

# Planning and Implementation of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in Haryana

A Process Study

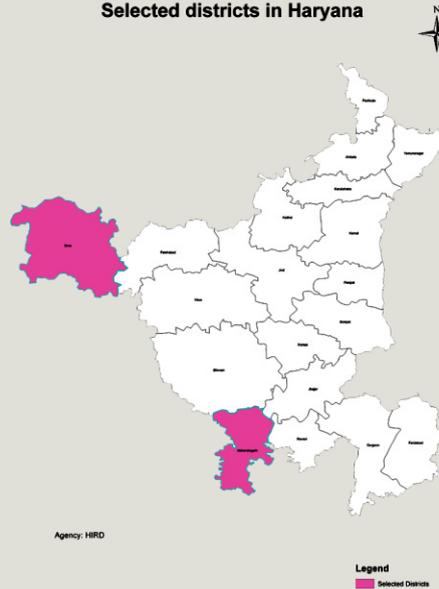
S Kaushil

S M S Yadav

P Durgaprasad



Selected districts in Haryana



National Institute of Rural Development  
Hyderabad

&

Haryana Institute of Rural Development  
Haryana

# Vision

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*“To facilitate the rural development efforts with particular emphasis and focus on the rural poor by improving the knowledge, skills and attitudes of rural development officials and non-officials through organising training, workshops and seminars”.*

Monograph Series - 5



# Planning and Implementation of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in Haryana: A Process Study

S Kaushil

S M S Yadav

P Durgaprasad

**National Institute of Rural Development**, Hyderabad  
and  
**Haryana Institute Of Rural Development**, Haryana

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February, 2010

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Published by : **National Institute of Rural Development**

Rajendranagar, Hyderabad - 500 030. Telefax : 24008473

E-mail : [ciec@nird.gov.in](mailto:ciec@nird.gov.in) Website : [www.nird.org.in](http://www.nird.org.in)

Printed at : Vaishnavi Laser Graphics, Hyderabad. Ph. 040 27552178

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## **Preface**

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), presently known as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, is an unprecedented intervention by the Government in reforming and reenergising the (rural) labour market both by way of correcting the prevailing anomalies and in providing livelihood security to millions of rural poor. Most of the rural poor are largely dependent on the prospects of agriculture sector which is facing the problems of productivity in absolute and relative terms. The promised 100 days of guaranteed wage employment per household per annum at the stipulated minimum wages would not only reduce the rampant under and unemployment in rural areas, but also impact the stagnant wage structure for the rural unskilled workers.

The rights based NREGS emphasises on community participation in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation (Social Audit) of the programme. It also aims at enabling the local bodies to move towards good governance through the transparency and accountability mechanisms. Elaborate institutional arrangements have to be made to realise not only the objectives of the NREGA but also to make the formal (PRIs) and informal institutions vibrant. Thus, the efficacy of the institutional performance and active participation of the community determine the overall effectiveness of NREGS.

The Centre for Wage Employment and Poverty Alleviation (CWEPA), created in the context of the NREGS in January 2008 has taken up a process study of NREGS to document the Planning and Implementation arrangements in 11 States (Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, J&K, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Sikkim and Uttarakhand) to understand the problems and factors influencing the differential performance across and within the regions. The CWEPA has involved the willing State Institutes of Rural Development and reputed Research Institutions to participate in this 11-State study with a view to building a network of institutional alliance to examine various thematic issues relating to NREGS on a regular basis.

NIRD has designed the study, data collection instruments, sampling design and data analysis plan. Besides the field study initiatives of CWEPA, the partner institutions have also taken the responsibility of conducting the field study in collaboration with NIRD and are associated with report writing. Pre and post-study workshops were conducted to validate the study design and instruments. A post-study working was also done to consolidate learning and agree upon the key areas of reporting and suggested action for improved implementation of the NREGS. We hope that the findings of the State-specific studies and suggested action points would benefit the delivery system to enhance the overall effectiveness of NREGS in the respective States.

**K. Hanumantha Rao**  
Prof. & Head (CWEPA)

## **Acknowledgements**

We place on record our sincere thanks to Shri V.S. Sampath, IAS, former Director General for entrusting us with this important assignment of carrying out a process study on Planning and Implementation of NREGS in 11 States. We are grateful to Shri B.K. Sinha, former Director General, NIRD and Shri K.N.Kumar, Deputy Director General for their guidance, comments and encouragement for publishing these study reports for wider sharing with the development professionals.

We are thankful to our partner institution, i.e. 'Haryana Institute of Rural Development' for associating with the study and in particular to Dr. Surat Singh, Director for evincing active interest and providing guidance to the faculty members, and in the overall making of this report.

Dr. K. Hanumantha Rao, Prof. & Head (CWEPA) has provided us valuable comments and we would like to express our thanks for encouragement and his support.

Special thanks are due to District Programme Coordinators of Sirsa and Mahendragarh, the sample study districts for their support in organising the fieldwork. We take this opportunity to thank the Programme Officers, the Elected Representatives and the workers in particular for their cooperation in providing data and sharing their views and experiences.

Ms. K. Jayasree has provided able technical support in data processing. Ms. K. Rajya Lakshmi has taken the burden of typing the manuscripts and also the final report. We thank them profusely.

Study Team

## Executive Summary

- \* The report processes, analyses and summarises the official and people's perceptions as well as the research team's observations as per the NIRD's prescribed formats and parameters. It brings out the strengths as well as weaknesses of the operationalisation of NREGS in Haryana, points to the evident as well as perceived reasons for the same, and puts forth some concluding observations, suggestions and prescriptions for sprucing up the process of implementation of NREGS in the State, for which the report does indeed find both the need and the scope.
- \* The State government should at the earliest constitute the State Employment Guarantee Scheme Council and appoint in the NREGS districts DPCs/Addl. DPCs at the district level and POs at the block level exclusively to operationalise and manage the NREGS.
- \* These DPCs, ADPCs and POs should be equipped with adequate knowledge, skills, attitudes and capabilities required for the effective operationalisation of the Scheme in accordance with their respective jurisdictions, responsibilities and roles. This means that they must go through a rigorous orientation-cum-training programme at some national and/or state level institutions.
- \* The ICT-enabled, technical, financial and administrative support personnel should also be similarly identified, trained/equipped and assigned to this district and block level officers.
- \* The prevailing problem of shortage of BDPOs, JEs and Gram Sachivs needs particularly to be addressed and the shortages made up so that each block has its BDPO, each group of 2-3 villages has at least one Gram Sachiv and each group of 5-10 villages has at least one JE. Such provisioning of these personnel is, indeed, most critical to the effective working of the Scheme, given its special nature and specific operations.

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- \* Suitably oriented and trained *Rozgar Sahayaks* and *Mates* should also be appointed as per provisions for the NREGS.
- \* Financial provisions for the appointment of all these personnel should be included in the central component and auxiliary provisions of the NREGS. These funds should fully and optimally be used by the State government.
- \* Top priority needs to be given to the IEC activities provided for in the Scheme. The study found a rather depressing state of affairs as regards the awareness levels not only among the common villagers and target beneficiaries but also among the elected representatives, the *Gram Sachivs*, some block and district level officials and NGO representatives operating in the area.
- \* There is urgent need for capacity-building of different categories of stakeholders to enable them to cope effectively with their new responsibilities. Special drives in this regard should, therefore, be designed and organised.
- \* Capacity of concerned officials and functionaries needs to be strengthened in the use of ICT applications such as software for data entry compiling, transmitting and retrieving of data/records relating to NREGS at GP, block and district levels and updating of related web portals and their networking with the designated sites of the MoRD under the Scheme.
- \* The most critical and, indeed, the first and foremost requirement for the success of NREGS is the awareness-generation among the rural masses and target beneficiaries about the aims, the provisions, the entitlements and the reach of not only the NREGA but also the RTI and Panchayati Raj Acts and their specific rights and entitlements under these.
- \* Even more critical for the real success of the NREGS is the need for mobilisation of the rural masses in general, and the target beneficiaries in particular, so that they do actually come forward to

claim and obtain their rightful benefits under the NREGA and various other schemes and enactments.

- \* Community-based Monitoring and Social Auditing of NREGS must be introduced/strengthened. The present institutional framework for this purpose should be properly strengthened.
- \* Of the total households, only 33.23 per cent households had applied for registration under REGS. However, the registration percentage was higher in district Sirsa than district Mahendragarh due to higher level of awareness among the people in the former district. The GPs have issued job cards to all the registered households.
- \* Within the registered households more than 56 per cent households were SCs. The proportion of registered SC households was higher in district Sirsa as compared to district Mahendragarh. In some of the blocks of district Sirsa, the percentage of registered SC households was even higher at 75.
- \* Out of the total employment generated under REGS, over 60 per cent of employment was availed of by SCs and 31 per cent by women. Between the REGS sample districts, only marginal differences were noted in employment generated for SCs, women and others in terms of proportionate figures, though district Sirsa performed better both category-wise and in terms of absolute numbers.
- \* District Mahendragarh performed much better than district Sirsa in terms of percentage of households completing 100 days of employment. However, overall in Haryana, only 11.08 per cent participating households completed 100 days of employment under REGS. This demonstrates both the positive factor of availability of alternative employment opportunities for rural labour and the negative factor of sluggishness of the authorities in implementing REGS by way of mobilising workers for seeking employment under the REGS. Equally important is the point of the method allotment of 'works' and unequal distribution of 'work' on the part of the supervisors and sarpanches.

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- \* In terms of financial allocations for REGS, district Sirsa is far ahead of district Mahendragarh but in terms of utilisation of funds, Mahendragarh performed better with 95.20 per cent fund utilisation whereas district Sirsa could utilise only 67.87 per cent funds. For Haryana as a whole, the fund utilisation was 77.18 per cent.
- \* Overall in the State, 64.81 per cent funds were utilised for unskilled wage component, 2.34 per cent on semi-skilled and skilled wage component, 31.34 per cent on material component and only 1.43 per cent on contingencies. Low expenditure on contingencies implies in some measure the inability of the implementing authorities in making use of computers, appointing computer assistants, creating a Management Information System etc. Funds utilisation for material component was well within the permissible limit of 40 per cent. However, the utilisation percentage of funds on wage component was higher in district Mahendragarh (73.26 per cent) as compared to district Sirsa (62.72 per cent).
- \* As far as the number of works completed and types of assets created under REGS is concerned, 1652 works were undertaken during 2006-07, of which only 985 (59.62 per cent) works were completed before April 2007. However, district Mahendragarh performed better in terms of completing works undertaken during 2006-07 before April 2007. Most of the works undertaken under REGS during this year were in the nature of water conservation and rural connectivity. Some works of renovation of traditional water bodies, land development, micro-irrigation, drought proofing and flood control were also undertaken. The highest proportion of expenditure was incurred on rural connectivity works (44.99 per cent of funds) followed by water conservation works (32.76 per cent of funds).
- \* The degree of awareness and active involvement of Panchayati Raj Institutions at district and block level in decision-making and implementation of REGS is not significant, with some exceptions

here and there. At Gram Panchayat level too, only the Sarpanch tends to dominate the show.

- \* Almost all the workers got work within the radius of their Gram Panchayats.
- \* Workers got work on piece-rate in general.
- \* Drinking water and first aid box facilities were generally provided at worksites. Creche facility and shade facility were provided in a much better way in district Mahendragarh than in district Sirsa, though there were deficiencies on these counts in both the districts.
- \* Vigilance and Monitoring Committees mostly exist on paper. Their participation in REGS is generally insignificant.
- \* Awareness level about RTI is also very low among the respondents.
- \* Generally, the impact of REGS on unskilled wages in other works, i.e., open market, was in favour of the workers. REGS has also resulted in some reduction in the migration of adult workers in search of work, notwithstanding the point that a good number of them are already immigrant workers in the State.
- \* Involvement of NGOs/CBOs in REGS has been very low. This aspect needs to be strengthened to make the rights-based REGS more successful.

## CHAPTER I

# Introduction

### **Overview of Economy, Poverty and Unemployment**

Having realised long back that the agriculture sector alone cannot help solve the problem of rural poverty and unemployment on a sustained basis, successive governments have initiated several programmes to directly provide employment and tackle the problems of rural poverty and unemployment. Over time, the Governments have taken up mainly two types of employment generation programmes, viz., Wage Employment Programmes and Self-Employment Programmes to alleviate poverty, unemployment and underemployment.

In September 2005, the Government enacted the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), 2005, which provides a legal guarantee for one hundred days of employment in every financial year to any rural household whose adult members are willing to do unskilled manual work at the statutory minimum wage. To translate this 'right to work' concept emanating from the NREG Act, 2005 into a reality, the Government launched the Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (REGS) in February, 2006 initially in 200 poorest and backward districts (out of the total 593 districts in the country) in 27 States with the aim to cover all the districts in the next five years under the Scheme. The REGS is a demand-driven comprehensive wage employment Scheme, which replaces the allocation-based SGRY in a phased manner. During the financial year 2007-08, the Government has further extended the REGS to another 130 districts of the country.

In Haryana, the REGS was launched initially in Sirsa and Mahendargarh districts in the first phase in February 2006. It has now been extended to two more districts, viz., Ambala and Mewat, in the second phase during 2007-08. Besides providing 100 days of guaranteed employment to every

rural household, the REGS also aims at generating productive assets, protection of soil and water, reduction in rural-urban migration, fostering social equity, etc.

**Area and Population :** Haryana is a small State spread over 44,212 sq. km. comprising 119 blocks and twenty districts. There are 6,955 villages of which 6764 are inhabited villages.

As per Census 2001, the total population of Haryana was 211.45 lakhs including 113.64 lakhs of rural population. It witnessed a rural population growth of 2.07 per cent per annum during 1991-2001 and, presently, 71.08 per cent of its total population resides in rural areas. About 40.91 lakh persons belong to scheduled castes and they constitute 19.35 per cent of the total population. About 67.91 per cent population is literate/educated.

The overall sex ratio was 861 as against the national figure of 933. The sex ratio has declined continuously since 1981 and was at its lowest during Census 2001.

**Disabled Population :** The total number of the disabled persons in REGS district Sirsa is 34,312, which is almost double the figure of 18,912 disabled persons in REGS district Mahendragarh. REGS is seen as a ray of hope for disabled persons as many of them cannot get an opportunity to work under other schemes/elsewhere in the State/Country.

**Poverty and Migration :** Rural poverty was 28.0 per cent in 1993-94 and it dropped to 13.6 per cent in 2004-05. Chronic poverty still exists in 1.5 per cent of the households. The rate of migration from rural to urban areas is 29.3 per cent.

**Land Utilisation :** During 2004-05, the net area sown (NAS) in the State was 35,28,000 ha and 28,97,000 ha area was sown more than once during the year. Thus, a total of 64,25,000 ha area was under crops. During 2004-05, 10 per cent area was under forest, 4.8 per cent under fallow land, 1.5 per cent area was 'other uncultivable land excluding fallow land' and 12.0 per cent area was not available for cultivation.

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**Infrastructure Index (CMIE) :** In 2000, the infrastructure index (CMIE) all India as base (=100) and 133.12 for Haryana. It was 101.54 and 140.14 for the two REGS districts Mahendragarh and Sirsa, respectively.

**State Domestic Product and Per Capita Income :** GDP per capita at constant prices for Haryana was Rs. 19323 in 2004-05. GDP growth rate for the period 1997-98 to 2004-05 was 7.29 per cent per annum. Share of Agriculture in GDP was 34.97 per cent in 1997-98, which came down to 27.66 per cent in 2004-05. Per capita income at 1999-2000 prices was estimated at Rs. 35,044 in Haryana for 2004-05.

**Labour and Employment :** The total workforce during 2004-05 was 424 workers per thousand persons (522 male workers per thousand men and 317 female workers per thousand women). The workforce growth rate during the year 1994-2005 was 1.51 per cent per annum. About 50 per cent male workers and 91 per cent female workers are employed in agriculture. Manufacturing accounts for only 11.8 per cent of male workers and 3.60 per cent of female workers out of the respective total of male/female workforce.

Casual labour was 22.9 per cent in 1993-94, which dropped to 18.7 per cent in 2004-05. The unemployment rate (CDS approach) was 7.2 per cent for males and 3.4 per cent for females in 2004-05. The average number of days of employment per worker in 2004-05 was 178 days for males and 69 days for females.

Wages paid to agricultural labourers for a normal working day of eight hours and skilled male labourers in 2006 were as follows:

**Table 1 : Information sheet on Haryana**

S.No.	Indicators	
1	2	
1.	GDP per capita (Constant Prices) (Rs.) 2004-05	19323
2.	GDP growth rate (1997-98 to 2004-05) % p a	7.29

(Contd...)

**Table 1 : (Contd...)**

1	2	
3.	Population growth (1991-2001) % p a	2.07
4.	Workforce (Per thousand persons) (2004-05)	
	- Males	522
	- Females	317
	- Persons	424
5.	Workforce growth (1993-94 to 2004-05) % p a	1.40
6.	Distribution of workforce (2004-05) % (PS+SS)	
a)	Agriculture	
	- Males	49.4
	- Females	90.6
b)	Mining & Quarrying	
	- Males	0.20
	- Females	0.00
c)	Manufacturing	
	- Males	11.8
	- Females	3.60
d)	Electricity, Water etc.	
	- Males	0.80
	- Females	0.10
e)	Construction	
	- Males	12.6
	- Females	0.50
f)	Trade, Hotel & Restaurant	
	- Males	11.1
	- Females	1.10
g)	Transport, Storage & Communications	
	- Males	6.20
	- Females	0.20
h)	Other Services	
	- Males	7.90
	- Females	3.90
7.	Wage rate (Rs/day) – Males – Public works – 2004-05	-
	Other works – 2004-05	75.26
8.	Wage rate (Rs/day) – Females – Public works- 2004-05	—
	– Other works- 2004-05	59.34
9.	Casual Labour 1993-94 %	22.9
	2004-05 %	18.7

(Contd...)

**Table 1 : (Contd...)**

1	2		
10.	Unemployment rate (CDS) 2004-05	- Males %	7.2
		- Females %	3.4
11.	Average No. of days of employment Per worker 2004-05		
		- Males	178
		- Females	69
12.	Rural Poverty (%) - 1993-94		28.0
	- 2004-05		13.6
13.	Infrastructure index (2000) (CMIE) (All-India = 100)		
	Haryana		133.12
	Mahendragarh		101.54
	Sirsa		140.14
14.	Migration from rural to urban areas (2001)		29.3

**Table 2 : Wages for male agricultural labourers during 2006**

S.No.	Type of Agricultural Activity/Work	Wages (Rs. per day per person)
1	Ploughing	111.29
2	Sowing	110.94
3	Weeding	97.96
4	Harvesting	113.10
5	Picking Cotton	96.67
6	Other Agricultural Operations	99.77

**Table 3 : Wages for skilled male labourers during 2006**

S.No.	Type of Skilled Work	Wages (Rs. per day per person)
1	Blacksmith	173.17
2	Carpenter	179.74

### **National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme - Haryana**

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 calls for the formulation of a Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (REGS) by each State government within six months of the date of commencement of the Act. Each State REG Scheme is required to have minimum features specified in Schedule-I and Schedule-II of the NREG Act, 2005. The Central Government has also issued operational guidelines for NREGA Act, 2005 to facilitate the States in designing and implementing REGS in their respective States as per the State-specific economic, social and institutional context.

In January 2007, the Haryana Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (HREGS) under NREG Act, 2005 came into force. The HREG Scheme 2007 primarily aims at providing not less than one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household in the rural areas covered under the Scheme. The secondary objective of the Scheme is to create durable community, social and economic assets and infrastructural development in rural areas. The Scheme is implemented as a Centrally sponsored Scheme on cost sharing basis between the Centre and State Governments. The entire cost of wages of unskilled manual workers and 75 per cent of the cost of material and wages of skilled and semi-skilled workers, administrative expenses, worksite facilities etc. are to be borne by Central Government. The State Government bears only 25 per cent of the cost of material and wages of skilled and semi-skilled workers and defrays the cost of unemployment allowances (payable under the Scheme) and State level administrative expenses.

