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Title: A study of the Implementation of PMGSY through a comparative study of Madhubani, Samastipur and Darbhanga distrrict

Abstract

Rural Road connectivity is a key component of rural development, since it promotes access to economic and social services, thereby generating increased agricultural productivity, non-agriculture employment as wellas non-agricultural productivity, which in turn expands rural growth opportunities and real income through which poverty can be reduced.

A study (Fan et al. 1999) carried out by the International Food Policy Research Institute on linkages between government expenditure and poverty in rural India has revealed that an investment of Rs 1 crore in roads lifts 1650 poor persons above the poverty line. Public investment on roads impacts rural poverty through its effect on improved agricultural productivity, higher non-farm employment opportunities and increased rural wages. Improvement in agricultural productivity not only reduces rural poverty directly by increasing income of poor households, it also causes decline in poverty indirectly by raising agricultural wages and lowering food prices (since poor households are net buyers of foodgrains). Similarly, increased non-farm employment and higher rural wages also enhance incomes of the rural poor and consequently, reduce rural poverty.

Some of the findings are:

(a) increase in agricultural production due to road facility

(b) increase in fertiliser consumption

(c) increase in non-agricultural activities

(d) better utilisation of existingfacilities like, school, health, banks and post offices.

Similarly, a socio-economic survey conducted in a remote area in India by CRRI in 1989, showed that the villages located on the main road are comparatively well developed than those away from the road. The rural transport study carried out (NCAER and IIMB, 1989) for two different periods in 1979 and 1989 revealed that after the development of rural roads, there was a change in transport modes in rural areas and also an increase in economic activities.

The economic analysis of rural roads carried out for selected rural road projects financed by World Bank in Morocco (World Bank, 1996) is one of the major studies which attempted to find out the rate of return on the investment made.

The study quantified the benefits based on savings in vehicle operating cost

(VOC) compared to the original i.e. unpaved roads. The economic analysis

carried out for rural access project (World Bank, 1999) in Bhutan has shown

significant transport cost saving.

The impacts of rural roads are summarized as given below:

Improvement in transportation services:- which leads to improved

access to market centres for the rural producers, better availability of form

inputs at reduced prices;

Diversification of agricultural:– improved market access promotes shift in favour of cash crops and commercialization of agricultural activities.

Diversification of livelihood opportunities:– better connectivity

enhances employment opportunities in the non-agricultural sectors.

Improved services:– improved road connectivity, interalia, enhances

access to education, health, communication and financial services.

Increase in the outreach of the State:– Improved rural roads facilitates

better availability of public services and functionaries in rural areas.

In a developing country like India where 73 percentage of the population lives in rural areas and only 27 percentage in urban areas, we need a very structured planning procedure should be used for the developmental activities and infrastructure facilities available in rural area. Rural roads are integral part of rural development and it stimulates overall development by providing access to economic and social infrastructure and facilities. Finally it needs to be noted that the planning process is a dynamic process which needs temporal modification as per the requirements of the people concerned. The need is to identify the basic hindrance in the policy and use the best possible way to address it. A government does not become popular or unpopular on the basis of its policy but it solely depends on the manner in which the policy is implemented.