

# **REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON PLANNING AND EXECUTION**

CENTRAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE COUNCIL

MAY 2010

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# REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON PLANNING AND EXECUTION

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## 1. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The working group on Planning & Execution has examined its agenda and after consultation with officials and civil society organizations and field visits, arrived at the following set of recommendations aimed at improving the implementation of MGNREGA. While some of these recommendations are aimed at greater compliance with provisions of the MGNREGA guidelines, other recommendations may require revision of the guidelines.

**1.1** The Annual Plan, drawn up on the basis of the Shelf of Projects (SoP) for each village, will get administrative and technical approvals so that works can be started as soon as there is a demand for work (Sec 8)

**1.2** The Gram Panchayats (GP) and other PIAs are the appropriate authorities empowered to 'start' works (by issuing work orders) once they have received administrative sanction for their Annual Plan (Sec 8)

**1.3** The GP must prepare a base year labour budget on the basis of a survey of job card holders within the GP, eliciting information on the seasonal demand for labour from each job card holder. This must then be verified by the Gram Sabha (GS). The GP in this task may be assisted by the Village Cluster for Development (VCD) team (Sec 9)

**1.4** Additional staff dedicated for MGNREGA: a) at the GP level (one community mobiliser; assistants to the Employment Guarantee Assistant (EGA) in case of large GPs) (sec 11A) b) at the level of a cluster of GPs (7-8 members) (Sec 11B) and at the block office (Sec 11C). The support team at the cluster level will be jointly supervised by the Programme Officer (PO) and GPs

**1.5** The Labour-Material ratio is to be maintained at 60:40 across all works at the block level (Sec 12)

**1.6** There is need for state-level detailed listing of works permissible under MGNREGA within the overall framework of the operational guidelines (Sec 13). Even in water-logged flood plains in the Gangetic basin, desert regions in Rajasthan and the coastal areas in Kerala, there is room for generation of more employment with appropriate works

**1.7** Convergence projects may be encouraged provided they address priorities expressed in the Perspective Plan and are ratified by the GS (Sec 15)

**1.8** There is need for provision of a creche within the village for children of MGNREGA workers. MGNREGA may pay wages for one attendant for every group of ten children (Sec 18)

**1.9** To facilitate work on forest land, State Governments must set up a High Level Task Force which includes senior officials from the department of Rural Development, Forest Department and members of the SEGC. This Task Force must recommend a set of rules and orders to enable execution of MGNREGA on forest land. The Working Group suggests some institutional options for works on forest land (Sec 19).

**1.10** Payment of wages should be made by the PIA every week or fortnight on the basis of the muster roll and the measurement book, without waiting for verification by the PO. Verification of the measurement book and completion report by the PO should be required only for making the final payment to workers/suppliers (Sec 20).

**1.11** In case of a revision of wage or material rates, it should be the responsibility of the DPC to issue fresh approval of revised estimates for proposed works and annual plans. This should be done on a suo moto basis by the DPC and the revised estimates conveyed to PIAs (Sec 25).

**1.12** There is need for appointment of one mate for every 30 workers, instead of the current ratio of 1:50 (Sec 26)

**1.13** Every state must adopt a dashboard of key indicators which must be monitored at the highest levels to track MGNREGA implementation (Sec 28)

**1.14** The provision for administrative costs be increased from the current 6% to 8%. Of this 8%, 6% should be reserved to support the costs of Planning & Execution at the Block level and below (Sec 29).

The above recommendations will enable MGNREGA to substantially increase coverage as well as the provision of work to the poor households in rural India. With the above changes, MGNREGA will provide 60 days of employment per year to each of eight crore households in rural India. In the 2000 most backward blocks, four crore households will be provided 80 days of employment each. Additionally, MGNREGA works will contribute strongly to poverty reduction through improved productive assets and better convergence with local livelihoods and priorities.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

As mentioned in the official guidelines MGNREGA aims at three goals:

- Social protection through employment guarantee;
- Inclusive growth through strengthening livelihoods; and
- Empowerment of the poor and improvement in governance.

The Working Group of the CEGC on Planning and Execution has reviewed the recent experience with MGNREGA schemes and identified several issues which need to be addressed to better achieve MGNREGA goals. On some issues, problems arise despite adequate provision in the Operational Guidelines (MoRD, 2008). In such cases the Working Group suggests ways of improved compliance with the Operational Guidelines. On other issues there is need to modify or develop further some of the current provisions in the Guidelines. The Working Group suggests modifications in such cases. On a third set of issues the Working Group recommends a more detailed examination before arriving at specific recommendations.

The Working Group arrived at its conclusions after a process of consultation with officials, NGO functionaries and communities in several states (Annexure I). Some members of the Working Group also undertook field visits to work sites and panchayat offices in selected states.

## 3. IMPORTANCE OF PLANNING IN MGNREGA

The Operational Guidelines of MGNREGA (MoRD, 2008) state:

“Planning is critical to the successful implementation of the Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGA). A key indicator of success is the timely generation of employment within 15 days while ensuring that the design and selection of works are such that good quality assets are developed. The need to act within a time limit necessitates advance planning. The basic aim of the planning process is to ensure that the district is prepared well in advance to offer productive employment on demand” (4.1.1).

The unique feature of MGNREGA is its bottom-up architecture - planning and selection of works and their implementation are to be done in a participatory manner under the

leadership of the Gram Sabha (GS) and the Gram Panchayat (GP). However, few reports record that this actually happens on the ground. Work priorities tend to follow orders from the state or district headquarters and do not reflect the needs and aspirations of the people as they should. The hope was that greater water security and drought- and flood-proofing would be realised. While there have been a few successes in this regard, these remain oases of excellence.

#### 4. UNIT OF PLANNING: VILLAGE CLUSTER FOR DEVELOPMENT (VCD)

Section 13 of NREGA makes Panchayats the principal authorities for planning. The process of planning under Section 16 of the Act, the GS is to make recommendations on the works to be taken up under MGNREGA. The Gram Panchayat is to prepare a shelf of projects and annual plans on the basis of GS recommendations (MoRD, 2008).

