

Infrastructural Development in Rural India

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Abstract

The study scrutinizes the infrastructural development in Rural India. The purpose of this paper is to analyze and provide the information regarding the development schemes in rural area. Rural sector which plays an important role in India is still seeking the advancement and development for their present and future. The paper provides the information regarding the development of roads, electricity, transportation and facilities like hospitals, schools etc. The study reveals that the work of development is tougher in rural areas in comparison to urban areas due to many social and physical barriers. Though the progress is very slow but the analysis shows that the actions taken by Indian Government, International Organizations like World Bank and Indian NGO's would definitely be fruitful and long lasting.

1. INTRODUCTION

Rural area which contributes approximately 67 percent of the total geographical area of India and shares 22 percent of the total GDP of the country. Rural areas or the country or countryside are areas that are not urbanized. They have a low population density, and typically much of the land is devoted to agriculture. The degree to which areas of wilderness are included in the term varies; very large wilderness areas are not likely to be described by the term in most contexts.

In India, Six lakh villages with population of approximately 700 million are engaged in farming directly or indirectly and feeding the mouths of 1.1 billion people, which still lagging proper facilities of medication, education, transportation and electricity etc. which are basic needs for the development of any area. The integrated development of rural area is one of the abiding work and challenge before the Central and State Governments of India. Before entering into the topic the concept of infrastructure and development must be understood clearly.

The word infrastructure was imported by oxford dictionary from French language, where it was used in military sense and was used around the time of I World War. Infrastructure can be considered as structures in physical form or services required for a society, which is a basic need for the support and development of a society like roads, electricity, water, and telecommunications etc. Infrastructural development is related to the development of such facilities which are supportive and contribute to the overall development of the country. Rural development is related to the development of rural areas as well as the people residing in it. The development of people depends upon the income growth, better life style, education and medical facilities etc.

2. NEED OF INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL AREAS

Slow agricultural growth is a concern for policymakers as some two-thirds of India's people depend on rural employment for a living. Current

agricultural practices are neither economically nor environmentally sustainable and India's yields for many agricultural commodities are low. Poorly maintained irrigation systems and almost universal lack of good extension services are among the factors responsible. Farmer's access to markets is hampered by poor roads, rudimentary market infrastructure, and excessive regulation.

In recent years the migration to urban areas or cities is on large scale due to the modernization and advance life style in such areas. According to different surveys conducted by different NGO's, the rural youth go to cities for higher education or for good educational facilities which is not properly available in rural areas. According to the Ministry of HRD, only 10-15 percent graduate and PG colleges are established in rural areas which is very less in comparison to the requirement. The fast and materialistic life style in urban areas attracts the rural youth in a very large quantity. After completion of studies, metro cities become the first choice of job seekers which creates a psychological distance between rural and urban zones. Non availability of high tech farming or industries near by places and inefficiency of self employment, the rural youth turns to cities which is creating more pressure on particular areas. Most of the good/multi specialty hospitals are available in cities only which forces population to be concentrated on a particular developed place only. Approximately 60 percent of all rural households do not have electricity. Some 600 million Indians have no electricity at all. While 80% of Indian villages have at least an electricity line, just 44% of rural households have access to electricity. Some half of the electricity is stolen, compared with 3% in China. There is a short fall of about 15-20000 mw of electricity in India. There are villages which do not get electricity even 10 hours a day. For irrigation farmers have to depend on rains or traditional irrigation system only. Lack of proper roads creates a barrier in smooth transfer of goods

and services and even human being. Tele density in rural is only 8 percent. The vast rural areas have not been able to access to internet.

The internet is like a superhighway without any doubt on which economies surge ahead. There are also great opportunities for agriculture as well as other traditional industries.

The Rural people can improve their livelihood if access to internet. Rural India where approximately 65% of the total population lives has less than 20 percent of the professional institutes. According to HRD ministry, over three-fifths of colleges imparting courses in general education are located in urban areas. Approximately 50% of the total rural population is illiterate. At least 50% does not access to clean drinking water, schools and primary health care facilities.

Analytical study reveals that one of the most important features in rural China is the rapid development of rural non farm economies since the economic reform in 1978. The following table Displays the comparative railways progress in Indian and china.

