

Strategies of Modi's Government on Agriculture and Rural Development Programs for Viksit Bharat@2047: Policy Framework and Execution

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ABSTRACT

Development concept should help attain broad-based economic growth to ensure balanced development across all regions and states and across sectors. This implies acceptance new technologies promotion innovation and up skilling. The strategy when implemented, will bridge the gap between public and private sector performance. The Prime Minister has determined on putting in place a 'development state' in place of the 'soft state' that this government had inherited. In this context, the government has focused on the efficient delivery of public services, rooting out corruption and black economy, formalizing the economy and expanding the tax base, improving the ease of doing business, nurture the stressed commercial banking sector back to a healthy state, and stopping leakages through direct benefit transfers and widespread use of the JAM trinity. The government of India's determined vision to transform the nation into an urbanized entity by the centenary of its independence in 2047 encompassing diverse facets of development such as economic prosperity, social advancement, environmental sustainability, and effective governance. This vision underscores the critical juncture at which India currently stands. Realizing this vision demands staunch dedication, a firm belief in India's destiny and a profound recognition of the vast potential talent and capabilities of its people, particularly the youth. With the largest demographic share, the youth are positioned as the vanguard in leading India two words recessive Bharat by 2047. In this context this paper would enlighten about the practical suggestions for bringing in changes in India pertaining to various sectors i.e. economical, agricultural, urban housing development. It would lead to holistic well being of citizens in India and positively would help our Government of India to achieve the vision of "Viksit Bharat 2047."

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KEYWORDS: *Agriculture, Economy, Environment, Governance, and Urban House*

INTRODUCTION

The present paper aim is modernize agricultural technology, augment productivity, efficiency and crop diversification, and generate income and employment through a paradigm shift that ensures food security while maximizing value addition in agriculture. The difference between the contribution of agriculture to national income and share in employment has remained large and has widened. The manufacturing and service sectors have failed to absorb the excessive workforce in agriculture. Consequently, value addition per worker in agriculture grew slowly and income per farmer never crossed one-third of the income of a non-agriculture worker since the 1980s. The country took 22 years to double farmers' income at

an annual growth rate of 3.31 per cent during 1993-1994 to 2015-16; doubling farmers' income between 2015-16 and 2022-23 will require an annual growth rate of 10.4 per cent in farmers' real income. Corporate investment in agricultural infrastructure has not exceeded 2 per cent. In the year's post-independence, the policy structure was purposeful on increased production and productivity to ensure food security for India. August 15, 2022, independent India will turn 75 years. In the lifespan of nations, India is still young. The best is surely yet to come. India's youthful and aspiration population deserves a rapid transformation of the economy, which can deliver double-digit growth, jobs and prosperity to all. A

strong foundation has been laid in the last four years. While there is every room for confidence, there is none for complacency. A surge of energy, tireless effort and an unshakeable resolve on the part of the government, private sector and every individual citizen can achieve this transformation in the next five years.

Seventy years ago, similar energy, effort and resolve from all Indians freed the country from colonial rule within five years of the launch of the Quit India movement in 1942. Then, like now, foundations had been laid but a committed acceleration of effort was necessary. The Prime Minister's call for *Sankalp Se Siddhi* is a clarion call for a radical transformation for a New India by 2022-23. Increase the investment rate as measured by gross fixed capital formation (GFCF) from present 29 per cent to 36 per cent of GDP by 2022. About half of this increase must come from public investment which is slated to increase from 4 per cent to 7 per cent of GDP. Government savings have to move into positive territory. This sharp increase in investment-to-GDP ratio will require significantly higher resource mobilization efforts as elaborated in the chapter on Growth. In agriculture, emphasis must shift to converting farmers to 'agripreneurs' by further expanding E-National Agriculture Markets (e-NAMs) and replacing the Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) Act with the Agricultural Produce and Livestock Marketing (APLM) Act. The creation of a unified national market, a freer export regime and abolition of the Essential Commodities Act are essential for boosting agricultural growth.

A strong push would be given to 'Zero Budget Natural Farming' (ZBNF) techniques that reduce costs, improve land quality and increase farmers' incomes. This is a tested method for putting environment carbon back into the land. Therefore, ZBNF allows India to significantly contribute to reducing the global carbon footprint.

