



ASIAN
EVALUATION
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India's National Rural Livelihoods Mission

Lessons from an impact evaluation for
evidence-informed decision-making

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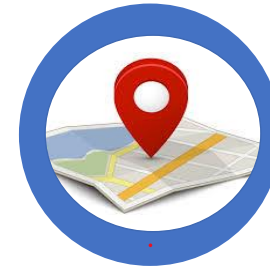


International
Initiative for
Impact Evaluation

About National Rural Livelihood Mission



The Program, in part funded by World Bank, aims to create efficient and effective institutional platforms of the rural poor, enabling them to increase household income through sustainable livelihoods enhancements and improved access to financial services



742 Districts
7,091 Blocks



95.2 Million
Households



8.73 Million
SHGs



109,000 BC
**Sakhi/
Paypoints**



30 Million
Women
Farmers



SVEP-0.245
Million
enterprises

The NRLM Evaluation (by 3ie)

The program started in 2011 and after 8 years of implementation, the 3ie evaluation aimed at the following objectives:

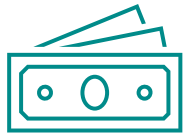
27000 Households across 9 states



Assess the impact of NRLP program on institution building, socio-economic and empowerment outcomes



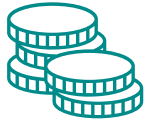
Examine the role and contribution of federations



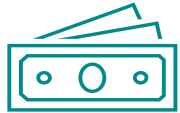
Understand program implementation

**The evaluation was designed to ensure ownership across all stakeholders
Funded by BMGF and Ministry of Rural Development (for data collection)**

Some Findings



Improved savings by 28% and reduced dependence on informal debt (20%)



Incomes increased by 19% driven by increases in wage incomes. But, in remote villages, this was driven by increases in agricultural income. Program households had 0.2 additional sources of income on an average



Women's involvement in income generating work by secondary status increased (58% to 62%)



Women with higher education gained confidence to engage with the community due to the programme. However, intra-household bargaining is more difficult to change, and we find no impacts of the programme on women's household decision-making

Why the Ministry valued the 3ie evaluation

- **Ownership and buy-in, along with a willingness to engage with academics inside MoRD**
- **Co-creation of design with Ministry's priorities in mind**
- **Separate inputs from State Governments**
- **Local agency for data collection selected by MoRD**
- **In-depth understanding of the programme by the research team (guidelines etc.)**
- **Use of administrative data to understand implementation and States of study**

Challenges for policymakers

- **High-capacity at MoRD to engage with evaluation findings, but differing capacities at State-levels**
- **Rigorous evaluations with understanding of context**
- **Needs of evaluation agency for rigorous evidence may be different from the immediate needs of policy-makers**
- **Constraints of time (that may be required for evaluations) and ability to engage**
- **Continuously evolving nature of the programme due to demands across several areas (e.g. health, equity and gender)**
- **The intervention needs to play out fully for policy change to be considered**

Some food for thought

There is “value” in evaluation, but academics could help make using results easier:

- **Develop high-level summaries of research as learning notes, with less focus on the methods**
- **Highlight actionable results but consider the operational reality**
- **Research professionals to engage with policymakers**
- **Continuous engagement with the policymakers**
- **Involvement of various stakeholders – dissemination of results**
- **Two-way communication – Interesting stories**



Thank you