**Table 1 : Expansion of Chinese and Indian Railways
(A Comparison (1992–2002))**

Rail Particulars	China	India
New track (RKM)	13797	682
Track doubling (Km)	9400	1519
Electrification (RKM)	8975	5192
Investment (billion \$)	85	17.3

3. BARRIERS IN INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT

The slow involvement and acceptance of rural in development activities are greatest barrier in the development of rural India. Conventional sources of energy have been used so far. Lack of adequate financial resources has been a major problem in the

development of rural infrastructure. According to World Bank news in March 2009 the job schemes in rural sector are also barricading the development. Other barriers are like lack of mobility, rural tendency of not accepting the changes, political motto, conventional life style, school dropout(52%approx.) etc.

4. EFFORTS OF INDIAN GOVERNMENT

The Central Government's National Common Minimum Programme is assisting and proving very effective for the overall development of Rural areas and overall country. The number of actions has been taken by Ministry of Rural Development for the development and eradication of poverty from Rural India. The allocation of funds in 10th five year plan had been enhanced to Rs.76,774 crore against Rs.42,874 crore in 9th plan. Different schemes like-National Rural Employment Guarantee act, Sampoorna Gramin Rojgar Yojna etc. for providing the employment, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojna for improvement of roads proved very fruitful in construction and repairing roads in rural areas. Which leads to an increase in employment opportunities and movement among different areas? Approximately 3, 75000 km of roads are to be constructed in rural areas.

5. PREPARATION OF TRAINING

MANUAL ON SWARN JAYANTI

GRAM SWAROJGAR YOJNA (SGSY)

Job scheme wages through Aadhaar launched in Jharkhand to overcome the delay in payment of wages to the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) workers in Jharkhand, allegedly owing to administrative apathy, the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has piloted a project in Jharkhand. Under the project, online authentication and Aadhaar Enabled Payment System (AEPS) in

respect of MGNREGS was conducted in three blocks of three districts.

The UPA government had in 2006 launched its flagship Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Generation Scheme targeting the rural poor and had also rolled out the National Rural Livelihood Mission, a massive self-empowerment programme focusing on rural women.

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act aims at enhancing the livelihood security of people in rural areas by guaranteeing hundred days of wage-employment in a financial year to a rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.

Different states like Maharashtra offering concessions to companies if to set up in rural areas. The Indian government has announced its 3G policy which will make 3G, HSPA, and WiMax technologies that are expected to bridge the last mile and drive mobile broad band in rural areas. Rural India is expected to account for 40 percent of the 250 million new wireless users as per a recent study conducted by FICCI. BSNL also planning to reduce tariff and broadband charges for the rural consumers.

6. RURAL INDIA TO GET 85K BUSES

The government is planning to roll out at least 85000 buses in rural areas in the next five years to improve public transportation and connectivity to rural areas. Association of state road transport undertakings has proposed purchase of 50,854 buses during 12th five year plan. The govt. is planning to spend Rs. 1220 crore on inspection centers and 1000 crore on driving training centers for effective planning and implementation.

Banks Eye Rural Areas Through 1 Man Units. The govt. aims to provide banking services to 73000 villages, having population of 2000, banks will have to appoint a business correspondent who will work

in a 100-200sq ft room and shall deal with all cash transactions and other routine work. a bank office shall visit the branch once in a week and connected to CBS through a secured password.

Recently, NABARD in India has come up in a significant way to provide loan assistance for construction of rural roads in several States under RIDF programme. As the financial institution like NABARD may not have the requisite technical expertise, it may be worthwhile to consider providing NABARD loans with technical and management inputs of NRRDA. This would enhance the financial and technical discipline, as well as help in adoption of uniform standards for these roads, on the lines of the PMGSY. This can be channelized by transferring the total loan amount to a pool to be availed of by the States under guidelines similar to that of PMGSY.

7. RURAL ROADS (RRS)

The National Rural Road Development Committee is Making optimum use of the plant and machinery, which will be brought there for the first phase road development programme.

It may be possible that there would be some isolated and especially deprived pockets in some districts, which need immediate attention. It is likely that the population of villages in such pockets may be less than 500. Some population criteria for providing individual black top approaches to such wadis(area) will be to be immediately decided. Also if a village is located say within 200m of a black topped road, it may not be necessary to provide a separate black top approach to such a village. The villages which we are now proposing to provide with black topped roads are relatively smaller villages. It would, therefore, look bad and might cause problems. It is, therefore, worth considering whether some amount should be set apart for rehabilitation of some selected roads of this category; say 10% of the total amount.

