



## **National Food Security Mission: A National Programme Working for Poverty Alleviation with Special Reference to Jorhat District in Assam (India)**

**Anwasha Saikia**

**Post Graduate Student, Economics Department, Banaras Hindu University**

### **ABSTRACT :**

*As it is said that poverty is a social phenomenon; it is a long disturbing factor which poses lots of impediments in the social and economic development. Poor people are unable to fulfill the basic necessities of day-to-day life. In India individuals, communities, and groups of people fall prey to the vicious circle of poverty. In India two-thirds of people live in poverty, 68.8% of the Indian population lives on \$2 a day. It is a matter of great regret that 30% people have to survive on meagre amount. Hence, it is the need of the hour to introduce and implement some fruitful programmes and projects to tackle poverty. It is a great challenge to alleviate poverty and to ensure development; but the government implements a number of poverty alleviation programmes to manage the causes and factors of poverty. Like MG NREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act), Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY), National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS), Annapurna, National Maternity Benefit Scheme, Integrated Rural Development Program (IRDP), Pradhan Mantri Gramin Awaas Yojana, National Food Security Mission (NFSM) are some of the programmes and projects implemented by central government for alleviation of poverty in India. National Food Security Mission was launched in October, 2007, in order to increase the production of rice, wheat, pulses and cereal. It is going on in 27 districts of Assam including Jorhat district. This paper is a case study of NFSM implementation in Jorhat district to study firstly whether the targeted production is achieved; secondly, whether more income is generated after the implementation of the programme. The paper is based on field study, interview and group discussion*

**Keywords:** Food security, MG NREGA, NFSM, Poverty. Poverty alleviation,

### **I. Introduction:**

Poverty is a social phenomenon – poverty alleviation is a global challenge. Poverty is defined as a state when income level from employment is so low that basic human need cannot be fulfilled. There is a close relation between poverty and starvation. Poor people are unable to fulfill the basic necessities of day to day life. In India; individuals, communities, and groups of people fall prey to the vicious circle of poverty. In India two-thirds of people live in poverty, 68.8% of the Indian population lives on \$2 a day. It is a matter of



great regret that 30% people have to survive on meagre amount. Hence, it is the need of the hour to introduce and implement some fruitful programmes and projects to tackle poverty.

Eliminating poverty is an ideal that humanity constantly pursues among that 17 sustainable development goal (SDGs) of the UN 2030 agenda for sustainable development. In 2005-2006, more than 61 crore of India suffered from multidimensional poverty. Moreover 28.6% of Indian's population suffered from "severe" poverty as compared with only 4.5 % in China. Hence it is high time to introduce and to implement some fruitful programme and project to eradicate the problem of poverty. The trickle – down hypothesis states that, the rapid growth of per capita income will be associated with a reduction in poverty. Montek. S. Ahluwalia has argued that, in India, trickle-down mechanism exists and hence the role of agricultural sector in alleviating the poverty had attracted wide attention. With the 5<sup>th</sup> plan, poverty alleviation came to be accepted as one of the principal objective of economic planning in India.

It is a great challenge to alleviate poverty and to ensure development; but the government implements a number of poverty alleviation programmes to manage the causes and factors of poverty. Like MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act), Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY), National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS), Annapurna, National Maternity Benefit Scheme, Integrated Rural Development Program (IRDP), Pradhan Mantri Gramin Awaas Yojana, National Food Security Mission (NFSM) are some of the programmes and projects implemented by central government for alleviation of poverty in India.

National Food Security Mission was launched in October, 2007, in order to increase the production of rice, wheat, pulses and cereal. It is going on in 27 districts of Assam including Jorhat district. This paper is a case study of NFSM implementation in Jorhat district to study firstly, whether the targeted production is achieved; secondly, whether more income is generated after the implementation of the programme. Eminent economist Amartya Sen comments, "Starvation is the characteristic of some people not *having* enough food to eat. It is not the characteristic of there *being* not enough food to eat" (1981:1) "The third world-countries exhibit the existence of mass poverty, although poverty also exists even in the developed countries in Europe and America. The concept of poverty is associated with



deprivation of a minimum requirement of living or consumption, that is minimum requirements for food, clothing, housing, health, etc.” (Sundar & Angles 2011: 274).

