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## **Rural Development Programmes in Warangal District – A Sociological Study**

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### **Abstract:**

Rural development is a central concern in a country like India, where a significant proportion of the population resides in villages and depends on agriculture and allied activities for their livelihood. The concept of rural development goes beyond mere economic growth; it encompasses improvements in the quality of life, social justice, equitable distribution of resources, and empowerment of marginalized sections of society. Over the years, the government has introduced a wide range of rural development programmes aimed at reducing poverty, generating employment, enhancing infrastructure, and promoting social welfare. Warangal district has a predominantly rural population characterized by diverse social groups, including Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and backward classes. Agriculture remains the primary occupation, but issues such as land inequality, seasonal unemployment, migration, and lack of access to resources continue to affect rural livelihoods. The implementation of major schemes such as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), rural housing programmes, sanitation initiatives, and the promotion of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) have significantly influenced rural life in Warangal. Rural development programmes are not merely technical or administrative interventions; they are deeply embedded in the social fabric of rural communities. Caste relations, gender roles, class divisions, and traditional authority structures play a crucial role in shaping access to resources and benefits. This study aims to analyse the impact of rural development programmes in Warangal District by focusing on these social dimensions.

**Key Words:** Rural Development, MGNREGA, Self-Help Groups (SHGs), Poverty Alleviation, Employment Generation, Social Structure, Gender, Rural Livelihood and etc.



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### **Introduction:**

Rural development continues to be a fundamental pillar of India's socio-economic progress, as a large proportion of the population still resides in villages and depends primarily on agriculture and allied activities for their livelihood. Although India has witnessed rapid growth in urban sectors, rural areas remain confronted with persistent and complex challenges such as poverty, unemployment, inadequate infrastructure, limited access to quality education and healthcare, and deeply entrenched social inequalities. These challenges not only affect economic well-being but also shape the social fabric of rural communities. In this context, rural community development programs have emerged as vital mechanisms for promoting inclusive growth and improving the overall quality of life in rural regions. Over the years, various initiatives introduced by the Government of India and the Government of Telangana have sought to address critical areas such as agricultural development, employment generation, infrastructure expansion, public health, education, and social welfare. These programs aim to bridge the gap between rural and urban areas while ensuring that marginalized sections of society are not left behind.

Importantly, these development programs are not limited to economic improvement alone; they also act as powerful agents of social change. They influence patterns of social interaction, challenge traditional norms, and gradually reshape institutions that have historically governed rural life. In particular, initiatives such as employment schemes, self-help groups, and welfare programs have contributed to the empowerment of marginalized communities, especially women and economically weaker sections, by enhancing their access to resources, decision-making, and opportunities. However, the process of development is not uniform or entirely equitable. Disparities in awareness, access, and implementation often result in unequal distribution of benefits, thereby reinforcing existing social hierarchies based on caste, class, and gender. As a result, while rural development programs have brought significant progress, they also highlight the continuing need for more inclusive, participatory, and socially sensitive approaches to ensure balanced and sustainable transformation of rural society.

### **What is rural development?**

Rural development refers to the process of improving the economic, social, and living conditions of people residing in rural areas. It focuses on enhancing agricultural productivity, generating employment opportunities, developing basic infrastructure such as roads, water supply, and electricity, and ensuring access to



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education, healthcare, and social welfare services. Beyond economic growth, rural development also promotes social transformation by empowering marginalized groups, including small farmers, women, and weaker sections, and increasing their participation in decision-making processes. In a country like India, where a significant portion of the population depends on agriculture, rural development plays a crucial role in reducing poverty, minimizing inequalities, and achieving balanced and sustainable socio-economic progress.

### **Evolution of Rural Development in India:**

Rural development in India began during the pre-independence period with small-scale efforts such as cooperative movements and village upliftment initiatives. However, systematic rural development started after independence in 1947, when the government recognized the importance of improving village conditions. One of the earliest major programmes was the Community Development Programme (1952), followed by the National Extension Service (1953), which aimed to promote agricultural development, infrastructure, and social welfare in rural areas. During the 1960s, the Green Revolution brought significant changes by increasing agricultural production through improved seeds, irrigation, and technology. In the 1970s and 1980s, programmes like the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), National Rural Employment Programme (NREP), and Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) focused on poverty reduction and employment generation.