To boost the rural connectivity, a rural roads programme, the PMGSY was launched as a 100% CSS. It aims to provide all-weather roads by 2003 to habitations with a population of 1000 and above, and by 2007 to those with a population of 500 and above. In respect of hilly/desert/tribal areas, it aims to link habitations with a population of 250 and above.9.3.24 However, despite all efforts about 35% of all habitations still remain to be connected by all-weather roads . Table 1.2 details the progress made in physical parameters of PMGSY by end-March 2007. As may be seen, only 21% of the habitations have been actually connected so far, although 24% were targeted during the Tenth Plan period. To address this slippage, the PMGSY has been re-phased to achieve time-bound targets of rural connectivity by folding it into the Bharat Nirman Programme (initiated in 2005–06). It aims to connect all 1000-plus habitations in rural areas (500-plus for hilly and tribal areas) by 2009. The Bharat Nirman Programme also envisages a massive scaling up of the programme in terms of habitation, connectivity coverage, construction targets, and financial investment.

Table 2 : Connectivity Status under PMGSY (as on 31 March 2007)- Targets versus Achievements

Population Category	No. of Eligible Habitations	Target up to Tenth Plan	No. of Habitations Connected
1000 and above	60030	25371	20478
500 and above	79208	14854	13193
250 and above	39530	2511	3816
Total	178768	42736	37487

A special loan of \$2.6 billion for infrastructure by World Bank is in the pipeline. HRD ministry has proposed 370 colleges in the districts where the enrolment ratio is low. University grants commission provides special grants to the institutes/colleges located in backward and rural areas. These efforts will definitely lead towards a developed Rural India.

Details of target and achievement for construction of National Highways by NHAI during the last three years and current year are as under :

Table 3 : Target and Achievement of National Highways

Year	Target in km	Achievement in km
2008-09	3519	2205
2009-10	3165	2693
2010-11	2500	1780
2011-12	2500	823 (upto October, 2011)

Swarnajayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY) was restructured into National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) to provide self employment opportunities. Pranab Mukherjee proposed to increase the allocation of NRLM by over 34 percent to Rs. 3915 crores in 2012-13.

8. BUDGETARY PROVISIONS FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

- Budgetary allocation for rural drinking water and sanitation increased from Rs 11000 crore to Rs 14000 crore marking an increase of over 27 per cent.
- The Union Budget 2012-13 proposed increase in allocation for by 20 per cent to Rs.24000 crore to improve connectivity. The issue of tax free infrastructure bonds for infrastructural development has been allowed again upto a limit of rs.50,000 crore.

- The budget stated the continuance of Backward Regions Grant Fund scheme in twelfth plan with enhanced allocation of Rs 12040 crore in 2012-13, thereby representing an increase of 22 per cent over the budgetary expenditure of 2011-12
- The Union Budget also proposed allocation under Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) to be enhanced to Rs 20000 crore.
- For creating warehousing facilities in rural areas, the Finance Minister proposed to earmark an amount of Rs. 5000 crores from the enhanced allocation of Rs. 20000 crores under Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF).

9. CONTRIBUTION OF NGO'S

(a) Work By Jindals

- Constructed and donated school buildings and dispensaries in more than 110 villages to the state government
- Providing potable water in many villages
- Providing recurring donations to more than 400 NGOs annually since many decades.
- Adopted 107 villages in Karnataka to provide, safe drinking water, sanitation, medical facility, education etc.

(b) Bankers Institute Of Rural Development

Bankers Institute of Rural Development (BIRD), Lucknow is a premier institute for providing training, research and consultancy services in the field of agriculture and rural development banking in India. The Institute was established in 1983 by National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), the apex development bank supporting agriculture and rural development in India.

As part of Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives, PNB has launched a welfare scheme of adoption of village viz., "PNB VIKAS".

Through this initiative, the Bank will work towards provision of better amenities like safe drinking water, development and maintenance of rain water harvesting ponds, construction of bus shelters, plantation of trees and sanitary facilities, aimed at improving the quality of life of the villagers. By providing books, sport kits and scholarships to school going children, the educational needs of the villages will be fulfilled, while by holding health care checkup camps, cleanliness drives and organizing local festivals, PNB VIKAS programme will ensure all-round improvement in the standards of living of the villagers. PNBVIKAS is designed as village specific programme with full flexibility to suit the

local conditions of the villages and will be shaped as a self sustainable activity with the ownership ultimately resting with the villagers themselves. Under the Scheme, Bank has selected 117 villages (60 in lead districts and 57 in non lead districts) indifferent circles for adoption.

10. CONCLUSION

Though the progress of infrastructural development in rural areas may not be as per the expectations but the efforts by government and Ngos would definitely take it to right track. The initiatives by different organizations including non governmental sector are very productive which would remove the psychological as well as physical barriers in the process of development.

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