It is the considered view of the Working Group that a GP is too small a unit for planning. There may be productive natural resources which are used by several GPs on a shared basis, such as a minor rivulet, large water body, forest land shared across many villages, extensive groundwater aquifers, range of hills which drain into a river, agricultural land with identical agro-climatic conditions and a uniform cropping pattern. These resources are best addressed at the level of a cluster of villages. Hence, the Working Group recommends the establishment of a **Village Cluster for Development (VCD)** at the level of population unit of 40,000 – 50,000 or covering an area upto 150 sq.kms. (15000 ha). The area will broadly correspond to the boundaries of a milli-watershed and local aquifer. A multi-disciplinary team will be formed for each VCD. The team will be led by an Assistant Programme Officer (APO) and will comprise specialists in community mobilisation, gender and inclusion, agriculture and allied activities, water harvesting and soil erosion control. The role of the VCD team is as follows:

- Preparation of a perspective plan on the basis of
  - consultation with constituent GSs,
  - recommendations of the GPs falling within the VCD,
  - technical advice from line departments and non governmental organisations (NGOs)
  - under the supervision of the Programme Officer (PO).
- Providing advice to the GPs for preparation of shelf of projects on the basis of the perspective plans and priorities of the GSs.
- Providing technical support to GP for executing works, maintaining Measurement Books, site inspection reports etc.
- Coordination amongst different implementing agencies undertaking works in the cluster area, including exchanging information on availability of work and demand for employment, playing a co-ordinating role in execution of interlinked projects

(projects involving upstream/downstream issues, stream diversions, aquifer-level groundwater management, catchment area treatment etc)

- Assisting GPs in material procurement
- Assisting GP in maintaining records and preparation of reports

## 5. PERSPECTIVE PLAN

The VCD team must prepare a **Perspective Plan** which should be for a period of five years. The cluster team will provide technical assistance to GPs on all matters which fall within the GP purview on the basis of the Principle of Subsidiarity. The Principle of Subsidiarity is the idea that a central authority should have a subsidiary function, performing only those tasks, which cannot be performed effectively at a more immediate or local level. This implies that all issues, which can be handled within the boundaries of the GP must be addressed by the GP itself, such as, for instance, deepening of a village pond, works on a grazing plot and plantations on village community land. On the other hand, there may be productive resources, which are used commonly by several GPs. As mentioned before, these resources are best addressed at the level of a VCD. The cluster team will in consultation with the GPs prepare plans for such components where there are significant externalities beyond the boundaries of a single GP. GS approval will be essential for this Perspective Plan. The Plan should include a mapping of natural resources and livelihoods of the area. In particular, the plan must assess the challenges faced by the poor, marginalised and most vulnerable sections of the communities. This planning process is consistent with Guidelines issued by the Planning Commission for Decentralised District Planning. The GPs must be encouraged to refer to the Perspective Plan prepared under the district planning exercise in the overall planning for MGNREGA. The Perspective Plan will include details on

- An assessment of quantitative and qualitative status of natural resources (topography, soil depth and quality, rainfall, water bodies, groundwater, vegetation);
- Ownership and use patterns; what do the small and medium farmers do;
- The significance of agriculture and other livelihoods (livestock, fishing, NTFP, etc) based on natural resources;
- On-farm and off farm absorption of labour in different seasons, migration patterns;
- Specific challenges and opportunities posed by the natural resource base (e.g. depleting groundwater, substantial monsoon runoff, soil erosion and silting up of water bodies, flooding and waterlogging, land with declining vegetative cover);
- Availability of surplus labour in each specific season, anticipation of demand for manual employment from the villages in the GP.

The Perspective Plan will

- Facilitate the creation of a shelf of projects which is derived from assessment of local resources and needs;

- Enable individual projects to be complementary to each other and build upon the results of earlier interventions to improve the productive base of the GP;
- Address opportunities to improve the productive natural resource base for a cluster of villages where there is strong interdependence and externalities in resource use; and
- Reduce the arbitrary basis for selection and sequencing of projects for execution.

The Perspective Plan will clearly list the priorities for the GP/VCD from among the work permissible under MGNREGA for a period of five years. It will also clearly indicate the most favorable sequence for implementation of works e.g.: upstream catchment area treatment before works on drainage line; setting up nurseries before plantation work etc. It will also broadly estimate the demand for work under MGNREGA and plan volume of work sufficient to meet that demand.

To scrutinize the Perspective Plans and to support the DPC for implementation of MGNREGA, the Working Group recommends the setting up of a **District level Technical Committee**. The Technical Committee may seek support from District Level Support Groups as mentioned in the current MoRD Guidelines on MGNREGA. This Technical Committee may recommend changes to the Perspective Plan on the basis of technical considerations of district level priorities. The Technical Committee may also draw upon the district plan prepared under the Planning Commission guidelines. In particular these district plans may offer useful lessons for inter-departmental coordination. These recommendations are to be sent to the VCD and are to be discussed by the GPs in the cluster. The cluster level perspective plan will be finalised by the GPs thereafter. The functions of the Technical Committee include:

- Assist the DPC in preparation of the District level Perspective Plan on the basis of Cluster level and Block level Perspective Plan.
- Assist the DPC in granting technical sanctions to the shelf of projects
- Prepare District wide Schedule of Rates for common tasks

## 6. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AGENCY (PIA)

The MGNREG Act specifies that at least 50% of the works in terms of cost should be executed by the GPs. Section 6.3 of the Operational Guidelines indicates that the Gram Panchayat is the single most important agency for executing works. It says, “the other implementing agencies can be Intermediate and District Panchayats, line departments of the Government, Public Sector Undertakings of the Central and State Governments, Cooperative Societies with a majority shareholding by the Central and State Governments, and reputed NGOs having a proven track record of performance. Self-Help Groups (SHGs) may also be considered as possible Implementing Agencies” (MoRD, 2008, 6.3.2).

The Working Group feels it is useful to define the “implementing agency” more clearly. This will also help enlist supportive functions, which can be provided by other government agencies and by other specialised bodies set up for this purpose.

A **Project Implementing Agency (PIA)** performs the following functions:

- Preparation of Shelf of Projects;
- Obtaining technical sanctions for the shelf of projects;
- Obtaining agreement with individual beneficiaries in case of works on private lands
- Obtaining agreement with GPs in case of work on common lands
- Obtaining administrative sanction for the annual plan which will contain all works to be taken up in that year;
- Starting works by issuing work order ;
- Employing persons who have applied for work, by approaching GPs, SHGs or worker organizations of manual workers;
- Obtaining muster rolls from the PO;
- Maintaining muster rolls and making relevant entries in the job cards of the workers;
- Weekly reporting on work site-wise job card wise number of work days provided;
- Weekly reporting on other details;
- Reporting to the PO on a regular basis of the job card wise provision of employment;
- Facilitating site inspections by PO or DPC
- On-site supervision by appointing mates including the job chart as specified under section 6.4.4;
- Maintenance of Measurement Book of ongoing works;
- Providing work site facilities such as shade, drinking water, first aid, crèches etc.
- Ensuring completion of works and preparation of Completion Report

### **Fund Release to GPs & other PIAs**

The Working Group recommends a **uniform system** be followed for making payments to workers and material suppliers for all categories of PIAs. The Working Group is of the view that all payments to workers and material suppliers must be made by the PIAs. This is at variance with the view that the roles of execution of work and payments should be separated in the interest of better governance. The Working Group recommends payments to be made by PIAs since this will ensure unity in accountability - workers will clearly know who is responsible for any irregularity in payments be it in the calculation or timing. The Working Group recommendation will ensure that this responsibility lies entirely with the PIA.

