



International Journal of Humanities & Social Science Studies (IJHSSS)

A Peer-Reviewed Bi-monthly Bi-lingual Research Journal

ISSN: 2349-6959 (Online), ISSN: 2349-6711 (Print)

ISJN: A4372-3142 (Online) ISJN: A4372-3143 (Print)

Volume-VII, Issue-II, March 2021, Page No. 131-139

Published by Scholar Publications, Karimganj, Assam, India, 788711

Website: <http://www.ijhsss.com>

DOI: 10.29032/ijhsss.v6.i4.2020.1-8

Implementation of Mgnrega: Myth or Reality- A Case Study of Haringhata Block, Nadia District, West Bengal.

Nemai Chandra Das

Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Sudhiranjan Lahiri Mahavidyalaya, Majdia, Nadia, West Bengal, India.

Abstract:

Bulk of Indian population lives in rural areas. According to 2011 census rural population formed 68.8 percent of the total population of the country. Rural development is the process of improving the quality of life and economic empowerment of rural people. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005(MGNREGA) is an ambitious Act providing employment to rural people and development of rural India. MGNREGA aims at enhancing the livelihood security of people in rural areas by guaranteeing 100 days of wage employment in a financial year to a rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. It mainly provides right to demand work and earn wages for their livelihood. It would be considered successful only when deprived, scheduled caste, scheduled tribe, women, and the disables included in the programmes got their benefits as declared in the provisions of the constitution.

This particular paper tries to view the current status of implementation of MGNREGA in Haringhata block of Nadia district, West Bengal and to identify emerging strengths and weakness for wider dialogue for improvement. 200 households have been chosen from two gram panchayates on stratified random sampling basis. The respondents have been asked through open ended and close ended questionnaire on several aspects of MGNREGA. This paper observes some irregularities in the implementation procedure and the lack of awareness about the rights. Still the beneficiaries believe that if effectively implemented, MGNREGA will be more effective instrument for reducing poverty.

Key Words: MGNREGA, Rural Development, Poverty, Empowerment, Awareness

Introduction: Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Act (MGNREGA) is considered as a “Silver Bullet” for eradicating rural poverty and unemployment, by way of generating demand for productive labour force in the village. Rural poverty and unemployment in India have grown in an unprecedented manner during the last few decades. Since Independence various employment generation programmes like IRDP(1979), DWCRA(1983), NREP(1980), EAS(1983), JRY(1989), SGSY(1999), PMGSY(2000-01) etc have been launched by the Government of India to reduce the

poverty of rural India. However, these programmes have some limitation. So in an attempt to improve up on the weaknesses of the previous programmes, the Government of India launched the new model of wage employment Guarantee Act which name National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. The act was enacted on 25th August and it come into force on 2nd February in 2006. The initial 200 districts chosen for implementation of the MGNREGA Act were the most backward districts of this country. Then the MGNREGA covered all the districts of India from 1st April, 2008. The NREGA was changed its name as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in October 2009. The MGNREGA aims to achieve the twin objectives of rural development and employment (Azeez and Akhtar, 2015). MGNREGA marked a paradigm shift from the other employment programmes with its right based approach. MGNREGA is considered the first Act in its type which is more comprehensive in nature. In its World Development Report 2014, the World Bank termed it a “stellar example of rural development”. MGNREGA is visualized as a first step towards the realization of the economic rights to work as envisioned in the Directive Principles of State Policy in the Constitution of India. It recognizes Article 39 of the Constitution, according to which the State must ensure that “citizens, men and women equally, have the right to an adequate means to livelihood” and Article 41 whereby “the Stare, shall within the limits of its economic capacity and development, make effective provision for securing Right to Work”(Azeez and Akhtar, 2015). Govt. is legally accountable for providing employment of hundred days work to those who demand it. This programme not only provides employment but also focuses on inclusive growth, as it conserves natural resources and creates productive assets (Pamecha and Sharma, 2015). In Haringhata block many villagers have no job when there is no agricultural work. In that time MGNREGA is help to provide job for them.

