi: Oxford Press. doi:10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198081661.003.0003

10. Naila Kabeer, Alakh N. Sharma and C. Upendranadh, "Social Security in South Asia: Issues and Perspectives".
11. P S Vijay Shankar, R. R. (2006). Government Schedule of Rates: Working Against labor. Economic And Political Weekly.
12. Abymon A., Sunny A.C., Babu J.O. (2018), " Socio-Economic Impact of NREGA on Workers and Effectiveness in its Implementation-A Study of Southern Kerala", International Journal of Pure and Applied Mathematics, Vol. 118, No. 20, pp. 4145-4157.
13. Jha, R., Raghav, G. and Shylashri, S. (2008) Reviewing the National Rural Employment Guarantee programme. Economic and Political Weekly, 43(11): 44-48.
14. Kareemulla, K., Kumar, S., Reddy, S.K., Rama Rao, C.A. and Venkateswarlu, B. (2010) Impact of NREGS on rural livelihoods and agricultural capital formation. Indian Journal of Agricultural Economics, 65(3): 524-539
15. Environmental Benefits of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA-EB) (<https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/29773.html>)
16. Environmental Benefits through MGNREGA <https://www.giz.de/de/downloads/Gender%20Impact%20Assessment%20of%20MGNREGA-EB.pdf>
17. Subodh Varma 23 Nov 2018 <https://www.newslick.in/madhya-pradesh-and-rajasthan-floundering-mgnrega-angers-people>