### **Issues**

**Following are the major issues examined in the study :**

- i) **Awareness about NREGA:** What strategies have been adopted to build awareness about NREGA, 'Right to Information' Act and 'Social Audit' among people, elected representatives, and officials? How effective are these strategies?

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- ii) **Registration, Issue of Job Cards and Applications for Wage Employment:** What roles the Gram Panchayats (GP), officials and civil society organisations have played in these activities? Irregularities, if any, noticed in the process?
- iii) **Planning:** Whether the Sarpanch and Secretary of GPs have received training for preparing action plans / shelf of works / projects? Could GPs prepare the development plans in a participatory manner? To what extent these works address the causal factors of poverty? Whether gender concerns and problems of the disabled are adequately taken care of in identification of works and provision of facilities? Whether Gram Sabhas are held to finalise the activities / works? Whether the officials could workout the cost and technical estimates in time? Is Programme Officer (PO) well equipped in performing the assigned tasks without delays? Whether a shelf of works / projects (technically approved and administratively sanctioned) are kept in pipeline for each GP?
- iv) **Implementation:** What arrangements are contemplated at various levels of administration to ensure smooth functioning of NREGA? What mechanisms are in use to give publicity to the works including associated cost estimates and whether they could ensure transparency? Are works planned match the magnitude of registration? Are all the applicants provided with work? Are there private contractors engaged in execution of works? Whether there is any (undue) delay in execution / inspection / measurement of works? Whether the applicants were provided with employment within 15 days? Have the implementing agencies provided the recommended facilities at worksites? What is the extent of participation of women and the physically challenged in the works? Whether 'piece-rate contract' of certain works is disadvantageous to (women) workers in realising the minimum wages stipulated? Whether job cards are duly filled in with all the particulars correctly and getting updated regularly? How fool proof is the institutional

arrangement for payment of wages? Are the wage payment methods and amounts accurate and as prescribed?

- v) **Monitoring and Social Audit:** Whether Gram Panchayat / Gram Sabha is monitoring the works? Are the officials adhering to the monitoring schedules prescribed? How effective are the Vigilance and Monitoring Committees (VMCs)? Whether the reports of VMCs are presented to Gram Sabha?

What are the practices followed for Social Audit? Whether Gram Panchayat is aware of the 'mandatory agenda' for the Social Audit to be conducted by the Gram Sabha? What are the problems in adhering to the same? How responsive are these agencies / authorities in making the proceedings / documents accessible to the public? Whether there is i) display of information on works including current status, sanction and utilisation of funds, list of applications; ii) Proper maintenance of records, registers and measurement books; and iii) arrangements for disbursement of wages in the presence of GP members and VMC? Whether any physical audit of the works undertaken? What role the local institutions and community have been playing?

- vi) **Transparency and Accountability :** Whether the State Employment Guarantee Council (SEGC) has prepared the key documents\* and kept the same in public domain? Whether the audit reports of GPs were processed and acted upon? What type of irregularities were reported and corrective actions initiated? How effective is the 'grievance redressal system'? Whether the implementing agency should also be made responsible for grievance redressal? What is the public perception about the (performed) role and responsibilities of elected representatives and government functionaries in different stages of the programme implementation?

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\* Data relating to registration, job cards issued, list of people who sought employment and were provided, receipt and utilisation of funds, sanctioning and progress of works, cost estimates and expenditure on different works, employment generated, copies of muster rolls and reports of local committees.

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##### **Objectives of the Study**

- Study the effectiveness of the processes adopted for generating awareness about NREGA, RTI Act and Social Audit among stakeholders;
- Assess the usefulness of the institutions and mechanisms chosen for sensitising people in regard to registration, issue of job cards and employment;
- Ascertain the extent to which the mechanisms have facilitated participatory planning and selection of works ;
- Review the procedures for implementation of works including provision of employment, works measurement and payment of wages;
- Examine the nature and quality of community participation and inter- institutional coordination in planning, implementation, monitoring and Social Audit of the works / projects;
- Analyse the problems in utilisation of Central and State funds – administrative and programme expenditure;
- Study the quality of assets created and their utility to the poor / weaker sections / others;
- Assess the tangible benefits of NREGS to the people in terms of employment and (minimum) wages, 'right to work', 'right to minimum wages', 'right to information' and accountability of development functionaries to people;
- Identify the major factors influencing the performance of NREGS with special focus on geographic, socio-economic and politico-cultural aspects that explain differential performance in the study areas;
- Outline the broad direction in which the NREGS is moving with specific reference to the national guidelines, state action plans, institutional arrangements, delivery systems / people's views, current achievements and future course of action.

### **Approach, Sampling Design and Profiles of the Study Area**

To study the above stated objectives and also to examine the issues referred to earlier, information was elicited from various key stakeholders. Further, secondary data were also collected from the office records and compiled and analysed. Secondary data for the reference period, i.e., financial year 2006-07, were collected from official registers, reports and other records available at State, District, Block and Gram Panchayat levels. Some secondary data were also collected from other sources such as journals, newspapers, internet, etc.

Primary data were mainly collected by interviewing the respondents at different levels as per the Scheme outlined in Table 5. Some of the primary (qualitative) data were gathered through Focused Group Discussions (FGD) too.

The FGDs were conducted by the research team (one in each GP). Two FGDs were conducted exclusively for beneficiary women workers of REGS and the other two FGDs were conducted for mixed group of beneficiaries and non-participating workers of REGS. Care was taken to include only those non-official persons in FGDs, who were not otherwise interviewed.

### **Sampling**

Multi-stage sampling was done as follows:

**Selection of District at State Level :** During the financial year 2006-07, the REGS was under implementation in Haryana in only two districts – Sirsa and Mahendragarh. The Haryana Institute of Rural Development (HIRD) Research Team has selected both the districts for the study (see State, district, block and village maps).

**Selection of the Block at District Level :** District Sirsa comprises seven blocks and district Mahendragarh five blocks. At this stage of sampling, two blocks were randomly selected from each category of blocks i.e., high and low performance blocks. Performance is judged by utilisation of funds

and average number of days of employment per household. Block Sirsa (high performing) and block Nathusari Chaupta (low performing) were selected in district Sirsa, whereas block Nangal Chaudhary (high performing) and block Mahendragarh (low performing) were selected in district Mahendragarh.

**Selection of Gram Panchayat at Block Level** : One Gram Panchayat was selected randomly from each sample block. Gram Panchayat Kotli in block Sirsa, Randhawa in block Nathusari Chaupta, Musnauta in block Nangal Chaudhary and Bhurjat in block Mahendragarh were selected.

**Selection of Respondents at Different Levels** : Besides collecting secondary data at State, district, block and Gram Panchayat levels, officials/elected representatives/beneficiaries were selected as per the following format for collection of primary data:

**Table 4 : Scheme of selection of respondents at different levels**

Level	No. of Respondents	Selected Respondents		
		Officials	Elected Representatives	Others
1	2	3	4	5
State	NIL	FCDP (could not be contacted due to his transfer)	Member of SEGC (SEGC not constituted during 2006-07)	
District	10	DC/ADC	President, Vice-president, One SC Member and One Female Member of ZP	NGO Officials
Block	20	BDPO	President, Vice-president, One SC	

(Contd...)

**Table 4 : (Contd...)**

1	2	3	4	5
			Member and One Female Member of PS	
GP	178 (includ- ing 59 Respondents of focused group discussions)	G.P. Secretary	Sarpanch, One SC Panch and One Woman Panch	<i>Rojgar Sahayak, Beneficiary Workers &amp; Non-part- icipating Workers of REGS</i>
Total	208			

To ease and systematise the task of data collection, the following (23) schedules were used to collect primary/secondary data :

**Table 5 : Type of schedules canvassed**

S. No.	Schedule Code	Title of the Schedule
1	2	3
1	S-1	Schedule for Officials of State Employment Guarantee Council
2	S-2	Schedule for State Officials
3	S-3	Financial Allocation and Utilisation (2006-07) under REGS at State Level
4	S-4	Physical Performance (2006-07) under REGS at State Level
5	S-5	Asset Creation (2006-07) at State Level
6	D-1	Schedule for District Programme Coordinator
7	D-2	Schedule for Elected Representatives of District Panchayat

(Contd...)

**Table 5 : (Contd...)**

1	2	3
8	D-3	Financial Allocation and Utilisation (2006-07) under REGS at District Level
9	D-4	Physical Performance (2006-07) under REGS at District Level
10	D-5	Asset Creation (2006-07) at District Level
11	B-1	Schedule for Programme Officer (BDO)
12	B-2	Schedule for Elected Representatives of Intermediate Panchayat (IP)/Block
13	B-3	Financial Allocation and Utilisation (2006-07) under REGS at Block Level
14	B-4	Physical Performance (2006-07) under REGS at Block Level
15	B-5	Asset Creation (2005-06) at Block Level
16	G-1	Schedule for Gram Panchayat (Elected Representatives/ GP Secretary)
17	G-2	Schedule for Workers of REGS at GP Level
18	G-3	Profile of GP
19	G-4	Schedule for Focused Group Discussions (FGDs)
20	G-5	Financial Allocation and Utilisation (2006-07) under REGS at GP Level
21	G-6	Physical Performance (2006-07) under REGS at GP Level
22	G-7	Asset Creation (2006-07) at GP Level
23	N-1	Schedule for NGO/CBO Representatives

### **Profile of Study Area**

**Profile of Districts :** Districts Sirsa and Mahendergarh are the two sample districts where the study is carried out. District Sirsa is located at south-western end of Haryana bordering with State of Punjab in north and State of Rajasthan in west. District Mahendergarh is located in eastern-southern part of Haryana bordering with State of Rajasthan. Both the sample districts are drought-prone areas having low rainfall. Total area of district Sirsa is

4277 sq. kms. and total area of district Mahendergarh is 1899 sq. kms. Total number of inhabited villages are 321 in district Sirsa and 368 in district Mahendergarh.

As per census 2001, rural population of districts Sirsa and Mahendergarh is 8,23,184 and 7,02,885, respectively. Rural population constitutes 73.72 per cent of the total population in district Sirsa and 86.51 per cent of the total population in district Mahendergarh. District Sirsa witnessed 23.59 per cent increase in population since 1991 whereas district Mahendergarh witnessed only 19.16 per cent population increase since 1991. Twenty-eight per cent rural population is SC in district Sirsa whereas only 16 per cent rural population is SC in district Mahendergarh. There is no ST population in both the districts. Twenty-nine per cent rural population of district Sirsa is literate/educated whereas 36 per cent rural population of district Mahendergarh is literate/educated. Sex ratio in district Sirsa and Mahendergarh is 880 females per thousand males and 920 females per thousand males, respectively.

In rural areas of districts Sirsa and Mahendergarh, the total number of main workers is 2,81,514 and 1,75,851, respectively. Total number of marginal workers is 99,984 in district Sirsa and 1,41,801 in district Mahendergarh. Number of non-workers in rural areas of district Sirsa is 4,41,686 and 3,85,233 in district Mahendergarh as per census 2001. District Sirsa has 34312 physically challenged persons whereas district Mahendergarh has only 18,912 physically challenged persons as per census 2001.

In year 2003-04, net sown area (NSA) was considerably higher in district Sirsa (11 thousand hectares) as compared to district Mahendergarh (3 thousand hectares). Total number of cultivators was 1,78,000 in district Sirsa and 1,92,519 in district Mahendergarh. Total number of agricultural labourers was 1,13,357 in district Sirsa and 39,000 in district Mahendergarh.

**Profile of Blocks :** Blocks Narnaul, Ateli, Nangal Chaudhary, Mahendergarh and Kanina (total 6 blocks) constitute the district of Mahendergarh. Whereas, blocks Baragudha, Dabwali, Ellanabad, Nathusari Chopta, Odan, Rania and

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Sirsa (total 8 blocks) constitute the district of Sirsa. Blocks Nangal Chaudhary and Mahendergarh in district Mahendergarh and blocks Sirsa and Nathusari Chopta in district Sirsa are covered under the study.

Blocks Nangal Chaudhary and Mahendergarh are rain-deficit and agriculturally less developed blocks. Most of workers of these two blocks are dependent on mining and quarrying activities for livelihood in the hilly terrain of aravali mountain ranges.

Blocks Sirsa and Nathusari Chaupta are agriculturally better-off as compared to blocks Nangal Chaudhary and Mahendergarh. The workers of blocks Sirsa and Nathusari Chaupta are more dependent on farm related works. However, rainfall is deficit here too and the terrain is sandy and dry. Irrigation facilities are rather satisfactory and better in blocks of district Sirsa than those in the district Mahendergarh blocks.

**Profile of Gram Panchayats:** This section presents profiles of the four sample Gram Panchayats and outlines the process/performance of REGS at Gram Panchayat level.

### **Gram Panchayat Kotli**

Gram Panchayat Kotli is situated in block Sirsa of district Sirsa. The total Population of Kotli is 7642, out of which 74.28 per cent are SCs. Of the 1318 households of the Gram Panchayat, 82.01 per cent are landless, 15.93 per cent are small farmers and 2.04 per cent are marginal farmers. About 63.88 per cent households are 'very poor' and are *Antyodaya* PDS cardholders. Another 19.87 per cent poor households are BPL families. Only 12.44 per cent households in the village are above the poverty line.

The net sown area in Kotli is 3165 acres, of which 88.94 per cent is irrigated. Twelve per cent of the net sown area is sown more than once in a year and 87.99 per cent area is irrigated more than once a year. Tube wells and canals are major sources of irrigation. Wheat is grown in approximately 2765 acres. Cotton and paddy are other important crops grown in the village (1250 acres and 1375 acres, respectively). Gwar, bajra and jowar are also grown.

Employment opportunities in the Gram Panchayat are generally not adequate in the months of December to March. During lean employment seasons, poor workers migrate to other areas in search of wage employment. This of course, is the crunch point.

Adult male workers get daily wage of Rs.120 in lean season and Rs.150 in peak season in agriculture. In non-agricultural works such as digging of canals, wage employment in cities etc., adult male workers earn Rs.150-200 wage per day. However, adult female workers get lower wages compared to the adult male workers. Adult female workers get Rs.80-100/day in lean season and Rs.100/day in peak season in agriculture. Women workers get generally Rs.100-150 wage per day in non-agricultural works. There are 10 child labourers in the village, who generally work in grocery shops and tailor shops.

Kotli has its own primary school and *anganwadi* centre. The nearest high school, primary health centre, bank, cooperative, bus stand and post office are situated at 2 km distance from Kotli. The nearest *Krishi Vigyan Kendra* and the nearest town are situated as far as 14 km away from the village. Drinking water and electricity facilities are available in the village. Under REGS, a total fund of Rs.14,23,267 was available during 2006-07 in the GP. The GP has utilised 83.13 per cent of REGS funds before April 2007. Out of the total utilised fund of Rs.1183212, (95.16 per cent) was spent on unskilled wage component, 66.64 per cent fund for digging of ponds and the remaining (33.36 per cent) fund was used for constructing kachha village roads.

Of the 1318 households of Gram Panchayat Kotli, 69.80 per cent households were registered and issued with job cards under REGS. Of these registered households, only 532 households demanded wage employment under REGS and the GP has provided wage employment to 427 households (80.26 per cent) before April 2007. About 11758 persondays of employment was generated under REGS during 2006-07 in GP Kotli; an average of 27.6 days per household. Of the total employment generated, SCs (99 per cent) and women (73.67 per cent) have benefited largely.

### **Gram Panchayat Randhawa**

Gram Panchayat Randhawa is situated in block Nathusari Chaupta of Sirsa district. The total population of Randhawa is 2850, out of which 34.45 per cent is SC. Out of the 910 households, 39.56 per cent are landless, 15.38 per cent are small farmers and 5.49 per cent are marginal farmers. Only 550 families have PDS cards, 48.35 per cent households have *Antyodaya* cards, 10.76 per cent households have BPL cards and only 1.3 per cent households have APL cards. About 39.56 per cent of the households have not applied for any kind of PDS card.

The net sown area is 2450 acres, of which 61.22 per cent is irrigated. About 40.81 per cent of the net sown area is sown more than once in a year. Tube wells and canals are the major sources of irrigation. Wheat is sown in approximately 1200 acres of land. Cotton, gwar, bajra and mustard are sown approximately in 900, 800, 600, and 300 acres, respectively. But the employment opportunities are generally not adequate in the months of December to March and June-July. However, the seasonal unemployment normally does not result in migration of workers here.

Adult male workers get Rs. 150 wage per day in lean season and Rs. 200 per day in peak season in agricultural activities like wheat harvesting and cotton picking. Adult male workers normally get Rs. 70-100 wage in non-agricultural works. Women workers get lesser wage per day as compared to male workers for the same kind of works. Women workers get Rs. 100 wage per day in lean season and Rs. 130 per day in peak season in agricultural works. Women workers get Rs. 50-80 wage per day in non-agricultural works. Lean season in agriculture is generally from June to July and from December to March. There are nine child labourers in the village who generally are engaged in cotton picking and wheat harvesting activities.

The GP has its own primary school, high school, primary health centre and *anganwadi* centre. The nearest town and bank are situated 11 km away. The bus stand and cooperative are 3 km away and the *Krishi Vigyan Kendra*

is situated 14 km away. Drinking water and electricity facilities are available.

Under the REGS, a total fund of Rs. 690863 was available in 2006-07 to the GP Randhawa. Of course, it utilised only 76.45 per cent of the REGS funds before April 2007. Of the total utilised funds, 87.04 per cent was used for digging village ponds and the rest (12.95 per cent) was used for construction of CC Gali.

Out of the total (550) households of GP Randhawa, only 315 households (57.27 per cent) had applied for registration under REGS and the GP issued job cards to 218 households (69.20 per cent of 315). By April 07, 44.44 per cent of job cardholder families had applied to the GP for wage employment. However, the GP had provided employment to 82.14 per cent of them before April 07. In sum, 4649 persondays of wage employment was generated in 2006-07 in Randhawa, out of which 69.90 per cent was availed of by SCs and 38.28 per cent by women; about 21 days of employment was provided for each participating household.

### **Gram Panchayat Bhurjat**

Gram Panchayat Bhurjat is situated in block Mahendragarh of district Mahendragarh. The total population of Bhurjat is 1800, out of which only 4.16 per cent is SC. There are 278 households in the village out of which 53.95 per cent are landless, 17.98 per cent are small farmers and 3.59 per cent are marginal farmers. All the households of the village have PDS cards but only 19.64 per cent households have BPL cards. Only 2.87 per cent households have *Antyodaya* cards.

The net sown area in GP Bhurjat is 300 acres, out of which 50 per cent is irrigated. This 50 per cent net sown area is irrigated more than once a year and is also sown more than once a year. Tube well is the only source of irrigation with no canal irrigation. Wheat and mustard are sown in about 100 acres, whereas bajra is sown in 60 acres, jau and maize each is sown in 20 acres.

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Employment opportunities are generally not adequate in the months of January, February and May and June. About 30 workers migrate to other places in search of employment. There are no child labourers here.

Adult male workers get Rs. 100 wage per day in lean season and Rs. 120 wage per day in peak season in agricultural works. The peak season in agricultural works generally occurs in March and April. In non-agricultural works, the male adult workers usually get the same wage as in agricultural works. As per the GP version, there is no disparity in wages between male and female workers either in agricultural or non-agricultural works.

Primary school, primary health centre and *Anganwadi* centre are situated in the village itself. Of course, the high school, bank, cooperative, post office and bus stop are 5 km away from Bhurjat. The nearest town and *Krishi Vigyan Kendra* are situated 13 km away from the village. Drinking water facility is available but the nearest electricity connection is 3 km away from the village.

Under the REGS, funds to the tune of Rs. 1254801.13 were available in 2006-07. The GP utilised 97.41 per cent of the REGS funds before April 2007. Out of the total utilised funds, 51.37 per cent was used for digging village ponds, 26.69 per cent for galli plugging and 21.92 per cent for construction and repair of kachha roads. But all the utilised funds were spent on unskilled wage component only.

Out of the total 278 households of GP Bhurjat, only 45.68 per cent had got registered and received job cards under the REGS. Of these job cardholder households, only 68.50 per cent households had applied for wage employment under the REGS. Of course, the GP had generated 9879 persondays of employment of which 59.99 per cent was availed of by SC and 41.78 per cent by women workers. The worker households obtained, on an average, 91.4 days of employment from REGS during 2006-07.