Objectives:

1. Modernize agricultural technology, increase productivity, efficiency and crop diversification. Generate income and employment through a paradigm shift that ensures food security while maximizing value addition in agriculture.
2. Provide every family with a pucca house, with a water connection, toilet facilities, and 24x7 electricity supply and access. Build 2.95 crore housing units in rural areas and 1.2 Crore housing units in urban areas.
3. Create a policy environment that enables income security for farmers, whilst maintaining India's food security. Encourage the participation of the private sector in agricultural development to transition from agriculture to robust agri-business systems. Promote through government policies the emergence of 'agripreneurs' so that even small and marginal farmers can capture a higher share of value addition from 'farm gate to fork'.

Methodology of the Study:

The whole emphasis of research paper is based on a descriptive study. The study has been carried out with the help of both historical and analytical source the present work based only secondary data which include, NITI Aayog. Data, survey reports, Central and state government reports, articles, books, and internet data materials

Constraints:

Fragmented land holdings:

Agriculture is characterised by an extremely fragmented landholding structure with an average farm size of 1.15 hectares and the predominance of small and marginal farmers, with those holding less than 2 hectares

Low price realization

There exists a large gap between farm harvest prices (FHP) and retail prices (see Figure 6.1). Prices also tend to fall below the minimum support prices in a good production year, leading to agrarian distress. Mechanisms need to be developed to ensure remunerative prices to farmers, in both 'good' and 'bad' monsoon years.

Non-farm employment

Lack of non-farm employment opportunities has resulted in excessive dependence on agriculture for livelihood among both small and marginal farmers as well as among the landless.

Agricultural credit

Despite an allocation of more than INR 11 lakh crore of commercial credit, access to institutional credit remains a constraint, especially in the case of tenant farmers.

Agricultural trade

Exporters of agro-commodities are not successful in raising their share in global markets because of uncertainty in the foreign trading regime.

Way Forward:

Marketing reforms

Many of the constraints in marketing can be addressed by adopting the Model Agricultural Produce and Livestock Marketing Act (APLM), 2017, which provides for progressive agricultural marketing reforms, including the setting up of markets in the private sector, allowing direct sales to exporters/processors and customers, farmer-consumer markets, e-trading, single point levy of market fee, a unified single trading licence in a state, declaring warehouses/silos/cold storage as market sub-yards and the launch of the National Market for Agriculture.

APLM should be adopted by all states as expeditiously as possible.

Amend Essential Commodities Act: The Essential Commodities Act, which has proven a disincentive to large investment in agricultural technology and infrastructure, should be

replaced with a modern statute that balances the interests of farmers and consumers.

Stable export policy: In consultation with all stakeholders, the Government of India should come up with a coherent and stable agricultural export policy, ideally with a five to ten-year time horizon and a built-in provision for a mid-term review. Efforts should be made to achieve this urgently.

Price realization: The government should consider replacing the Commission on Agricultural Costs & Prices (CACP) by an agriculture tribunal in line with the provisions of Article 323 B of the Constitution. NITI Aayog should set up a group to examine the following:

Replacing the minimum support price (MSP) by a minimum reserve price (MRP), which could be the starting point for auctions at minds separating the criteria for MSPs for (i) surplus produce; (ii) for deficit but globally available products; and (iii) for products that are in deficit both domestically and globally. Examine options for including private traders operating in markets to complement the minimum support price regime through a system of incentives and commission payments. Raising MSP or prices can only be a partial solution to the problem of assuring remunerative returns to farmers. A long-term solution lies in the creation of a competitive, stable and unified national market to enable better price discovery, and a long-term trade regime favourable to exports.

Agriculture advisory service: An effective and technology driven Agriculture Advisory Service may be considered on the lines of those of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the European Union (EU). The mandate would be to ensure that farmers adopt an optimal cropping pattern that maximizes their income.

Futures trade: Futures trade should be encouraged. Removal of entry barriers to increase market depth should be considered.