In view of the stagnating food-grains production and an increasing consumption need of the growing population, the National Development Council in the 53<sup>rd</sup> meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> May, 2007 adopted a resolution to launch a food security mission in 2007-08, comprising rice, wheat and pulses to increase the annual production of rice by 10MT, wheat by 8MT, pulses by 2MT by the end of the Eleventh plan (2011-12). Accordingly, a centrally sponsored scheme ‘NFSM’ was launched in October, 2007. The Mission met with an overwhelming success and achieved the targeted additional production of rice, wheat and pulses. NFSM is composed of 3 components during the 11<sup>th</sup> plan as below:

- I.** NFSM-rice
- II.** NFSM-wheat
- III.** NFSM-pulses.

During the 12<sup>th</sup> five year plan, coverage of NFSM extended to include 2 more components – NFSM-coarse cereals, NFSM- commercial crop.

## **II. Objectives of the Study:**

NFSM is important as a poverty alleviation programme. Keeping in view the importance of the subject, the objectives of this study are designed in the following way:

1. To investigate area, production trend, productivity of different pulse cultivation in NFSM and non-NFSM areas of Jorhat District Assam.
2. To analyse the yield and income generation of the beneficiaries.

**III. Scope:** Mrs. Runjun Savapandit and Dr. Gautam Kakaty observe, “The NFSM is extended to 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan due to its success in achieving the targeted goal of production enhancement” (2015:12). Due to the limitation of time and scope, the present study will only analyse the rate of production and beneficiaries benefited in the area. Different studies try to investigate the way of implementation of NFSM as poverty alleviation scheme and its success. This paper honestly attempts to study the nature of implementation and how it works to reduce



poverty in rural areas. The paper also tries to give suggestions to make the programme more effective.

### **III. Methodology:**

Both primary and secondary data are used to study the paper. The study is undertaken in Jorhat district, in the state of Assam. NFSM has been going on in Jorhat district from 2010-11. Data used for the paper has been collected from District Agricultural Office, Jorhat. From different pulse areas of Jorhat district two Development Blocks of Jorhat have been randomly selected. Again from these two blocks, 20 NFSM beneficiaries and 20 non-NFSM beneficiaries has been selected. Interview, field study and observation are used as tools. The field study has been carried on during December 2019-January 2020. To analyse data table, chart and diagrams are used. Secondary data have been collected from NFSM Website, Govt. of Assam and some other research works already done.

#### **Food security in Assam:**

NFSM- rice was launched in Assam in 2007-2008 covering 13 districts of the state with certain objectives such as,

- Increasing production of rice through increase in area and productivity.
- Restoring soil fertility and productivity at individual farm level.
- Enhancing farm level economy to restore confidence among the farmers.
- Creation of employment opportunities.

The total area under NFSM-rice increases from 1321.66 thousand hectares in 2007-08 to 1446.76 thousand hectares in 2010-11. As NFSM- pulses launched in 2010-11, the area under the rice witnessed slide decrease in 2012-2013. The districts like Kokrajhar, Barpeta, Darang, Sunitpur, Nagaon, Morigaon, Lakhimpur, etc. witnessed a rise in area after the adoption of NFSM. Darang district witnessed the highest growth in area in the production of rice from 3.2% from 9<sup>th</sup> plan to 9.97% in 11<sup>th</sup> plan.

NFSM-pulse was launched in 2010-2011 targeting the districts where area under pulses is more but productivity is comparatively lower (Savapandit & Kakaty 2015). The scheme



covered 10 districts of the state. Accelerated Pulses Production Programme, popularly known as A3P is a sub scheme of NFSM-pulses. The objectives of the scheme are stated below ---

- Increasing area coverage and productivity of pulses in order to increase production.
- Popularizing pulses cultivation through demonstration programmes.
- Enhancing firm income of pulses cultivators through increase in productivity.

Impact of the scheme after 3years of implementation could be evidenced from a 60% increase in production and 13% increase in productivity of pulses. Districts like Kokrajhar, Borpeta, Dhubri, Kamrup, Jorhat, etc. witnessed a rise in area under NFSM- pulse. The total area under pulses increased from 67.75 thousand hectares in 2010-11 to 95.31 thousand hectares in 2012-13.