#### **Gram Panchayat Musnauta**

Gram Panchayat Musnauta is situated in Aravali Hills in block Nangal Chaudhary in district Mahendragarh. The total population of Musnauta is

4059, out of which 12.56 per cent is SC. Out of the total 737 households of the Gram Panchayat, 29.85 per cent are landless, 33.92 per cent small farmers and 3.39 per cent marginal farmers, 91.58 per cent households are APL cardholders, 6.10 per cent households are BPL cardholders and only 2.30 per cent households are *Antyodaya* cardholders.

The net sown area in GP Musnauta is 4300 acres, out of which only 10.74 per cent is irrigated, 34.88 per cent of the net sown area is sown more than once a year. Tube well is the only source of irrigation. Bajra, moth, jwar, wheat and mustard are the important crops sown.

Employment opportunities are generally not adequate in the months of February to April. During this lean employment period, approximately 15 workers migrate to other areas in search of employment. There are no child labourers in Musnauta.

Primary school, high school, *anganwadi kendra* are situated in Gram Panchayat Musnauta. The nearest bank is 9 km away, nearest cooperative is 3 km away, and the nearest primary health centre is 2 km away from the village. The nearest town is 22 km away and *Krishi Vigyan Kendra* is 39 km away from the village. Drinking water facility is available but there is no electricity facility. The nearest electricity connection is 8 km away.

Under the REGS, funds to the tune of Rs. 569615 were available in 2006-07. But the GP had utilised only 88.10 per cent of the REGS funds before April 2007. Out of the total utilised funds, 90.13 per cent was spent on unskilled wage component for digging two village ponds.

Out of the total 737 households of the GP, only 24.28 per cent households had got registered and got job cards under REGS. Of these (179) job cardholder households, only 33.51 per cent households had applied to GP for wage employment under the REGS. The GP had generated a total of 4755 persondays of employment under the REGS. Specific data on employment generated in persondays separately for SC and women workers are not available in the case of this GP; it was 79 days of employment per (worker) household in the GP.

## CHAPTER II

# Institutional Arrangements for Planning and Implementation of REGS

### **HREGS Implementation Arrangements**

**State Level :** At the State level, the Rural Development Department of the State Government is the Nodal Agency for implementation of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005. The Secretary, Rural Development is the Commissioner of HREGS, who is expected to ensure that all the activities required to fulfill the objectives of the Act are carried out in letter and spirit. The Director, Rural Development assists the Secretary.

HREGS also envisages that the State Government shall constitute the HREGS Council for the purpose of advising State Government on all matters related to the Scheme, determining the preferred works, reviewing the implementation and monitoring and redressal mechanisms, promoting widest possible dissemination of information about the Act and schemes under it, and for preparing annual reports to be placed before the State legislature by the State government. The Council is on the anvil.

**District Level :** At the district level, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) is the District Programme Coordinator (DPC), and the Additional Deputy Commissioner-cum-Chief Executive Officer of the District Rural Development Agency is the Additional District Programme Coordinator (ADPC) under the Scheme. The DC is responsible for overall coordination and successful implementation of the Scheme in the district and the ADC assists the DC in carrying out the associated tasks.

At the district level, the Zilla Parishad (ZP) is responsible for finalising the REGS district plan and for monitoring and supervising the REGS. DPC monitors all aspects of the implementation including registration, employment, unemployment allowance, Social Audit, funds flow, progress and quality of works, qualitative aspects of implementation and timely and correct payment of wages.

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**Block Level :** The Panchayat Samiti (PS) is responsible for planning of the REGS at the block level and for its monitoring and supervision. The Block Development and Panchayat Officer (BDPO) is the Programme Officer (PO) at the block level with necessary support staff for facilitating implementation of REGS. The PS and the BDPO monitor registration, employment provided to each household, unemployment allowance paid, Social Audit, flow of funds, timely and correct payment of wages, progress and quality of works etc. The BDPO is also responsible for sending the progress reports and returns to the DPC, who sends these reports to the State and Central government.

**Village Level :** The Gram Sabha (GS) is responsible for a number of functions relating to planning and monitoring of REGS at the village level. The Gram Panchayat (GP) is the principal planning and implementing agency and is responsible for identification of works in the GP areas as per the recommendations of the GS, and for executing the works. The *Gram Sachiv* helps the GP in discharging its duties and also receives applications, issues job cards, maintains records, etc. The GP also engages services of a local graduate as '*Rojgar Sahayak*' on contractual basis to assist in maintaining the (REGS) records and other related works. The services of village level organisations of the poor, SHGs, Youth Clubs, etc., are also envisaged under HREGS to be utilised by the GP in discharging its duties particularly in awareness building, communication, mobilisation of rural households for registration and submission of applications for work, identification and prioritisation of works, etc.

**Fixation of Minimum Wages under REGS During 2006-07 :** There is no different set of wages for REGS and other development programmes like Haryali, SGRY, etc. in the State. Initially, the minimum wage was Rs. 95.13 per manday under REGS during 2006-07. The State Government has revised the wage rate for unskilled workers from Rs. 95.13 per manday to Rs. 96.55 per manday with effect from July 2006. The State Government further revised the minimum wages from Rs. 96.55 per manday to Rs. 99.21 per manday with effect from January 2007. The rate now stands revised to Rs.

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135 per day w.e.f. July 2007. However, at the time of this survey, the new rate was not yet notified.

The prevalent agriculture wage is Rs. 99.21 for digging 100 CFT Soil. In REGS, the wage rate is the same (i.e. Rs.99.21), but the quantum of expected output depends upon the hardness and softness of the soil. The State Government has conducted a Time and Motion study for both male and female workers for determining the quantum of output. For male workers, if the soil is hard, then he has to dig 75 CFT and in the case of soft soil, he has to dig 100 CFT for one manday work. In case of female workers, if the soil is hard, then she has to dig 70 CFT, and if the soil is soft, then she has to dig 80 CFT for one manday work.

There is no difference in the rate of wages being paid to the male and female workers for one manday work. There are no seasonal variations in wage rate under REGS. Wages are usually paid to workers every week and in no case later than a fortnight. Wages are generally paid by the GP to workers in cash. In 57 villages in District Sirsa, workers are being motivated to open Bank Accounts so that their wages can be directly sent to their SB A/c.

In district Sirsa, initially every GP had a separate REGS A/c in a bank at the block headquarters. In many cases, the distance between the block level bank and the GP was 30-50 km, which resulted in payment delays, travelling problems and problems of security of funds while carrying cash from the Bank to the GP. Therefore, the district administration instructed all the GPs to open their REGS Accounts in the nearest branch of any of the 10 Banks notified by the district administration of Sirsa. The Banks were further requested to transfer REGS money from one branch to another by the Advice System. This arrangement resulted in speedy and safe delivery of REGS funds directly to the GP from the DPC.

In district Mahendragarh, the REGS funds are routed to the GPs from the DPC through the BDPO at block level except in Block Narnaul, where the DPC sends the REGS funds directly to the GP. The District Administration is

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planning to route the REGS funds directly to the GPs in Ateli block and Nangal Chaudhary blocks too, on the same lines as in block Narnaul.

However, there is incongruency in fund transfer procedure in both the REGS districts as the funds transfer mechanism under REGS is evolving in its own ways. Therefore, there is need for introducing a standardised and common procedure for transfer of funds in all the NREG districts.

**CHAPTER III**  
**Planning, Implementation and Performance**  
**of REGS**

**Physical and Financial Performance of REGS at State Level**

The performance of NREGS in Haryana during 2006-07 can be rated as very satisfactory (see the statement given below for details). The funds utilisation was of the order of 77 per cent and on an average the participating worker household got 48 days of employment from the Scheme. Though this programme is open to all, the inclusion of the socially disadvantaged (SCs & women) was encouraging from the poverty alleviation point of view. It is reported that about one-tenth of the households could obtain 100 days of employment. This is a good indicator but it may perhaps also indicate inequality in the distribution of employment opportunities under the Scheme.

**Table 6 : Performance of NREGA in sample districts :  
Haryana (2006-07)**

	State	Selected Districts of NREGA from Haryana	
	Haryana	Mahendragarh	Sirsa
1. % of households (hhs) demanding work to issued job cards	47.5	42.0	51.7
2. % of hhs provided employment to households demanding employment	100.0	100.0	100.0
3. % hhs provided with 100 days of employment	11.1	20.4	5.4
4. Utilisation of funds (%)	77.3	95.5	67.9
5. Employment days (Million)	2.41	1.06	1.35
6. Employment per household (days)	47.6	55.0	43.1
7. Share of SCs in employment (%)	60.0	60.2	59.9
8. Share of STs in employment (%)	—	—	—
9. Share of women in employment (%)	30.6	29.3	31.6
10. Cost of generating one day of employment (Rs.)	149	143	154

Source: <http://nrega.nic.in>, as on 9.11.2007.

There were 321267 households in the two REGS districts, namely, Sirsa and Mahendragarh, during the financial year 2006-07. Of these, only 106772 households (33.23 per cent) had applied for registration and job cards under REGS. The GPs issued job cards to all the 106772 households after registration. The category-wise distribution of these job cardholder households is shown in Table 7.

**Table 7 : Households with job cards**

Category of Household	No. of Households Issued with Job Cards		
	Dist. Sirsa	Dist. Mahendragarh	Haryana
SC	35259 (57.84%)	25583 (55.85%)	60842 (56.98%)
ST	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Others	25705 (42.16%)	20225 (44.15%)	45930 (43.02%)
Total	60964 (100%)	48508 (100%)	106772 (100%)

Source : Departmental Report.

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages.

Table 7 shows that in Haryana as a whole, 57 per cent of the households that received job cards belong to scheduled castes. The rest belong to other castes, mostly 'Other Backward Castes' (OBCs). Significantly, the percentage of category-wise distribution of cardholder households across the two districts is similar. However, as far as the absolute number of job cardholder households is concerned, district Sirsa has a clear edge over Mahendragarh.

As regards the employment provided to willing registered households against their application demanding employment, employment was provided to all the applicant households (100 per cent) within the stipulated timeline as per the NREG framework in the State. Field observations revealed that supply was shown as demand for employment perhaps to avoid payment of 'unemployment allowance'. It happened in several States.

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The real test of the performance of REGS implementation lies in the quantum and quality of employment generated and assets created. Table 8 shows that the total employment generated during 2006-07 under REGS was 24.125 lakh persondays, of which 60 per cent was accounted for by the SC households, 30.6 per cent by women and the rest by others including a miniscule number (02 workers) of the physically handicapped. The average number of days of employment per SC household was 23-25 days; for women it was 15-17 days. Thus, gender bias in provision of employment is very conspicuous.

**Table 8 : Employment generation under REGS at State level during 2006-07**

S. No.	Category of Household/ Person	Employment Generation in Lakh Persondays(%)		
		Dist. Sirsa	Dist. Mahendragarh	Haryana
1	SC Households	8.113 (59.90%) [23.0]	6.370 (60.21%) [24.9]	14.483 (60.03%)[23.8]
2	ST Households	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
3	Women	4.279 (31.59%) [16.65]	3.100 (29.3%)[15.33]	7.379 (30.59%) [16.07]
4	Physically Challenged	0 (0%)	SDNA (02 Workers Worked)	SDNA (02 Workers Worked)
Total (SC/ST+Others including Women and Physically Challenged)		13.545 (100%) [22.2]	10.580 (100%) [21.8]	24.125 (100%) [22.6]

Source : Departmental Reports.

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages to column totals; figures in [] are data on average number of days of employment per household.

SDNA : Separate Data Not Available.

As between the two districts, there is only marginal difference of performance in terms of the proportionate figures. However, in terms of absolute person-days of employment generated, Sirsa is a better performer both category-wise and overall. But when we compare the performance in terms of percentage of households completing 100 days of employment, district Mahendragarh has performed better than district Sirsa. In district Sirsa, only 5.37 per cent REGS participating households completed 100 days of employment, whereas in district Mahendragarh, only 20.42 per cent participating households completed 100 days of employment under REGS (Table 9). Thus, overall, only 11.08 per cent of the participating households completed 100 days of employment under REGS in the State. This shows that either there is not much demand for 100 days of employment or the awareness building or mobilisation (IEC) efforts by the concerned authorities/agencies have been inadequate. The former inference probably holds true. This needs to be looked into in-depth and acted upon appropriately.

As regards the proportion of participating households completing 100 days of employment under REGS, the figure (Table 9) for district Mahendragarh (20.42 per cent) is almost four times that for district Sirsa (5.37 per cent). Block-wise, Kanina (a non-sample block) and Nangal Chaudhary (a sample block) in Mahendragarh district, lead with 28.77 and 25.21 per cent, respectively. Significantly, other blocks in this district too, are showing figures higher than the figures for various blocks in district Sirsa except Badagudha that just matches the lowest scoring block (Narnaul) in district Mahendragarh in this context. The reasons for these inter-district differentials could be many but stability and consistency of work under REGS combined with demand for work/ability to execute seem to be the explanatory factors for varied performance. Juxtaposing the data on percentage of households provided with 100 days of employment with the data on average number of days of employment per household, one can infer that implementation was highly biased in some blocks and more so in Mahendragarh.

**Table 9 : Proportion of participating households completing 100 days of employment under REGS during 2006-07**

Blocks in District Sirsa	%age of Households	Average No. of days of employment per household
Badagudha	15.86%	19.9
Dabwali	4.56%	22.0
Ellanabad	9.84%	25.8
Nathusari Chaupta	5.78%	20.7
Odan	12.34%	44.5
Rania	4.33%	13.6
Sirsa	3.56%	20.9
District Sirsa as a whole	5.37%	22.2
Blocks in District Mahendragarh		
Narnaul	14.97%	24.9
Ateli Nangal	16.59%	20.6
Nangal Chaudhary	25.21%	35.5
Mahendragarh	17.67%	16.8
Kanina	28.77%	27.7
District Mahendragarh as a whole	20.42%	23.5
Haryana as a whole		

Source : Departmental Report.

Blocks written in bold indicate sample blocks.

Table 10 shows the data on financial allocations by the Centre and the State. The total allocation during 2006-07 including opening balance as on April 2006, was Rs. 37.170 lakh of which the State share was only 10 per cent during year 2007-08. District-wise figures once again reveal that Sirsa with a Rs. 3071 lakh allocation is far ahead of Mahendragarh with Rs. 1586 lakh allocation, almost in a 2:1 ratio on this score. (Disproportionately higher for SIRSA when viewed from the number of job cards issued).

**Table 10 : Financial allocations under REGS at State level during 2006-07**

(in Rs. lakh)

Type of Funds Allocation	Financial Allocations			
		Dist. Sirsa	Dist. Mahendragarh	Haryana
Opening Balance as on 1/4/2006		593.381	576.202	1169.583
Released Last year and received during current year 2006-07	Central	21.470 (100%)	15.700 (100%)	37.170 (100%)
	State	0.00 (0%)	0.00 (0%)	0.00 (0%)
	Total	21.470 (100%)	15.700 (100%)	37.170 (100%)
Released during current year	Central	2232.030 (09.90%)	901.860 (90.95%)	3133.890 (90.92%)
	State	223.203 (09.09%)	89.736 (9.04%)	312.939 (9.07%)
	Total	2455.233 (100%)	991.596 (100%)	3446.892 (100%)
Misc. Receipts		1.291	2.480	3.771
Total Fund Availability for REGS during 2006-07 (1+2+3+4)		3071.375	1585.978	4657.353

Source: Departmental Reports.

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages.

However, when we examine the data on the utilisation of the funds allocated (Table 11), we get significant insights, both at the State level and across the two REGS districts. The fund utilisation percentage under REGS was 77.18 for the State as a whole. Across the two districts, however, there was a big differential. It was much lower than the State average, at 67.87 per cent in Sirsa and pronouncedly higher at 95.20 per cent in

Mahendragarh. This factor shows Mahendragarh in a far better light than Sirsa in terms of the extent of utilisation of allocated funds. It can be inferred that Sirsa was given more allocation than needed. The positive implications of this should also be noted while analysing the other parameters of performance in the two districts.

**Table 11 : Financial utilisation under REGS at State level during 2006-07**

Type of Utilisation	Financial Utilisation in Lakh Rs.(%)		
	Dist. Sirsa	Dist. Mahendragarh	Haryana
On unskilled wage component	1307.454 (62.71%)	1022.320 (67.70%)	2329.774 (64.81%)
On semi-skilled & skilled wage component	0.270 (0.01%)	84.090 (5.56%)	84.360 (2.34%)
On material	748.376 (35.85%)	380.400 (25.19%)	1128.776 (31.40%)
On contingencies (including expenditure at DRDA level)	28.596 (1.37%)	23.160 (1.53%)	51.756 (1.43%)
Total	2084.696 (100%)	1509.970 (100%)	3594.666 (100%)
Fund utilisation as % of Total Available Funds	67.87%	95.20%	77.18%

Source : Departmental Reports.

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages.

Thus, the other significant contrast across the two districts that needs to be noted in terms of the wage-material composition of the funds utilised. As shown in Table 11, in Sirsa, 62.72 per cent funds were utilised on wage component and 35.85 per cent on material component, the rest (1.37 per cent) being contingency expenses. In contrast, the figures for Mahendragarh were 73.26 per cent fund utilisation for wage component

and 25.19 per cent for material component. This speaks of the greater emphasis on labour-intensive type of works undertaken in Mahendragarh district vis-à-vis Sirsa district, which again goes to weigh the scale in favour of Mahendragarh on this parameter of performance under REGS. Of course, reduced allocation on materials may affect the quality and durability of assets in Mahendragarh. The wage-materials ratio may be altered to 65:35, if the present evidences are reflections of ground realities elsewhere.

Overall, in Haryana, 64.81 per cent funds were utilised on unskilled wage component, 2.34 per cent funds on semi-skilled and skilled wage component, 31.40 per cent on material component and only 1.43 per cent funds were utilised on contingencies including expenditure at DRDA level under REGS. This shows that the present allocation of four per cent towards administrative and contingency expenses need not be revised. The State can go for IT applications in NREGS, which would bring qualitative improvements in planning and implementation including monitoring (as in AP) by using the balance 2.6 per cent of funds. On the whole, thus, 22.82 per cent funds could not be utilised under REGS. This calls for rigorous monitoring and necessary interventions by the authorities concerned.

As stated earlier, apart from the quantum of employment generated, it is the type, quality as well as the quantum of need-based durable assets created through the employment generated under REGS constitutes the ultimate test of the successful implementation of REGS. Table 12 provides data on the type of works/assets created. In the State as a whole, rural connectivity, water conservation, renovation of traditional water bodies, irrigation works, drought proofing and land development works have been executed under REGS, which are all in consonance with the guidelines of NREGS.

Out of the total expenditure of Rs.2084.696 incurred on asset creation, 44.99 per cent of the expenditure was on rural connectivity, 32.76 per cent on water conservation and water harvesting works, 14 per cent on land development works, 3.81 per cent on micro irrigation works, 3.24 per

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cent on renovation of traditional water bodies, 0.46 per cent on 'flood control & protection works', 0.46 per cent on 'drought proofing works', and the rest of the expenditure accounted for asset creation under REGS. Thus, the maximum number of works executed under the REGS related to 'rural connectivity and water conservation'. However, more than 50 per cent of the total works initiated during the financial year 2006-07 were still in progress as on March,07.



