

Access of Poverty Alleviation Programmes in India

Rusikesan. D

MBA, Department of Management Studies
Bharath Institute of Science and Technology,
Selaiyur, Chennai, Tamil Nadu 600 073
Bharath Institute of Higher Education and Research

ABSTRACT

India is the home to above 40 crores of poor did not have incomes to access a consumption basket which defines the poverty line. Of these, 83.36 per cent were in the rural areas.² India is home to 33 per cent of the poor fall below the international poverty line. Such a high incidence of poverty is a matter of concern in view of the fact that poverty eradication has been one of the major objectives of the development planning process. This programme the creation of employment opportunities for the unskilled workforce has been a major challenge for development planners and administrators. Poverty alleviation has been one of the guiding principles of the planning process in India. India's anti-poverty strategy for urban and rural areas has three broad strands; promotion of economic growth; human development and targeted programmes to address the multidimensional nature of poverty. The role of economic growth in providing more employment avenues to the population has been clearly recognized. The main objective for this study access of poverty alleviation programmes in India.

1. INTRODUCTION

Poverty in India is widespread, and a variety of methods have been proposed to measure it. The official measure of Indian government, before 2005, was based on food security and it was defined from per capita expenditure for a person to consume enough calories and be able to pay for associated essentials to survive. Since 2005, Indian government adopted the Tendulkar methodology which moved away from calorie anchor to a basket of goods and used rural, urban and regional minimum expenditure per capita necessary to survive.

The World Bank has similarly revised its definition and benchmarks to measure poverty since 1990, with \$1.25 per day income on purchasing power parity basis as the definition in use from 2005 to 2013. Some semi-economic and non-economic indices have also been proposed to measure poverty in India; for example, the Multi-dimensional Poverty Index placed 33% weight on number of years spent in school and education and 6.25% weight on financial condition of a person, in order to determine if that person is poor.

The different definitions and different underlying small sample surveys used to determine poverty in India have resulted in widely different estimates of poverty from 1950s to 2010s. In 2013, the Indian government stated 21.9% of its population is below its official poverty limit. The World Bank, in 2010 based on 2005's PPPs International Comparison Program, estimated 32.7% of Indian population, or about 400 million people, and lived below \$1.25 per day on purchasing power parity basis. According to United Nations Development Programme, an estimated 29.8% of Indians lived below poverty line in 2009-2010.

2. OBJECTIVE

- To Study the Poverty alleviation programmes in India

3. METHODOLOGY

This study based on Secondary data. This data was collected from various issues of Indian statistical handbook, Website, Journal and Books.

POVERTY ALLEVIATION PROGRAMMES IN INDIA

The strategy for poverty alleviation is essentially two fold. Firstly, an effort is underway to provide greater opportunity for the poor to participate in the growth process by focusing on specific sectors, which offer such opportunities. Secondly, poverty alleviation and social sector programmes have been strengthened and restructured with special programmes for the weaker sections of society. Details of these programmes were reported in the Economic Survey 2003-04. Table 10.4 and Box 10.2 indicate developments during the current year.

SWARNJAYANTI GRAM SWAROZGAR YOJANA (SGSY)

The single self-employment programme of Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), launched with effect from 1.4.1999, has been conceived keeping in view the strengths and weaknesses of the earlier schemes of Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) and Allied Programmes along with Million Wells Scheme (MWS). The objective of restructuring was to make the programme more effective in providing sustainable incomes through micro enterprises. The SGSY lays emphasis on the following:

- Capitalising advantages of group lending.
- Focussed approach to poverty alleviation.
- Overcoming the problems associated with multiplicity of programmes.

SGSY is conceived as a holistic programme of micro enterprises covering all aspects of self employment viz. organisation of the rural poor into self help groups (SHGs) and their capacity building, planning of activity clusters, infrastructure build up, technology, credit and marketing. Micro enterprises in the rural areas are sought to be established by building on the potential of the rural poor. The objective of the programme is to bring the existing poor families above the poverty line.

JAWAHAR GRAM SAMRIDHI YOJANA (JGSY)

The Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) has been recast as the Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY) with effect from 1.4.1999 to impart a thrust to creation of rural infrastructure.

While the JRY resulted in creation of durable assets, the overriding priority of the programme was the creation of wage employment. It was felt that a stage had come when rural infrastructure needed to be taken up in a planned manner and given priority. The Gram Panchayats can effectively determine their infrastructure needs and the responsibility of implementing the programme has been entrusted to the Gram Panchayats. The funds are directly released to the Gram Panchayats by the DRDAs/Zilla Parishads. The JGSY is implemented as a CSS with funding in the ratio of 75:25 between the Centre and the States. The primary objective of JGSY is creation of demand driven community village infrastructure including durable assets at the village level and assets to enable the rural poor to increase the opportunities for sustained employment. The secondary objective is generation of

supplementary employment for the unemployed poor in the rural areas. The wage employment under the programme is given to Below Poverty Lines (BPL) families.