During the 9<sup>th</sup> plan period, in case of rice the total AGR in area, production and productivity in non-NFSM districts are (-) 0.21%, 2.58%, 5.24% respectively as against NFSM districts which witnessed 0.36%, 2.75 % and 2.16% total AGR in area, production and productivity respectively. It is seen that, during 10<sup>th</sup> plan period total average AGR in area, production and productivity stood at (-)5.43%, (-) 7.29% and 2.01% respectively in NFSM districts. In non- NFSM districts total average AGR in area, production and productivity stood at 1.62%, (-)2.05 %, (-)3.81% respectively.

In case of pulses, during 10<sup>th</sup> plan period the total average AGR in area, production and productivity of pulses was recorded as (-)1.84. (-)0.36 and 1.37 % respectively in NFSM districts. In non- NFSM districts the total average AGR in area, production and productivity stood at 5.65%, 0.68% and 0.89 % respectively. During 11<sup>th</sup> plan period the total average area, production and productivity stood at 4.845% ,4.42% and 0.43% respectively in NFSM districts. While for non-NFSM districts, this figure was 8.45%, 8.91% and 0.29% respectively.

### **NFSM in Jorhat district:**

In Jorhat district, pulse cultivation has been increasing from the year of launching. It shows an increasing trend.

Table-1

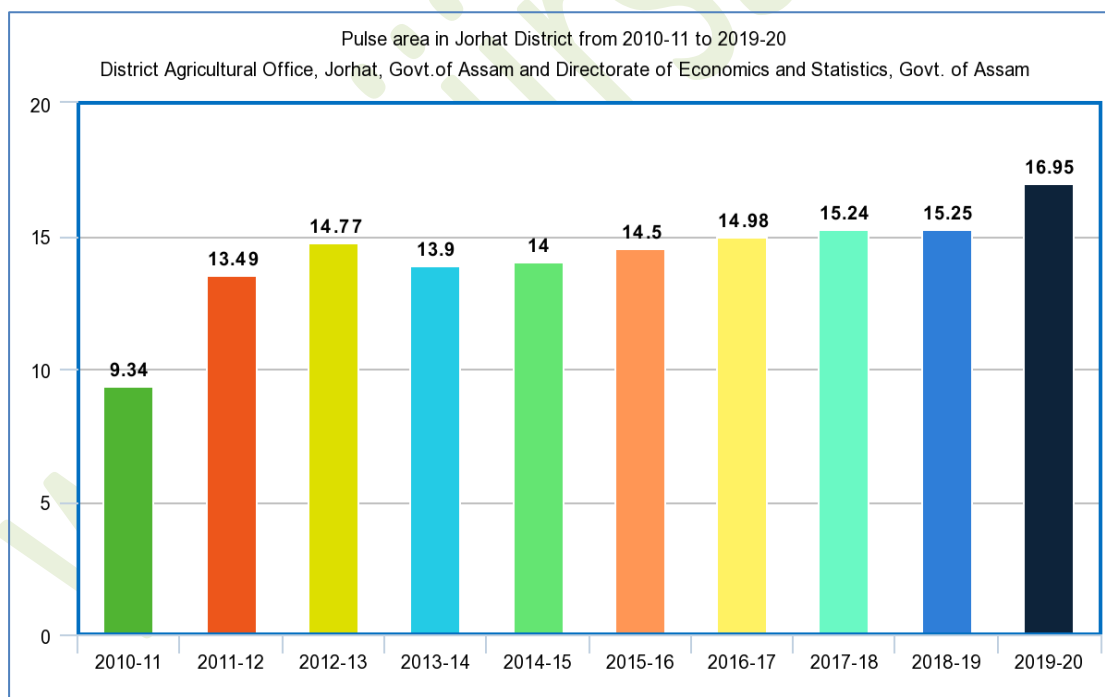


District	Pulse Area (000ha)									
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Jorhat	9.34	13.49	14.77	13.90	14.00	14.5	14.98	15.24	15.25	16.95

In Jorhat District an increasing trend is shown in pulse cultivation by the farmers. Earlier in 2010-11 the total pulse area in Jorhat is very less, i.e. only 9340 hectares. It is 13490 hectares in 2011-12, and 14770 in 2012-13, 14500 hectares in 2014-15 which is increased upto 16950 hectares in 2019-20 (Table 2).

Table 2

**Trend in Area, production and productivity of pulses:**



There are nine kinds of pulses covered under NFSM-pulse in Jorhat district: green gram, black gram, kharif green, gram, rajmah, sunflower, ground nut, lentil and pea.