Funds should be released by the DPC directly to the designated MGNREGA bank accounts of the PIAs. The initial release should be upto 50% of the annual budget of the PIA or the proposed expenditure in the first six months of the fiscal year whichever is less. This amount may be adjusted for any balance carried forward from the previous year.

## 7. SHELF OF PROJECTS (SoP)

The Operational Guidelines states: “The sequence of approvals laid down under the Act necessitates time bound coordination between different levels.... It is therefore legally imperative that there are no delays in the approval of the plan of works at any level and equally necessary to ensure that the priorities of the Gram Sabhas are maintained. The absence of an approved **shelf of projects** affects the pace at which employment demand has to be met” (MoRD, 2008, 4.4.2).

The PIA (GPs, line departments or any other agencies mentioned above) will prepare a Shelf of Projects (SoP). This SoP will include activities which are permissible under MGNREGA and which are consistent with the broad development priorities of the region as set in the Perspective plan. For the GP, the SoP will be drawn up with technical assistance from the VCD team. Other agencies may prepare SoP with their own in-house expertise. The PIAs need to seek approval for their SoPs from the GS, which will ensure that the projects meet local priorities and strengthen the productive resource base for the village economy.

The Operational Guidelines states that the number of works in the shelf of projects in a village should be adequately more than the estimated demand (MoRD, 2008, 4.3). The Working Group felt that the SoP should contain projects, which can meet the demand for work from the GP for at least **two years**. The individual projects will include technical design (location, design of structure, materials used, construction process, estimate of potential employment to be generated at worksite). This SoP will be granted Technical Approval by the district level Technical Committee. Every year, the PIA will revisit the shelf of projects and replace completed (executed) projects with a new set of projects for which fresh technical approval will be sought. For the GP specifically, an approved SoP will enable it to respond quickly to demand for work from the villages. With technically approved shelf of projects, GPs can quickly plan execution of works and creation of employment. It will also reduce the time required for approval of Annual Plan/Budget and issue of work orders for specific projects.

The PO must match the SoP with the perspective plan. In case any major priority of the GP or the VCD remains unaddressable, the PO may approach any agency with proven technical expertise to prepare a shelf of projects and function as a PIA.

## 8. ANNUAL PLAN

Every year, the PIA will prepare an **Annual Plan**. The Annual Plan will clearly indicate the time when works can be executed. It will be the responsibility of the PIA to inform the PO in case works are not being executed in time and the Annual Plan needs to be revised. The Annual Plan will also include a budget based on cost estimation of the proposed works and a half yearly forecast of expenditure. The administrative sanction will, therefore, be an approval of the annual budget of the PIA for the MGNREGA related scheme. The Annual Plan, drawn up on the basis of the SoP for each village, will get administrative and technical approvals so that works can be started as soon as there is a demand for work. This is in accordance with the

directions of the Operational Guidelines, 2008:

- “6.4.1. All works will be required to obtain Administrative Sanction and Technical Sanction in advance, by December of the year preceding the proposed implementation.
- 6.4.2 Once a demand for employment is received, works will be started from the shelf of approved works ready with technical and administrative sanctions.
- 6.4.4 The Gram Panchayats are generally the appropriate authorities empowered to ‘start’ works (by issuing work orders) and to allocate employment among persons who have applied for work.
- 6.4.5 The Programme Officer (PO) shall also act as the authority empowered to ‘start’ works (by issuing work orders) if the demand for employment is either received by the PO or referred to it by the Gram Panchayat” (MoRD, 2008).

The above planning process, with technical and administrative sanctions to the annual plan given beforehand and the actual execution of work on the basis of work orders, is essential to enable the GP to respond to demand for work. This will help avoid the common situation where demand for work is limited to the projects for which sanction is sought and obtained. It is common that poor manual workers enter into commitments as migrant workers well in advance of the actual period of migration. If such workers can reasonably predict when work will be available for them in the local area, they will stay back in villages and work under MGNREGA. Further, the process of granting technical sanction to the shelf of projects and administrative sanction to the Annual Plans will make the provision of work more predictable for manual workers. This will substantially reduce distress migration.

The Working Group strongly recommends a quick transition to a system of sanctioning of works and work execution based on work orders as described above.

## 9. LABOUR BUDGETING

The Operational Guidelines states that the labour budget<sup>1</sup> will be based on a projection of employment<sup>2</sup> demanded by rural households. This is important and must form the basis for the preparation of the annual plan. In practice in almost all states, the employment provided in the previous financial year is the basis for projection of the labour budget of the current year. The Working Group feels that this practice underestimates the demand for work since it has found that a large number of potential MGNREGA workers are either unemployed or have migrated under distress conditions in search of work. The number of person days of

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<sup>1</sup>“Chapter IV, Para 14, sub section (6) of the NREG Act says that the District Programme Coordinator (DPC) shall prepare in the month of December every year a **labour budget** for the next financial year containing the details of anticipated demand for unskilled manual work in the district and the plan for engagement of labourers in the works covered under the Scheme. The Ministry of Rural Development will estimate the requirement of funds on the basis of projections made in the Labour Budget. Central funds will be sanctioned after examining these Labour Budgets and taking into account utilization of funds previously released” (MoRD, 2008, 8.4).

<sup>2</sup> The Guidelines (8.4.1 (a) i) suggests that the increase in projected household demand against last Financial Year’s household demand should be reasonable and based on past and current trends of the district

employment provided per job card is currently very low. The projected labour demand can be accurate only if the initial estimates of demand in the previous years are accurate. The working group recommends the preparation of a base year labour budget on the basis of a survey of job card holders within the GP. The GP must elicit information on the seasonal demand for labour from each job card holder. This must then be verified by the GS. The GP in this task may be assisted by the VCD team. This base labour budget will be a reliable basis for subsequent annual labour budgets as suggested in 8.4.1(a)i. Subsequently in case there is an adverse weather event (floods, droughts etc.) or a natural calamity, there may be a need to conduct a special survey in that particular year. The increment can accommodate demographic changes (population growth, new households and permanent migrations) and seasonal changes and monsoon variations.

In the labour budget the GP should match this demand for work with the employment to be generated by its own Annual Plan. If there is a deficit of work or a deficit of workers the GP must highlight this condition. The PO/VCD may forward this information to potential PIAs (line departments and other agencies), inviting them to propose works as needed.

## 10. ROLE OF GRAM PANCHAYAT (GP)

The MGNREGA Act as well as the Operational Guidelines provides a pivotal role to the GP in implementation of MGNREGA schemes as well as in the objectives of the Act. We have already noted the role of the GP as a PIA. In addition the GP has a significant role under the Act as a local government to ensure that the Act is successful in providing livelihood security to every poor household in a transparent manner. This requires the GP to perform the following **functions in addition to its role as PIA**:

- Raising community awareness on the provisions of the Act.
- Providing Job cards and supporting poor households to get registered under the Act.
- Contribute to the formulation of a Perspective Plan for the VCD; assess local resources and requirements and identify components which may be addressed within the GP on the basis of the Principle of Subsidiarity.
- Ensuring that the MGNREGA SoP and the Annual Plan contribute to the development of the GP consistent with the overall development prepared under the Integrated District Planning process.
- Mobilising the community to ensure greater participation in GS so that the perspective plan, SoP and Annual Plans are discussed in detail
- Preparation of a base labour budget after consultation with all poor households.
- Receiving application for works and issuing dated receipts
- Receiving claims for unemployment allowance from workers, forwarding these to the PO and tracking compliance with the provision of the Act.