Crop insurance: PMFBY needs to be modified to - Promote weather-based insurance. Increase non-loaned farmers' insurance coverage. Allow for mixed cropping and increase the number of crops notified. Contract farming Encourage states to adopt the Model Contract Farming Act, 2018: Contract farming can be thought of as a form of price futures. The contract will specify the price and quality at which the farmers' produce will be purchased. This protects the farmer in cases where prices fall below the MSP.

Land aggregation

Encourage states to adopt the Model Agriculture Land Leasing Act, 2016: The Model Act aims to improve land access to small and marginal farmers through land leasing, whilst also providing for a mechanism for tenants to avail of institutional credit. A major constraint to land leasing under the present regulatory environment is the un-willingness of landowners to lease out land due to fears of land capture by

tenants. The Model Act spells out the rights and responsibilities of both landowners and tenants. Like the Model Contract Farming Act, 2018, this Act too contains provisions for dispute resolution within a specified timeframe.

Digitize land records: Complete digitization of land records is a must for effective implementation of land leasing. Geo-tagging, along with location agnostic online registration of land records to generate updated land records, must be carried out.

Promote farmer producer organizations (FPOs): There are now 741 FPOs in the country, managed under the aegis of Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC). They have demonstrated that aggregating farmers can help achieve economies of scale. The benefits accorded to start-ups under the Start-up India Mission need to be extended to FPOs as well. National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD's) model of joint liability groups can be promoted to channelize small growers into the value chain.

Research and Development:

Focus on precision agriculture: Support research on energy friendly irrigation pumps, micro irrigation, climate smart technologies, internet of things (IoT), and use of technology in animal husbandry to monitor animal behaviour, health and production to prepare for future challenges. Research spending, currently at 0.3 per cent, needs to be increased to at least 1 per cent of agricultural GDP.

Create a knowledge hub to disseminate best practices: It is essential that new technology be adopted at the farm level. The performance of *Krishi Vigyan Kendras* (KVKs) should be regularly reviewed by external agencies and well performing KVKs must be strengthened to disseminate best practices at the field level.

Develop models of integrated farming: Research so far has focused on practices for individual crops or enterprises. The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and State Agriculture Universities (SAUs) should focus on providing recommendations across the farming value chain, covering production, post- production, processing and other value-addition activities.

Innovation several breakthroughs have the clear potential for quickly doubling farmers' income. One is the recorded success of zero budget natural farming by Subhash Palekar. It is now being adopted across the country and providing notable increases in farmers' net income by sharply reducing costs of production and improving incomes by raising yields and improving the quality of agricultural produce. Two, there are patented herbal inputs that improve soil quality and make plants more pest resistant. These herbal inputs, for which actual performance data is now available for a few thousand farmers, need to be applied across the country.

Three, rapid progress has also been made in organic farming techniques, which have also helped improve incomes of cultivators and dairy farmers. These should be carefully examined for possible application across the country.

Non-farm income Moving labour out of agriculture into manufacturing will go a long way towards the goal of doubling farmers' income.

According to estimates prepared by Chand, Srivastava & Singh (2017), nearly two-thirds of rural income is generated in non-agricultural activities. In non-agricultural activities in rural areas, another avenue is shifting farmers to agribusiness and farm-related skills which are currently in short supply. Create and nurture agripreneurs for achieving greater value addition through agro-processing and propagation of modern extension services. India will also have to accelerate growth in the manufacturing, services and exports sectors to wean labour away from agriculture. This will result in higher productivity and income for farmers.

Modernizing Agriculture:

Current Status:

The existing yield levels of a majority of crops remains much lower than the world average. The predominant causes are low irrigation, use of low quality seeds, low adoption of improved technology, and knowledge deficit about improved agricultural practices. Close to 53 per cent of cropped area is water stressed. Rainwater management practices and services are resource starved. This limits a farmer's capacity to undertake multiple cropping and leads to inefficient utilization of land resources.

Inefficient extension delivery systems have led to the presence of large yield gaps as well. Yield gaps exist at two levels in India. First, there is a gap between best scientific practices and best field practices. The second gap exists between best field practices and the average farmer. There exist significant yield gaps both amongst and within states. Yield gaps have been found to exist in even highly productive states such as Punjab. Closing these gaps provides an opportunity to enhance productivity and incomes significantly. This further implies that states with low productivity (or large yield gaps) have significant potential for catch-up growth in their productivity levels.

