Impact Study of the MoRD programmes implemented during 2008-09 to 2010-11 on the rural households in all the seven districts of the Bundelkhand region of Uttar Pradesh

The Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) implements various beneficiary oriented and Area Development Schemes in the rural areas of the country through State Governments. The present study aims to assess the socio-economic impact of the MoRD programmes implemented during 2008-09 to 2010-11 on the rural households in all the seven districts of the Bundelkhand region of Uttar Pradesh (Jhansi, Mahoba, Hamirpur, Jalaun, Lalitpur, Chitrakoot and Banda).

Various rural development programmes covered under the study are as follows:

- Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS)
- Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)
- Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY)
- Rural Housing (IAY)
- National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP)
- Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC)
- Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP)/ National Rural Drinking Water Supply Programme (NRDWP)
- Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP/ DPAP/Hariyali)

The study is based mainly on the primary data - quantitative and qualitative - collected from a representative cross-section of beneficiaries of different programmes in the study districts. Four blocks were selected from each district based on proportion of rural BPL households. Five villages were selected from each block. From each village, 20 beneficiaries (assigning suitable quotas for different programmes) and five non-beneficiaries were randomly selected and interviewed with the help of an interview schedule. In addition, focus group discussions were held with the beneficiaries to obtain wide range of information on the implementation and impact of various rural development programmes. In all, 2818 beneficiaries and 688 non-beneficiaries were covered.

I. Reach of programmes

MGNREGS

- About 45% of the sampled households did not receive any wage employment under MGNREGS during 2008-09 to 2010-11. This level of reach for a backward region like Bundelkhand with scarce opportunities for wage employment is very low.

- Only 12% of households received 100 days of employment guaranteed under the scheme. No wonder, 80 percent of households felt that the scheme has not fulfilled the job requirements of their families.

- The average number of days of employment provided to the households who have been issued job cards was only 27 days in 2009-10 and 29 days in 2010-11. The lowest average in this regard for the year 2010-11 was observed in Mahoba (22 days) and the highest in Jhansi in 2010-11 (37 days). The situation is no better for SC households: 27
days in 2009-10 and 32 days in 2010-11. There is also a gender disparity with women receiving only 7 to 8 days of employment per year.

- Though an average of 27 days of wage employment was provided under MGNREGS, the actual increase in the number of days is only 10 days of employment. This has happened as the employment opportunities provided did not supplement the wage opportunities fully due to implementation of MGNREGS works during agriculture season.

- Whenever the beneficiaries approached Mukhiya / Pradhan or Panchayat Sewak for redressal of issues related to the payment of their wages, the authority demanded favours to extend requisite help.

**Indira Aawas Yojana (IAY)**

- Only 5.7% of BPL households received benefit under IAY scheme during the reference period. The reach varied widely across districts.

- Out of the total HHs sanctioned IAY houses (all seven districts), the construction of houses was completed only in 59% cases against 70% utilization of sanctioned funds. Across the districts, the physical achievements are much lower than the percentage utilization of available funds during the related period.

- Only 12% of IAY beneficiary households have smokeless chullahs. The worst District is Hamirpur where there is no house with smokeless chullah and the best is Jhansi with 30% houses having it.

- There are complaints of rampant corruption in the scheme. A bribe of ₹5,000 to ₹10,000 is being charged by the authorities before release of IAY funds to the beneficiaries.

**Other Schemes**

- Only 8.9% of all rural households received benefit under the TSC during the reference period.
- Only 4.2% of rural households received benefits under the SGSY scheme during the reference period.
- Similarly under NSAP scheme also only 4.1% of rural households reportedly received the benefits.

**I. Fund utilization**

- Only about 80% of available funds were utilized in all the three years from 2008-09 to 2010-11.
- The lowest utilization of funds is observed in respect of TSC (62%) and employment oriented programmes viz MGNREGS (75%) and SGSY (66%). Even the IWMP has registered a utilization rate of only 79%.
- Under-utilization of funds in respect of major programmes like MGNREGS reflects tardy implementation of rural development programmes in the draught prone, employment deficit region.
II. Major Impact Observed

The study shows that the beneficiaries under various schemes have shown positive impacts in terms of increase in income levels, production, transportation and living conditions, while negative impacts like increase in accidents have also been reported.

- In the case of MGNREGS beneficiaries, the average number of person days of wage employment per household has increased from 42 person days before MGNREGS implementation to 52 days in 2010-11. However, this had resulted in a net increase of only 10 days of wage employment for the beneficiary households due to loss of wage employment in agricultural works.

- The most significant impact of MGNREGS as perceived by beneficiaries was an increase in wage levels (48% respondents) and availability of employment opportunities in their own village (23%). At the same time, the scheme did not fulfill people’s expectations as 80% of beneficiaries have reported that the scheme did not meet their job requirements.

- Even after getting benefit of the IAY scheme, around 89% did not have a smokeless chullah in their houses. This was highest in Hamirpur where no smokeless chullah was constructed and lowest in Jhansi with 70% of such HHs. Non-provision of smokeless chullah and latrine has lessened the scheme’s impact on the standard of living of IAY households.

- 43% of beneficiaries reported an increase in income through SGSY activity. However, as much as one-third of beneficiaries in Lalitpur district reported that there was no market for SGSY goods.

- 75% of NSAP beneficiaries felt that the impact of the scheme resulted in improving the economic condition of their families. Another 25% reported that it had reduced dependency of beneficiaries on their families.

- The positive impact of the PMGSY as perceived by the respondents included better transport system (78% respondents), increased employment opportunities (11% respondents) and increased access to health facilities (11% respondents). On the flip side, more than half of the respondents (54%) reported an increase in accidents as a negative impact of the scheme.

- About two third of beneficiaries under the IWMP scheme reported an increase in agricultural production. Production of grams registered an increase of 46%; followed by pulses (26%) and wheat 25%. Lalitpur and Chitrakoot districts have shown greater impact on agricultural productivity.

- Average monthly household income in the region increased by ₹27.4% only from ₹2261 to 2880 during the study period. Across the study districts, the increase ranged between 17 to 32% only.
Quality of Life

- There is no major improvement in the quality of life of beneficiary households.
- Before the reference period around 0.9% of households were using LPG/PNG for the purpose of cooking which has now increased to 1.3% only.
- The proportion of households using electricity as the main source of lighting has increased from 26% households before 2008-09 to around 34% households in 2011.
- The number of school going children has increased but the increase in school dropouts has negated the positive impact on educational status of the respondents.

Deprivation

- A slight improvement is seen on food security as about 15% of the households reported that were not able to get two time meals a day earlier and this has now declined to 6% only.
- Similarly, while in 2008 around 19% of households reported that they did not have a pair of clothes for themselves, in 2011 this has reduced to just 1.4%.
- In 2008, around 15% of households reported that some members did not have a pair of chappals. This has declined to 3% in 2011.
- More than half of the households are still deprived of loans from institutional sources and depend upon local money lenders.
- Though the average loan amount from institutions has increased by 52% from ₹1900 to ₹2900, the non-institutional loan of ₹300 per annum per household continued to exist.