In recent decades, rural development has shifted towards inclusive growth with schemes such as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGS), National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), and Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY). These programmes aim to improve employment, infrastructure, and livelihoods. Overall, rural development in India has evolved from basic welfare to a comprehensive approach focusing on economic growth, social justice, and sustainable development.

### **Rural Development in Telangana:**

Rural development in Telangana is closely linked with its agrarian structure and socio-economic conditions. Before becoming a separate state in 2014, Telangana was part of Andhra Pradesh, where rural development focused mainly on irrigation projects, agriculture, and poverty alleviation programmes. However, many rural areas in Telangana faced issues such as drought, lack of irrigation facilities, and regional inequalities. After the formation of Telangana in 2014, the state government



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introduced several innovative rural development programmes to address these challenges. One of the major initiatives is Mission Kakatiya, which focuses on restoring irrigation tanks and improving groundwater levels. Another important programme is Mission Bhagiratha, aimed at providing safe drinking water to rural households. The Rythu Bandhu Scheme was introduced to provide direct financial support to farmers, reducing their dependence on loans. In addition, employment programmes like MGNREGS and women empowerment initiatives through Self Help Groups under SERP have strengthened rural livelihoods. These programmes have improved agricultural productivity, infrastructure, and income levels. Overall, rural development in Telangana has focused on inclusive growth, farmer welfare, and sustainable use of natural resources.

### Objectives of the Study:

1. To study the different rural development programs in Warangal District.
2. To understand how these programs, affect people's lives, especially in terms of income, employment, and social conditions.
3. To examine how these programs, bring changes in society, such as in gender roles, caste relations, and participation of people in community activities.

### Methodology:

This study is based on a qualitative approach using primary and secondary data. The primary data was collected by using case study method and the Information for secondary data has been collected from various sources such as government reports, official websites, research articles, books, and previous studies related to rural development.

### Major Rural Development Programmes in Warangal District:

#### 1. Mission Kakatiya:

Mission Kakatiya is a flagship rural development programme launched by the Government of Telangana with the primary aim of restoring and rejuvenating traditional irrigation tanks and water bodies across the state, including in Warangal Rural District i.e., current Warangal District. Under this scheme a total number of 1080 tanks revived in Warangal rural district in 4 phases with an amount of 5336.16 lakhs. The programme focuses on desilting tanks, repairing bunds, strengthening sluices, and improving water storage capacity to ensure better irrigation facilities for farmers. By reviving these water resources, Mission Kakatiya helps in improving groundwater levels and ensures a more reliable supply of water for agricultural activities. This has a direct positive impact on crop productivity and agricultural



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income, particularly for small and marginal farmers who depend heavily on tank irrigation. Additionally, the programme contributes to soil fertility, as the removed silt is often used in agricultural fields. Mission Kakatiya promotes community participation, strengthens rural livelihoods, and reduces agrarian distress. It also helps in generating employment opportunities under schemes like MGNREGA, thereby supporting rural households and contributing to overall rural development. With this the post monsoon level ground water level has grown by 40%. The program increased agricultural income, fisheries, improved irrigation facilities, and strengthened rural livelihoods.

#### **Case Study:**

In a village called Govindapur, there is a farmer named kasam Laxman, aged about 45 years, belonging to the Mudiraj community. He owns around 2 acres of agricultural land and also depends on fishing in the village pond as part of his traditional occupation. Due to frequent drought conditions, the village tank did not have sufficient water, which negatively affected both agriculture and fishing activities. As a result, Laxman could cultivate only one crop per year, and fish production was also very low, reducing his overall income. After the implementation of Mission Kakatiya, the village tank was restored and desilted. This led to improved water storage and a rise in groundwater levels. With better water availability, Laxman was able to cultivate two crops in a year instead of one, which significantly increased his agricultural income. He also used the tank silt in his fields, which improved soil fertility and reduced the cost of fertilizers. In addition, the restored tank supported better fish growth, allowing him to expand his fishing activities and earn additional income.

