GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1372
TO BE ANSWERED ON 03.03.2016

GREENING RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

1372. SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH:
SHRI BAIJAYANT JAY PANDA:

Will the Minister of **RURAL DEVELOPMENT** be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken by the Government under its initiative of Greening Rural Development Programmes (GRDP) in India;
(b) whether adequate steps are taken under schemes like MGNREGS, PMGSY etc. to ensure sustainable development of a cleaner and healthier rural India;
(c) if so, the details thereof;
(d) whether the Government has conducted any study to assess the ecological impact of implementation of the programmes of the Ministry of Rural Development and if so, the details and findings thereof; and
(e) whether the Government proposes to improve ecological impact of its programmes by taking appropriate measures to align the activities carried out under various rural schemes in accordance with the guidelines of GRDP and if so, the details thereof ?

ANSWER
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(SHRI SUDARSHAN BHAGAT)

(a): Yes, Madam. The Ministry of Rural Development has setup a Task Force for Greening Rural Development with the following objectives:

i. Natural resource protection, conservation and upgradation
ii. Improved efficiency in use of such resources
iii. Proactive dissemination of green technologies for adoption in different programmes.
iv. Reduction of negative environmental impacts
v. Strengthening of climate resilience of communities and eco-systems.
vi. Convergence of Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) for greening.

(b) & (c): Yes, details of schemes IAY, MGNREGA, NRLM & PMGSY are in **Annexure.**

(d): **IAY** - Ministry of Rural Development in collaboration with UNDP is conducting state specific studies suggesting house designs which are cost-effective, environment friendly, disaster resilient and sustainable suitable for different geo-climatic zones of the respective States.

MGNREGA - Institute of Science (IISc) in collaboration with the Ministry of Rural Development and GIZ (2013) came to several conclusions in their research done in 4 districts of four states with a total sample of 2057 beneficiary households. The study results validate the purpose of asset creation through MGNREGS works. The results show that:-

1. MGNREGS has contributed to improved or sustained groundwater levels where ground water levels have remained stable, despite increased extraction.

2. Increased water availability for irrigation where area irrigated has increased in the range of .2 to 57 Ha (depending on the nature of work) in the surveyed worksites. Improved drinking water availability for humans and livestock.
3. Gross area under cultivation increased in the range of 43% to 102% in the surveyed villages due to Mahatma Gandhi NREGA interventions. Average crop yields increased by 46to 100 % in the surveyed fields. Diversity in cropping was also observed.
4. Due to the land development, contour and field bunding, terracing and water related NRM works, soil fertility increased significantly and soil erosion was shown to have been reduced by 82% in 779 beneficiary sample plots.
5. This study included assessments of ecological, socioeconomic and physical indicators such as groundwater, soil and organic carbon and biomass estimation. It assessed community response through household surveys and PRA methods.

(e): Ministry has come up with a technical manual named “SAMARTHYA” which will guide the States/UTs to carry out all the permissible works under MGNREGA more efficiently.

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ANNEXURE

LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1372
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Details of Steps taken under various RD schemes

Indira AwaasYojana

The following provisions have been incorporated in the guidelines of the scheme of Indira AwaasYojana as a part of the initiative of Greening Rural Development Programmes:

a) There should be special effort to promote green housing, which will include improved use of local materials, appropriate building designs and construction techniques. The objective is to reduce the negative environmental impact of housing and improve user comfort. This is through greater reliance on renewable and locally available material, through reduced use of energy during the lifecycle of the house and the use of materials and designs appropriate to local weather patterns.

b) There should not be any mandatory type design. A menu of options in respect of use of materials and building technologies as appropriate locally, may be provided to the beneficiary along with the cost implications and the choice should be left to the beneficiary.

In addition to the above provisions in the guidelines, the following other initiatives have been taken by the Ministry in this direction:

a) An advisory has been sent to all the State Governments to consult experts to develop designs which are disaster resilient, eco-friendly, low-cost and which enable construction of durable houses using locally available materials.

b) The Ministry in collaboration with IIT, Delhi has launched a portal www.ruralhousingnetwork.in for sharing and disseminating information about good practices relating to cost effective, environment friendly, disaster resilient technology / practice in house construction.

MGNREGA

a): The works pertaining to land water and tree plantation under MGNREGA are carried out by following the watershed approach (ridge to valley approach). The guidelines/circulars were issued by the Ministry from time to time.

b): Issued guidelines, circulars, for the construction of IHHL etc. under MGNREGA. Regular monitoring of the works is done through MIS, Field Visits, Reports, and Ministry Team Visits etc.