Desilting work of Minor Irrigation Canal in Progress in district Sirsa



Pond Excavation work in progress in district Mahendergarh

**Table 12 : Asset creation under REGS at State level during 2006-07**

Category of Works	Unit	No. of Works		Employment Cost Incurred in Lakh Rupees		Unskilled Wages	Skilled Wages
		Completed	In Progress	Lakh Person-days	Total		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Water Conservation and Water Harvesting	9877383 Cm MT	233 (23.65%)	261 (39.13%)	SDNA	1161.948 (32.76%)	SDNA	SDNA
Drought Proofing	98.56 Ha	21 (2.13%)	2 (0.29%)	SDNA	13.709 (0.38%)	SDNA	SDNA
Micro Irrigation Works	64.55 Km	123 (12.48%)	52 (7.79%)	SDNA	134.999 (3.81%)	SDNA	SDNA
Provision of Irrigation facility to land owned by SC/ST, IAY beneficiaries, etc.	0 Ha	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	SDNA	0 (0.00%)	SDNA	SDNA
Renovation of traditional water bodies	365209 Cm MT	68 (6.90%)	25 (3.74%)	SDNA	115.056 (3.24%)	SDNA	SDNA
Land Development	88.6Ha	75 (7.61%)	93 (13.94%)	SDNA	496.223 (14.00%)	SDNA	SDNA

(Contd...)

Table 12 : (Contd...)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Flood Control and Protection	2.5 Km	1 (0.10%)	8 (1.19%)	SDNA	16.427 (0.46%)	SDNA	SDNA
Rural Connectivity	387.04Km.	461 (46.80%)	226 (33.88%)	SDNA	1594.767 (44.99%)	SDNA	SDNA
Any Other Activity (Approved by MoRD)	0	3 (0.30%)	0 (0.00%)	SDNA	9.78 (0.27%)	SDNA	SDNA
Total	-	985 (100%)	667 (100%)	24.125	3542.91 (100%)	2084.696	SDNA

Source : Departmental Report.

SDNA = Separate Data Not Available Cm MT = Cubic Meters

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages to column totals.

### **Overall Performance of NREGS in Haryana and Study Districts**

Towards understanding the overall effectiveness of the NREGS in the study states, a set of 'key indicators' was developed and shared with a panel of internal and external judges. The judges were asked to assign scores/relative weights to each of the indicators on the basis of their relative importance from their view point. The sum of scores/weights is 100. The performance score of the NREGS in Haryana during 06-07 can be judged from the scores presented in Table 12 (a) and Figure -1.

The overall effectiveness of the Haryana REGS worked out to 53 per cent. Between the two study districts, the performance of district Mahendragarh was higher than that of district Sirsa. The indicators / areas of performance, namely, issue of job cards and time taken for provision of employment' and 'payment of wages' show encouraging progress. However, evidently, little or no effort was made by way of convergence of NREGS with other developmental programmes. Neither there was any innovation in the NREGS delivery system. Despite reiteration by the Central and State governments for introduction of and / or strengthening of the awareness building requirement, there was striking inadequacy on this front. The extent of intangible outcomes such as articulation of demand for development services, empowerment, confidence level, as perceived by the workers also fall short of the expectations relating to the effectiveness of the programme. Equally disturbing findings include (1) lack of transparency (2) low levels of people's participation, and (3) failure to provide the mandated worksite facilities.

Also, it is evident that the volume of employment generation and the size of funds reported to have been utilised in 06-07 are largely independent of the participatory processes recommended for adoption in the planning and implementation of the rights-based NREG programme. Again, it appears that the NREGS has been implemented in a routine way just as any other programme is, for the implementing authority has paid little attention to the important process of sensitising the workers about their rights and the need for making demands on the delivery systems that are

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operated conjunctively by the officials as well as the Gram Panchatyats. Therefore, there is need for overcoming the stated shortcomings and deficiencies. Also, there is a pressing need for making the development administrators and the delivery systems more responsible, responsive and accountable. Then alone, there will be a good chance for operationalising the principles and practices of democratic governance and rights based approaches to development such as the NREGS.

**Table 12 a : Performance of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) - overall effectiveness index (2006-07) - Haryana**

Areas (Indicators)		Maxim	Mahen-	Sirsa	Hary-
		um	dragarh		ana
		score			
1	2	3	4	5	6
A.	General	7.3	3.14	2.24	2.55
	- Convergence of NREGS with other rural development programmes	2.0	-	-	-
	- Innovations	2.0	-	-	-
	- Utilisation of funds	3.3	3.14	2.24	2.55
B.	Awareness of workers	15.8	2.96	5.65	4.3
	- About NREGA provisions (days of employment, unemployment allowance, wages to be paid, time limit for payment of wages etc.)	4.8	2.01	2.86	
	- About RTI	1.5	-	0.10	
	- About Social Audit	2.2	-	0.07	
	- About Official to be contacted and procedure for seeking work	3.1	-	1.34	
	- About VMC and <i>Rozgar Sevak</i>	1.6	0.43	0.27	
	- About works under REGS	2.6	0.52	1.01	
C.	Display of information on works and wages at Gram Panchayat (GP)	3.5	0.59	1.60	1.09

(Contd...)

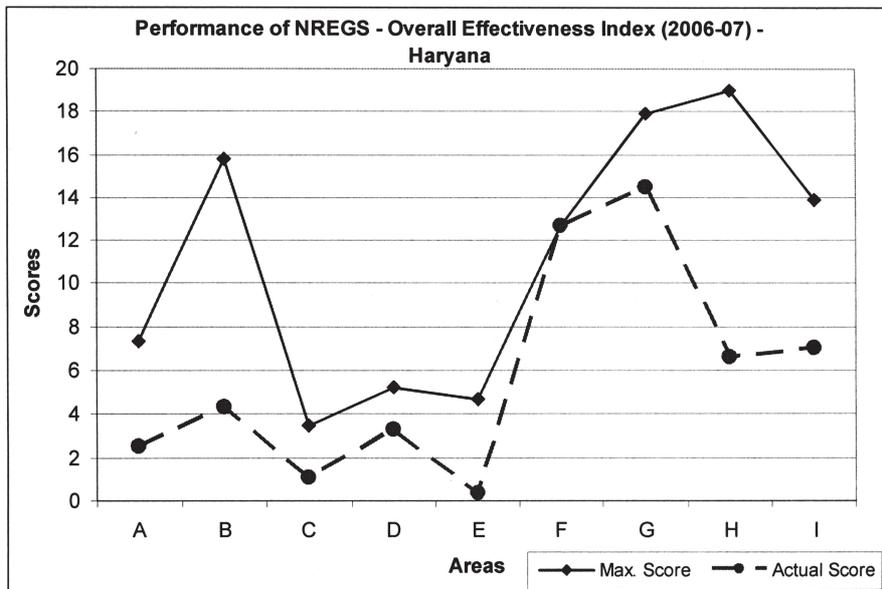
**Table 12 a : (Contd...)**

1	2	3	4	5	6
D.	Worksite facilities (shade, creche, first aid, drinking water, muster roll)	5.2	3.85	2.72	3.28
E.	Participation of workers in Gram Sabha and Social Audits	4.7	0.33	0.40	0.36
F.	Issue of job card and time taken for provision of employment	12.7	12.7	12.7	12.7
	- Provision of work within 15 days	9.0	9.0	9.0	
	- % of households which obtained the job cards free of cost	3.7	3.7	3.7	
G.	Payment of wages (within 15 days and full payment)	17.9	15.43	13.52	14.47
	- Receipt of minimum and equal wages	4.8	4.72	4.42	
	- Timely payment	5.9	5.9	5.6	
	- Issue of wage slips	3.5	1.11	0	
	- No problems in receipt of full wages	3.7	3.7	3.5	
H.	Gains /Benefits	19.0	8.33	4.86	6.59
	- Average number of days of employment	6.3	4.03	1.34	
	- % share of SCs and STs in employment	3.5	2.11	2.00	
	- % share of women in employment	3.6	1.05	1.13	
	- % hhs with 100 days of employment	5.6	1.14	0.3	
I.	Perceptions of workers	13.9	7.28	6.83	7.05
	- Realisation about 'Right to work'	1.9	1.57	1.19	
	- Realisation about 'Right to information'	1.2	0.14	0.14	
	- Quality of assets created	1.7	1.27	1.03	
	- Usefulness of assets to community	1.7	1.49	0.95	
	- Realisation that people can demand work from officials & GP	2.0	0.10	0.66	
	- Effect of REGS - Increase of wages of unskilled workers in other works	1.9	0.83	1.5	

(Contd...)

**Table 12 a : (Contd...)**

1	2	3	4	5	6
-	Reduction in the migration due to NREGS	1.4	0.64	0.47	
-	More informed about decision making at GP	1.1	0.60	0.44	
-	Effectiveness of planning and implementation of REGS	1.0	0.64	0.45	
J.	Overall Effectiveness of REGS	100.0	54.61	51.53	53.00



A: General; B: Awareness of workers; C: Display of information on works and wages at GP; D: Worksite facilities; E: Participation of workers in GS and Social Audits; F: Issue of job card and time taken for provision of employment; G: Payment of wages (within 15 days and full payment); H: Gains/Benefits; I: Perceptions of workers

### **Views of Members of State Employment Guarantee Council and State Level Officials on Performance of REGS**

The SEGSC is yet to be constituted in Haryana, as stated earlier. However, the views of the State Programme Coordinator, REGS regarding the performance of REGS during 2006-07 could not be ascertained due to his transfer and the resultant lack of access. But the views of several other important officers have been gathered in this context.

### **Performance of REGS at District Level**

This section evaluates and presents the performance of the REGS at the district level in order to capture the inter-district differentials and inter-block differentials within the districts, especially as regards the relative position of the sample blocks. Views of district level officials, elected representatives of Zilla Parishads and representatives of NGOs/CBOs are also discussed in this section to provide insights into the reasons for differential performance of REGS across the districts, and the search for ways and means to improve the overall process of REGS planning and implementation.

### ***Physical and Financial Performance of REGS at District Level***

- \* All the households registered under REGS were issued job cards (Table 13).
- \* Percentage of total households issued with job cards in district Sirsa was 37.93.
- \* Percentage of households issued with job cards in district Mahendragarh was 28.53.
- \* However, the employment provided to willing registered households against applications for employment received during 2006-07 in all the blocks of REGS districts was 100 per cent (Table 13)

**Table 13 : Distribution of households by job cards issued in the sample blocks and districts**

Blocks in District	Sirsa households issued with job cards under REGS		
	SC Households	Other Households	Total Households
Badagudha	5550 (75.82)	1770 (24.18)	7320 (100.00)
Dabwali	7633 (60.00)	5089 (40.00)	12722 (100.00)
Ellanabad	4470 (60.02)	2977 (39.98)	7447 (100.00)
Nathusari Chaupta	3382 (30.00)	7893 (70.00)	11275 (100.00)
Odhan	3728 (80.50)	903 (19.50)	4631 (100.00)
Rania	5403 (55.55)	4324 (44.45)	9727 (100.00)
Sirsa	5093 (64.95)	2749 (35.05)	7842 (100.00)
Distt. Sirsa as a Whole	35259 (57.84)	25705 (42.16)	60964 (100.00)
Blocks in Mahendragarh			
District			
Narnaul	4292 (59.99)	2862 (40.01)	7154 (100.00)
Ateli Nangal	6999 (60.00)	4666 (40.00)	11665 (100.00)
Nangal Chaudhary	3672 (60.01)	2447 (39.99)	6119 (100.00)
Mahendragarh	7270 (58.35)	5190 (41.65)	12460 (100.00)
Kanina	3350 (39.83)	5060 (60.17)	8410 (100.00)
Distt. Mahendragarh as a Whole	25583 (55.85)	20225 (44.15)	45808 (100.00)
Haryana as a Whole			

Source : Departmental Report.

Figures in parentheses are percentage.

Blocks written in bold indicate sample blocks.

As regards performance on account of employment generation, Sirsa district with 13.545 lakh persondays (Table 14) is quite ahead of Mahendragarh district with 10.77 lakh persondays. The proportionate shares of SCs, women and others in persondays of employment generated are nearly the same in both the districts. Nearly 60 per cent of employment

generated was availed of by SCs and about 30 per cent of employment generated was exclusively availed of by women, which in a sense, reflects the greater extent of benefits of REGS flowing towards poorer and weaker sections of the society in the State across the two districts. It is heartening to note that in a society with glaring gender disparities, women workers account for almost 30 per cent of NREGS workers. It also raises a doubt, i.e. whether these women are migrant workers from other States currently settled in Haryana.

**Table 14 : Employment generation under REGS at district level during 2006-07**

Block in District	Employment generation in lakh persondays and (%)		
	SC Workers	Women Workers	Total Employment
Sirsa			
Badagudha	1.107 (76.03)\$	0.436 (29.95)\$	1.456
Dabwali	1.453 (51.80)	0.823 (29.34)	2.805
Ellanabad	0.958 (49.87)	0.524 (27.28)	1.921
Nathusari Chaupta	1.100 (47.01)	0.800 (34.19)	2.340
Odhan	1.444 (70.00)	0.602 (29.18)	2.063
Rania	0.807 (61.00)	0.336 (25.40)	1.323
Sirsa	1.244 (75.99)	0.758 (46.30)	1.637
Dist. Sirsa as a whole	8.113 (59.90)	4.279 (31.59)	13.545
Blocks in District Mahendragarh			
Narnaul	1.11 (62.36)	0.59 (33.15)	1.78
Ateli Nangal	1.44 (60.00)	0.79 (32.92)	2.40
Nangal Chaudhary	1.30 (59.91)	0.65 (29.95)	2.17
Mahendragarh	1.24 (59.33)	0.50 (23.92)	2.09
Kanina	1.39 (59.66)	0.62 (26.61)	2.33
Dist. Mahendragarh	6.48 (60.17)	3.15 (29.25)	10.77
as a whole			

Employment figures for SC and women workers exclude 'others'.

\$ figures in ( ) are % to the block and district total No. of households.

SDNA = Separate Data Not Available.

Source : Departmental Report.

Blocks written in bold indicate sample blocks.

Table 15 shows the figures of allocation and utilisation of funds under REGS in the two districts as also block-wise. It can be seen that whereas Sirsa got a much greater total amount of funds vis-à-vis Mahendragarh, its utilisation percentage was far lower (i.e. 81.85 per cent) than the latter (i.e. 96.77 per cent). Block-wise figures, too, reveal a similar pattern with some variations, more by way of an exception than a rule/pattern. But, of course, this needs to be looked into more intensively to locate the reasons/factors accounting for the rather remarkable fund utilisation percentage in the case of district Mahendragarh and the laggard performance of district Sirsa.

**Table 15 : Block-wise financial allocation & utilisation of REGS funds in 2006-07**

(Rs. in lakh)					
District-wise Blocks	Opening Balance on 1/4/2006	Released during Current Year	Total Funds Available	Total Funds Utilised	Utilisation in %
<b>Blocks in Dist. Sirsa</b>					
Badagudha	39.60	230.618	270.218	227.639	84.24
Dabwali	43.20	479.907	523.107	362.200	69.24
Ellanabad	39.60	387.69	427.290	340.530	79.70
Nathusari Chaupta	46.80	339.61	386.410	337.090	87.24
Odhan	33.30	319.16	352.460	292.890	83.10
Rania	48.60	212.924	261.524	256.976	98.26
Sirsa	48.60	260.145	308.745	253.205	82.01
<b>Dist. Sirsa</b>		<b>2230.054</b>	<b>2529.754</b>	<b>2070.530</b>	<b>81.85</b>
<b>Blocks in Dist. Mahendragarh</b>					
Narnaul	27.68	232.52	263.20	243.33	92.45
Ateli Nangal	50.48	336.45	386.93	386.93	100.00
Nangal Chaudhary	47.16	210.00	257.16	247.11	96.09
Mahendragarh	53.93	216.00	269.93	256.94	95.19
Kanina	28.42	353.71	382.13	374.64	98.04
<b>Dist. Mahendragarh</b>		<b>1348.68</b>	<b>1559.35</b>	<b>1508.95</b>	<b>96.77</b>

Source : Departmental Report.

Blocks depicted in bold are sample blocks.

Component-wise utilisation of funds as depicted in Table 16 is another important parameter for evaluating the REGS performance. On this score, if the greater proportion of the wage component is taken as a positive indicator, then Mahendragarh is quite ahead with nearly 75 per cent wage component vis-à-vis Sirsa with 63 per cent. The material component accounts for only 25 per cent in the former as against 36 per cent in the latter. There are, of course, arguments in favour of both, but in terms of the primary objective of REGS, wage component is, indeed, more direct and a positive indicator of performance. Block-wise too, a similar pattern emerged, more markedly in favour of Mahendragarh and Nangal Chaudhary blocks of district Mahendragarh.

Very low levels of expenditure towards wages of skilled and semi-skilled workers except in Rania block followed by Narnaul and Mahendragarh imply that in the other blocks mostly earthen works and less concrete structures were taken up. In the former blocks, the share of material cost was also low. Whether these patterns would have any impact on the quality of assets needs further scrutiny.

As stated earlier, employment generation, the primary objective of REGS, is intimately related to the secondary objective of asset creation for employment generation. The assets should be such that they should provide further employment. For example, a watershed or a culvert can provide de-silting and maintenance opportunities. It is important, therefore, to examine the type and quantum of assets created under the REGS in the State and districts under study. Table 17 depicts the performance on this score in the sample districts. Thus, we find that in Sirsa, the water resource oriented works accounted for 46.83 per cent of the total expenditure, followed by rural connectivity works (35.12 per cent) and land development works (23.99 per cent). The picture emerging in Mahendragarh, however, presents quite an interesting contrast. Here, the expenditure on land development works is virtually nil, while rural connectivity works account for a whopping 58.68 per cent and water resource related works account for as much as 40.44 per cent. But, of course,

**Table 16 : Component-wise utilisation of funds under REGS 2006-07**  
(Rs. in lakh)

Block of REGS District	Utilisation of Funds in Lakh Rupees (%)				Total
	On Unskilled Wage Component	On Semi-skilled & Skilled Wage Component	On Material Component	On Contingences	
<b>Blocks in Sirsa Dist.</b>					
Badagudha	142.202 (62.47)	0 (0.00)	83.802 (36.81)	1.635 (0.72)	227.639 (100%)
Dabwali	269.368 (74.37)	0 (0.00)	90.212 (24.91)	2.620 (0.72)	362.200 (100%)
Ellanabad	186.879 (54.88)	0 (0.00)	151.095 (44.37)	2.556 (0.75)	340.530 (100%)
Nathusari Chaupta	225.650 (66.94)	0 (0.00)	108.770 (32.27)	2.670 (0.79)	337.090 (100%)
Odhan	198.050 (67.62)	0 (0.00)	93.790 (32.02)	1.050 (0.36)	292.890 (100%)
Rania	127.082 (49.45)	0.27 (0.11)	128.075 (49.84)	1.549 (0.60)	256.976 (100%)
Sirsa	158.223 (62.49)	0 (0.00)	92.632 (36.58)	2.350 (0.93)	253.205 (100%)
Dist. Sirsa	1307.45 (63.15)	0.27 (0.11)	748.376 (36.14)	14.43 (0.70)	2070.53 (100%)
<b>Blocks in Mahendragarh Dist.</b>					
Narnaul	174.77 (71.82)	12.60 (5.18)	55.12 (22.65)	0.84 (0.35)	243.330 (100%)
Ateli Nangal	232.16 (60.00)	0.00 (0.00)	154.77 (40.00)	0.00 (0.00)	386.930 (100%)
Nangal Chaudhary	209.60 (84.82)	0.00 (0.00)	37.51 (15.18)	0.00 (0.00)	247.110 (100%)
Mahendragarh	200.96 (78.21)	9.49 (3.69)	45.94 (17.88)	0.55 (0.21)	256.940 (100%)
Kanina	224.83 (60.01)	62.00 (16.55)	87.05 (23.24)	0.75 (0.20)	374.630 (100%)
Dist. Mahendragarh	1022.32 (69.08)	84.09 (5.57)	380.39 (25.21)	2.14 (0.14)	1508.940 (100%)

Source : Departmental Report.

Figures in Parentheses indicate percentages to the block total utilisation.

Blocks depicted in bold letters are sample blocks.

the explanation for this differential performance lies in the difference in the geo-climatic conditions, topography and socio-economic profile of the two districts. Water is an imperative resource for both the districts, but land development is a difficult proposition for Mahendragarh due to its hilly, rocky and Aravali land profile. Hence, rural connectivity comes as an easier and more viable alternative choice for the REGS shelf of works in this district as compared to and contrasted with Sirsa.