Some of the salient features of MGNREGA are as follows:

- All adult members of a rural household willing to do unskilled manual work have the right to demand employment.
- Such a household will have to apply registration on the Gram Panchayat.
- After verification, the Gram Panchayat will issue a Job Card with photograph of all the adult members of household willing to work under the programme.
- The Job Card must remain in the custody of the household.
- Job cardholder can apply for the work to the Gram Panchayat which will issue him/her a dated receipt of the work application.
- Employment will be provided by Gram Panchayat (Local Self Governing body) within 15 days of work application, failing which unemployment allowance will be paid.
- Disbursement of wages has to be done weekly basis and not beyond a fortnight.
- Wages will be paid at the wage rate to the wage earners through their Bank/Post Office accounts.
- A ratio of 60:40 for wage and material costs should be maintained at G.P. level.

- No contractors/ and no labour displacing machinery shall be used in execution of work.
- Panchayati Raj Institutions will have a principle role in planning, monitoring and implementation.
- At least one-third of the workers should be women.

Objective of the Study: The present study on evaluation of the MGNREGA scheme is intended to assess the impact of the scheme on the targeted beneficiaries. The basic objectives of this study are:

1. To review the present status of implementation of MGNREGA in Haringhata block of Nadia district, West Bengal.
2. To identify the emerging strengths and weakness for wider dialogue for improvements.
3. To find out some measurable recommendations for proper implementation of this Act.

The Survey area and The Methodology of the Study: In India, MGNREGA came into force in 200 districts on 2nd February 2006 and was then extended to an additional 130 districts in the second phase in the financial year 2007-08. Nadia district in West Bengal was selected for the implementation of such programme at its second phase. Nadia is one of the backward district of West Bengal. Nadia district is situated between 22 53” and 24 11” North latitude and 88 09” and 88 48” East longitude and spread over to an area of about 3927 square kilometers. The district is roughly 46 feet above the mean sea level. The Tropic of Cancer has divided the district in two parts. Total population as per 2011 census report was 46,04,827 of which rural population was 36, 25, 308 (78%) with density of population 1172 persons per square kilometers and sex ratio was 946. The entire district lies the alluvial plain of Ganga and its tributaries. There are seventeen blocks and 187 Gram Panchayat in Nadia district. We have chosen a block named Haringhata of Nadia District for our primary survey. As per census 2011, Haringhata block has total population of 231068. Out of which 118,709 are males while 112359 are females. The average sex ratio of Haringhata Block is 947. As per census 2011 out of total population, 89.8% lives in the rural areas. The total literacy rate of Haringhata Block is 82.15%. The male literacy rate is 78.61% and the female literacy rate is 69.27%. Schedule Caste (SC) constitutes 31.9% while Schedule Tribe (ST) were 4.9% of total population in Haringhata Block. As per census 2011, in this block out of total population, 86,036 were engaged in work activities. 83% of workers describe their work as main work (Employment or Earning more than 6 months) while 17% were involved in Marginal activity providing live hood for less than 6 months. Of 86,036 workers engaged in main work, 14,680 were cultivators (owner or co-owner) while 23,760 were agricultural labourer. (Census, 2011)

This study is primarily based on primary sources though some secondary sources have been followed. For collection of data from sample households, both closed and open ended questions have been employed. By applying purposive sampling method, two Gram

Panchayats i.e., Mollabelia and Fatepur have been selected out of ten from Haringhata block which are mainly rural belts. After the selection of Gram Panchayats the list of job card holders of MGNREGA household was obtained from Gram Panchayat and 100 MGNREGA job card holders were randomly selected. Thus the sample size concise of 200 MGNREGA beneficiaries from selected two Gram Panchayats of Haringhata Block.

MGNREGA- a Brief outlook in India, West Bengal and Nadia district : The MGNREGA programme has already completed eleven financial years and now running in to twelve year. The current financial year provides data only up to February 2021 as discussed below. Table-A provides the overall performance of MGNREGA in India as well as the state of West Bengal and the district of Nadia during the current year 2020-21.