EMPLOYMENT ASSURANCE SCHEME (EAS)

The Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) was launched on 2nd October, 1993 in 1772 identified backward blocks of 257 districts situated in drought prone, desert, tribal and hill areas where the Revamped Public Distribution System (RPDS) was in operation. The programme was subsequently extended to more blocks and thereafter was universalised. It is, presently, being implemented in all the 5448 rural blocks of the country. The EAS was restructured w.e.f. 1999-2000 to make it the single wage employment programme. While the basic parameters have been retained, the scheme has become allocative scheme instead of demand driven and a fixed annual outlay is to be provided to the States. The programme is implemented as a CSS on a cost sharing ratio of 75:25 between the Centre and States.

The primary objective of the EAS is creation of additional wage employment opportunities during the period of acute shortage of wage employment through manual work for the rural poor living below the poverty line. The secondary objective is the creation of durable community, social and economic assets for sustained employment and development. EAS is open to all the needy rural poor living below the poverty line. A maximum of two adults per family are provided wage employment. While providing employment, preference is given to SCs/STs and parents of child labour withdrawn from hazardous occupations who are below the poverty line.

NATIONAL SOCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME (NSAP)

The NSAP was launched with effect from 15th August, 1995 as a 100 per cent Centrally Sponsored Scheme with the aim to provide social assistance benefit to poor households in the case of old age, death of primary breadwinner and maternity. This represents a significant step towards the fulfillment of the Directive Principles in Articles 41 & 42 of the Constitution. The programme supplements the efforts of the State Governments with the objective of ensuring minimum national levels of well being and the Central assistance is an addition to the benefit that the States are already providing on Social Protection Schemes or may provide in future. The provision of Central assistance seeks to ensure that social protection to beneficiaries is uniformly available. The main features of the three components of the NSAP namely; (i) National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS), (ii) National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS) and (iii) National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBS) are given below:

NATIONAL OLD AGE PENSION SCHEME (NOAPS)

Old age pension of Rs.75 per month, per beneficiary is provided to person of 65 years and above who is a destitute in the sense of having little or no regular means of subsistence from his/her own sources of income or through support from family members or other sources. In order to determine destitution, the criteria, if any, currently in force in the States/UTs may also be followed.

NATIONAL FAMILY BENEFIT SCHEME (NFBS)

A sum of Rs.10,000 is provided in the case death of primary breadwinner due to natural or accidental causes. The family benefit is paid to such surviving member of the household of deceased who, after local enquiry, is determined to be the Head of the household. The primary breadwinner is defined as a member, whose earnings contribute substantially to the household income and who is more than 18 years and less than 65 years of age. The bereaved household should qualify as a BPL according to the criteria prescribed by the Government of India.

NATIONAL MATERNITY BENEFIT SCHEME (NMBS)

A lump sum cash assistance of Rs.500 is provided to pregnant women of households below the poverty line up to the first two live births provided they are of 19 years of age and above. The maternity benefit is to be disbursed in one instalment, 12-8 weeks prior to the delivery. In case of delay it can be disbursed to the beneficiary even after the birth of the child.

RURAL HOUSING – INDIRA AWAAS YOJANA (IAY)

In the Ninth Plan, the Special Action Plan for Social Infrastructure has identified 'Housing' as one of the priority areas. It aims at providing 'Housing for All' and facilitates construction of 20 lakh additional dwelling units, of which 13 lakh dwelling units are to be constructed in rural areas. The composite housing strategy for the Ninth Plan is a multipronged strategy which has been operationalised w.e.f. 1999-2000. The salient features of the strategy under Action Plan are given below. The Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY) will continue to be major scheme for construction of houses to be given to the poor, free of cost. However, an additional component has been added, namely, conversion of unserviceable kutcha houses to semi pucca houses. From 1999-2000, the criteria for allocation of funds to States/UTs under IAY has been changed to 50 per cent poverty ratio and 50 per cent housing shortage in the State. Similarly, the criteria for allocation of funds to a district in a State have been changed to the SC/ST population and housing shortage, with equal weight age to each of them. A Credit-cum-Subsidy Scheme for rural housing has been launched from 1.4.1999 which will target a rural family having annual income up to Rs.32,000. The subsidy portion will be restricted to Rs.10,000/- and loan amount to Rs.40,000/-. The loan portion will be disbursed by the commercial banks, housing finance institutions etc.