#### **2. MGNRES:**

Employment generation is one of the important factors in rural development. In rural areas, majority of the population depends upon agriculture sector. But the agriculture sector failed in provision of employment throughout the year. In the process of mechanization of agriculture sector, the rural people lost their employment opportunities. To fill that gap, the government of India initiated The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGS). The scheme guarantees up to 100 days of work per year to each rural family, helping them earn income and reduce unemployment. In Warangal district, around 79,587 households participated in MGNREGS. During 2023–24, the district generated about 17.5 lakh person-days of employment against a target of 20.3 lakh, and in 2024–25, employment increased



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from 20.32 lakh to 25.14 lakh person-days, showing a 23.7% growth. This indicates that more rural people are getting job opportunities. The scheme has had a strong impact on people's lives. It provides a steady source of income, especially during agricultural off-seasons, and helps reduce poverty and financial stress among rural families. It has also reduced migration to cities, as people can find work in their own villages. Women have benefited significantly, as they get equal wages and increased participation in the workforce, which improves their economic independence and social status.

### Case study:

In a village called Chintalapalli of Sangem Mandal a woman named sogala Kamalamma, aged 54, belongs to a Scheduled Caste community and works as a landless labourer. She lives with her aged husband and her two children along with their families. However, her children do not take proper care of their parents and their health. Kamalamma is usually engaged in agricultural work as a daily wage labourer. Before the implementation of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGS), she faced irregular employment and struggled to earn a stable income, especially during the agricultural off-season. This led to financial difficulties and forced her to depend on others for basic needs. After joining MGNREGS, Kamalamma started getting regular wage employment within her village. She now earns a steady income for several months in a year, which helps her meet essential needs such as food, healthcare, household expenses, and especially the medical needs of her husband. This has improved her financial stability and provided her with a sense of security and independence.

### 3. Rythu Bandhu:

Rythu Bandhu Scheme is an important agricultural support programme introduced by the Government of Telangana to provide direct financial assistance to farmers. Under this scheme, farmers receive investment support per acre for both Rabi and Kharif seasons to meet expenses such as seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, and other cultivation needs. The scheme helps farmers by providing timely financial support before the cropping season, which reduces their dependence on private moneylenders and high-interest loans. As a result, farmers are able to invest properly in agriculture, leading to better crop productivity and income. It mainly benefits small and marginal farmers by ensuring that they have enough funds for cultivation without falling into debt. From a social and economic perspective, Rythu Bandhu has improved the financial stability of farmers, reduced agrarian distress, and



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strengthened the rural economy. However, challenges such as exclusion of tenant farmers and unequal distribution of benefits still remain important concerns. Before the scheme, most farmers (68.33%) had medium cropping intensity and 31.67% had low, with none in the high category. After implementation, medium increased to 73.66%, low decreased to 15%, and high increased to 11.67%. Farm income also improved, with medium income farmers rising from 40% to 55%, and high income from 13.33% to 28.33%. Low income farmers reduced from 46.67% to 16.67% after the scheme. This improvement was due to timely financial support, better inputs, and reduced dependence on moneylenders.

#### **Case Study:**

In a village called Narlavai, a farmer named Tadagonda Narsaiah, aged 58, belongs to the Vadrangi community and owns about 3.5 acres of agricultural land. He mainly cultivates paddy. Before the implementation of the Rythu Bandhu Scheme, Narsaiah faced financial difficulties at the beginning of each cropping season. He depended on private moneylenders, borrowing at an interest rate of around 2% per month to purchase seeds, fertilizers, and other inputs. This created a heavy financial burden and reduced his overall profits. After the introduction of the scheme, he began receiving timely financial assistance per acre before the sowing season. This support enabled him to purchase quality seeds and fertilizers on time and manage his cultivation without depending on loans. As a result, his paddy yield improved, and his overall income increased. The reduction in debt burden provided him with financial stability and confidence to continue farming.