Table-A

Statistics	India	West Bengal	Nadia
Total no. of Job Cards issued	14.98(in Cr)	143.49(in lakh)	7.69(in lakh)
Total no of Workers	29(in Cr)	316.67(in lakh)	19.11(in lakh)
Total no of active Job Cards	9.45(in Cr)	101.4(in lakh)	4.57(in lakh)
Total no of active Workers	14.74(in Cr)	171.24(in lakh)	7.54(in lakh)
No. of HH demanded employment	8,10,88,986	84,14,654	3,13,290
No. of HH provided employment	7,07,73,329	78,75,305	2,85,625
Average days of employment provided per HH	49.15 %	50.83 %	43.56 %
Person days generated so far	363.08(in Cr)	4002.78(in lakh)	124.43(in lakh)
Average wage rate per day per person (in Rs.)	200.57	193.08	169.33
Total no of HHs completed 100 days of wages employment	53,52,332	6,19,872	14,921
Total HH worked	7.39(in Cr)	78.75(in lakh)	2.86(in lakh)
Total Individuals Worked	10.88(in Cr)	116.47(in lakh)	3.97(in lakh)

Source: www.nrega.nic.in

Total 14.98 Cr households in India and 143.49 lakh households in West Bengal are issued job cards among them 9.45 Cr job cards in India and 101.4 lakh job cards in West Bengal are active during financial year 2020-21. In India out of which 8, 10, 88,986 households demanded employment and 7, 07, 73,329 households are provided employment. On the other hand in West Bengal out of which 84, 14, 654 households demanded employment and 78, 75, 305 households are provided employment. A total 14.74 Cr workers are active workers and average days of employment provided per household is 49.15 percent in India. Otherwise in West Bengal a total 171.24 lakh workers are active workers and average days of employment provided per households is 50.83 percent. During this year, the average wage rate per persons per day is Rs. 200.57 in India and Rs. 193.08 in West Bengal. In Nadia district a total 7.69 lakh households are issued job cards among them 4.57 lakh job cards are active during financial year 2020-21. Out of which 3, 13, 290 households

demanding employment and 2, 85,625 households are provided employment. A total 7.54 lakh workers are active workers and average days of employment provided per household is 43.56 percent. During this year, the average wage rate per person per day is Rs. 169.33.

Implementation of MGNREGA in Haringhata Block: A Field Survey: This section of the paper deals with the presentation and analysis of data. The survey furnishes some important data relating to demographic features of the MGNREGA job card holders of two Gram Panchayats like gender, caste group, education and monthly family income. Table -1 to Table -4 narrates socio-economic profile of the respondents. Males constitute 50.5 percent and females constitute 49.5 percent of our respondents as shown in Table -1.

TABLE-1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

GP	Male	Female	Total
Mollabelia	51	49	100
Fatepur	50	50	100
Total (%)	50.5%	49.5%	100%

Source: Data Obtained from Survey.

Table-2 shows that among the respondents, 12 percent belong to SC category, 79 percent to ST category, 8 percent to other backward classes and 1 percent to others category.

TABLE-2: Distribution of Respondents by Caste Group

GP	SC	ST	OBC	Others	Total
Mollabelia	15	77	7	1	100
Fatepur	9	81	9	1	100
Total (%)	12%	79%	8%	1%	100%

Source: Data Obtained from Survey.

From the Table-3, an idea of literacy level of the respondents can be ascertained. The table shows that 23 percent respondents are illiterates, 26.5 percent primary educated, 8.5 percent secondary and only 2 percent respondents are higher educated.

TABLE-3: Distribution of Respondents by Education

GP	Illiterate	Primary	Junior secondary	secondary	Higher secondary	Higher Education	Total
Mollabelia	25	23	40	8	0	4	100
Fatepur	21	30	34	9	6	0	100
Total(%)	23%	26.5%	37%	8.5%	3%	2%	100%

Source: Data Obtained from Survey.

Table-4 provides information relating to economic status of the respondents. 81 percent stated their income to be within rupees 2501 to 5000, 10.5 percent reported monthly income up to rupees 2500 and only 7.5 percent stated their income to be within 5001 to 8000. Table shows that income of only 1 percent exceeds rupees 8001 to 12000. From the table we can infer that most of respondents are poor.

TABLE-4: Distribution of Respondents by Monthly Family Income

GP	Up to	Rs.2501 to	Rs.5001 to	Rs.8001 to	Total
----	-------	------------	------------	------------	-------

	Rs.2500	Rs.5000	Rs.8000	Rs.12000	
Mollabelia	14	78	7	1	100
Fatepur	7	84	8	1	100
Total(%)	10.5%	81%	7.5%	1%	100%

Source: Data Obtained from Survey.