- Maintenance of works register and job card register
- Ensuring that works executed by all PIAs address the development priorities of the GP as expressed in the Perspective Plan.
- Monitoring design and execution of works by all PIAs in the GP to ensure quality and utility.

## 11. HUMAN RESOURCE SUPPORT FOR MGNREGA AT THE LEVEL OF GP, VCD AND BLOCK

### A. Staff at the Level of GP

There should be one **Employment Guarantee Assistant (EGA)** at each GP. The Roles of the EGA are:

- All Administrative functions of the GP as PIA :
- Maintaining GP level registers as per the Guidelines
- Preparing Work Order and activities related to the Work Order
- Ensuring norms of Transparency and Proactive disclosure are observed in the GP *vis a vis* GS
- Reporting to the PO as required
- Issue and maintenance of Job Cards
- Preparing Annual Budget for MGNREGA including proposed works and obtaining formal agreements for works on private lands from the owners.
- Preparation of wage list on the basis of the Muster Roll
- Estimation of material requirements, identification of vendor, placement of order at prescribed rates, receipt of material,
- Preparation of pay order on the basis of wage list and submission to bank after ratification by the GP head ( Pradhan/Sarpanch) and the GP Executive Officer for transfer of wages to workers' accounts and payment to material suppliers.
- Issue of materials from stock for specific works, supervising of use of material, maintenance of stock register.

In states where the GP covers more than 6000 people, it may be considered to provide an administrative assistant to the EGA for every additional slab of 6000 people or less.

In the most backward 2000 blocks, there should also be one **Community Mobiliser** in every GP (the GPs will pay the salaries of the Community Mobiliser). The Community Mobiliser will:

- Provide information on REGS to potential/actual workers and other GP residents
- Ensure that the GS meetings and social audits are held and well attended
- Assess demand for work on an annual and seasonal basis from job card holders in the GP

- Ensure the formation and support the functions of the GP-level vigilance committee including representation of MGNREGA workers and vulnerable groups as per guidelines.
- Form user groups to manage assets created by MGNREGA on panchayat or public land.
- Formalise agreements between user groups and panchayats for maintenance of MGNREGA assets.

## **B. Technical Support to Gram Panchayat (Team at VCD level)**

The Working Group felt that lack of adequate personnel at crucial levels and with required capacities has been one of the key constraints of planning and execution under MGNREGA. There was a clear consensus in the group that a demanding programme like MGNREGA requires full-time, dedicated and adequately trained staff. Hence, adequate personnel deployment should be ensured at all levels and their capacities built for bottom-up planning. The Working Group felt that the issue of the human resource required for planning and execution is closely related to the issue of building their capacities which is being deliberated upon by the Working Group on Capacity Building. The Working Group on Planning and Execution recommends the following:

- Introducing an intermediate layer between the block and the GP in the form of a Village Cluster for Development (VCDs). This cluster could comprise groups of GPs covering a population of 40000 – 50000, or an area of 150 sq kms whichever is less.
- An Assistant Programme Officer (APO) who will be VCD team leader, supervise the provision of support to the GPs, report on activities to the PO at the Block level and assist in compliance with the provisions of MGNREGA.
- At every VCD, an MGNREGA team should be constituted with resource persons for community mobilisation, gender and inclusion, soil and moisture conservation, agriculture and allied activities. The DPC may appoint a civil society organisation (CSO) for this function where technically capable CSOs with demonstrated commitment and credibility are available.
- A minimum team at the VCD level will include
  - Three technical specialists (TS) one each in charge of
    - a) Community Mobilisation, Gender and Inclusion,
    - b) Soil & Water Conservation and
    - c) Agriculture and allied livelihoods.

The specialists will provide support to GPs in their respective domain areas. E.g: The TS community mobilisation will suggest measures to include poorest households in the work force. She will suggest strategies to include works which will improve productive assets of poor

households. The TS soil and water conservation will survey surface and groundwater resources of the region and suggest appropriate structures for water harvesting and groundwater recharge. The TS agriculture and livelihoods will suggest steps to converge MGNREGA works with livelihoods of poor households.

- Two technical assistants (TA): The TAs will support the GP in design and execution of works. The TA will provide support to selection of sites, design of structures, cost estimation, site inspections, measurement book and work completion. In the 2000 most backward blocks, there will be provision for three TAs for each VCD.
- The VCD team will work under the overall supervision of the PO. The PO will pay the VCD team's salaries and all operational expenses.
- The VCD teams will be partially accountable to the GPs that they are expected to support. A system may be developed whereby VCD team members' visits to GPs are planned as per a predetermined roster. The GP will be expected to certify that the visits were made and useful services obtained. The PO must release salaries on the basis of such certification by GPs.

### **C. Block level team (including the Programme Officer)**

In view of the responsibilities entrusted to the Programme Officer the Working Group recommends that there is **one full-time Programme Officer** in every block, dedicated to the implementation of MGNREGA. In addition to the responsibilities outlined in the Operational Guidelines under section 2.2.2., the working group suggests the following functions:

- supervising the performance of the VCD teams, releasing their salaries and meeting their operational expenses.
- facilitating release of funds to all PIAs as per guidelines section 8.5.6 upon request once the PIA has utilised more than 60% of its previous instalment.
- conducting periodic site inspections;
- verifying measurement books and work completion certificates;
- ensuring that the shelf of projects and annual budgets proposed by GPs and other PIAs is consistent with the Perspective Plan of the GP;
- working as the Grievance Redressal officer at the Block level (Section 11.7). Appeals against PIAs will be made to the PO;
- reporting to the DPC on all complaints and action taken against complaints

To enable matching of demand for employment with provision of work within the block, Section 2.2.2iv may be modified in the following way

- In case employment opportunities proposed by GPs and all other PIAs in the block fall short of the demand for work from the block, the PO may proactively seek further proposals for works under MGNREGA.

- To perform the above functions, the PO will require a team of one junior engineer and one accountant-cum-administrative assistant fully dedicated to MGNREGA. The PO is responsible for entry of relevant data into the MIS for MGNREGA. The PO will be assisted in her task by a team of two Data Entry Operators. They will be responsible for first entry of data into the computerised MIS.

In the most backward 2000 blocks, an additional data entry operator will be provided to each PO.