#### **4. Self Help Groups:**

Self Help Groups (SHGs) play an important role in rural development by promoting savings, credit access, and livelihood opportunities, especially for women. In Warangal Rural District, SHGs are mainly promoted under the Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP). These groups consist mostly of rural women who come together to save money, access bank loans, and engage in income-generating activities. According to government data Warangal district has about 13,303 Self Help Groups with nearly 1,69,706 members. Out of these, around 15,765 SHGs received bank credit, with total credit support of about ₹406.14 crore. SHGs in Warangal Rural District are involved in various activities such as agriculture, dairy farming, small businesses, tailoring, and petty trade. These groups help members to become financially independent by providing access to loans at lower interest rates, reducing dependence on moneylenders. SHGs have empowered women by increasing



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their participation in decision-making, improving their confidence, and enhancing their social status. They also contribute to poverty reduction, improved family income, and better access to education and healthcare. Recent initiatives in Telangana show that lakhs of women connected to SHGs are also benefiting from health programs and social awareness activities.

### Case Study:

In Narlavai, there is a women's Self-Help Group (SHG) named Swashakthi Mahila Group, formed under the Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP). The group consists of 15 women from economically weaker sections who regularly save small amounts of money and deposit them in a common group account. Before joining the SHG, most women in the village depended on their husbands for financial support and had very limited awareness about savings and credit facilities. They also relied on local moneylenders for small loans at high interest rates, which increased their financial burden. After joining the SHG, the members began saving regularly and gained access to bank-linked loans at lower interest rates, which improved their financial stability. One of the members, a woman named Manemma, took a loan of ₹50,000 from the group and started a small dairy activity by purchasing a buffalo. This helped her earn a regular income and improved her family's economic condition. Similarly, other members used loans for activities such as tailoring, running small shops, and supporting agricultural work. It helped women gain confidence, participate in household and community decision-making, and improve their social status. The members became more aware of government schemes, health, and education. Regular group meetings encouraged unity, cooperation, and collective problem-solving among the women.

These are only few schemes along with this in Warangal rural currently Warangal district conducts various rural development programmes which is for the upliftment of rural poor, improvement of rural infrastructure and etc.

### Key Findings:

1. Rural development programmes in Warangal Rural District have significantly contributed to improving agricultural productivity, employment generation, and overall rural livelihoods.
2. Mission Kakatiya has played a crucial role in strengthening irrigation facilities by restoring tanks, which resulted in increased groundwater levels (around 40%), improved cropping intensity, and enhanced income for farmers. It also supported fisheries and traditional occupations.



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3. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGS) has helped reduce seasonal unemployment by providing wage employment. It improved income security for rural households, especially women and landless labourers, and reduced financial dependency.
4. Rythu Bandhu Scheme has provided timely financial support to farmers, reducing their dependence on moneylenders. This led to better use of agricultural inputs, increased crop productivity, and improved farm income levels.
5. Self Help Groups promoted under Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP) have significantly empowered rural women by improving their access to credit, enhancing income-generating activities, and increasing their participation in decision-making.
6. Case studies from villages like Govindapur, Chintalapalli, and Narlavai clearly show that these programmes have positively impacted individual lives by improving income, reducing poverty, and strengthening social status.

### Conclusion:

Rural development programmes in Warangal Rural District have played a significant role in improving the socio-economic conditions of rural communities. The study clearly shows that initiatives such as Mission Kakatiya, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGS), Rythu Bandhu Scheme, and Self Help Groups under Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP) have contributed to enhancing agricultural productivity, generating employment opportunities, improving income levels, and strengthening rural livelihoods. These programmes have not only supported economic development but also brought important social changes. They have helped in empowering marginalized communities, especially women and weaker sections, by increasing their participation in economic activities and decision-making processes. The case studies included in this study further highlight how these programmes have positively impacted individual lives by reducing poverty, improving financial stability, and enhancing social status. However, the study also reveals that challenges such as unequal access, lack of awareness, exclusion of certain groups like tenant farmers, and gaps in implementation still persist. Therefore, for achieving sustainable and inclusive rural development, there is a need for more effective implementation, better awareness among rural people, and policies that ensure equal distribution of benefits.



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