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RESEARCH ARTICLE

DROUGHT MITIGATION THROUGH MOBILIZATION OF MGNREGS AND GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS IN MAHARASHTRA THROUGH JANSATHI DUSHKAL NIVARAN MANCH PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

The Jansathi Dushkal Niwaran Manch, a network of 150 NGOs in Maharashtra, set up under the initiative and auspices of Sanskriti Samvardhan Mandal (NGO), Sagroli (Nanded) during the drought period 2015 to 2018 for giving relief to people in some of the worst affected drought villages of Marathwada, Western Maharashtra, and Vidarbha by mobilizing MGNREGS schemes and other relief services such as water tankers, fodder and water for animals and Public Distribution System/Food security. Through this project, 123010 job cards were ensconced under MGNREGS, mobilized 349920 labors with an average of 56 days of work to each labor, organized 276 trainings on the watershed, agribusiness related for government schemes to 822849 beneficiaries. JDNM strengthened 3675 SHGs and JDNM associates provided financial assistance of Rs. 83.00 lakh for agriculture inputs to 2113 farming families through women's SHGs as an interest-free loan. also helped to the production of the compost by 100 farmers. Associates mobilized Rs. 28.65 Crore from Karja Mafee Yojana (crop loan waive scheme) during this year up to Feb.2018

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INTRODUCTION

NGOs are very prominent for effective implementation of government programs towards sustainable rural development through the NGOs activities in education, health, agriculture, community development, energy, environment, and waste, moral upbringing, youth empowerment, and poverty alleviation (Enyioko, 2012). According to a GlobeScan poll of experts, the leading role in achieving sustainability will be played by the business (35%), followed by NGOs (30%), and governments (24%) (Bell, 2002). The Western Indian state Maharashtra is known for its high proneness for drought, especially the Marathwada, parts of Western Maharashtra and Vidarbha regions. With 24% of its areas falling under India's Semi-Arid Tropics (SAT), the state has seen a severe dry spell over the past few years. The year 2015 was one of the worst drought years after the infamous 1971 drought year which was the result of scanty rainfall over the past 3-4 years, unseasonal rains and hailstorms, and El Nino effects causing severe loss to crops and water stocks. This led to several suicides amongst members of the farming community. Besides agriculture and farmers, the landless and single women or women-headed households were severely affected.

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Program Objectives

- To work on the mobilization of MGNREGS to develop land and water assets of farmers and help laborers get employment in their villages.
- To empower women by organizing them in Self Help Groups (SHGs), linking groups with Banks, NABARD, etc. to help them start small economic enterprises.
- To mobilize government welfare and development programs for women and farmers to help them explore agriculture allied activities such as dairy, sericulture, petty shops, etc.
- To promote Shivansh Khad – a bio-grade fertilizer concept with the help of Hans Foundation and State Government as a climate change adaptation process in Maharashtra.
- To facilitate people's advocacy for appropriate implementation of government programs and policies concerning women's empowerment and drought mitigation.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The Janasathi Dushkal Nivaran Manch, a network of 150 NGOs in Maharashtra, set up under the initiative and auspices

of Sanskriti Samvardhan Mandal, Sagroli (Nanded) and Dilasa Sanstha, Ghatanji (Yavatmal) has played a very facilitating role in giving relief to people in some of the worst affected drought villages of Marathwada, Western Maharashtra, and Vidarbha by mobilizing MGNREGS scheme and other relief services such as water tankers, fodder and water for animals and Public Distribution System/Food security during 2015 to 2018. These NGOs worked on awareness and mobilization of MGNREGS, the formation of SHGs, promotion of bank linkages, promotion of government welfare and development programs, and advocacy at block and district level. They also made aware farmers about various agriculture and horticulture development schemes besides various training and extension schemes through the ATMA Section of the Agriculture Department. To build the capacity of NGOs especially the head of organization and staff by given inputs on the program theme and involve them in the common process is also one of the program strategies. Each supported NGO associated with 15 districts. Details are given in table 1

Activities conducted through the project

Following activities were done during the three years to help achieve the above-envisaged objectives:

- Awareness Programs: The staff of supported organizations has been covered 15 villages each on the program theme.