**Views and Observations of the ADC-cum-ADPC, Sirsa**

- \* Budget and shelf of works for 2007-08 has been duly prepared. However, lack of specialists was cited as a problem.
- \* ADPC himself has not received any training on REGS.
- \* There were no complaints regarding non-issue of application forms and job cards. However, there was a complaint about incomplete job cards, non-provision of employment and non-payment of wages by the concerned field officials.
- \* There were complaints about corruption, distance of worksite, unemployment allowance and gender bias.
- \* REGS did result in greater transparency in decision-making and implementation and accountability of officials and elected representatives. It also led to better coordination among officials, elected representatives, NGOs/SHG/CBOs to some extent.
- \* Gram Sabha meetings helped in generating keen interest and fuller awareness about the REGS and its provisions/benefits.
- \* There was no request for information about REGS under RTI from any source.
- \* Implementation of REGS was very good and has led to a responsible delivery system for "rights-based" poverty alleviation programmes.
- \* Involvement of PRI leaders and officials contributed very significantly to the performance of the REGS.

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- \* Role of NGOs and social activists and Workers' Organisations was significant.
- \* There was differential performance of REGS across blocks, and the main reasons cited by the ADPC were :
- \* Positive initiatives taken by Block Programme Officers
- \* Individual initiatives by Sarpanches
- \* Responsiveness of support staff such as SDO (PR), JE (PR), Gram Sachiv and Accountant was noteworthy.
- \* Awareness level of labourers about REGS was significant.

**Suggestions Made by the ADPC, Sirsa**

- \* Awareness building exercise regarding the need for applying for work among job seekers needs to be stepped up considerably.
- \* Independent Block Programme Officers should be immediately posted to look after the REGS.
- \* Dedicated officials should be designated as Block Programme Officers.
- \* Limit on remuneration to Gram Rozgar Sewak should be increased from the fixed Rs. 2000 to the minimum wage fixed for unskilled labourers (Rs.99)/day x 30 days.
- \* REGS funds should be sent directly to GPs through the Advice System so as to avoid unnecessary loss of time.
- \* Work on private lands should not be taken up at this stage until all government and Panchayat lands have been treated.
- \* No amendment is required with regard to the list of works stipulated under REGS.
- \* There is a lot of scope for dovetailing REGS works with Haryali and other (RD) programmes. All pucca works may be taken up under Haryali while kaccha works may be covered under REGS.

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- \* Proportion of pucca and kaccha works may be allowed to be adjusted in successive years.
- \* Guarantee of employment may be increased to 200 days a year. Many workers who have work under NREGS are now demanding for employment of more than 100 days.
- \* Strengthening of terms of reference of rural link roads should be included in the list of permissible works.
- \* Some kind of incentive such as allocation of some special funds, may also be provided for the GPs, which carry out the NREG Scheme in its letter and spirit.
- \* DPCs and ADPCs may be imparted regular training through orientation and refresher courses through (training) programmes organised by the State and Central governments.
- \* Technical wing officials, such as engineers and SDOs also require training and orientation about the objectives of REGS.

#### **Views and Observations of ADPC, Mahendragarh**

It may be mentioned here that Shri M.P. Bansal, DPC and Shri Ashok Kumar Bishnoi, ADPC of district Mahendragarh jointly responded to Format D-1. Their observations and remarks were mainly on the same lines as that of the ADPC, Sirsa. They have not put forward any suggestions for improving the overall effectiveness of REGS in areas such as better utilisation of funds, taking up works on private lands, convergence with other schemes and special concession for physically challenged persons and women.

#### **Views and Observations of the Elected Representatives of ZPs**

Table 18 shows the profile of the ZP elected representatives. The experience with regard to the awareness, interest, involvement and participation of the elected representatives of ZPs in the two sample districts, as revealed by the responses of the sample respondents to the queries in the survey schedules as well as during general discussions with other members has, on the whole, been rather depressing. They were

usually non-positive and sometimes even outright negative. Most of the (6) respondents in this category have not involved themselves adequately in the various aspects and processes of the REGS in their areas of jurisdiction. Indeed, most of the responses were of “cannot say” type and thus, reflected the feelings of either indifference and apathy or anguish on account of having been excluded from the decision-making and implementation process by the officials/elected representatives of GP. The study, therefore, on this score, definitely points out to the urgent need for further and effective sensitisation, orientation and capacity-building of the Elected PRI functionaries on the one hand, and their involvement in the planning and implementation processes pertaining to REGS in their respective domains, on the other. Effective training of elected representatives of ZPs on NREGS, RTI, Social Audit and preparation of REGS plan is therefore, imperative.

**Table 18 : Profile of respondents: elected representatives of zilla parishads in sample districts**

Zilla Parishad	Particulars of Respondents
Sirsa	Vice-president of ZP (1)
	SC Women Member of ZP (1)
	Total - 2
Mahendragarh	Vice-president of ZP (1)
	SC Women Member of ZP (1)
	Members of ZP (2)
	Total - 4

#### **Views, Observations and Suggestions of NGOs**

Two NGOs, viz, PRIA and Maksad Welfare Society, that were working in the sample districts were approached and interviewed. Of these, PRIA, represented by Dr. Satpal Singh, District Coordinator, has done some active work in Mahendragarh district for awareness-building and social mobilisation for NREGS through Gram Sabha meetings; developing and

distributing pamphlets on REGS, and conducting RTI orientation camps in two villages and organising training programmes in about 80 GPs of Mahendragarh district. PRIA has also maintained regular interface with the district authorities for monitoring, grievances redressal and other corrective steps needed for effective implementation of REGS such as payment of wages in time and equal wage payments for men and women.

**Views and Observations of PRIA (NGO)**

- \* The REGS is Sarpanch and *Sachiv*-centric. It does not want to share knowledge or authority with other people.
- \* District administration does not provide any meaningful and result-oriented training to the villagers.
- \* Not all the registered households come forward to demand work and do not, therefore, get regular work. They are also not fully aware of their rights to work, guidelines etc.
- \* Flow of funds is not smooth.
- \* There is need for result-oriented training for all concerned officials, elected representatives and awareness-building of other stakeholders and target beneficiaries.
- \* Villagers are not active, participative and involved in REGS work selection, planning, implementation and Social Audit.
- \* The stipulated minimum wage rate is often not attractive to make workers work in REGS, particularly in villages adjacent to towns where wages are often higher than the minimum wage for unskilled workers.

Dr. Singh (NGO) repeatedly emphasised the need for awareness-building, social mobilisation and training of people for making the REGS really and fully effective.

The involvement of the other NGO, Maksad Welfare Society, represented by Shri Sanjay Sharma, has been rather peripheral. It has worked more for forming SHGs than for REGS related activities. It has also not positively

impressed either by the way in which REGS is being implemented neither in the area nor by its effect in terms of employment generation and benefits to the poor. It has, however, made the following observations:

- \* Need for integration of NREG works with those of different line departments.
- \* Need for provision of proper facilities for workers.
- \* Selected works should be sustainable and as per the needs of the people.
- \* NGOs should be given greater role in REGS.
- \* Paper work should be simplified.

Interestingly, this NGO opines that REGS should lead to scarcity of wage labour for landlords in NREGS villages and strain the social relations between the two for improved benefits to the poor in particular.

### **Performance of REGS in Sample Blocks**

This section evaluates and presents the information on physical and financial performance of REGS in the sample blocks during 2006-07 in terms of the stipulated parameters. Views of the block level officials and elected representatives of the Panchayat Samitis are also discussed with a view to developing an insight into the planning and implementation processes of REGS and to identify ways and means to improve the same.

***Physical and Financial Performance of REGS in Sample Blocks :*** In the second stage of sampling, blocks Sirsa and Nathusari Chaupta in district Sirsa and blocks of Mahendragarh and Nangal Chaudhary in district Mahendragarh were selected for the study. It was noted that, as per records:

- \* All the registered households were issued with job cards in all the four sample blocks.
- \* Employment was provided to all the willing registered households against their applications for employment during 2006-07 in all the sample blocks.

It is clear from Table 19 that block Nathusari Chaupta is way ahead of other blocks with a figure of 45.29 per cent and that Nangal Chaudhary is at the bottom with 19.18 per cent in respect of the percentage of total households that have been registered and issued job cards. Block Mahendragarh (30.12 per cent) and block Sirsa (27.93 per cent) came mid-way on this score. However, as between the two districts, Sirsa is ahead of Mahendragarh in this respect.

**Table 19 : Percentage of total households issued with job cards and percentage of SC households among job card holders under REGS in sample blocks during 2006-07**

Sample Blocks	Percentage of Households Issued with Job Cards out of total households	Percentage of Job Card holder SC Households out of Total Job Cardholder Households
Nathusari Chaupta	45.29%	30.00%
Sirsa	27.93%	64.90%
Nangal Chaudhary	19.18%	60.01%
Mahendragarh	30.12%	58.35%

Source : Primary Data.

It may be noted here that as per Census 2001, the percentage of SC households in total population is 26.65 in district Sirsa and 16.31 in Mahendragarh. However, out of the total households issued with job cards under REGS, 30 per cent in block Nathusari Chaupta, 64.95 per cent in block Sirsa, 60.01 per cent in block Nangal Chaudhary and 58.35 per cent in block Mahendragarh are SC households. This indicates that registration of the SC households in REGS is higher in the two sample blocks of district Mahendragarh as compared to the sample blocks of district Sirsa.

Table 20 shows that the performance of sample blocks of district Mahendragarh is far better than the performance of sample blocks of district Sirsa in providing 100 days of employment to the willing households.

**Table 20 : Percentage of participating households completing 100 days of employment under REGS in sample blocks during 2006-07**

Block	Percentage of Households
Nathusari Chaupta	5.78
Sirsa	3.56
Nangal Chaudhary	25.21
Mahendragarh	17.67

Source : Primary Data.

Table 21 shows that in terms of total funds available under REGS during 2006-07, district Sirsa with an overall utilisation of funds of Rs. 2529 lakh, is far ahead of district Mahendragarh with Rs. 1559 lakh. However, when we compare the absolute amounts of funds utilised, the gap between the two is much narrower: only Rs.2070:1508 (i.e. 4:3) as against the gap in respect of funds available, being as much as 2529:1559 (i.e. 5:3). This is also clearly brought out by the last column in Table 21, which shows the per cent utilisation figures for the two districts and their respective blocks. Thus, within Sirsa district, the sample block Nathusari Chaupta with 87.24 per cent utilisation rate is considered better than block Sirsa with 82.01 per cent fund utilisation. Within Mahendragarh district, however, the two sample blocks are almost at par in this aspect.

**Table 21 : Financial allocation and percentage of utilisation of funds in sample blocks during 2006-07**

(In Rs. lakh)

Sample Blocks	Opening Balance on 1/4/2006	Released during Current Year	Total Funds Available	Total Funds Utilised	Per cent Utilisation
Nathusari Chaupta	46.80	339.61	386.410	337.090	87.24
Sirsa	48.60	260.145	308.745	253.205	82.01
Dist. Sirsa as a whole		2230.054	2529.754	2070.530	81.85
Nangal Chaudhary	47.16	210.00	257.16	247.11	96.09
Mahendragarh	53.93	216.00	269.93	256.94	95.19
Dist. Mahendragarh as a whole		1348.68	1559.35	1508.95	96.77

Source : Sample Data.

Table 22 shows that in terms of wage-material cost composition, the sample block Nathusari Chaupta in Sirsa and the sample block Nangal Chaudhary in Mahendragarh have spent more on the wage component within their respective districts. Overall, however, the two sample blocks of Mahendragarh have both been way ahead of the two sample blocks of Sirsa. This speaks of the greater emphasis on the selection of labour intensive works in Mahendragarh district and its two sample blocks. This, as indicated in the earlier chapter, seems to be due, in part, owing to the geo-climatic, topographic and socio-economic profiles of the respective districts and their blocks.

**Table 22 : Component-wise utilisation of funds under REGS in sample blocks during 2006-07**

Blocks	Utilisation of Funds in Lakh Rupees (%)					Total
	On Unskilled Wage Component	On Semi-skilled & Skilled Wage Component	On Material Component	On Contingences		
Nathusari Chaupta	225.650 (66.94)	0 (0.00)	108.770 (32.27)	2.670 (0.79)		337.090 (100%)
Sirsa	158.223 (62.49)	0 (0.00)	92.632 (36.58)	2.350 (0.93)		253.205 (100%)
Dist. Sirsa as a whole	1307.454 (63.15)	0.27 (0.11)	748.376 (36.14)	14.43 (0.70)		2070.53 (100%)
Nangal Chaudhary	209.60 (84.82)	0.00 (0.00)	37.51 (15.18)	0.00 (0.00)		247.110 (100%)
Mahendragarh	200.96 (78.21)	9.49 (3.69)	45.94 (17.88)	0.55 (0.21)		256.940 (100%)
Dist. Mahendragarh as a whole	1022.32 (69.08)	84.09 (5.57)	380.39 (25.21)	2.14 (0.14)		1508.940 (100%)

Source : Primary Data.

Figures in parentheses are percentages.

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Closely linked with the wage-material cost composition pattern of REGS fund use in a block or district, is the performance in terms of the quantum of employment generated, quantum and quality of works executed and assets created. Table 23 presents the data on employment generated in lakh persondays. District-wise, it is Sirsa that is ahead with a figure of 13.5 lakh persondays of employment generated block-wise, it is Nathusari Chaupta, which is leading among all the sample blocks with a figure of 2.34 lakh persondays of employment generated. However, in consonance with the wage-material-cost configuration earlier, the two blocks in Mahendragarh have performed better in terms of this parameter.

**Table 23 : Employment generation under REGS in sample blocks during 2006-07**

Blocks	Employment Generation in Lakh Persondays (%)				Average No. of days of employment. per household	
	SC	Women	Physically Challenged	Total	SC	Women
Nathusari	1.100	0.800	0	2.340	32.5	20.7
Chaupta	(47.01)	(34.19)	(0.00)	(100%)		
Sirsa	1.244	0.758	0	1.637	24.4	20.9
	(75.99)	(46.30)	(0.00)	(100%)		
Dist. Sirsa as a whole	8.113	4.279	0	13.545	23.0	22.2
	(59.90)	(31.59)	(0.00)	(100%)		
Nangal Chaudhary	1.30	0.65	0	2.17	35.4	35.5
	(59.91)	(29.95)	(0.00)	(100%)		
Mahendragarh	1.24	0.50	SDNA	2.09	17.0	16.8
	(59.33)	(23.92)		(100%)		
Dist. Mahendragarh as a whole	6.48	3.15	SDNA	10.77	25.3	23.5
	(60.17)	(29.25)		(100%)		

SDNA = Separate Data Not Available.

Figures in parentheses are percentages.

Also, as regards the share of SCs and women among the beneficiaries in terms of persondays of employment recorded, it is block Sirsa which tops with a figure of 1.24 lakh persondays in the case of SCs and block Nathusari Chaupta, which tops with a figure of 0.8 lakh of the total persondays in the case of women workers. The differentials among the blocks on these scores reflect the social, economic and demographic configurations of the respective blocks.

Table 24 shows the work-wise/asset-wise progress and expenditure incurred in the sample blocks under REGS. Clearly, water resource related works lead, followed by rural road connectivity related works. Significantly, in the case of Sirsa district, land development is a low priority work in Nathusari Chaupta block though not so in Sirsa block. But even more significantly, land development accounts for zero expenditure in the case of both the sample blocks in Mahendragarh district. Once again, part of the explanation for the difference in the choice of works and fund use pattern can perhaps be attributed to the different geo-climatic and topographic conditions of the respective blocks. It is significant to also note that it is only in block Nangal Chaudhary that the renovation of traditional water bodies was chosen as a 'major work' under REGS and it alone accounted for 39.3 per cent of the REGS expenditure in this block. However, there does seem to be some degree of mix-up here because the water conservation and water harvesting category accounts for only 13 per cent of the total REGS expenditure incurred in this block. Thus, the two blocks together, give a figure of 52 per cent. The percentage of works which were undertaken during 2006-07 but were in progress (not completed) on 31-3-07, is much higher in the sample blocks of district Sirsa as compared to that in the sample blocks of district Mahendragarh.



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Gali Construction in Harijan Basti under NREGS



Irrigation Channel for Watering SC Farmers' Land



Women Workers Working at NREGS Worksite

**Views, Observations and Suggestions of BDPO of Blocks Sirsa and Nathusari Chaupta**

Sh. D.S. Sandhu, BDPO of Sirsa block with addl. charge for Nathusari Chaupta block, is also holding the charge as PO, REGS for these two blocks. The summary of his views is:

- \* Received training on NREGS of three days only by HIRD.
- \* Was aware of NREGA, but not clear about the RTI and Social Audit provisions.
- \* Organised one-day training courses for GPs, *Sachivs*, *Rozgar Sahayaks*, Sarpanches at the BDPO office.
- \* Prepared the Perspective Plans (PPs).

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- \* Approved PPs prepared by GPs for the reference year.
- \* Prepared a shelf of projects for the block and also for all the GPs.
- \* GP did not forward even one application to PO for work allotment twice.
- \* GPs and Panchayat Samitis are the executing agencies.
- \* No convergence of REGS with other (RD) schemes.
- \* Complaint register maintained, but no complaint was received under REGS during 2006-07.
- \* Generally, the implementation has been effective on most counts. However, delays in technical approval due to the paucity of empanelled JEs has been a main hurdle in the implementation of REGS.
- \* Difficulty in opening post office/bank accounts of workers has also been a non-positive experience.
- \* Wages were paid weekly and cheques were issued promptly to Gram Panchayats.
- \* There has been no active involvement of NGOs.
- \* There was no problem or delay in release of funds and their utilisation.
- \* The demand for work was fully met.
- \* There was adequate support staff at block headquarters.
- \* There was cooperation/support from elected representatives of PRIs.
- \* As per the BDPO, REGS implementation has resulted in
  - greater coordination between PO and GPs, PO and CBOs, PO and Block Samiti.
  - greater accountability of officials and elected representatives.
  - enhanced transparency in decision-making and implementation but only to a limited extent.

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- \* Work is not progressing well in villages adjacent to towns as labourers there were not willing to work under REGS because of work availability at higher wages in the nearby towns.
- \* Wages of unskilled workers in villages have gone up by around Rs. 30 from Rs.135 due to REGS.

**Suggestions by BDPO (Block Sirsa/Nathusari Chaupta)**

- \* Material component should be increased.
- \* Since landholding of SC households under patta land re-distribution programme, IAY etc., is not much, scope for work on land development on this count is limited. Therefore, REGS work should be allowed on private lands. Some contribution (25 per cent) may be charged from the landlords for provision of welfare services to the workers as imposition of higher wages may lead to use of machinery by them, thereby defeating the objective of employment generation.
- \* Works should be more in the nature that create need-based assets of durable nature and as per the need of the village concerned. Follow-up should be done.
- \* Handicapped persons should be given 50 per cent concession in work load.
- \* Women with infants should be given 25-30 per cent concession in work load.
- \* SGRY is a better scheme than REGS as it allows carrying of soil to and from long distances.

**Views, Observations and Suggestions of BDPO, Blocks Mahendragarh and Nangal Chaudhary**

Shri Deepak Yadav, BDPO, Mahendragarh, with additional charge of Nangal Chaudhary, who is also looking after the work of PO, REGS in these two blocks, provide the following responses:

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- \* He received training for management of REGS but not for RTI.
- \* He himself conducted training for Gram Panchayats and others.
- \* Prepared the Perspective Plan and approved the Perspective Plans submitted by Gram Panchayats.
- \* No application for work was forwarded to him by Gram Panchayat.
- \* No convergence of REGS with other schemes.
- \* No complaint received under REGS during 2006-07.
- \* All tasks under REGS were performed effectively.
- \* Wages were paid fortnightly.
- \* There were no delays and problems in the release and utilisation of funds, according to the PO.
- \* Employment demand was adequately met.
- \* Existing office staff helped as support staff.
- \* There was cooperation and support from elected representatives.
- \* VMCs have been functional.
- \* Received applications under RTI, but gave no details.
- \* According to him, REGS did enhance transparency in decision making and implementation and increased accountability of officials and elected representatives. However, he was not sure if REGS would lead to responsive Governance/Government.
- \* Performance of REGS was good in the two blocks and promoted the leadership of PRIs and involvement of officials.
- \* NGO participation was not satisfactory. Same was the case with the workers' organisations.
- \* No views on impact of REGS on wages of unskilled work in other works.