SWARNJAYANTI GRAM SWAROZGAR YOJANA (SGSY)

SGSY, launched in April, 1999 after restructuring the Integrated Rural Development Programme and allied schemes, is the only self-employment programme for the rural poor. The objective is to bring the self employed above the poverty line by providing them income-generating assets through bank credit and Government subsidy. Up to November 2005, the Centre and States, sharing the costs on 75:25 basis, had allocated Rs.8,067 crore, of which Rs. 6,980 crore had been utilized to assist 62.75 lakh self-employed.

SAMPOORNA GRAMEEN ROZGAR YOJANA (SGRY)

SGRY, launched on September 25, 2001 to provide additional wage employment in the rural areas, has a cash and food grains component, and the Centre bears 75 per cent and 100 per cent of the cost of the two with the balance borne by the States/UTs. In 2004-05, 82.23 crore persondays were generated with the Centre releasing Rs. 4,496 crore as cash component and

about 50 lakh tonnes of food grains to the States/ UTs. Besides, under the special component of the SGRY, with the States/UTs meeting the cash components, Centre released 26 lakh tonnes of food grains to the 13 calamity affected States. In 2005-06 up to November, 2005, the number of person days generated under SGRY was 48.75 crore, while the Centre's contributions in terms of the cash and food grains components up to January, 2006 were Rs. 4651 crore and 35 lakh tonnes, respectively. Under the special component, about 11.65 lakh tonnes of food grains have been released to the 11 calamity-hit States in the current year.

NATIONAL FOOD FOR WORK PROGRAMME (NFFWP)

The NFFWP was launched as a CSS in November 2004 in the 150 most backward districts to generate additional supplementary wage employment with food security. States receive food grains under NFFWP free of cost. The focus of the programme is on works relating to water conservation, drought proofing (including a forestation /tree plantation), land development, flood-control/protection (including drainage in waterlogged areas), and rural connectivity in terms of all-weather roads. In 2004-05, allocation of Rs 2,020 crore and 20 lakh tonnes of food grains generated 7.85 crore person days of employment. In 2005-06, of the allocation of Rs 4,500 crore and 15 lakh tonnes of food grains (Revised), Rs.2,219 crore and 11.58 lakh metric tonnes of food grains had been released up to January 27, 2006. About 17.03 lakh person days were generated up to December 2005.

S WARNA JAYANTI SHAHARI RO ZGAR YOJANA (SJSRY)

In December 1997, the Urban Self-Employment Programme (USEP) and the Urban Wage Employment Programme (UWEP), which are the two special components of the SJSRY, substituted for various programmes operated earlier for urban poverty alleviation. The SJSRY is funded on a 75:25 basis between the Centre and the States. In 2003-04, the central allocation of Rs. 94.50 crore plus Rs. 10.50 crore for North- Eastern Region including Sikkim was fully utilized. Even 2004-05 saw the release of the entire budgetary allocation of Rs. 122.00 crore. In 2005-06, out of an allocation of Rs. 160.00 crore, Rs. 84.52 crore had been utilized until November 30, 2005.

ANTYODAYA ANNA YOJANA (AAY)

AAY launched in December 2000 provides food grains at a highly subsidized rate of Rs.2.00 per kg for wheat and Rs.3.00 per kg for rice to the poor families under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS). The scale of issue, which was initially 25 kg per family per month, was increased to 35 kg per family per month from April 1, 2002. The scheme initially for one crore families was expanded in June 2003 by adding another 50 lakh BPL families. During 2003-04, under the AAY, against an allocation of 45.56 lakh tonnes of food grains, 41.65 tonnes were lifted by the State/UT Governments. Budget 2004-05 expanded the scheme further from August 1, 2004 by adding another 50 lakh BPL families. With this increase, 2 crore families have been covered under the AAY.

MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE ACT

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 (or, NREGA No 42) was later renamed as the "Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act" (or, MGNREGA), is an Indian labour law and social security measure that aims to guarantee the 'right to work'. It aims to ensure livelihood security in rural areas by providing at least 100 days of wage employment

in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. Starting from 200 districts on 2 February 2006, the NREGA covered all the districts of India from 1 April 2008. The statute is hailed by the government as "the largest and most ambitious social security and public works programme in the world". In its World Development Report 2014, the World Bank termed it a "stellar example of rural development".

4. CONCLUSION

At the macro-level, there is a need to coordinate a myriad of poverty alleviation programmes of the central government and the State governments. The transfer of central funds to the States for different programmes should be efficient. Currently, such funds and goods like food grains are not fully utilized by the States. There is a need to strengthen the financial management capacity of certain States to use the funds efficiently. These are the States where the percentage of the BPL is more than the national average.

Poverty is more of social marginalization of an individual, household or group in the community/society rather than inadequacy of income to fulfill the basic needs. Indeed, inadequate income is one of the factors of marginalization, but not the sole factor. The poverty alleviation programmes should not aim merely to increase the income level of individual, household or group, but mainstreaming marginalized in the development process of the country.

5. REFERENCE

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