Table-5 provides information relating awareness about MGNREGA of the respondents. 24.5 percent respondents are known about MGNREGA through the Panchayat, 44.5 percent known through political leader and 27.5 percent known through friends. Only 0.5 percent and 3 percent respondent's awareness about MGNREGA through Govt. Official and radio, television, news paper etc. From the table we can infer that most of respondents are not aware about MGNREGA through Government institution and media.

TABLE-5 Sources of MGNREGA Awareness

GP	Panchayat	Radio/TV	News Paper	Govt. Official	Political Leader	Friend	Total
Mollabelia	31	2	0	1	36	30	100
Fatepur	18	2	2	0	53	25	100
Total (%)	24.5%	2%	1%	0.5%	44.5%	27.5%	100%

Source: Data Obtained from Survey.

In table -6, 10.5 percent respondents obtain job card through Gram Panchyate. 61.5 percent respondents get job card through informal application and 16.5 percent respondents collect from household survey. Only 9 percent respondents get job card through written application.

TABLE-6: Obtaining of Job Cards

GP	Through Gram Sabha	Informal Application	Written Application	By Household Survey	Others	Total
Mollabelia	15	54	3	28	0	100
Fatepur	6	69	15	5	5	100
Total (%)	10.5%	61.5%	9%	16.5%	2.5%	100%

Source: Data Obtained from Survey.

In Table-7 work days are divided into six categories. The average performance of last two years, 30 percent respondents have got more than 150 days of work, 16 percent got 101 to 150 days of work, 28.5 percent got 61 to 100 days of work and 20 percent got job 26 to 60 days of work. Only 5.5 percent respondents have got job less than 25 days of work in last two years.

TABLE-7: Working days of Beneficiaries (Last two years)

GP	No Work	Upto 25 days	26 to 60 days	61 to 100 days	101 to 150 days	150 days above	Total
Mollabelia	0	4	12	33	16	35	100
Fatepur	0	7	28	24	16	25	100

Total(%)	0%	5.5%	20%	28.5%	16%	30%	100%
----------	----	------	-----	-------	-----	-----	------

Source: Data Obtained from Survey.

Table-8 provides the nature of MGNREGA work. 0.5 percent job cardholder works in agriculture, 3.5 percent tree plantation and 20 percent pond digging. Highest percentage of job cardholder (75 percent) works in soil digging.

TABLE-8: Nature of work

GP	Agriculture	Vegetable	Tree plantation	Soil digging	Pond digging	Others	Total
Mollabelia	0	0	5	72	21	2	100
Fatepur	1	0	2	78	19	0	100
Total(%)	0.5%	0%	3.5%	75%	20%	1%	100%

Source: Data Obtained from Survey.

Table -9, 10, 11 shows that the progress of working like road construction, digging pond and plantation under MGNREGA scheme. Table -9 show 59.5 percent respondents tell that 1km to 5 km construction of road under MGNREGA project. 16.5 percent shows 5km to 10km and 5.5 percent shows above 10km construction of road is made. 18.5 percent shows the work is nil. Another table -9.1 shows the status of digging pond under MGNREGA work. 42.5 percent respondents tell that they digging up to 3 ponds, 16 percents shows up to 5 ponds and 13.5 percent shows above 5 ponds digging. 28 precedents did not perform this work. Table -9.2 shows that 2.5 percent respondents tell that work of plantation is very good, 42.5 percent responds good and 8.5 percent responds they did not knew such work.

TABLE-9: Work progress: Road Length

GP	0 Km	1-5 Km	5-10 Km	10 Km and above	Total
Mollabelia	11	50	28	11	100
Fatepur	26	69	5	0	100
Total (%)	18.5%	59.5%	16.5%	5.5%	100%

Source: Data Obtained from Survey.

TABLE-9.1: Work progress: Digging Pond.

GP	None	Up to 3	Up to 5	Above 5	Total
Mollabelia	4	41	28	27	100
Fatepur	52	44	4	0	100
Total (%)	28%	42.5%	16%	13.5%	100%

Source: Data Obtained from Survey.

TABLE-9.2: Work progress: Plantation.

GP	Very good	Good	None	DK	Total
Mollabelia	4	41	41	14	100
Fatepur	1	44	52	3	100
Total (%)	2.5%	42.5%	46.5%	8.5%	100%

Source: Data Obtained from Survey.