The total pulse area covers both NFSM and non-NFSM pulse including Majuli (land area is 352 square kms). The area used for pulse cultivation increases from 2015-16 to 2019-20 (per year). From 400 hectares in 2016-17 area for green gram cultivation increases to 500



hectares in 2017-18, 1060 hectares in 2018-19 and to 2400 hectares in 2019-20. The percentage rises 6.5 times more in 2019-20 than in 2016-17. The number of beneficiaries also increases from 2015-16 to 2019-20. The number was 1260 in 2016-17, 1200 in 2017-18, 2065 in 2018-19, and 7750 in 2019-20. The area for cultivation of lentil is 400 hectares in 2015-16, 200 hectares in 2016-17, 200 hectares in 2017-18, 430 hectares in 2018-19, 300 hectares in 2019-20. In the same way number of beneficiaries are 1260 in 2015-16, 628 in 2016-17, 500 in 2017-18, 1075 in 2018-19 and 750 in 2019-20. Initiative taken for cultivation of Rajmah is nil in 2015-16 and 2017-18. Only in 2018-19 the area for Rajmah cultivation is 200 hectares and number of beneficiaries involved are 500.

Table 3: NFSM Pulse area (Ha) in Jorhat District (Undivided)

Sl. No	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Remark
1	1500	1250	1200	3090	5700	Area is increasing

Table 3 shows that the total area of Pulse cultivation under NFSM is increasing. In 2015-16 the area is 1500, in 2016-17 it is 1250, in 2017-18 it is 1200, in 2018-19 it is 3090, and in 2019-20 total pulse area is 5700.

Table: 4

District Data as per 2011 census			
Sl No 1	Total Farm Family	Rural	BPL
	49,000	78.2%	39.9%

Table 5: Data of Machineries used per year

Year	Power tiller	Rotovator	Sprayer (Subsidized)
2017-18	17	10	10
2018-19	227	15	40
Total	244	25	50



### **Financial Upgradation:**

1. PancharatnaKrishak Gut, Teok, SumoniSapori (Kaliapani development block) bought a tracker for carrying passenger during 2016-17. During 2018-19, they also bought a tractor under CMSGUY from profit earned from the cultivation of black gram.
2. Doni Polo Women Group,SHG of Major ChaporiTeok(Kaliapani development block) also earned 4lakhs of rupees from cultivation of black gram during 2019-20 from which they will by a tractor.
3. Mechanized farming system is undertaken with the assistance from the NFSM programme and with the help of this, profit from the crop is increased, production cost is reduced, thus financial upgradation is achieved. Some of the beneficiaries under this programme include Rajiv Gogoi,Jiten Bora, Amiya Bora, ManujDutta ,etc.
4. The cluster demonstration of Pea followed by Maize was undertaken in 100Ha area of Neul Gaon, Allengmora ADO Circle, covering Dhankhuloi AEA Eleka and SawguriEleka.The same programme was undertaken in the same village in 2015 with great success.

### **Average annual growth rate in last four years:**

“During 9<sup>th</sup> five year plan, AGR in area varied from 0.36 percent in Dhubri district to 20.70 percent in Jorhat district. In Nagaon district AGR area was negative. The AGR in production varied from 0.98 percent in Nagaon district to 19.39 per cent in Jorhat district” (Savapandit & Kakaty 2015: 24).

### **IV. Findings:**

1. Before implementation of NFSM,there was not much awareness regarding cultivation of pulses; black gram was the only pulse that was produced by the people of Jorhat district and that was also not in adequate amount.But in recent years it has been seen that people are interested in pulse cultivation.
2. The productivity is showing an increasing trend in pulse cultivation.
3. Accelerated growth in production of pulses so as to provide direct sources of food and income for purchasing necessary goods.
- 4.It helps in increasing the Food Security by stepping up the overall food production and food stocks held by the government, thus helps to remain self sufficient.



## V. Suggestions:

1. More areas and beneficiaries should be included under the programme. There are immense possibilities of expansion.
2. Good quality seed should be supplied. At present black gram production rate per hectare is 600 KGs. It is below the national level. Hence, measures should be taken to increase the production rate to 1200 to 1300 KGs per hector.
3. Irrigation, water shed project should be increased.
4. More and more mechanical technologies should be provided in subsidized rate.
5. Facilities should be introduced for marketing; a standard price should be fixed by the Government for the benefit of the pulse farmers.
6. Awareness should be created among common people about the nutritional values of pulses.

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