## 12. CHOICE OF WORKS: THE MATERIAL / LABOUR RATIO

The Material/Labour Ratio (M/L Ratio) under MGNREGA is stipulated as 60:40. There is a demand that this condition is too restrictive and rules out certain essential works in specific areas. Works to be taken up in the hill states such as Himachal Pradesh are usually cited as examples. Since work in the hills region necessarily involves works with high material cost, the demand for a suitable modification of the ratio is made. The Working Group is of the view that this ratio has been stipulated to check the tendency to adopt works with a high material component. Such works invariably brings in the contractor system. Hence, the Working Group feels that the stipulated ratio should be adhered to except in some specific circumstances (for instance, for works in the hill states like Himachal Pradesh).

The Operational Guidelines states that “this ratio should be applied preferably at the Gram Panchayat, Block and District levels” (MoRD, 2008, 6.2). The Working Group feels that it is best if this ratio is maintained at the block level. This allows some flexibility in choice of works at the GP, VCD and block levels. The Working Group feels that strengthening the planning and execution process through the steps mentioned in this report will ensure that the choice of works adheres to this ratio at the block level. The district level Technical Committee should play the key role in ensuring that this ratio is maintained.

## 13. EXPANDING SCOPE OF WORKS: REGIONAL VARIATIONS

The framework of planning and execution of works under MGNREGA has to be mindful of the vast regional variations within India. Regional variations could be identified in two ways: a) variations in agro-ecological conditions and resource endowments across regions; and b) variations in capacities of institutions participating in planning and execution under MGNREGA. In both, the question is how the provisions of the Act have been utilized to develop appropriate schemes addressing specific regional problems. For instance, special attention on how MGNREGA can be adapted to address the problems in coastal areas, hills, deserts, saline areas, water-logged and flood-prone areas and so on need to be considered.

For **coastal areas**, such as Kerala, a special set of Guidelines could be drawn up. This special focus is important because coastal areas and traditional fishing communities are the most backward and vulnerable in a state like Kerala, where the spatial inequalities have only widened over time. Coastal areas are densely populated with hardly any land available for public

works. Fishing communities normally do not take up the kind of manual work, which is provided under MGNREGA. Fishing communities suffer extreme hardship during the rainy season, a period when it is most difficult to provide work under MGNREGA. One option is the inclusion under MGNREGA of works which will improve the productive assets of the fishing community. Such works will include the construction of country boats for artisanal fishing, weaving of fishing nets, construction of landing jetties, drying yards and market platforms. Only such assets may be selected which can be created within the 60:40 labour : material ratio.

In the **water-logged and flood-prone areas in Indo-Gangetic plains**, there is ample opportunity for taking up works in the MGNREGA framework. In several districts in *chaur* lands, extensive networks of drainage channels are in disrepair. These need to be cleared in a systematic manner. Where required such channels need to be extended to reach the wider natural drainage system which is the local river. This will help to drain fertile lands in this flood-prone region and increase productivity. This region also has numerous ponds which are useful for irrigation and pisciculture. These ponds help to reduce the intensity of floods. There is considerable scope to desilt and deepen these ponds. Embankments need to be repaired and strengthened at regular intervals. To enable such works there is need for inter-departmental cooperation including department of fisheries, department of flood control and department of irrigation. There are opportunities to involve user groups such as fish workers' cooperatives and groups of farmers. The GP can play an important role in identifying such work and coordinating between departments and user groups.

In the **desert region in western Rajasthan** MGNREGA offers resources for works such as sand dune stabilisation and wind breaks. Shifting sand dunes and hot winds bearing sand threaten agriculture. Even in the command area of the Indira Gandhi Canal, shifting sand dunes reduce irrigation potential and threaten to overrun plots of small and marginal farmers. MGNREGA can support widespread establishment of nurseries of suitable grass and shrub species. In addition MGNREGA can support plantation work on sand dunes and as wind breaks. It can also create temporary wind breaks of brushwood to enable vegetation to survive in a protected micro environment. MGNREGA can also contribute significantly by supporting and reviving traditional water harvesting systems to meet the acute drinking water shortage (*Tankas, Beri, Kua*) and facilitate limited protection to kharif crops (*Nadi and Khadin*) in the desert regions.

In the case of the **hills region**, it was pointed out that the key difficulty is in terms of adhering to the labour to material ratio of 60:40. Most of the works to be taken up in the hills involve masonry construction with a high material component. Hence, planning here would involve a suitable modification of this ratio.

These examples point to the need of a state level detailed listing of works permissible under MGNREGA within the overall framework of the operational guidelines.

Regional variations are also in terms of the strength and weakness of **the institutional**

**capacities of GPs**, who are the principal implementing agency under MGNREGA. There seemed to be several types of situations here: in Jharkhand, GPs are almost non-existent. Here the VCD team can play a prominent role in generating awareness in creating and registering demand for work and in ensuring that MGNREGA plans conform to local priorities. In states like Bihar and UP, the GPs do exist but are extremely weak in terms of their institutional capacity. In these states, strong VCD teams need to be set up and their capacities developed to support the GPs. In the interim period, the line departments shoulder a major responsibility as MGNREGA PIAs. In states like Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, the GPs are actively engaged in MGNREGA implementation but their institutional capacities are severely limited. In such states it becomes viable to deploy a strong technical team at the level of the VCD being proposed by this Working Group. Finally, in states like Kerala and West Bengal, the GPs are large and functional as institutions. Here, MGNREGA can support a technical staff for each GP in addition to the EGA. A closer study of all these variations needs to be done and the results incorporated into the state level architecture of MGNREGA. The capacities of local institutions in different regions are reflected in the roles that different agencies play in programme implementation.

#### 14. CONVERGENCE WITH AGRICULTURE & LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT

MGNREGA offers a great possibility of stepping up public investment in rural areas of India. One of the most vital sectors where public investment needs to be stepped up is the **rainfed agriculture**. If it is used effectively, MGNREGA can have a great deal of convergence with agriculture and other livelihood activities, which could unleash a tremendous synergy to transform our rural landscape and revitalise rainfed agriculture. This investment should be directed towards those activities, which are locally relevant (such as soil fertility enhancement and greater organic matter in the soil) but are not taking off on a sufficiently large scale. The bottleneck could be the requirement for high initial investment, which could be overcome through MGNREGA funds. The attempt could also be to fundamentally influence farmer practices in a desirable direction (such as promotion of sustainable agricultural practices) by subsidizing the *incremental* cost of such activities. Some of these activities may initially appear to have a high associated risk or unclear benefits. MGNREGA support for the incremental cost may help the rainfed farmers to adopt sustainable practices by overcoming these barriers. There should also be the clarity that this support is available only for a limited time frame, beyond which these practices need to be financed through private investment. The MGNREGA investment must be real, additive (not displacing what the farmer would have invested in a business-as-usual scenario), measurable and verifiable.