Demand side factors favour the expansion of area under fruits and vegetables, and livestock products. These enterprises also offer better income. Staple crops (cereals, pulses and oilseeds) occupy 77 per cent of the total gross cropped area (GCA) but contribute only 41 per cent to the output of the crop sector. High value crops (HVCs) contribute an almost similar amount to total output as staples do, but they occupy only 19 per cent of the GCA. Research has also shown that diversification to the fruits and vegetables segment is likely to benefit small and medium farmer's more than large ones.

Over the past few years, new development initiatives aimed at modernising agriculture have been introduced. *Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana* (PMKSY) aims to expand irrigation coverage whilst promoting water use efficiency. Area under micro irrigation has grown 2.5 times in the last four years. The second cycle of the Soil Health Card (SHC) scheme is underway, which will focus on job creation and entrepreneurship development through local entrepreneurship models. So far, 3.76 crore SHCs have been distributed under the second cycle.

Constraints:

Use of outdated and inappropriate technology is the main reason for low productivity of crops and livestock. Given the pre-dominance of small and marginal farmers in Indian agriculture, affordability becomes a significant constraint on technology adoption by farmers. There exist several bottlenecks hampering on-farm adoption of technology developed in public sector. Agricultural research in the country is constrained by resource inadequacy, regulations and intellectual property rights (IPR). Multiple private and public sources supplying different information to farmers create confusion. A huge gap exists between the demand for and supply of skills in agriculture, hindering diversification, adoption of precision agriculture and on farm post-harvest value addition. India has not caught up to the rest of the world in terms of technology, which has led to the dominance of inefficient production practices, such as flood irrigation, at the farm level. Renewed focus on ground absorption of technology, market intelligence, skills and extension and modernising trade and commerce in agriculture are needed to modernise agriculture in India. Both production and marketing suffer due to the absence of adequate capital. Low scale is a serious constraint on the adoption of improved practices and in the input and output market.

Way Forward:

Productivity and Efficiency:

Increase area under irrigation: Irrigation coverage needs to be increased to 53 per cent of gross cropped area (GCA) by 2022-23. the focus should be on increasing coverage through micro-irrigation. *Increase adoption of hybrid and improved seeds:* States should take the lead through the following measures: Dynamic seed development plans are required. These may be based on crop wise area (each season separately), seed rate per hectare used, desired/targeted seed replacement rate and crop wise seed requirement. Crop wise requirement should be worked out based on historical trends, introduction of new varieties and replacement of poor yielding varieties.

States should aim to increase the seed replacement rate (SRR) to 33 per cent for self-pollinated crops and 50 per cent for cross-pollinated crops in alternative years.

Increase Variety Replacement Ratio (VRR): Phase out old varieties of seeds and replace them with hybrid and improved

seeds to enhance productivity. The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) along with State Agricultural Universities (SAUs) should develop climate resilient varieties of crops suitable for the 128 agro-climatic zones of the country, through farmer participatory plant breeding and adopting farm varietal trials from the third year of the development of the seed.

Strengthen seed testing facilities: Seed testing facilities need up gradation in terms of both personnel and technical expertise. Regular performance monitoring is required to maintain the quality of test results.

Uniform national procedure for seed licensing: To tackle the problem of heterogeneity in seed licensing procedures across states, the central government should develop model guidelines for seed licensing and support states in implementing these.

Efficient fertilizer usage: Strengthen the SHC scheme and include not merely nine but all sixteen parameters in the tests. This will ensure SHC based fertilizer distribution at the ground level. Seed SHCs with the integrated fertilizer management system Link SHCs with Kisan credit cards and make SHCs mandatory for subsidies. Ensure proper functioning of the SHC labs.

Reorient fertilizer subsidy policy: The current lopsided fertilizer subsidy policy needs to bring secondary and micronutrients on the same nutrient-based subsidy (NBS) platform as phosphorus (P) and potash (K).

Regulate pesticide use: Align the pesticide regulatory framework with food safety laws to make adoption broad based. Strengthen extension activities to ensure that best practices reach the average farmer.

