

implemented to increase the income of job card holder families by providing them employment in the state under MGNREGA. A large number of districts can be instrumental in augmenting the horticulture crops in Madhya Pradesh. The Nandan Flodhan sub-scheme is running very successfully in many districts of the state.

2.2 AREA AND SCOPE OF STUDY

This study focuses on horticultural activities conducted as a sub-scheme under the aegis of the convergence of MGNREGA and National Horticulture Mission (NHM).

The study takes into consideration the state-wide scenario with a focus on certain districts. To collect the ground realities, the following selected districts were visited and surveyed: Harda, Shivpuri, Ujjain, Dewas, Morena, Khandwa, Khargone, Gwalior, and Burhanpur.

2.3 BROAD OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the study is to assess the actual measures taken by various district administrations in the state, which contributed to the success of the Nandan Flodhan sub-scheme for horticulture. The study also tries to assess the effect of the scheme on the poor people at the grass roots level. It tries to determine the effectiveness of the measures taken in contributing to the success of the scheme and whether such measures can be applied to other states too. The study attempts to find answers to the following key questions:

- How has the Madhya Pradesh Government encouraged and extended Nandan Flodhan sub-scheme for Horticulture to all districts?
- How were the people made aware of Nandan Flodhan sub-scheme?
- Has the scheme been successful in providing with more job opportunities to the rural people?
- How were the works identified under Nandan Flodhan sub-scheme?
- What was the technique used to accomplish the work?
- How were the complaints tackled and grievances readdressed?

- How effective has the Nandan Flodhan sub-scheme been?
- Has the scheme influenced labour migration in the districts of Madhya Pradesh?
- Has the income level of the beneficiaries increased?
- Can one envisage Nandan Flodhan sub-scheme under MGNREGA as a long-term resource in the direction of providing opportunities for employment and better income to the rural people?

2.4 METHODOLOGY ADOPTED

Interviews and discussions were conducted to collect the data. The chief executive officers and district panchayats were interviewed for gathering data in the selected districts. After meetings with the project officers and other concerned officers of Horticulture Department, necessary information was collected, and on-the-spot survey was carried jointly to serve as observation data.

On-the-spot discussions were held with beneficiaries along with the gram panchayat Secretary. Discussions were also held within communities. The study was carried out on the basis of interviews, discussions, interaction with different stakeholders on-the-spot surveys, photography, videography, etc.

2.5 OBSERVATIONS IN DETAIL INCLUDING GOOD PRACTICES: IF REPLICABLE, THEN HOW AND WHERE?

2.5.1 Horticulture Works under MGNREGA

It is a well-acknowledged fact that environmental stability is the most important factor in maintaining the prevailing balance in nature for the sustenance of flora, fauna, and human lives. There has been an eternal relation between forest and human livelihood, and if horticulture is carried out and encouraged in rural areas, it will not only be helpful in maintaining the environmental stability and balance but will also serve as a source of income to the rural people. Consequently, the Nandan Flodhan sub-scheme was planned and implemented in the related districts in Madhya Pradesh.

2.5.2 Induction of Horticulture Activities Under MGNREGA

Horticulture activities were not initially included under MGNREGA. In the year 2008, Mrs. Gauri Singh (IAS), State Coordinator of Indira Gandhi Poverty Eradication Plan, was on an official visit to Chattarpur District. During the visit, she inspected Flodhan and production of hybrid vegetables and papaya, yielded with the coordination of horticulture initiatives in and around the Khajuraho area in Chhatarpur District. Almost 300 varieties of vegetables were available. A state-level seminar in Khajuraho was held by Mrs. Gauri Singh after the visit and all district-level officers and district project coordinators participated in it.

Mrs. Singh informed Mr. Sanjay Singh (IAS), Director MGNREGA, Government of India, about the activities she had seen and the potential that it had. Mr. Sanjay Singh himself visited Chhatarpur, Tikamgarh, and Khajuraho to survey all the horticultural activities. Necessary orders were sent to prepare a plan for Bundelkhand, after discussing the matter with the district collectors and chief executive officers, in order to cover the horticultural activities under MGNREGA.

In this context, a special plan of horticultural activities was prepared to improve the livelihood of the BPL community and to take it up under MGNREGA as an innovative scheme with the joint effort of the SGSY scheme. The plan was sent to Mr. Sanjay Singh, Director MGNREGA, Government of India, through Mr. MPS Bundela with the effort of the Chief Executive Mr. Ashish Kumar Gupta, to be included in the pilot project in Bundelkhand after the necessary recommendations by the Executive Horticulture and Forest Region, Bhopal, and Department of Panchayat and Rural Development, by the Collector Mr. Ajatshatru Shrivastava, CEO Mr. Ashish Kumar Gupta, and Senior Horticulture Officer Mr. MPS Bundela.