The following **five principles** may be laid down for including any agriculture-related works in MGNREGA:

1. It should be within the 8 program areas listed in the MGNREGA.
2. It must contribute to a 'durable asset' like soil fertility

3. The proposed work should not be in the nature of 'working capital'
4. It should not replace what the farmers/ people will be doing under business -as-usual i.e. should not replace farmers' own investments on asset creation. It must be supplemental / complementary.
5. Labour orientation must be the primary concern.

The Working Group feels that specific activities like soil fertility enhancement, preparation of organic inputs like bio-pesticides, tree plantations, green manuring, green fencing, wind breaks etc. could be introduced into the micro-plans developed under MGNREGA. Specific activities under animal husbandry, NTFP processing, crop produce aggregation and value addition also could be made part of the MGNREGA micro-plans. The labour component of these activities as well as some part of the material component (on 60:40 basis) could be met from MGNREGA funds. The Working Group felt that the experience of Andhra Pradesh was worth a closer study in terms of convergence.

The convergence of NREGA with sustainable agricultural practices will need to be facilitated through additional human resource and computing support. The example of **HR and computing support** provided by Government of Andhra Pradesh to the non-pesticide management (NPM) Agricultural Programme may be cited here. As per GoAP orders (G.O.Ms.No.55, dated 16<sup>th</sup> February, 2008), each GP has been provided with one village Level NPM-EGS activist. This Village NPM-EGS Activist is positioned by the VO and is paid remuneration as a skilled worker from January to June. At the Mandal level, one exclusive Mandal Coordinator/Technical Assistant (NPM-EGS) is positioned. The Mandal Coordinator (NPM-EGS), in addition to assisting Mandal Samakhya, also performs functions like coordinating all NPM-EGS activities, taking measurements of the works executed, compiling data and record keeping. An exclusive Computer Operator is also employed at the Mandal level to take care of the data processing and other works. The Mandal Samakhya is provided with a dedicated computer system with internet connectivity for data processing and generation of the work orders.

The Guidelines on Convergence (MoRD, 2009) have identified several natural resource management activities where the expertise of the Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) can be used in conjunction with the choice of works under MGNREGA:

- Afforestation including tree plantation on common and individual land (including homesteads) with multi-purpose vegetation (fuelwood, fodder, timber, herbal plants, medicinal and aromatic plants, biofuel plantations etc.);
- Land development with contour bench terracing, contour bunds and graded bunds, pasture development, tank silt application on agricultural land;
- Acid amelioration in problem soils and micro-nutrient management;
- Enriched compost production through various labour-intensive methods of bio-waste recycling;
- Vermi-composts and vermi-wash;

- Production of liquid manures like *sanjeevak* or *amrit paani*;
- Preparation of bio-pesticides like neem kernel extract, other neem-based preparations, NPV sprays etc.;
- Bamboo plantations;
- Mushroom cultivation, Sericulture and Pisciculture;
- Azolla production in tanks;
- Plastering the floor of cattle sheds and places of rest for animals in the homesteads;
- Plastering the floor of threshing ground in the fields to prevent post-harvest losses.
- Support to farmers' seed storage systems by constructing storage bins with locally available or improved materials and technology.

MGNREGA can also support a comprehensive a commons - dependent livestock system by including works such as :-

- treatment of common lands for raising additional fodder in the form of multi purpose trees, shrubs and grasses
- create infrastructure facilities for fodder storage
- increase drinking water facilities through surface water bodies and drinking water troughs

## 15. OTHER OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONVERGENCE

The Convergence Guidelines (MoRD, 2009) of the MoRD mentions **five ways** in which convergence of MGNREGA with other schemes could be achieved:

- Gap filling through MGNREGA for similar work under the schemes of the department with which convergence is being considered;
- Dovetailing inputs into a common Project;
- Area Approach;
- Value addition to MGNREGA works; and
- Technical support for ensuring quality in planning, selection and execution of MGNREGA works

The Working Group notes that the government of Madhya Pradesh has set an example by exploring the possibility of convergence of watershed programme with MGNREGA. This could be seen as an example of the Area Approach to convergence. In 2010, GoMP has gone further and have come out with a special set of orders for developing micro-plans for convergence under MGNREGA. The idea is to identify a Cluster of Villages (roughly 5000 ha, covering 15-20 villages) in each development block and formulate convergence plans for these clusters on a watershed basis. Many of the livelihood interventions mentioned above could be made part of the micro-planning exercises of the GPs in these clusters.

The Working Group felt that any notion of convergence necessarily implied expansion

of the scope of MGNREGA to include **works on the private land**, especially of small and marginal farmers. As the Convergence Guidelines (MoRD, 2009) notes, this also means value additions to NREGA works and organizing better technical support to planning, selection and execution of NREGA works. The processes and content of planning for convergence will depend on the nature of works to be taken up under such land. Another Working Group of the CEGC is examining the issue of works on private land.

The Convergence Guidelines (MoRD, 2009) has suggested **piloting of the convergence of MGNREGA with National Afforestation Programme (NAP) of the MoEF** in 18 districts. Several proposed activities under NAP (such as in situ soil and moisture conservation measures, soil and moisture conservation by constructing small scale engineering structures, planting and sowing of multi-purpose trees, shrubs, grasses and legumes, as well as non-timber species, fuelwood and fodder plantation including pasture development for meeting biomass needs of the rural communities, conservation in situ of medicinal plant species and augmenting their plant population, raising of bamboo, cane plantation and medicinal plants, raising of coastal shelterbelts in the problem areas, promotion of agro-forestry and sericulture, as appropriate etc.), are also allowed under MGNREGA. Hence, planning could be undertaken for the forest area and adjoining land areas including village common lands, community lands, revenue wastelands, jhum lands and private lands with watershed approach. The Joint Forest Management Committee (JFMC) at the village level and Forest Development Agency (FDA) at the division level could prepare micro-plans and work out modalities for convergence with MGNREGA.

The Working Group has received suggestions for **convergence with social programmes such as TSC and ICDS**. In these cases, the respective line departments need to play a role as PIAs.

The working group is of the view that convergence programmes be supported by MGNREGA. A few principles need to be observed while designing convergence projects:

1. The convergence projects must address priorities as expressed in the perspective plans prepared by GPs or cluster of GPs.
2. The respective PIAs need to inform the respective GSs of the convergence proposals and obtain their agreement
3. Convergence proposals deliver definite gains in terms of development outcomes which would not be available if the interventions are implemented separately.
4. Convergence projects are governed by the transparency provisions of the MGNREGA guidelines including monitoring by the GS.

## 16. REFORMING SCHEDULE OF RATES (SoRs)

The Working Group observed that the Schedule of Rates (SoRs) currently in use for estimation, monitoring and valuation of MGNREGA works has an intrinsic bias towards the contractor system and use of machines. They need to be drastically reformed. The need for

such a reform arises particularly in a sensitive and humane programme like MGNREGA, which is about providing gainful employment to all those who need it. In particular, women and elderly workers will seek work under MGNREGA. It was observed that several states have attempted revision of the SoRs, but these have been done by revising upwards the rates per unit of tasks without rigorous time and motions studies. Some states like Andhra Pradesh have added allowances for “hot months” by giving an extra percentage over the existing task rate for work taken up during March – June season.