- Promotion of Self Help Groups (SHGs), linkage with nationalized banks, and NABARD for micro-enterprises.
- Awareness created on MGNREGS – work on new job cards, raised work demand for MGNREGA work, follow up for pending and regular wage payments.
- Awareness and facilitation of implementation of government schemes for women's development, agriculture and horticulture development, dry land development, water conservation, etc.
- Advocacy visits to block and district level concerned government offices to mobilize government schemes and activate administrative officials concerning the schemes

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- **MGNREGS Works:** JDNM associates facilitated the issuance of new job cards to 153010 families during this period by acting as a catalyst between government officials and labor.
- Mobilized MGNREGS works to the tune of 349920 labors with on an average 56 days of work to each labor with a total payment outlay of Rs.378.17 Cr which is distributed by the government.

Table 1. Association of the lead organizations

Lead Organizations (DSO)	Associated NGOs in 2015-16	Associated NGOs in 2016-17	Associated NGOs in 2017-18
SSM, Nanded	78	67	37
DILASA, Yavatmal	15	6	5
Janvikas Beed	10	10	16
Kalapandhari, Latur	NA	NA	12
Abhinav Bharat SSM, Solapur	15	11	18
Vikasganga S. S.	10	15	16
AWARD Group	5	14	12
Ashamant Foundation	12	11	NA
Mahurdevi Group	5	4	NA
	150	138	116
Villages	2700	2760	1090
Blocks	80	73	73
Districts	15	15	15

Table 2. Mobilized MGNREGS Job cards and payments received by labors

Year	Applications submitted by Associates	Job cards received by labor	Number of labor on MGNREGS Works	Payment received by labor
2015-16	84218	82162	152,000	Rs. 232.00 Cr
2016-17	51186	64325	188318	Rs. 143.28 Cr
2017-18	6634	6523	9602	Rs. 2.89 Cr
Total	142038	153010	349920	Rs. 378.17 Cr

Table 3. Mobilization of 12 Government schemes:

Sr. No.	Name of a government scheme	Number of beneficiaries	Amount Mobilized from Government (Rs. In Cr.)
1	Jal Yukt Shivar	1411	
2	Pantpradhan Pik Vima Yojna	342907	
3	Mahatma Phule Jivan dayi Aarogya Yojana	4029	
4	Pik Karj	85906	
5	Pantpradhan Jan Dhan Yojna	47817	479.83
6	Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Yojna	15026	
7	Suknaya Yojana	3720	
8	Vanikaran (Van Yukt Shivar Yojna)	91869	
9	Pantpradhan Jeevan Suraksha Vima Yojana	11686	
10	Krishi Khatyacya Yojna (Agriculture Department Schemes)	211468	
11	Sericulture Scheme	707	
12	Chhatrapati Shivaji Shetakari Swabhiman Yojana – Karja mafee	6303	
13	MGNREGS (As given in the above table)	349920	378.17
	Total Beneficiaries and government amount mobilized	1172769	858.00

The works were in the areas of water conservation structures such as individual wells/farm ponds, land leveling and minor earthen check dams, desilting of water bodies, plantations, Sericulture, Horticulture, etc. works were carried out as a part of MGNREGA (Table 2).

Associate organizations facilitated/strengthened 3675 SHGs with the membership strength of 39928 rural poor women involved in savings and credit activity. Members mobilized Rs. 6.26 Crore from various financial institutes such as NABARD, MAVIM, Lead banks, and Scheduled banks to help women start small home-based activities such as petty shops, grocery shops, small dairy units, agriculture inputs (seeds/fertilizers), flour mills, Mirchi kandap machine, etc.

Under the capacity, building activity members organized 276 training and workshops bringing together government officials and community leaders to discuss the various schemes and their implementation in the operational areas. As a result of this members helped establish a sound dialogue between government machinery and people and mobilize numerous schemes including MGNREGS and compensation for crop damage.

Constraints faced while implementing the project.

- Non-cooperation from government agencies particularly from gramsevak, gram rojgar Sevak and sarpanch.
- Took time to get the confidence of the beneficiaries for participation in the project.
- Non-cooperation of Banks particularly for the insurance policies.
- Lack of funds to cover more area.

Conclusion

The overall analysis of the study reveals that NGOs are very prominent for the effective implementation of government programs towards sustainable rural development.

The project was a success to create awareness among the supported Organisation, Self Help Groups to link with micro-finance agencies. Awareness created on the MGNREGS to get new job cards, demand for the work. It also created the awareness and facilitation of the implementation of the government schemes for women and agriculture.

Application of research: This study will help NGOs with the collaborator's project implementation particularly in drought mitigation.

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