Table -12 refers to economic condition of respondents after getting MGNREGA work. 36 percent respondents show better condition from previous, 61 percent respondents tell that the economic condition remains the same and only 3 percent shows the bad side of economic condition.

TABLE-12: Economic Condition after MGNREGA.

GP	Better from Previous	Remained Same	Worst	Total
Mollabelia	45	53	2	100
Fatepur	27	69	4	100
Total (%)	36%	61%	3%	100%

Source: Data Obtained from Survey.

According to MGNREGA guidelines, it is mandatory to have basic facilities such as safe drinking water, first aid kits, shade and also child care facility for women workers. Table - 13 refers 191 respondents out of 200 of Mollabelia and Fatepur G.P. did find those facilities at the work site for drinking water, first aid and shade but only 7 respondents did find child care facility at the work site. All of them informed that they were not paid any unemployment allowance. They did not applied for the unemployment allowances and it is the responsibility of the GPs to let them know about the provision of the application for unemployment allowances. No one got extra 10% wage for above 5km distance from home to work place.

Table-13: Allowance and facilities available in worksite (No. of respondents says yes)

Facilities and Allowances	Mollabelia	Fatepur	Total
1. Maintenance of the worksite facilities- drinking water, first aid and shade	95	96	191
2. Maintenance of the worksite facilities- Child care	5	2	7
3. Got any unemployment allowances	0	0	0
4. Applied for unemployment allowances	0	0	0
5. Provision of extra 10% wage for above 5km distance from home to work place	0	0	0

Source: Data Obtained from Survey.

Conclusion: It is true that MGNREGA has influenced largely on rural employment and rural development. It helps to create rural asset like roads, pond, plantation etc as well as helps to eradication of rural poverty and maintain a standard lifestyle of rural poor people. The success of the MGNREGA largely depends upon how it is being managed. But the picture emerging from this study is not very encouraging. The function of MGNREGA in the study area is not satisfactory. We see that only 36 percent respondents told their economic condition better after MGNREGA. As an average 23 percent of respondents living at Mollabelia and Fatepur Gram Panchayat of Haringhata block are illiterate, the

effect is clear in the unawareness about the activity (Table-5) and the number of written applicant (Table-3). On the other hand the monthly family income of 95.5 percent respondents is within five thousand (Table-4). As a result, for their poor economic condition the demand for 100 days work is very high but the image, to get work for 100 days work in last two years (Table-7), which has been collected, is not satisfactory this scheme has not been used properly in the block. A 61 percent respondent has said that this MGNREGA scheme has not done any change in their economic condition. If this MGNREGA scheme is to be successful the people has to be more concern to understand their right. For the proper implementation of the scheme, the nation as well as the local institution has to be more active. Therefore, it is recommended that the programme should be further spread in the rural areas by means of proper planning, better monitoring, adequate supervision and effective implementation.

References:

1. Azeez, N.P. Abdul and Akhtar S.M. Jawed (2015): Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act(MGNREGA)- Provisions, Implementation and Performance, New Century Publication, New Delhi, India.
2. Singh, Nandini (July, 2013): Impacted of MGNREGA ON Migration and Asset Creation, International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics, Patancheru, 502 324, Andhra Pradesh, India. icrisat@cgiat.org
3. Puthenkalam, John Joseph and George, M. K.(2012): Human Development Strategy of MGNREGA, Rawat Publications , New Delhi, India.
4. Saha, Mihir (2007): Employment Guarantee, Civil Society and Indian Democracy, EPW 42:45/46 Nov. 10-23 p 43-51
5. Sing, Chandra Prakash (1989): Poverty Alleviation Programmes Under the Plans, Indus Publication, New Delhi, India.
6. Pamecha, Dr. Suman and Sharma Indu (2015): Socio-Economic Impact of Mgnrega – A study Undertaken among Beneficiaries of 20 Villages of Dungarpur District of Rajasthan, International Journal of Science and Research Publication, Volume-5, Issue 1, January 2015. www.ijsrp.org
7. District Human Development Report: Nadia, Department of Planning, Government of West Bengal, Published: June, 2012, p.1.
8. February (2006) The Kolkata Gazette 10.
9. <https://www.censusindia.co.in/subdistrict/haringhata-block-nadia-west-bengal-2315>
10. www.nregs.nic.in