Custom hiring centres: Madhya Pradesh has had demonstrable success with their custom hiring centre model to hasten the pace of farm mechanization. This model should be replicated nationwide by employing rural youth and promoting entrepreneurship.

Subsidies on liquid fertilizers: Targeted subsidy should be provided on liquid fertilizers to encourage substitution with micro-irrigation.

Investment subsidies for micro-irrigation: Rather than power and water subsidies, investment subsidies for micro-irrigation can be provided through the DBT mode

Strengthening extension systems:

Synergy between Agriculture Technology Management Agency (ATMA) and Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs): The ATMA programme needs to be reoriented to include bottom up planning at the district and block levels to develop Strategic Research Extension Plans (SREP). Further decentralization and autonomy are essential to the success of this programme. Subject matter specialists at KVKs should

orient their research to the block action plans developed by ATMA.

Public Private Partnership in KVKs: The guiding principles of ATMA provide for the promotion of PPP in extension delivery. With each KVK in possession of approximately 50 acres of land, KVKs should incubate private sector initiatives in extension delivery.

Market led extension: Give priority to extension services that disseminate information to farmers regarding (i) crop selection (ii) demand for and supply of crop produce, (iii) expected price of commodity and (iv) availability of infrastructure facilities for storage, transport and marketing of produce.

Value added extension: Prioritise value added extension services to enable a reduction in post-harvest losses by converting raw agricultural produce to processed products. This allows for increased price realization and contributes towards increasing farmers' income.

District level skill mapping: ICAR and SAUs should map the demand for and supply of skills in agriculture at the district level and coordinate with skill development missions to impart the required skills to farmers and agricultural labour.

Replicate dealer training programme in state agricultural universities: The National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management's (MANAGE) dealer training programme should be replicated in SAUs, with diploma holders granted licences to conduct extension activities.

Sustainable water use in agriculture: About 83 per cent of water is used in agriculture. The solution to resolving India's imminent water crisis lies in conserving water in agriculture. Therefore, more efficient irrigation technologies, water harvesting and better crop selection must be encouraged.

Diversification: promotion of high value crops (HVCs) and livestock

High value crops

Encourage diversification to HVCs: Design an incentive mechanism to wean farmers away from cereal crops to HVCs. The area under fruits and vegetables needs to increase by 5 per cent every year.

Establish regional production belts: As in the cluster-based approach, regional production belts for HVCs need to be identified and supported through the Mission on Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH). Make SHCs mandatory in these belts.

Use of hybrid technology in vegetables: Shift to using hybrid varieties for vegetables. At present, 10 per cent of the cropped area under vegetables is under hybrids. Shifting to hybrids has the potential to increase yields by 1.5 to 3 times and provide a significant increase in income.

Rootstocks for production of fruits: Rootstock technology has shown the capacity to double production and be resilient to climate stress. Measures should be taken to standardize and

promote usage of rootstocks to produce fruits. *Smart horticulture*: There have been pockets of success spread throughout the country, using techniques such as high-density plantation, protected cultivation and organic production. These methods need to be documented and replicated at the national level. It is recommended that a mission on smart horticulture may be setup to identify and promote new technologies. This mission must work in synergy with various agricultural research institutions in the country.

Strengthen market for organic products: Targeted efforts to create a market for niche products are recommended. Spices unique to a state can be branded by the Spice Board to encourage the production of organic spices. *Convert agricultural waste*: Recycling and utilizing agricultural waste would give a further fillip to farmers' income.

Livestock and fisheries

Breed indigenous cattle with exotic breeds: Breeding of indigenous cattle with exotic breeds needs to be encouraged to arrest the issue of inbreeding. This will enable greater gene coverage, reduced diseases and greater resilience to climate change.

Promote and develop bull mother farms: Employing multiple ovulation and embryo transfer technologies, these farms can significantly enhance milk productivity through the supply of cattle with enhanced milk potential to farmers.

Village level procurement systems: Installing of bulk milk chillers and facilities for high value conversion of milk are needed to promote dairy in states. The private sector should be incentivized to create a value chain for HVCs and dairy products at the village level.