A systematic revision of SoRs requires a re-estimation of the amount of work (a “Task”) a human being can perform in a given area during a given period of time (normally 8 hours). Carefully designed **Work Time and Motion Studies (WT&MS)** need to be undertaken for this<sup>3</sup>. This exercise has to be done in a transparent manner. IEC material must be developed and disseminated to demystify SoRs amongst potential workers. The Government of Rajasthan has some excellent examples in this regard. States like Rajasthan have moved forward in the direction of coming up with district specific SoRs, which enables them to take into account inter-regional and inter-district variations in conditions under which work is performed. The WT&MS should also allow for regional variations in tasks, depending on the variable local conditions and the health and nutrition status of the population. For instance, the tasks expected to be performed by the malnourished, primitive tribal groups, the aged and women should be treated differently from those expected from able-bodied men.

The Working Group felt that there is the need to develop **a simple and accessible template of SoRs**, which could be used by the GPs, EGAs and the mates during execution of works. This template could be developed at two levels: one, with rates for the simple and often repeated tasks and the other with rates for more complicated tasks. The SoR for common tasks may be developed at the level of the district whereas the SoRs for the complex tasks may be developed for a group of districts within the same agro-climatic region. Comprehensive training on SoRs should be made part of the capacity building exercises of the personnel involved in the execution of MGNREGA works. The template should also allow for regional variations and include special works to be taken up in the hills region, coastal regions, deserts, water-logged and flood-prone plains and saline areas.

Let us closely examine one commonly encountered problem: in some arduous tasks women are less productive than men. If they work under a uniform SoR, women will earn lower wages than men for the same hours of work. State Governments have tried different solutions to enable parity on this issue.

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3 As the Operational Guidelines states: “the State Governments may undertake comprehensive work time and motion studies. These studies will observe out-turn and fix rates after detailed location specific observations. This implies that productivity norms must follow possible out-turn under different geo-morphological and climatic conditions, across and within Districts. This is of particular significance in areas with a high degree of location specificity and variability in the soil, slope and geological conditions and seasonal variation. Therefore, a matrix of rates for the same task needs to be drawn up that follows ecological rather than administrative boundaries. The Schedules of Rates (SOR) may be prepared on the basis of these studies” ((MoRD, 2008, 6.7.2).

1. State Government like Rajasthan have **modified their SoRs** by reducing the task out turn for one unit of payment. This way, women are able to earn the minimum wage through 7 hours of work. The average earnings of male workers for 7 hours of work are higher than the minimum wages. In Rajasthan over 80% of the workers on MGNREGA sites are women.
2. State Governments like West Bengal and Bihar have **seperate SoRs for women** prescribing a higher rate for women compared to men for the same out turn. While this may be easy to administer when tasks on work sites are executed by gender segregated teams, this system poses a major challenge in case tasks are executed by gender mixed teams. The challenge lies in measuring the specific out turn of women members of such mixed teams.
3. A third option is to have a **common SoR pegged at an average male worker's productivity**. A woman worker may get a prescribed premium for the same out turn when compared with men workers. In case of gender mixed teams, this does not pose the above major challenge i.e. measuring the productivity of specific women members working in a mixed team. It just requires a head count of men and women to verify the muster roll. However, the overall estimate for a specific work may vary depending on the gender composition of the worker team.

## 17. WORK FOR DIFFERENTLY ABLED

The Working Group noted that Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan have come out with **special orders for the differently abled** – those who are not able to perform regular tasks. The GoMP orders have classified different types of disabilities and have suggested works to be provided against each category of disability (**Annexure II**). Activities such as drinking water arrangements, looking after children, plantation, irrigation canal digging, earth backfilling, sprinkling water on newly built walls, filling sand and pebbles in pans etc., have been suggested to the differently abled persons. The Working Group feels that this is a highly commendable initiative. These orders not only classify the types of physical disabilities but also mention the types of work that people with these disabilities could perform. Obviously, these tasks and the rates corresponding to them do not form part of any SoR. But such a special consideration for the physically challenged is essential in MGNREGA, to strengthen the social safety net aspect of the programme.

## 18. FACILITIES FOR MGNREGA WORKERS

The Operational Guidelines provide for the employment of a person to look after children below the age of six years in case their parents work on a MGNREG scheme (MoRD, 2008, 6.8.2). The Guidelines suggest that the location of the crèche should be planned for optimum utilization (MoRD, 2008, 6.8.3). The insistence of the crèche to be located at the work

place seems to be primarily to benefit the exclusively breast feeding mothers, who could then conveniently go over to her very young infant and feed her. Since this situation is only necessary in the first six months after childbirth (in the first three months of which it is not advisable for the women to do physical labour), there seems to be sufficient rationale to provide for a creche in the village for children of MGNREGA workers who are over six months of age. The Working Group suggests that the option of **supporting a crèche in the village** be made available to the MGNREGA workers. If the workers agree, the scheme can support one person for every ten children or less. This person will look after the children in one location in the village and will be paid the daily minimum wages. This person may also be supported to converge with the ICDS system at the local level. On account of this, the uptake and quality of ICDS services need drastic improvement.

## 19. FOREST ISSUES

In several states, in poor regions, forests occupy a significant portion of the geographical area. The Forest Department (FD) is administering most of these forests. Such land offers vast opportunities for productive investment through labour oriented works. Such works will enable a large increase in the days of employment provided to each job cardholder. Further such investment will increase productive assets such as ground and surface water and biomass yield. In all states, legislation and policy permit those works to be taken up on forestland, which contribute to the conservation of forest resources. Such works must be within the ambit of the Forest Working Plan, which is usually aimed at forest conservation.

In most states however, very little work has been undertaken on forestland under MGNREGA. The Forest Department has been reluctant to execute such works or permit other PIAs to do so. The existing forest laws, particularly the Forest Conservation Act (FCA), and the attitude of the FD pose serious problems. While taking up MGNREGA interventions on the watershed development approach, the ridge area in a typical watershed is located on land in the control of the forest department. If no erosion control works are taken up in this part of the watershed, the entire principle of ridge-to-valley planning is violated. Moreover, since adivasis are normally concentrated in villages close to the forest, it becomes difficult to carry out development activities under MGNREGA in adivasi villages. A conflict is also often created with the very basic provisions of employment guarantee, since long delays in obtaining necessary permissions for working in forest areas translate themselves into inordinate gaps between work demand and work initiation, thus nullifying the very purpose of the employment guarantee.