The plan was so effective that it was notified in the *Gazette* on March 10, 2008, and was circulated all over India. The horticultural activities were implemented throughout the state after the implementation of the plan.

Table 2.2 Status of the Works from 2006-07 to 2013-14

Year	No. of selected beneficiaries	No. of sanctioned project report of beneficiaries	According to sanctioned project report of Floodhan				Who got benefit of Kapil Dhara
			Sanctioned area in hect	No. of plants to be planted	Sanctioned amount in lakh	Beneficiaries who practice self-irrigation	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2006-07	0	0	0.00	000	0.00	00	00
2007-08	386	85	85.00	15674	111.05	85	08
2008-09	189	43	47.92	29984	77.78	43	00
2009-10	151	88	94.00	63208	163.97	87	01
2010-11	100	60	60.00	28150	100.25	54	06
2011-12	46	46	46.00	47232	92.55	40	00
2012-13	251	0	0.00	000	0.00	00	00
2013-14	315	40	4.00	100000	181.20	40	00
Total	1438	362	372.92	284248	726.801	349	15

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To collect the ground realities, the districts which were selected, visited and surveyed are as follows: Harda, Shivpuri, Ujjain, Dewas, Morena, Khandwa, Khargone, Gwalior, and Burhanpur.

2.6 IMPLEMENTATION OF HORTICULTURE ACTIVITIES UNDER MGNREGA—GLIMPSES FROM THE DISTRICTS

2.6.1 Khandwa- A Ray of Hope to Gawali Self-Help Group from MGNREGA

MGNREGA ignited and gave a new turn to the life of Gawali Self-Help Group of gram panchayat Jhagaria in the district panchayat Baldi. In spite of their best efforts, the group lost all hopes to achieve success in their lives.

Shri Mohammad, Chairman, Gawali Self-Help Group, said that ten residents of the village established the group due to non-availability of jobs and scarcity of land. Most of the group activities were cattle rearing and grazing. The group initially set a flour mill in the village but found it difficult to meet their needs of bread and butter. The group then borrowed a bank loan of Rs. 25,000/- each and purchased goats which again failed to improve their livelihood. The goats were sold and bank loans repaid. They then started brickwork which bore no results either, and they had almost decided to disband the group. In the meantime, they came to know about tree plantation job under MGNREGA and decided to try it out. The members planted trees over 40 acres of land on a nearby hill under the MGNREGA scheme. Under this task, mostly fruit yielding trees were planted, viz., 2700 *jam*, 1200 *anwla*, 2000 orange and mango and 1200 *karanj* trees. To protect the trees, the area was fenced with *ratanjot*, sowing almost three quintals of seeds. This gave good results, and the group members earned an amount of almost Rs. 1.50 lakh in three years. As a result of the tireless efforts by the members, all the trees have now grown up and have attained maturity. The guava trees have even started to yield fruits.

The greenery spread atop the hill with thousands of trees not only looks and feels pleasant but also reflects the efforts made by them in making this happen.

As can be seen in the table below, for 138 beneficiaries, the government sanctioned Rs. 726.80 lakh to plant 2,84,248 trees in an area of 372.92 hectares between 2006-07 and 2013-14.

will be able to gain an amount to the tune of Rs. 2,40,000/- to 4,00,000/- every year. Over a period of 20 years, the beneficiary will gain an estimated amount of Rs. 64,00,000/- to 80,00,000/-.

2.6.3 Possibilities for Replication

The main idea behind the horticultural crops is to eradicate malnourishment and ensure enriched and nutritious human diet. The Nandan Flodhan sub-scheme under MGNREGA is aimed at providing employment and livelihood to the job card holders and to improve their socio-economic status by increasing the income level of poor people in rural areas.

In spite of geographical imbalances in the regions of Malwa, Nimad, Chambal, Bundelkhand and Baghelkhand, the scheme has come out so well in the state that it can be safely termed a good practice. Even though the number of horticulture in the Nandan Flodhan sub-scheme units is insufficient, the study has found ample evidence of progress on the ground.



Figure 2.3 Left to Right: (i) inspection of plantation; (ii) horticulture officers; (iii) a beneficiary with his crop

The intervention can be positively considered for replication in areas which have the climate, situation, atmosphere, and other conditions that suit this intervention. Up-scaling this experience to the national level will certainly lead to significant benefits to rural people with very low income levels. If planned and implemented professionally in the right earnest, the scheme has the potential to improve the nutritional level in a sizeable population by directly supporting enhanced growth and production of vegetables and fruits. It can also improve income by producing pulses and other edible products through inter-

crops. It will also help in checking and controlling the price rise, commonly witnessed in fruit and vegetable markets, besides environmental improvement.