### Suggestions by the PO

- \* Need for awareness camps at the village level.
- \* Land development and water related works on private lands should be taken up.
- \* Camel cart should be allowed for transportation of materials/debris.
- \* Some concession in work load should be given to handicapped persons and women with infants.

### Views, Observations and Suggestions of Elected Representatives of Panchayat Samiti

Altogether 18 elected representatives of Panchayat Samiti were interviewed in the four sample blocks. Following are the particulars :

**Table 25 : Profile of respondents : elected representatives of panchayat samitis**

Block	President	Vice-president	SC Member	Female Member	Others	Total
Nathusari Chaupta	1		1	1	1	4
Sirsa	1		1	1	1	4
M. Garh	1	1	1	1	1	5
Narnaul	1	1	1	1	1	5
Total	4	2	4	4	4	18

As regards the main observations and suggestions put forth by these respondents, there is a broad commonality:

### Observations

- \* REGS has helped and can help the poor and the unemployed by providing for livelihoods, if implemented effectively.

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- \* REGS helps in pushing up wage rates in non-REGS works for the unskilled workers.
- \* REGS is a very good scheme for improving the infrastructure in rural areas.
- \* REGS slows down the tendency of out-migration of rural workers in search of work.

#### **Suggestions**

- \* Wages should be paid at time rate.
- \* Material-wage ratio should be increased.
- \* Paper work should be decreased and simplified.
- \* Panchayat Samiti should get adequate participation and role in planning and implementation of REGS.
- \* In fact, Panchayat Samiti should be the implementing agency and should run this (REGS) programme.
- \* Minimum wage rate should be Rs. 150 per day.
- \* Grant should be allocated at block level so that Panchayat Samiti would have a greater say and role in REGS vis-à-vis the Gram Panchayats.
- \* SGRY is a better Scheme and should be re-started.
- \* Handicapped persons and women should be given some concessions in workload.

#### **Workers' Views and Responses**

As can be seen, this is a fairly representative sample. However, an overall analysis of the responses provided by them to the queries in the schedules shows that the degree of their awareness and active involvement in the decision-making and implementation of REGS is generally insignificant, with some exceptions here and there. This brings out the strong need for sensitisation, mobilisation, orientation and capacity building of the Elected Representatives if they are to play a meaningful role in visualisation and

carrying out their mandates, and more importantly that of the REGS. Of course, some of them have specifically emphasised this need. They have generally expressed their lack of awareness of the objectives and provisions of the Scheme and have often voiced a feeling of hurt on being not involved actively in the operationalisation of the Scheme by the officials and Sarpanches.

Given the basic objectives and the modus operandi of the NREG Act, the 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment Act and the RTI Act, full and active involvement of the representatives is *sine qua non* to its successful implementation in letter and spirit. On this count, therefore, a lot more needs to be done in Haryana, especially now that the NREGS is being extended to all the districts in the State.

#### **Views, Observations and Suggestions of the GP Level Respondents**

As is obvious, the Sarpanches and the *Gram Sachivs*, aided by the *Rozgar Sahayaks* and coordinated by the PO, are the key players in the planning and implementation process of the REGS at the ground level. The Panches also have a role but is often perceived as minimal. Similarly, the Gram Sabha too, has a critical role to play at various junctures, especially during the identification and prioritisation of works to be taken up in the GP under REGS. The Social Audit, while in operation and at the work completion stage, is another important event for the Gram Sabha. But the Gram Sabha's role was more in theory and little in practice.

The responses, views, suggestions and observations of the GP level functionaries are, therefore, of great significance in profiling and evaluating the performance of REGS at the grassroots level. They reveal the scenario of the site of action, which indeed is the true measure of the performance of the REGS. The extent and quality of REGS' successes and failures, and its strengths and weaknesses can be captured only through interactions with them.

Altogether 19 respondents were interviewed from the 4 sample GPs. They included 4 Sarpanches, 2 SC Panches, 3 Women Panches, 4 other Panches,

3 *Gram Sachivs* and 3 *Rozgar Sahakayks*. Table 26 details the GP-wise distribution of these respondents.

**Table 26 : Profile of respondents : GP level functionaries**

Sample GP	Sarpanches	SC Panch	Women Panch	Other Panch	<i>Gram Sachiv</i>	<i>Rozgar Sahayak</i>	Total
Kotli	1	1	1	0	0	1	4
Randhawa	1	0	0	2	1	1	5
Bhurjat	1	1	1	0	1	1	5
Musnauta	1	0	1	2	1	0	5
Total	4	2	3	4	3	3	19

As is to be expected, all the Sarpanches were actively involved in the registration, issuing of job cards, receiving applications for work, informing about work availability, allocating work and payment of wages in all the villages. They were assisted by the *Rozgar Sahayaks* in most of these functions in the GPs except in Musnauta, where no *Rozgar Sahayak* was appointed. The *Gram Sachiv* has also played an important role in the conduct of some of these functions in the two sample villages, viz., Musnauta and Bhurjat, both in district Sirsa, but not in the two sample villages of district Sirsa. This also reflects to a greater or lesser degree the pro-active involvement of the concerned ADC-cum-ADPCs and BDPOs-cum-POs in these cases.

#### **Views, Observations and Suggestions of GP Level Respondents**

While most of the respondents said that there were no problems in the performance of their function, some of them pointed out the following difficulties and problems in some instances:

- \* Lack of awareness about the Scheme and prevalence of illiteracy among the target beneficiaries.
- \* *Gram Sachivs* are over-loaded with work responsibility in many GPs.

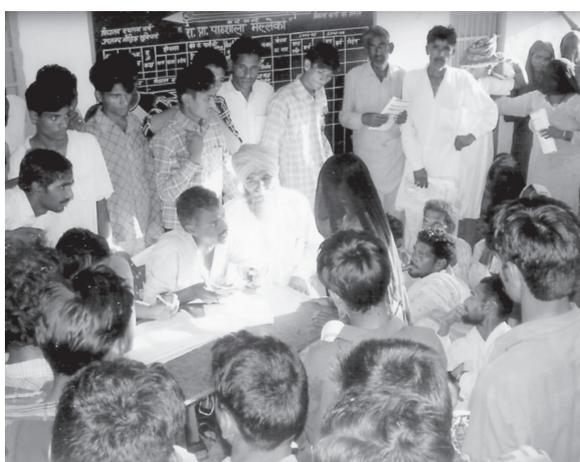
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- \* Lot of paper work.
- \* Difficulty in gathering people together for photographs and issuing job cards.
- \* Initially, only a single copy of job card was prepared for one family. Later on, the GPs were instructed to prepare job cards in duplicate so that one copy of the job card remains with the worker and another copy is kept in the GP.
- \* Indifference and apathy among target beneficiaries.
- \* Difficulty in measurement in the quantum of work.
- \* Difficulty in identification of actual workers in the wage payment phase.
- \* GPs took part in the plan formulation process.
- \* *Rozgar Sahayaks* (RSs) were appointed by all the sample GPs except Musnauta.
- \* *Rozgar Sahayaks* were effective in their role.
- \* Gram Sabhas were organised. This was done as per the directions and instructions of the Panchayat Department through the BDPOs.
- \* Interestingly, about half of the respondents expressed lack of awareness about the need and provisions for general, technical and administrative approvals of financial plans for works.
- \* Measurement of works was quite often cited as a problem due to the shortage of J.E.s.
- \* GPs were ordinarily involved in the wage payment process.
- \* While most respondents agreed that the method of wage payment was safe, some of them suggested that BDPO should be present during wage payment. It was noticed that sometimes a member of the household other than the worker himself takes the wage (on his behalf).

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- \* Most of the respondents reported that Gram Panchayats were effective in communicating the provisions of REGS and that the GPs had also displayed the details of works and wage payment.

#### **Payment of Wages under NREGS in Village Mallekan, District Sirsa**



\* Most of the respondents said that the Muster Rolls were kept in the GP for public review.

\* Four respondents out of the sample (19) elected representatives of GP level reported that they have noted differences in attendance of workers and in actual number of workers present. One of them (a SC

Panch) had told that he could not take any action or could not pursue the case further as he is very poor and was not in a position to spend money and time for it.

- \* Four respondents reported that demand for work was more and GPs did not have adequate shelf of works to meet this demand.
- \* Problems in work distribution in GPs were also noticed where the population of workers was very high such as in GP Kotli: Workers in large numbers, generally more than one per family, reached the worksite and pressurised the *Rozgar Sahayaks* to provide work to all of them on the spot.
- \* Sarpanches and *Sachivs* in the respective GPs were not clear about the number of workers demanding or willing to do 100 days work under the REGS.

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- \* Significantly, most of the elected representatives of GPs said that REGS have resulted in reduction in migration in search of employment.
- \* Majority of the views were negative in regard to the ability of the GP to initiate more development works after the onset of REGS, but some (5 responses) were positive.
- \* Similar pattern of responses appeared on the query about the GP's ability of collaborating with the CBOs/NGOs for rural development.
- \* Most significantly, most of the respondents wanted to get additional training in specific areas of REGS so that they could understand it better and work properly. Some of them also wanted, thorough training, record maintenance under REGS.
- \* Also, significantly, most of the respondents opined that REGS had helped in making the GP level decision-making transparent and accountable.
- \* Out of the 19 sample elected representatives of GPs, only 5.26 per cent (01) rated the performance of REGS as 'excellent' in their GPs, 42.10 per cent (08) 'very good' and 10.52 per cent (02) 'as satisfactory'. In support of their responses, they cited instances of works done and the positive results of REGS in terms of community betterment and rural development in addition to increase in employment, worker participation, etc. This perception is encouraging.

#### **Suggestions Made by GP Level Respondents in Sample Villages**

- \* Help should be taken from educated village people in maintaining records.
- \* Kaccha johads should be made pucca under REGS works.
- \* There should be a separate (Autonomous) agency for implementation of the REGS.
- \* Sarpanch should have full autonomy.

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- \* REGS should have convergence with Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC).
- \* Training to GP level functionaries is needed.
- \* Every GP should have its own *Gram Sachiv*.
- \* Paper work and record keeping should be minimised and simplified.
- \* Piece-rate wages should be encouraged and increased.
- \* Greater coordination among officials and elected representatives is needed.
- \* Greater participation and involvement of all the villagers, especially panches, should be ensured in NREG and associated RD programmes.
- \* Technical officials and financial officials should devote more time to REGS at GP level.
- \* TA and other allowances should be paid to the VMC members to motivate them and enhance their participation.

***Rozgar Sahayaks (NREG Assistants/helpers) specifically made the following suggestions:***

- \* Job cards are excessive in number in some villages (e.g. Kotli) and providing work to all the job seekers at one time as per demand may not be feasible for the GP. There should, therefore, be provision to limit job provision to 100 or 200 workers at one time to overcome such situations.
- \* There should be a separate full time PO for REGS.
- \* Plan for works should be formulated on a prioritised basis through dialogue between implementers and job seekers.
- \* Mate is needed for supervising the progress of work. He should be paid minimum wages on daily basis at par with other unskilled workers.
- \* Minimum wages should be increased/assured.

### **Performance of REGS at Target Beneficiary Level**

This section presents one of the most crucial parts of the study, namely, the findings of the responses, experiences and views of the sample workers, the primary target beneficiaries of the REGS. As we shall notice, most of the findings here reinforce and corroborate the findings and conclusions emerging from the analysis of the data pertaining to the other stakeholders, namely, officials, elected representatives of PRIs and NGOs at various levels, i.e. State, district, block and GP. All the responses, views and perceptions of the sample workers in regard to various aspects covered in the schedule (Format G-2) are consolidated and presented in Tables 27 to 60. These include benefits accrued to the target groups and to the community; some of the intangible gains to the community such as accountability of officials and elected representatives of Gram Panchayat and transparency in respect of the planning and execution of works by Gram Panchayats are also examined.

In all, 119 sample workers were selected from the Gram Panchayats of Kotli and Randhawa in Sirsa district and Musnauta and Bhurjat in Mahendragarh for this study.

### **Profiles of the Sample Workers**

The socio-economic profiles of the workers can be gleaned from Tables 27 to 31. The participation of females was low as they accounted for less than a fifth (17 per cent) of all NREG workers. Representation of workers from the schedule caste (SC) group was encouragingly high at 78 per cent in sample GPs of Sirsa and 67 per cent in the sample GPs of Mahendragarh. The middle aged (36-60 years) and youth (20-35 years) constituted nearly 90 per cent of all workers in both the districts. While there was high representation of labour class and cultivators in Sirsa, only non-agriculture labour participated in the HREGS works in Mahendragarh. Majority of the workers were landless (88 per cent in Sirsa and 100 per cent in Mahendragarh) in the two districts. Two-thirds of the workers' household annual income during 2006-07 was in the range of Rs. 5001-10,000 in

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Sirsa. Whereas in Mahendragarh, most of the workers had higher incomes and half of them had incomes in the range of Rs. 10,001 to 15,000. The average family size was 4.98 in Sirsa and 5.26 in Mahendragarh. Thus, almost all the workers are poor since the rural poverty line was Rs.24900 per household per annum during 2004-05 for Haryana (See Table 31). For the two districts together, 86 per cent workers are from families having annual income of less than Rs. 15000.

**Table 27: Distribution of workers: sex-wise**

District	Male	Female	Total
Sirsa	51	8	59
	86.4%	13.6%	100.0%
Mahendragarh	48	12	60
	80.0%	20.0%	100.0%
Total	99	20	119
	83.2%	16.8%	100.0%

Note: The source of data for all the Tables is primary data collected from the sample workers in the field. N = 119

**Table 28 : Distribution of workers: caste-wise**

District	SC	ST	OBC	OC	Total
Sirsa	46	6	—	7	59
	78.0%	10.2%	—	11.9%	100.0%
Mahendragarh	40	3	12	5	60
	66.7%	5.0%	20.0%	8.3%	100.0%
Total	86	9	12	12	119
	72.3%	7.6%	10.1%	10.1%	100.0%

'—' Indicates 'None'.

**Table 29 : Distribution of workers: age group-wise**

District	Years < 20	21-35	36-60	60 and above	Total
Sirsa	8 13.6%	21 35.6%	30 50.8%	—	59 100.0%
Mahendragarh	3 5.0%	20 33.3%	35 58.3%	2 3.3%	60 100.0%
Total	11 9.2%	41 34.5%	65 54.6%	2 1.7%	119 100.0%

**Table 31 : Distribution of workers: occupation-wise**

District	Cultivator	Ag. Labour	Non-Ag. Labour	Total
Sirsa	9 15.3%	36 61.0%	14 23.7%	59 100.0%
Mahendragarh	—	—	60 100.0%	60 100.0%
Total	9 7.6%	36 30.3%	74 62.2%	119 100.0%

**Table 32 : Distribution of workers: economic status-wise**

	Income p.a <Rs. 5000	Rs.5001 -10,000	Rs.10,001 -15,000	Rs. 15,001 -20,000	Rs.20,001 -25,000	Rs.15,001 +	Total
Sirsa	8 13.6%	39 66.1%	10 16.9%	2 3.4%	—	—	59 100.0%
Mahendragarh	2 3.4%	12 20.3%	30 50.8%	10 16.9%	4 6.8%	1 1.7%	59 100.0%
Total	10 8.4%	51 43.2%	40 33.9%	12 10.2%	4 3.4%	1 .8%	118 100.0%

Note: poverty line for rural Haryana during 2004-05 was Rs. 24900 per annum per household of size five.

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On the whole, in terms of economic conditions and incomes, Sirsa appears to be relatively backward. However, the number of poor among workers is evidently very high in both the districts.

Most of the workers belong to large families and families with 1-3 children. For most of the worker households the major sources of income are crop and animal husbandry and wage labour.

**Awareness Levels :** The level of awareness of the workers in regard to NREGS was not high and it varied considerably across the GPs / blocks / districts in Haryana (see Tables 32 to 38). Only 60 per cent of workers were aware of their entitlement under REGS. About 75 per cent of workers knew that guaranteed wage employment is for 100 days per family per year under REGS. Significantly, the awareness among workers was very low about provision of unemployment allowances under REGS. Hardly 25 per cent of workers knew that if Gram Panchayat/ PO fails to provide guaranteed employment within the stipulated time, then they will be entitled to receive unemployment allowances as per NREGS. About 55 per cent of workers in district Sirsa were aware of minimum wages whereas in district Mahendragarh only 0.3 per cent workers were aware. However, every worker in both the districts knew that wages should be paid within 15 days of completion of the work. Most of the workers were not aware about the wages to be paid, if work was given beyond 5 kms from the GP. The average awareness score about NREGA was high (46 per cent) in Sirsa and low in Mahendragarh (23 per cent).

**Table 32 : Distribution of workers: awareness level-wise**

Awareness Indicators	Aware of entitlements	Max.No. of days of Employment	Wages to be paid if work is given beyond 5 kms of GP	Minimum wages to be paid	Time limit for providing employment	Time limit for payment of wages
Sirsa	32 54.2%	41 69.5%	12 21.1%	32 55.2%	33 57.9%	59 100.0%
Mahendragarh	40 67.8%	49 81.7%	3 5.0%	2 3.5%	2 3.4%	60 100.0%
Total	72 61.0%	90 75.6%	15 12.8%	34 29.6%	35 30.4%	119 100.0%

**Table 33 : Correct responses against six questions on NREGS**

District	Nil	Only 1	Only 2	Only 3	Only 4	Only 5	All six	Average score (%)
Sirsa	15 25.4%	8 13.6%	6 10.2%	13 22.0%	8 13.6%	9 15.3%	-	46.1
Mahendragarh	8 13.3%	37 61.7%	14 23.3%	—	1 1.7%	—	-	23.3
Total	23 19.3%	45 37.8%	20 16.8%	13 10.9%	9 7.6%	9 7.6%	-	34.4

**Table 34 : Distribution of workers: awareness about RTI Act and Social Audit**

District	RTI Act	Social Audit
Sirsa	4 6.9%	2 3.4%
Mahendragarh	—	—
Total	4 3.4%	2 1.7%

About 60 per cent of the workers knew that they had to give application for work (Table 37). However, 49 per cent in Sirsa and 10 per cent in Mahendragarh opined that one could get work without application too; a small proportion felt that without job card also work could be demanded / obtained (Table 38). The source of information about NREGS and Social Audit was Panchayat in both the districts. However, disturbing though, the workers' knowledge about 'Right to information' and 'Social Audit' was very low. But, almost 40 to 45 per cent of the workers in GPs of Sirsa were aware of the fact that they could approach the NREG officials / others for lodging complaints, if job cards were not issued and work was not given within 15 days. Unfortunately, such information was not known to the workers in Mahendragarh. The low levels of awareness could be due to inadequacy in the IEC efforts / approaches adopted by officials and GPs to sensitise the local community about NREGS, RTI Act and Social Audit (Tables 32 to 38). A small proportion of workers was aware of the works selected (in Gram Sabha) under NREGS. Most of them reported that the Sarpanch participated in the Gram Sabha held for Social Audit. Since the people's participation was low, workers could not appreciate the utility of Social Audit (Table 44).