NRLM

Sustainable Livelihoods and Adaptation to Climate Change (SLACC) project is linked to National Rural Livelihoods Mission-renamed as DeendayalAntyodayaYojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM). The total cost of the Project is estimated to be US$ 10.7 million of which US$ 8 million

will be provided as grant from the “Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF)” administered by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) and the balance portion will be funded by the participating States of Madhya Pradesh and Bihar as counterpart contribution. The Project Development Objective (PDO) is to improve adaptive capacity of the rural poor engaged in farm-based livelihoods to cope with climate variability and change. Effective date is from 13-02-2015 to 30-06-2018.The total cost is to be met from SCCF grant and contribution from the participating State Governments namely Madhya Pradesh and Bihar.

The key project interventions in SLACC are as follows:

- Production Systems: Drought and flood tolerant seeds and crop varieties; seed and fodder banks; community nurseries, vegetative buffers, livestock breeds; etc.
- Ecological Systems: Participatory irrigation management (particularly during critical stages of kharif), protection/maintenance of water bodies (e.g. percolation wells, tanks) and other traditional drainage systems; rainwater harvesting; biomass mulching, contour bunds/trenches, tree-based farming etc.
- Financial Systems: Weather-based index insurance
- Knowledge Systems: Weather-based agro-advisories; ICT services (e.g. smart phones to CRPs); community climate adaptation plans; capacity-building on climate adaptation; flood contingency planning; policy framework on livelihoods adaptation

The Ministry of Rural Development has approved the Annual Action Plan and accordingly a sum of Rs. 390.60 lakhs each has been released to Bihar and Madhya Pradesh during December, 2015.

Under SLCC, at the State level, the State Rural Livelihoods Mission (SRLM) will lead an institutional mechanism for interdepartmental coordination involving the line departments (agriculture, watershed, forestry, water resources, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Gurantee Act (MGNREGA) and livestock) to facilitate timey convergence of departmental programs and sharing of experiences and best practices. NRLM and MGNREGA has existing convergence program going on in both the states.

Convergence will also be ensured through integration of climate change adaptation interventions into MahilaKisanSashaktikaranPariyojna (MKSP) being implemented and National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM)/National Rural Livelihoods Project (NRLP) project areas.

The Government is also implementing Project “Governance Accelerated and Livelihoods Security” (GOALS), which is a collaborative efforts of Ministry of Rural Development and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The Project covers 12 most affected Left Wing Extremism (LWE) Districts from these states, namely Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Odisha with a total outlay of Rs. 128.98 crore. The Project period is 5 years covering the period 2013-2017. One of the Main focus area of GOALS is to “Providing technical assistance to achieve green development under different schemes”.

PMGSY

(i) In order to promote cost-effective, environment friendly and fast construction technologies and non-conventional materials in the construction of rural roads, the Ministry has issued "New Technology initiatives Guidelines" vide Ministry's circular dated 8.5.2013, wherein the States are permitted to use Indian Road Congress (IRC) accredited technologies &non conventional materials, including jute and coir Geo-textiles, such as Coir and Jute, in road pavements in areas where drainage is an issue, as well as in areas where the soil properties can be improved with Geo-Textiles/Geo-Synthetics. As per the aforesaid Guidelines, at least 15% length of annual proposal of a State, must include new and non conventional materials. This mandatory conditionality is implemented and monitored by the Empowered Committee (EC) headed by Secretary (RD), Government of India. The States have been encouraged to enter into MoU with State Technical Agencies (STAs) for technical support in the use of such technologies. The Ministry has set a target of 5000 km PMGSY Roads to be constructed in 2015-16 using Waste Plastic and Cold Mix technologies which are environment friendly and cost effective.

(ii) Central Road Research Institute (CRRI) in collaboration with National Rural Roads Development Agency (NRRDA) has undertaken **a pilot project to comprehensively map availability of local marginal materials** like Flyash, Steel slag, marble slurry etc. It is expected that the use of these green technologies and marginal material would not only prevent environment pollution but would also expand working season in construction of rural roads and would substantially reduce the life cycle cost of such roads**.**

(iii) **Tree Plantation along completed PMGSY roads:** The road side tree plantation is expected not only to create productive assets but also to check the deterioration of roads and will continue to strengthen ecological balance and reduce global warming. To start with, it is proposed to go for road side tree plantation on the roads constructed under PMGSY in a systematic and planned way under MGNREGS. Accordingly, an action Plan for road-side plantation in convergence with MGNREGS has been issued. NRRDA & IRC joint guidelines for plantation on rural roads have also been issued. States have been requested to follow up action for plantation of trees on the flanks of PMGSY roads in consultation with Gram Panchayat/ZillaPanchayat and MGNREGA officers.

(iv) **Rain water conservation initiative:** Provision of Bridge-cum-Bandhar: The Ministry has issued a circular wherein the States have been permitted to design the Bridges so as to serve as Bridge-cum-Bandhar for conserving the rain water.