2.7 STAKEHOLDERS' VIEWS

The stakeholders showed their confidence in the sub-scheme during the field-level interaction. The beneficiaries, in particular, were all praises for the interventions.

Mr. Mohammad, who is one of the members of the Gawali Self-Help Group, was all praise for support provided under MGNREGA for horticulture. He stated, "Our self-help group had almost failed after trying many things. At this critical moment, we came across the government initiative through this scheme, and it turned out to be a fortune changer."

A woman beneficiary in Shivpuri District proudly showed the plants that she had grown and said, "Without this scheme being there, I don't think it would have been possible to achieve what I have achieved."

2.8 INITIATORS

Horticultural activities were not initially included under MGNREGA. In the year, 2008, as detailed earlier Mrs. Gauri Singh (IAS), State Coordinator of Indira Gandhi Poverty Eradication Plan, was on an official visit to Chattarpur District. Credit goes to her and to Mr. Sanjay Singh, Director MGNREGA, GoI, for including it in the scheme of programme activities.

2.9 FINDINGS

The benefits, extended to the beneficiary under the scheme, include the provision of seeds, plant fertilizers, herbicide and weedicide costs, and expenditure in developing the land. In addition to these, the beneficiary is also paid for his manual work in his field, by the government under MGNREGA. Despite all this investment by the government, the beneficiary/farmer is the sole owner of the yield of his crops. The beneficiary farmer can also take advantage of inter-crops, i.e., wheat, soya bean, jowar, gram, maize, etc., along with the main crop, under this scheme. In Burhanpur District, farmers have sold their banana and papaya crops up to a cost of Rs. 1.00 to 1.50 lakh. The Nandan Flodhan sub-scheme gives direct benefit to the beneficiary farmers.

arrangements for irrigation, and also for the manual work done by him. Since the beneficiary is the sole owner of the produce, therefore, at times, he develops the land using government funds and compromises on the quality of horticulture to grow the crop of his choice.

- Some of the beneficiaries adopt and participate in the scheme only to extract the gain of government resources and do not focus on the main objectives of the scheme.
- On account of lack of attention and proper care by the beneficiaries, crops and plants are destroyed.
- Inadequate awareness in planting and irrigation harms the plants and crops.
- The above issues damage the scheme's reputation and result in trust deficit of the general people.
- Being a government scheme, the officials and staff sometimes do not put in requisite energy and effort, causing wastage and poor quality besides trust erosion.
- A lot of barren lands is lying useless in the Bundelkhand region which could be used for horticultural initiatives to implement and activate the scheme.
- The scheme yields optimum benefits when done in groups, but most of the beneficiaries have been observed working individually on their farms/fields. The scheme is beneficiary oriented.
- In some districts, scheme implementing agencies are apathetic which affects the selection of right and eligible beneficiaries.
- The scheme is also affected due to insufficient publicity and advertisement as it creates a general ignorance of its benefits.
- In some areas, people are uninterested in agriculture due to the difference in wages.
- Shortage of Horticulture Nandan Flodhan experts has been observed while conducting the study.

2.11 RECOMMENDATIONS

In MP, horticultural activities turned out to be the ideal intervention under MGNREGA and can play an important role towards improving the socio-economic conditions of the people

- The scheme should be published and advertised on a broad scale, making the people aware at large of the micro-benefits, motivating them to adopt the same. The barren and waste land at Chambal in the Bundelkhand region is lying useless which can be developed and utilised for this scheme under MGNREGA after formulating a proper plan for the purpose.
- The scheme can be dovetailed with National Horticulture Mission.

2.12 CONCLUSION

The main objective of horticulture crops is to eradicate malnourishment and ensure enriched and nutritious human meal. The Nandan Flodhan sub-scheme under MGNREGA is aimed at providing employment and livelihood to the job card holders and to improve their socio-economic status by increasing the income level of poor people in rural areas.

According to the climate, weather, situation, farmer participation and other conditions and achievements, challenges and recommendations discussed in the study report, the region suits to this type of scheme. Up-scaling this experience to the national level will certainly lead to significant benefits to rural people with very low income levels. If planned and implemented professionally and in the right earnest, the scheme has the potential to improve the nutrition levels in a sizable population by directly supporting enhanced growth and production of vegetables and fruits. It can also improve income by producing pulses and other edible products through inter-crops. It is suggested that National Horticultural Mission schemes should be suitably customised to be taken up in conjunction with MGNREGA to yield a higher output. Low-cost post-harvest technology should be encouraged to offset the price increase in times of depression.

Horticulture Works under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in Madhya Pradesh: *Good Practice of Sub-Scheme "Nandan Flodhan" in Madhya Pradesh*