**Table 35 : Distribution of workers: GP as source of information for REGS, RTI and Social Audit**

District	REGS and RTI	Social Audit
Sirsa	59 100.0%	58 98.3%
Mahendragarh	60 100.0%	60 100.0%
Total	119 100.0%	118 99.2%

**Table 36 : Distribution of workers: awareness level-wise contacts for official information**

District	Job cards are not given	Work is not given within 15 days	Wages are not paid within 15 days
Sirsa	23 40.4%	25 44.6%	23 45.1%
Mahendragarh			?
Total	23 19.7%	25 21.6%	23 20.7%

**Table 37 : Distribution of workers: awareness level of requirements for getting work**

District	Application to be given
Sirsa	36 64.3%
Mahendragarh	34 57.6%
Total	70 60.9%

**Table 38 : Distribution of workers: knowledge of methods of seeking work**

District	Can get work without			
	Job card		Application	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Sirsa	-	28	-	8
		49.1%		14.0%
Mahendragarh	-	6	-	4
		10.0%		6.7%
Total	-	34	-	12
		29.1%		10.3%

**Registration and Job Cards:** About 92 per cent of job cards in Sirsa and 73 per cent of job cards in Mahendragarh were registered in the name of males. Most of the workers (94 per cent in Sirsa and 82 per cent in Mahendragarh) were possessing the job cards and in the case of others, the job cards were with the Sarpanch. It is heartening to note that no one has incurred any expenditure on getting the job cards. While almost all workers in Sirsa carried the job cards with them while going for work, hardly one-third of the workers did so in Mahendragarh (Table 39). Nearly 76 and 55 per cent of the workers in Sirsa and Mahendragarh reported that the supervising staff (e.g. *Gram Rozgar Sahayak*) had made the entries of employment and wage details in the job cards.

**Table 39 : Distribution of workers: job card registration and possession**

District	Who has registered for the job card - Male	Possession of job card by self	Expenditure incurred, if any, for getting job card (Nil) No expenditure was incurred by any one	Keeping job card while going for work	Making entries of employment and wages paid in the job card
Sirsa	48 92.3%	52 94.5%	55 100.0%	53 96.4%	31 55.4%
Mahendragarh	44 73.3%	49 81.7%	60 100.0%	21 35.0%	44 75.9%
Total	92 82.1%	101 87.8%	115 100.0%	74* 64.3%	75 65.8%

\* For others, the job card is left behind at home or it is with the *Sevak*/ Programme Staff/ Others.

**Participation:** Most of the workers gave application for work and all of them obtained work within 15 days (Table 40). By and large, the piece-rate contract wage was in vogue and the size of the group was small in a large number of cases (six members). All the workers got work within the Gram Panchayats. Equal wages and minimum wages were paid to men and women and payment was made in cash. The workers did not face any problem in receiving the wages (Table 41). Almost all the workers preferred time-based work in both the districts. However, many workers in Sirsa perceived that piece-rate work was disadvantageous to women. No worker was given any wage slip in district Sirsa, though 32 per cent workers in district Mahendragarh reported that they did get the wage slips.

**Table 40 : Distribution of workers by extent of time taken for giving employment**

District	Time taken for giving employment				
	Given application for work	Immediately	Less than a week	7-10 days	11-15 days
Sirsa	38 66.7%	—	1 2.6%	25 65.8%	12 31.6%
Mahendragarh	46 76.7%	3 5.5%	1 1.8%	26 47.3%	25 45.5%
Total	84 71.8%	3 3.2%	2 2.2%	51 54.8%	37 39.8%

**Table 41 : Distribution of workers by type of wages and receipts**

Districts	Piece-rate contract	Size of groups		Wages paid - equally	Issue of wage slips	Mode of payment - cash	Problems in getting full wage	Receipt of Min. wage
		≤ 5	6-12					
Sirsa	56 94.9%	45	13	49 84.5%	58 98.3%	56 94.9%	51 100.0%	
Mahendragarh	58 96.7%	60	-	58 96.7%	19 31.7%	57 96.6%	55 100.0%	
Total	114 95.8%			107 90.7%	19 16.0%	115 97.5%	106 100.0%	

Majority of workers were unaware of the works / schemes selected under HREGS in their GPs. While their own participation in Gram Sabha for identification of works was moderate, most of them acknowledged the participation of Sarpanch. The display of information on HREGS at GPs also led to better awareness in Sirsa (Table 42).

**Table 42 : Distribution of workers by level of awareness, type of works and participants in Social Audit**

District	Works selected under NREG	Who participated in Social Audit / GS			Display of information on works at GP
		Officials	Sarpanch	People in general	
Sirsa	20 33.9%	7 12.1%	46 79.3%	5 8.6%	27 45.8%
Mahendragarh	12 20.0%		40 93.0%	3 7.0%	10 16.9%
Total	32 26.9%	7 6.9%	86 85.1%	8 8.0%	37 31.4%

**Work Conditions:** It was reported by 55 per cent of the workers that muster rolls were kept at the worksite. In regard to mandatory facilities at worksite such as first aid and drinking water, the reported data were encouraging. But Mahendragarh's performance was better in this respect (Table 43).

**Table 43 : Distribution of workers by availability of mandatory facilities at worksite**

District	Muster roll	First Aid	Drinking water	Creche	Shade	Average Score (%)
Sirsa	32 55.2%	50 86.2%	50 84.7%	5 8.5%	16 27.1%	52.3
Mahendragarh	33 55.9%	60 100.0%	60 100.0%	18 30.0%	51 85.0%	74.2
Total	65 55.6%	110 93.2%	110 92.4%	23 19.3%	67 56.3%	63.2

Almost all the workers except 14 per cent of workers in district Sirsa reported that facilities such as drinking water, first aid box, etc., were provided at worksites. However, only 8 per cent of workers in district Sirsa and 30 per cent of workers in district Mahendragarh reported that Crèche facility was provided at worksite. Twenty seven per cent workers in district Sirsa reported that shade facility was provided at worksite whereas in district Mahendragarh 85 per cent of workers reported so. Evidently, compliance on this score was rather wanting and needs to be spruced up in both the districts, but more so in Sirsa. Taking the responses for the facilities into account, simple average score was worked out. The district Mahendragarh could provide more facilities (74 per cent) compared to Sirsa (52 per cent).

No improvised tools were provided to workers to reduce the drudgery nor any payment was made to sharpen the tools (Table 44).

**Table 44 : Distribution of workers by working conditions and facilities**

District	Work within the GP	No provision of improvised tools for reducing drudgery		Payment of money for sharpening tools -No
		Males	Females	
Sirsa	59 100.0%	59 100.0%	59 100.0%	53 89.8%
Mahendragarh	57 100.0%	60 100.0%	60 100.0%	57 96.6%
Total	116 100.0%	119 100.0%	119 100.0%	110 93.2%

**Perceptions:** A good proportion of the workers in Sirsa perceived that piece-rate work is disadvantageous to women since they cannot do heavy work (Table 45).

**Table 45 : Distribution of workers by perceptions on type of wage and disadvantages**

	Piece-rate work disadvantageous to females	Preference for time- based work
Sirsa	43 72.9%	59 100.0%
Mahendragarh	5 8.3%	29 48.3%
Total	48 40.3%	88 73.9%

All of them preferred time-based work. In Mahendragarh almost 50 per cent of them opted for time-based work. Knowledge of the workers with respect to formation, functioning (visiting worksites and participation in Gram Sabha) of the VMCs was poor (Table 46). By and large, the piece-rate contract wage was in vogue and the size of the group was small in a large number of cases (6 members). All the workers got work within the Gram Panchayats. Equal wages and minimum wages were paid to men and women and payment was made in cash. The workers did not face any problem in receiving the wages.

**Table 46 : Distribution of workers by views on performance of Vigilance and Monitoring Committees (VMCs)**

	Knowledge about formation of VMC	VMCs visiting worksites	VMCs participating in GS
Sirsa	10 17.2%	10 21.3%	5 10.2%
Mahendragarh	16 26.7%	7 11.9%	6 10.0%
Total	26 22.0%	17 16.0%	11 10.1%

While all of them perceived the impact of NREGS on the wages of unskilled workers in other sectors / activities as positive, the nature of the perceived effect was mixed. Over 60 per cent of the workers indicated that wages for unskilled workers had gone up (Table 47). When field staff enquired about the impact of REGS on wages of unskilled labour, many workers said that their wages have decreased, marginally though. Actually, these workers wanted to point out that they were getting lower wages in REGS (Rs.100 per day) as compared to other works in the open market (Rs. 150-250 per day). However, all the officers, elected representatives and field staff reported that REGS had a positive impact on the wages of unskilled labour. All of them indicated some increase in the wages of unskilled labour in the open market due to REGS.

**Table 47 : Distribution of workers by perceptions on benefits/ impacts of wages**

	Social Audits are Beneficial	Impact on wages of unskilled workers in other activities	Nature of effect on wages	
			Increased	Decreased
Sirsa	2 3.4%	58 100.0%	47 79.7%	12 20.3%
Mahendragarh	1 1.7%	59 98.3%	26 44.1%	33 55.9%
Total	3 2.5%	117 99.2%	73 61.9%	45 38.1%

Quality of the assets created under REGS was found to be better in Mahendragarh than in Sirsa and the quality score varied between 50 and 75 per cent. The perceptions of the workers about the usefulness of the assets to the village are consistent with the scores on the quality of assets (Table 48).

**Table 48 : Distribution of workers by opinions on quality of assets created - asset -1 (name the asset)**

	Very good	Good	Average	Not good	Don't know	Ave. % Score
Sirsa	4 6.9%	35 60.3%	3 5.2%	13 22.4%	3 5.2%	51.5
Mahendragarh	19 31.7%	37 61.7%	4 6.7%			75.0

**Distribution of workers by opinions on quality of assets created - asset -2**

	Very good	Good	Average	Not good	Don't know	Ave. % Score
Sirsa	6 12.8%	35 74.5%	3 6.4%	1 2.1%	2 4.3%	67.4
Mahendragarh	5 16.7%	24 80.0%	1 3.3%			71.1

**Benefits:** The litmus test for assessing the effectiveness of NREGA is the number of days of employment provided to worker households. Tables 49 & 50 present the number of workers and employment provided across various social classes. It is evident that in several households more than one worker participated in HREGS. Though gender biases were not evident in provision of work, the distribution of employment opportunities, appear to be iniquitous with OBCs getting the lion's share.

**Table 49 : Caste-group-wise number of workers and days of employment**

Caste group	Number of households	Total number of REGS workers	Average number of employment days per worker	Average number of employment days per worker
SC	86	140	39	39
ST	9	15	31	31
OBC	12	18	69	69
OC	12	18	47	47
Total	119	191	42	42

**Table 50 : Sex-wise employment generation**

Caste group	Number of workers	Average number of employment days per worker
Male	160	42
Female	31	42
Total	191	42

The distribution of households as per the number of employment days point out to certain biases. About 61 per cent of households could obtain less, only 40 days of employment under HREGS (Table 51), while 10 per cent got over 100 days of employment.

**Table 51 : Distribution of households according to caste group and days of (HREGS) employment – Haryana**

Caste group	Up to 20 days	21-40	41-60	61-80	81-100	101 & above	Total
SC	27	28	12	8	6	5	86
ST*	4	2	2	1	—	—	9
OBC	3	1	2	1	1	4	12
OC	4	4	-	1	1	2	12
Total	38	35	16	11	8	11	119

\* : Migrant workers.

In Sirsa, awareness levels are found to be high, working conditions are not very encouraging and (perceived) quality of assets created is not good. The scenario is quite opposite in Mahendragarh. The (sample) workers reported that they got on the average 42 days of employment during 2006-07 in selected GPs of the two districts. The (wage) income gains were to the tune of Rs. 4083 per household and OBCs got the maximum benefit of about Rs. 6683 (Table 52). As per the office records in the sample blocks of Mahendragarh, Viz., Nangal Chaudhary and Mahendragarh, about 25 and 18 per cent of worker households were given 100 days of employment during 2006-07. The corresponding figures in Sirsa district were less than six per cent. This suggests that the district Sirsa administration should evince more interest in the planning and execution of works. If the low levels of (HREGS) employment in Sirsa is interpreted as an indicator of low levels of demand, then the future fund allocation could be reduced accordingly.

**Table 52 : Employment and wages with and in the absence of REGS**

(Per household)

Caste group	Total number of days of employment (in the absence of REGS)	Market wage rate (Rs. / day)	Employment through REGS	Total wage received from REGS (Rs. / per annum) *
SC	43	109	39	3751
ST	53	112	31	3496
OBC	49	115	69	6683
OC	19	108	47	4520
Total	43	110	42	4083

\* No. of days of employment x wage paid under REGS per annum.

Note : Poverty line for Haryana Rural was Rs. 415 per capita per month during 2004-05.

About 61 per cent of the workers in Sirsa felt that REGS helped them in demanding work from the GP, while hardly 10 per cent in Mahendragarh opined so. The workers felt that they are better informed now about the decisions of GP (Table 53).

**Table 53 : Distribution of workers by perceptions on REGS benefits to the community and development agencies**

District	Demanding services from		Bringing together GP / CBOs, NGOs, officials as partners	Realisation by workers about		Creation of Useful Assets in GP
	Officials	GP		Right to Work	Right to Information	
Sirsa	3 5.1%	36 61.0%		37 62.7%	7 11.9%	33 55.9%
Mahendragarh		6 10.2%	2 3.4%	48 82.8%	7 12.1%	51 87.9%
Total	3 2.5%	42 35.6%	2 1.7%	85 72.6%	14 12.0%	84 71.8%

The REGS failed in bringing together the GP, CBO, NGO representatives and officials as partners and also in making workers realising their right to seek information. However, a large proportion of workers realised their right to work, more so in Mahendragarh. The effect of NREG on migration was moderate in Sirsa (34 per cent) and marginally higher in Mahendragarh (46 per cent) (Table 54).

**Table 54 : Distribution of workers by perceptions on REGS and reduction of migration of unskilled adults**

Districts (Weights)	At household level				At village level			
	Consid- erably (2)	Mode- rately (1)	No effect (0)	Score (%)	Consid- erably (2)	Mode- rately (1)	No effect (0)	Score (%)
Sirsa	8 13.6%	37 62.7%	14 23.7%	44.9	13 22.0%	34 57.6%	12 20.3%	33.8
Mahendragarh	5 8.3%	50 83.3%	5 8.3%	50.0	1 1.7%	53 88.3%	6 10.0%	45.8

The effectiveness of the REGS implementation in Sirsa was rated as average (45 per cent) (Table 55) and this was largely said to have been contributed by active participation of Sarpanch and members of the GP followed by officials.

**Table 55 : Distribution of workers by views on effectiveness of REGS implementation**

Districts (Weights)	Very effec- tive (3)	Effec- tive (2)	Less effec- tive (1)	Not effec- tive (0)	Cannot say (-)	Total	Score (%)
Sirsa	5 8.5%	7 11.9%	33 55.9%	1 1.7%	13 22.0%	59 100.0%	44.9
Mahendragarh	4 6.8%	46 78.0%	7 11.9%	1 1.7%	1 1.7%	59 100.0%	63.8
Total	9 7.6%	53 44.9%	40 33.9%	2 1.7%	14 11.9%	118 100.0%	

The implementation was more effective in Mahendragarh (64 per cent) and elected representatives seem to have made a significant contribution followed by the officials (see Tables 56 to 59). The opinions of majority of the workers apparently suggested that the awareness levels of the community and participation of local institution had hardly made any impact on the NREG Scheme implementation.

**Table 56 : Distribution of workers by opinions on contribution of Sarpanch and GP members to effective implementation of REGS**

Districts (Weights)	Large extent (2)	To some extent (1)	Not at all (0)	Cannot say (-)	Total	Score (%)
Sirsa	15 25.9%	32 55.2%	4 6.9%	7 12%	58 100.0%	40.5
Mahendragarh	34 56.7%	24 40.0%	1 1.7%	1 1.7%	60 100.0%	51.9
Total	49 41.5%	56 47.5%	5 4.2%	8 6.7%	118 100.0%	

**Table 57 : Distribution of workers by opinions on contribution of officials to effective implementation of REGS**

Districts (Weights)	Large extent (2)	To some extent (1)	Not at all (0)	Cannot say (-)	Total	Score (%)
Sirsa	6 10.2%	18 30.5%	23 39.0%	12 20.3%	59 100.0%	31.9
Mahendragarh	1 1.7%	37 61.7%	17 28.3%	5 8.3%	60 100.0%	35.4
Total	7 5.9%	55 46.2%	40 33.6%	17 14.3%	119 100.0%	

**Table 58 : Distribution of workers by opinions on contribution of awareness levels of community to effective implementation of REGS**

Districts (Weights)	Large extent (2)	To some extent (1)	Not at all (0)	Cannot say (-)	Total	Score (%)
Sirsa	1 1.7%	10 16.9%	35 59.3%	13 22.0%	59 100.0%	13.0
Mahendragarh		8 13.3%	26 43.3%	26 43.3%	60 100.0%	11.7
Total	1 .8%	18 15.1%	61 51.3%	39 32.8%	119 100.0%	

**Table 59 : Distribution of workers by opinions on contribution of local institutions to effective implementation of REGS**

Districts (Weights)	Large extent (2)	To some extent (1)	Not at all (0)	Cannot say (-)	Total	Score (%)
Sirsa	2 3.4%	6 10.2%	36 61.0%	15 25.4%	59 100.0%	11.4
Mahendragarh		1 1.7%	16 26.7%	43 71.7%	60 100.0%	Neg.
Total	2 1.7%	7 5.9%	52 43.7%	58 48.8%	119 100.0%	

Responses on the query about awareness level of the community were also rather depressing, with more than 50 per cent workers rating it as zero. Clearly again, concerted efforts are called for on the front of IEC and social mobilisation in general and at the Gram Sabha and GP level in particular so that the people in general and target beneficiaries in particular get adequate information about the provisions, procedures and benefits of the REGS and their rights to work, wages, entitlement, etc.

Interestingly, despite low levels of awareness, workers belonging to Mahendragarh district opined that their knowledge about the decision making at GP level has improved (55 per cent); the corresponding score in Sirsa district was lower (40 per cent) in spite of the fact that general awareness levels about NREGA are better in Sirsa (Table 60).

**Table 60: Distribution of workers by opinions on perceptions on improved knowledge of GP decision-making**

Districts (Weights)	Large extent (2)	To some extent (1)	Not at all (0)	Cannot say (-)	Total	Score (%)
Sirsa	4 6.8%	29 49.2%	13 22.0%	13 22.0%	59 100.0%	40.2
Mahendragarh	7 12.1%	43 74.1%	2 3.4%	6 10.3%	58 100.0%	54.8
Total	11 9.4%	72 61.5%	15 12.8%	19 16.2%	117 100.0%	

**Additional Points: Performance of REGS at Target Beneficiary Level**

- \* Only 5 per cent of workers in district Sirsa said that REGS has helped workers in demanding services from officials. Other workers either said 'No' or 'Can't say' in this regard. This brings us to the critical point of generating demand for convergent development services. Newer empowerment and IEC strategies and interventions are required to motivate people, especially the poor agriculture labour, and build their capacities and confidence.
- \* However, in the case of impact of REGS in terms of workers demanding services from the Gram Panchayat, the response was substantially positive in Sirsa with more than 50 per cent of workers reporting so. However, in district Mahendragarh, only 10 per cent workers reported positively in this regard.

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- \* When asked whether REGS helped in bringing GP, CBOs, NGOs and officials together as (development) partners, less than 5 per cent of workers in district Mahendragarh responded positively. As many as 18.64 per cent workers in district Sirsa and about 5 per cent workers in district Mahendragarh responded negatively. Rest of the workers said that they have had no idea whether REGS helped forge partnerships. This shows that the spirit of the REGS has not as yet really and fully been imbibed and adopted by the implementing agencies and other supporting organisations. But this is not to negate the performance and achievement of REGS. It should be kept in mind that such processes would be slow to get and one year is too short a time for such behavioural transitions to take root and fructify.
- \* More than 80 per cent of workers in district Mahendragarh and about 65 per cent workers in district Sirsa said that works taken up under REGS were useful to the villagers. On the whole, 70 per cent rated REGS as fairly satisfying in the first year of its implementation.
- \* About 10.92 per cent of workers reported that there was considerable reduction in migration of unskilled adults in their households due to REGS. Whereas, 73.10 per cent workers felt that the effect of REGS on migration was moderate in their families. Only 15.96 per cent workers said that there was no effect of REGS in curbing migration of unskilled adults. Between the districts, no major variation was noticed in this regard.
- \* While 80 per cent of workers in district Mahendragarh rated the implementation of REGS in GPs as effective, the percentage was a meagre 11 in district Sirsa. However, less than 2 per cent workers in each district felt that the Scheme was not effectively implemented in GPs. Others felt the implementation effectiveness was low.
- \* About 41.17 per cent of workers opined that Sarpanches and GP members have been largely responsible for good implementation of REGS. Less than 5 per cent workers were of the opinion that

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Sarpanches and GP members played no role at all in effective implementation of this Scheme.