Convergence of schemes in fisheries sector: Integrate the Blue Revolution scheme with MGNREGA. Ponds created through MGNREGA should be used to promote aquaculture and can be used to create potential clusters as well. *Capacity building for fish breeders and farmers*: Establish fish co-operative organisations and run village level schemes in coordination with *panchayats* to disseminate best practices and research.

Housing for All:

Current Status:

The President's clarion call to ensure the provision of houses to every family remains the key objective of the 'Housing for All' scheme. Following this announcement, the government has made it clear that one of its key priorities is to ensure safe and affordable housing for all. This mandate also includes up gradation of slums. Recent estimates of the Ministry of Rural Development and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs indicate a housing shortage of nearly 3 crore units in rural areas and 1.2 crore units in urban areas. Achieving the goal of 'Housing for All' will be a big step in the realization of New India Vision 2022 that will trigger economic growth and create millions of jobs for skilled as well as unskilled workers. Moreover, given the forward and backward

linkages of the housing sector, the focus on affordable housing could bring rich dividends for other distressed sectors such as steel and cement. Since 1985, the Government of India has been implementing a rural housing scheme for families living below the poverty line (BPL). A new scheme, the *Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana* (Gramin – PMAY-G) was launched in 2016. This scheme now provides per unit assistance of INR 1, 20,000/- in plain areas and INR 1, 30,000/- in hilly states/ targeted the sanctioning of 25 lakh houses and completing the construction of at least half the sanctioned strength. Against the mission target of 1.2 crore, 44.36 lakh houses have been sanctioned and 4.01 lakh houses had been completed by the end of March 2018.

Constraints:

The 'Housing for All' scheme faces the following key constraints:

- Lack of access to finance from formal financial institutions
- Long-drawn out, multi-level approval system in urban areas in a large majority of municipal jurisdictions
- For several categories of houses or those in particular locations, these delays are common even where a single window system has reportedly been introduced.
- Limited private sector participation in affordable housing schemes in urban areas
- Predominance of conventional construction practices that result in delayed progress in urban areas and the limited use of pre-fabricated and pre-engineered materials.
- Limited access to suitable land banks for affordable housing projects
- Continued rise in the number of slum dwellers.
- Insufficient number of trained masons despite the operation of the Construction Sector Skills Development Council since 2013
- Capacity constraints in urban local bodies (ULBs) to formulate and design mass housing projects integrated action plan districts/difficult areas. This support is provided to homeless families or to those who live in *kutcha* houses as per the Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC), 2011 data.

PMAY-G is converged with *Swachh Bharat Mission* (Gramin) and *Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme* (MGNREGS) for the construction of sanitary toilets and also to provide the unskilled wage component.

Conclusion:

Under PMAY-G, it was proposed to build one crore rural houses in three years between 2016-17 and 2018-19. The estimated financial requirement for the construction of one crore houses in these three years is INR 81,975 crore. During 2016-17, about 32.14 lakh houses were constructed. For the financial year 2017-18, the government set a target of

completing 51 lakh houses; 51.38 lakh houses had been sanctioned and 44.54 lakh houses (i.e., 87.29 per cent of the target) had been completed by the end of March 2018. Under the *Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana* (Urban- PMAY-U), the mission aims to achieve the objective of ‘Housing for All’ by 2022 through its four pillars – a) in-situ slum redevelopment; b) affordable housing through a credit linked subsidy scheme; c) affordable housing in partnership between public and private agencies and d) subsidy for beneficiary- led individual house construction or enhancement. For financial year 2017-18, the PMAY (Urban)

However, to achieve the target of doubling farmers’ income by 2022-23, we need to shift our focus from agriculture to agribusiness. The current government has taken several steps to improve private investment in agriculture. 100 per cent foreign direct investment (FDI) was allowed in 2016-17. Similarly, the SAMPADA scheme targets creation of food processing infrastructure. The budget allocation to the food processing sector was doubled in the Union Budget 2018-19. Introduction of the Model Agricultural Produce and Livestock Marketing Act (2017), Model Contract Farming Act, new guidelines for agro-forestry are some other key policy initiatives taken over the past few years.

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