- \* Sixty per cent of the sample workers felt that people are now better informed in some measure about the decisions of the GPs after the launch of REGS in their villages. About 16.8 per cent of workers felt that people are now a shade better informed about the decisions of (development) officials after the launch of REGS in their villages, whereas 37.81 per cent workers said the opposite. This points out to the need for greater efforts to ensure people's participation and information dissemination by the officials and others.
- \* About 74.78 per cent of workers reported that development programmes like REGS have made Gram Panchayats more responsive to the needs of the people.
- \* About 38.65 per cent workers reported that development programmes like REGS have made officials more responsive to the needs of the people, whereas the rest of them did not think so.

#### **Overall Effectiveness and Contributions**

- \* A one-third of all the households (1,06,722) in the two districts together registered themselves and are in possession of job cards. Nearly two-thirds of these households accounted for the scheduled castes and the rest were OBCs. All households that demanded work were given work on time.
- \* There is general tendency to show 'supply of work' as 'demand for employment'. This is perhaps done to avoid payment of unemployment allowance in the event of official failure to provide work. Often the officials wait for a big chunk of work to emerge in a village or a GP, so that many workers can be given work at a time. This clearly is a result of poor planning. Delays in administrative sanctions of action plans are doled out as reasons for delayed employment generation.

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- \* The total employment generated was to the tune of 25 lakh person-days of which two-thirds were SC workers and the rest were women.
- \* The 60:40 ratio of wages and materials was maintained consistently in both the districts with higher wage components in some GP villages.
- \* The average number of employment days per household was 23 in both the districts. The share of SCs in the number of employment days was nearly three-fourths.
- \* The GPs have generally been responsive. While many Sarpanches were active, most of them tended to dominate the REGS much to the displeasure of the Panches.

### **Monitoring and Social Audit**

- \* Most of the Panches complained that they received no training on REGS, RTI, Social Audit and Planning. Only two Panches in Sirsa district said that they had received training in REGS.
- \* Only the Sarpanches reported that they had received training on REGS and a few of them reported having also got training on RTI, Social Audit and Planning.
- \* Most of the *Gram Sachivs* and *Rozgar Sahayaks* did not get any training on RTI, Social Audit and Planning.
- \* Some of the Sarpanches were very clear about the provisions of different aspects of REGS.
- \* Vigilance and Monitoring Committees, Beneficiaries Committees and SHGs had been constituted in most of the sample villages. But they are yet to become functional. However, no VMC was constituted in GP Musnauta. The experiences of Sarpanches about these committees were mixed. Most of the elected representatives of GPs were not aware of the coordination level between the GP and VMCs as also about the role played by the GP in Social Audit and subsequent action.

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- \* Also, importantly, most of the elected representatives of GPs said that the status of the GP had improved to a large extent as a result of its involvement in REGS, and to some extent as a result of its involvement in RTI campaigns and Social Audit.
- \* Panchayat Samiti and GP may be given the major powers to monitor and supervise the works under REGS.
- \* Wages are paid in cash. Social Audit through the Gram Sabhas was ensured.
- \* However, monitoring of REGS implementation was carried out through field visits, progress reports, review meetings and third party assessments.
- \* Social Audits were duly conducted and were very effective. These were welcomed and appreciated by the rural masses.
- \* Monitoring and scrutiny of works and muster roll were though regular, the BDPO himself did not verify the rolls while the works were in progress.
- \* As regards discrepancy in muster roll entries and number of works at site, the name, designation and signature of the issuing officer were not properly entered in the muster rolls.
- \* As per the BDPO, Social Audit was done in all the GPs by the GSs, though the GP level respondents' views were at variance.
- \* As per the BDPO, the VMCs were functional and had helped in ensuring timely and full wage payments and timely work allotment to workers.
- \* BDPO had received only one application under RTI seeking information about works done under REGS during two months in village Farmai Kalan.
- \* There is special need for workers to be properly informed and made aware of the provisions and procedures of NREG monitoring, Social Audit and RTI.

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- \* Interestingly, PO said that though he was not given any monitoring schedule, he followed his own informal methods of verifying the muster rolls while works were in progress. No discrepancy was found.
- \* VMC should be made more active for monitoring and supervision work instead of the *Rozgar Sahayak* being over-burdened with this task.
- \* Awareness among workers about RTI and Social Audit was also reported to be almost nil in the two districts. In fact, no worker in district Mahendragarh knew about RTI and Social Audit and less than 7 per cent of the workers in district Sirsa were aware of these. This again brings out the sorrowful state of inadequacy and lack of awareness among workers regarding their rights, provisions and procedures under REGS.
- \* By and large, the Sarpanches participated in Social Audit. Only 5 per cent of the workers in district Mahendragarh reported that people in general also participated in Social Audit. Clearly, much needs to be done to ensure that the people in general and GP and Gram Sabha in particular do actively participate in Social Audit, which, indeed, is a critical component of the REGS monitoring and evaluation.
- \* In fact, most of the respondents were simply not clear about the meaning and purpose of Social Audit and its benefits. This is a rather undesirable scenario, and therefore, there is urgent need to improve the awareness levels and put in place a functional system of Social Audit.
- \* A similar response pattern and scenario emerged regarding the formation of VMCs, their visits to the worksites and their participation in Gram Sabhas. Obviously, positive intervention is urgently called for on this count, too.
- \* Fifty one per cent of the workers in district Sirsa and 86 per cent of workers in district Mahendragarh reported that VMCs do not visit the worksites. Fifty two per cent of the workers in district Sirsa and

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19 per cent in district Mahendragarh reported that VMC does not participate in Gram Sabha in their villages. Thus, VMC and Social Audit scenarios clearly need to be looked into and spruced up in the two districts as per the NREGA guidelines for effective implementation of REGS.

- \* Responses of workers also showed that the compliance level of the provision for the display of information relating to REGS work in GP was rather poor in district Mahendragarh and moderate in district Sirsa. Officials must be motivated and persuaded to ensure greater/fuller compliance, especially in the context of RTI and REGS guidelines.

## CHAPTER IV

# Summary, Concluding Observations and Suggestions

In the foregoing analysis, we have discussed the physical and financial performance of REGS during the financial year 2006-07 at different levels – State, District, Block and Gram Panchayat levels. We also analysed the views/observations and suggestions of officials, elected members of PRIs and target beneficiaries in detail.

### The Major Findings and Observations are

- \* Till date, the State Employment Guarantee Scheme Council (SEGC) has not been constituted. While, the REGS programming and implementation by the RD department is satisfactory, formation of the SEGC is expected to strengthen the REGS.
- \* Though the NREG Act and the REGS guidelines encourage deployment of hired staff and/or NGOs for carrying out the higher and grassroots level functions, there appears some reluctance to do so on the part of the REGS machinery, notwithstanding the availability of funds under the head 'Administrative expenses'. Difficult as it is to pin down the reasons for the same, one can hazard a guess that the REGS managers do not want any 'outsiders' to get 'directly involved' in the Scheme fearing exposure of 'irregularities and wrong practices', if any. This sounds strange though, in the face of shortage of staff and too many schemes.
- \* Officials at various levels, therefore, feel over-burdened with the multiple responsibilities of REGS. At the block level, many POs are looking after REGS in two blocks besides their normal duties as Block Development and Panchayat Officers (BDPOs) for two blocks each. At the Gram Panchayat level, *Gram Sachivs* are looking after 7-10 GPs each.

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- \* Of the total households, only 33.23 per cent households applied for registration under REGS. However, the registration percentage was higher in district Sirsa than district Mahendragarh due to higher level of awareness among the people in the former district. The GPs have issued job cards to all the registered households.
- \* Within the registered households more than 56 per cent households were SCs. The proportion of registered SC households was higher in district Sirsa as compared to district Mahendragarh. In some of the blocks of district Sirsa, the percentage of registered SC households was even higher at 75.
- \* Out of the total employment generated under REGS, over 60 per cent of employment was availed of by SCs and 31 per cent by women. Between the REGS sample districts, only marginal differences were noted in employment generated for SCs, women and others in terms of proportionate figures, though district Sirsa performed better both category-wise and in terms of absolute numbers.
- \* District Mahendragarh performed much better than district Sirsa in terms of percentage of households completing 100 days of employment. However, overall in Haryana, only 11.08 per cent participating households completed 100 days of employment under REGS. This demonstrates both the positive factor of availability of alternative employment opportunities for rural labour and the negative factor of sluggishness of the authorities in implementing REGS by way of mobilising workers for seeking employment under the REGS. Equally important is the point of the method allotment of 'works' and unequal distribution of 'work' on the part of the supervisors and sarpanches.
- \* Labour budget determines the amount of fund. However, the funds transfer mechanism between the District Programme Coordinator and Gram Panchayats is not uniform across the districts and blocks.

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- \* In terms of financial allocations for REGS, district Sirsa is far ahead of district Mahendragarh but in terms of utilisation of funds, Mahendragarh performed better with 95.20 per cent fund utilisation whereas district Sirsa could utilise only 67.87 per cent funds. For Haryana as a whole, the fund utilisation was 77.18 per cent.
- \* Overall in the State, 64.81 per cent funds were utilised for unskilled wage component, 2.34 per cent on semi-skilled and skilled wage component, 31.34 per cent on material component and only 1.43 per cent on contingencies. Low expenditure on contingencies implies in some measure the inability of the implementing authorities in making use of computers, appointing computer assistants, creating a Management Information System etc. Funds utilisation for material component was well within the permissible limit of 40 per cent. However, the utilisation percentage of funds on wage component was higher in district Mahendragarh (73.26 per cent) as compared to district Sirsa (62.72 per cent).
- \* As far as the number of works completed and types of assets created under REGS is concerned, 1652 works were undertaken during 2006-07, of which only 985 (59.62 per cent) works were completed before April 2007. However, district Mahendragarh performed better in terms of completing works undertaken during 2006-07 before April 2007. Most of the works undertaken under REGS during this year were in the nature of water conservation and rural connectivity. Some works of renovation of traditional water bodies, land development, micro-irrigation, drought proofing and flood control were also undertaken. The highest proportion of expenditure was incurred on rural connectivity works (44.99 per cent of funds) followed by water conservation works (32.76 per cent of funds).
- \* The degree of awareness and active involvement of Panchayati Raj Institutions at district and block level in decision-making and implementation of REGS is not significant, with some exceptions here and there. At Gram Panchayat level too, only the Sarpanch tends

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to dominate the show. Therefore, Panches at GP level and elected representatives of PRIs at all other levels voiced a feeling of hurt on not being involved actively in the operationalisation of the Scheme by the officials and Sarpanches.

- \* Awareness levels among the workers regarding rights, entitlements, provisions and procedures under REGS is generally very low and reflects poorly on the performance of the authorities concerned. The low score on awareness generation and IEC activities is not only a matter of serious concern but is also a reflection of the inadequate efforts of the officials. Therefore, there is need for formal and non-formal training of the officials and PRI functionaries.
- \* Most of the workers believed that they will get employment when Gram Panchayat starts new works. However, they are ignorant about their right that they should get employment within 15 days of their application for work. Workers are also ignorant about the provisions and conditionality of unemployment allowance that entitles them to get it, if work was not provided within 15 days of application for work
- \* The research team also felt that the officials and Gram Panchayats have tactfully evaded the question of 'right of workers'. Often REGS works were initiated as per the convenience of officials rather than the workers' demand. This is being done perhaps to deprive these workers of their claim for unemployment allowance.
- \* Almost all the workers got work within the radius of their Gram Panchayats.
- \* Workers got work on piece-rate in general.
- \* Workers brought their implements themselves. GP paid no money to workers for sharpening of tools. Neither did it provide any improvised tools at work place to reduce their drudgery.
- \* Drinking water and first aid box facilities were generally provided at worksites. Crèche facility and shade facility were provided in a

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much better way in district Mahendragarh than in district Sirsa, though there were deficiencies on these counts in both the districts.

- \* Social Audit component is quite weak in both the REGS districts. Most of the respondents were not clear about Social Audit and its benefits.
- \* Vigilance and Monitoring Committees mostly exist on paper. Their participation in REGS is generally insignificant.
- \* Awareness level about RTI is also very low among the respondents.
- \* Generally, the impact of REGS on unskilled wages in other works, i.e., open market, was in favour of the workers. REGS has also resulted in some reduction in the migration of adult workers in search of work, notwithstanding the point that they are already immigrant workers in the State.
- \* Involvement of NGOs/CBOs in REGS has been very low. This aspect needs to be strengthened to make the rights-based REGS more successful.
- \* It is pertinent to note here that the financial provision for the appointment of all these personnel is included in the Central component and auxiliary provisions of the NREGS. These funds should fully and optimally be used by the State government. Not doing so would reflect apathy, lack of involvement and lackadaisical attitude of the concerned authorities towards not only the need for prioritisation of the NREGS in the State but also for the fuller use of the funds and facilities being made available by the Central government.
- \* Also, importantly, top priority needs to be given to the IEC activities in the Scheme. The study found a rather depressing state of affairs as regards the awareness levels not only among the common villagers and target beneficiaries but also among the elected representatives, the *Gram Sachivs*, some block and district level officials and NGO representatives operating in the area.

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- \* It may be emphasised here that effective information flows and dissemination (IEC) about the various facets of the Scheme as also about the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders through all types of media and channels in the rural areas are an imperative need, if this Scheme is to take off in a meaningful sense and degree. Serious interventions must therefore, be designed and operationalised by the concerned authorities.
- \* Closely connected and equally important is the need for capacity-building of different categories of stakeholders to enable them to cope effectively with their new responsibilities. Special drives in this regard should, therefore, be designed and organised for the elected representatives of PRIs at all levels, especially for the women and weaker section members among them. But, of course, all other categories of stakeholders must also be covered by professionally designed and effectively delivered sensitisation-cum-capacity building programmes.
- \* Capacity of concerned officials and functionaries of PRIs, NGOs and CBOs needs to be strengthened in the use of ICT in accordance with the expected e-governance mode, in general, and to cater to the specific requirements of the REGS, in particular. Following are the areas of ICT applications here: Software for data entry compiling, transmitting and retrieving of data/records relating to REGS at GP, block and district levels and updating of related web portals and their networking with the designated sites of the MoRD under the Scheme.
- \* The most critical and, indeed, the first and foremost thing is the need for awareness-generation among the rural masses and target beneficiaries about the aims, the provisions, the entitlements and the reach of not only the NREG but also the RTI and Panchayati Raj Acts and their specific rights and entitlements under these provisions.

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- \* Even more critically, there is the need for mobilisation of the rural masses, in general, and the target beneficiaries in particular, so that they do actually come forward to claim and obtain their rightful benefits under the NREGA and various other schemes and enactments. In the absence of such mobilisation, the Scheme would remain at best a partial success in including and truly benefiting the target groups.

## CHAPTER V

### **Towards Effective Implementation of REGS**

The present study has clearly brought out the following: which if adequately addressed would ensure effective implementation of REGS besides greater transparency and accountability of the functionaries.

- (i) 'Awareness' about NREGA, RTI and Social Audit is a pre-condition for the individual and community to play an active role in the planning and execution of REGS. While the levels of 'awareness' about provisions of NREGA are found to be high in Sirsa, it did not get reflected in the employment generation and created of quality assets. The awareness score hardly captures the familiarisation of certain terms but not the content and procedures. The officials and elected representatives may not be proper agencies for rights based information dissemination for reasons mentioned above. So, the focus should be on sensitising and educating the community-based organisations and credible NGOs in regard to the various aspects including rights envisaged under NREGA. These agencies should be entrusted with the tasks of community mobilisation, awareness building, counselling and guidance to workers besides involving themselves in community-based monitoring, Social Audit and periodic third party evaluation.
- (ii) Field observations amply reveal the inadequacy of the capacity building initiatives for officials and elected representatives. Need for periodic formal and non-formal training for development functionaries is imperative. The use of IT and development of manuals for each category of functionaries (with focus on dos and don'ts) would be more rewarding.
- (iii) Given the known causes of rural poverty and the suggested eight categories of works under REGS, Natural Resource Management (NRM) based perspective plans for GP appear to be more relevant

and appropriate. Developing a cadre of para-professionals in each district by SIRDs to guide the local youth, CBOs and GP in plan preparation should receive top priority.

- (iv) In prosperous States like Haryana where market wages are higher than the minimum wages, REGS impact on labour market including migration would be minimal. However, the observed uneven distribution of employment opportunities could be corrected by revitalising the local institutions. In this context, educating and enabling the VMCs besides inclusion of social activists, representatives from the socially disadvantaged is expected to yield better outcomes.
- (v) The prevailing problem of shortage of BDPOs, JEs and *Gram Sachivs* needs particularly to be addressed and the shortages made up so that each block has its BDPO, each group of 2-3 villages has at least one *Gram Sachiv* and each group of 5-10 villages has at least one JE. Such provisioning of these personnel is, indeed, most critical to the effective working of the Scheme, given its special nature and specific operations.
- (vi) Suitably oriented and trained *Gram Rozgar Sahayaks* and *Mates* should also be appointed as per provisions for the REGS worksites/villages for effective GP level operations and coordination of REGS works. Preparation, issuance and monitoring of 'wage slips' would not only ensure transparency and accountability of the officials but can lead to empowerment of the workers.
- (vii) 'Social Audits' have to be mandating for release of funds but the NGOs, CBOs and VMCs should be entrusted with proper role. SIRDs have to design training programmes for these groups so as to make the entire process an 'endogeneous'. The transparency and accountability objectives cannot be achieved without proper conduct of 'Social Audits' and initiation of subsequent follow-up action.

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**Schedules Canvassed For the Study**

S. No.	Schedule Code	Schedule
1	S-1	Schedule for Officials of State Employment Guarantee Council
2	S-2	Schedule for State Officials
3	S-3	Financial Allocation and Utilisation (2006-07) under REGS at State Level
4	S-4	Physical Performance (2006-07) under REGS at State Level
5	S-5	Asset Creation (2006-07) at State Level
6	D-1	Schedule for District Programme Coordinator
7	D-2	Schedule for Elected Representatives of District Panchayat
8	D-3	Financial Allocation and Utilisation (2006-07) under REGS at District Level
9	D-4	Physical Performance (2006-07) under REGS at District Level
10	D-5	Asset Creation (2006-07) at District Level
11	B-1	Schedule for Programme Officer (BDO)
12	B-2	Schedule for Elected Representatives of Intermediate Panchayat (IP)/Block
13	B-3	Financial Allocation and Utilisation (2006-07) under REGS at Block Level
14	B-4	Physical Performance (2006-07) under REGS at Block Level
15	B-5	Asset Creation (2005-06) at Block Level
16	G-1	Schedule for Gram Panchayat (Elected Representatives/ GP Secretary)
17	G-2	Schedule for Workers of REGS at GP Level
18	G-3	Profile of GP
19	G-4	Schedule for Focused Group Discussions (FGDs)
20	G-5	Financial Allocation and Utilisation (2006-07) under REGS at GP Level
21	G-6	Physical Performance (2006-07) under REGS at GP Level
22	G-7	Asset Creation (2006-07) at GP Level
23	N-1	Schedule for NGO/CBO Representatives

# **Centre for Wage Employment and Poverty Alleviation**

## **Vision**

To become a nodal research and training centre with special focus on Rural Wage Employment Programmes and Poverty Alleviation.

## **Thrust Areas**

Training activities relating to Planning and Management of Wage Employment Programmes, Assessment of Impact of Rural Development Programmes on Rural Poverty Reduction and Livelihood Security.

## **Instruments**

- Conducting research on poverty and sustainable livelihoods
- Assess periodically the effectiveness of wage employment programmes
- Documentation of successful cases / best practices
- Develop training modules and course material in a partnership mode
- Organize training programmes for RD functionaries of wage employment programmes
- Conduct workshops on the major development issues of poverty, labour markets and wage employment programmes to sensitise policy makers.

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**National Institute of Rural Development**

Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India  
Rajendranagar, Hyderabad - 500 030

[www.nird.org.in](http://www.nird.org.in)