The Working Group felt that this situation should be rectified. Several options are available:

1. The FD plans a SoP for each forest unit which is consistent with the forest working plan. This SoP is granted technical and administrative sanction by the DPC. **The FD then functions as a PIA**, employing workers from the vicinity of the forest area, by

- approaching the respective GPs.
2. The FD prepares a perspective plan and an SoP on forest lands and proposes these to the respective GSs. In case the works proposed are not located within any village boundary (revenue or forest) the FD may propose these to the GS located closest to the forest area. Once the GS approves the works, such treatment becomes the part of the perspective plan of the GP. **The FD operates like a PIA and executes work after due AS and TS.** It informs the respective GS of annual budgets and utilisation.
  3. The FD can form JFM committees in the respective GS. **This JFM committee can work as the PIA on behalf of the FD.** The FD can assist the JFM committee to prepare and execute works in forest land which are consistent with MGNREGA Guidelines as well as the forest working plan. This JFM committee may be treated as a sub committee of the GP.
  4. The FD permits **other PIAs (including GPs)** to plan and execute works on forest lands. It does so after ensuring that such works are consistent with the forest working plan. It provides an additional technical sanction for such works and undertakes periodic site inspection which may become a prerequisite for making payments. These PIAs will need to work within the perspective plan of the respective GPs and with the approval of the GS. In this option, a time-bound approval of proposals related to the forest areas by the FD need to be ensured.

While these indicate the options available for facilitating work in the forest areas, the Working Group recommends that for any selected option, the State Government must set up a High Level Task Force which includes senior officials from the RD, FD, and members of the SEGC. This Task Force must recommend a set of rules and orders to enable execution of MGNREGA on the basis of the preferred option.

In this context, it is important to highlight the provisions of the **Forest Rights Act of 2006 (FRA)**. The FRA brings into its ambit all manner of forest areas and defines community forest resource to mean "customary forest land within the traditional or customary boundaries of the village or seasonal use of landscape in the case of pastoral communities, including reserved forests, protected forests and protected areas such as Sanctuaries and National Parks to which the community had traditional access." The FRA recognizes the rights of forest dwellers to live in forests, to nistaar, to entitlements such as grazing and fish and other products of water bodies and even provides rights for conversions of all forest villages into revenue villages. The most enabling provisions of the FRA are related to work in the forest areas. The FRA categorically states that notwithstanding anything contained in the FCA, the Central Government shall provide for diversions of forest land which involve felling of trees not exceeding seventy-five trees per hectare, for facilities managed by the Government such as schools, dispensary or hospital, anganwadis, tanks and other minor water bodies, drinking water supply and water pipelines, water or rain water harvesting structures, minor irrigation canals,

non-conventional source of energy etc. It stipulates that such diversion of forest land shall be allowed only if the forest land to be diverted for the purposes mentioned in this sub-section is less than one hectare in each case and the clearance of such development projects shall be subject to the condition that the same is recommended by the Gram Sabha (FRA, 2006).

Hence, the Working Group feels that the FRA provides a facilitating framework, which helps overcome the difficulties apparently arising out of the FCA. The FRA has given a clear and overwhelming mandate to the Gram Sabha to take decisions relating to work in the forest areas. Work on NREGA in forest areas could hold the key to bringing the adivasi communities and other forest-dwellers out of their absolutely level of poverty.

## 20. MUSTER ROLLS, PAYMENT APPROVALS AND PREPARATION OF WAGE LIST

This is for works being executed by the GPs as PIA. Technically qualified personnel for maintaining the measurement book should be placed with each GP (Kerala and West Bengal) or at the VCD level. Payment of wages should be made every week or fortnight on the basis of the muster roll and the measurement book. The wage list should be made and the payment order issued by the PIA. At periodic intervals the PO or his/her nominee must verify the muster roll and measurement book and match it with the site inspection. The final payment by PIAs to workers and material suppliers may be subject to certification by the PO of the measurement book and the work completion report. PO should take corrective action immediately in case of any errors.

Such provisions will on the one hand ensure that workers are paid wages within fifteen days of having performed their work. Such wages are on the basis of measurement of productivity. On the other hand, the above process also has provision periodic verification of productivity by the PO. Timely payment of wages is extremely important to attract very poor workers to MGNREGA sites. If wages are delayed such poor workers have no option but to migrate under distress conditions. The widely adopted current system of wage payment after validation of the measurement book by the PO, makes workers bear the burden of delays on the part of the PIA or PO. This system violates the provisions of the MGNREGA Act and Guidelines of wage payment within fifteen days of work done. The Working Group acknowledges the need to monitor the link between productivity and wages and recommends linking the final payment to workers and material suppliers with verification of the measurement book.

## 21. JOB CARDS

As per the current guidelines the job card proforma requires the names of all members of the households willing to work. This may be revised to enable entry of names of all members of the households regardless of age. The computerised MIS by itself must identify those members who are above the age limit and therefore eligible to work. This prevents the need for

periodic manual revision of Job Cards to enable entry of those households members who cross the age of 18 years. While GoMP enters the names of all members of the household on the job card, households have to file an application for inclusion of an additional member on the list of prospective job seekers once the member turns 18 years. This system can be improved if the MIS is programmed to modify the list of job seekers on the basis of the original entry in the job card.

In Rajasthan there is provision for issue of a separate job card for a married couple as soon as the marriage takes place. This arises from a clear definition of a household and is useful for poor communities. Other states too may include such a provision for revision of job cards.

## 22. SELECTION OF IMPLEMENTING AGENCY APPROPRIATE TO THE PROJECT

The provisions of the Operational Guidelines (MoRD, 2008, 6.3.3) appear to be adequate. However, the Working Group has identified one problem in several states. Several PIAs have not commenced work on projects months after approval. In case any selected PIA is unable to commence the work allotted to it within 15 days or complete it within the scheduled time frame, it must inform the DPC. The DPC must proactively monitor delays in commencement or completion of approved works. In case of delays on projects which meet local priorities, the DPC may entrust this work to another approved agency.

## 23. ENSURING COMPLETION OF WORKS

The Working Group has noticed that in many states, several works remain incomplete several months after commencement of execution. In some cases, work had to stop because of faulty design, estimation of costs and estimation of M/L ratios. The PIA has abandoned these works and begun other works. This reduces the impact of MGNREGA on productivity. In some cases, the slow progress in works has been reported due to faulty labour budgets, which over-estimated demand for work. The PO needs to enquire into the reasons and take appropriate action. In some cases this may require revision of estimates. In others it may require that the DPC appoints a different agency as PIA to complete the work (MoRD, 2008, 6.3.3.i). The DPC after due enquiry must initiate action against the PIA which has left the work incomplete.

## 24. DEVELOPING DETAILED ESTIMATES

Every state government can develop **a template for making estimates** on the basis of choice of interventions and design parameters fed in by the user. This can assist the technical staff deployed by the PIA in designing works. In several states there is a shortage of such staff leading to inadequate provision of work. The state governments may refer to the template developed by the Government of Andhra Pradesh. Each State Government must prepare a menu of works which is sufficiently large to cover for the requirements of diverse set of

conditions. This menu should be open ended with provision for addition of new designs as appropriate.

There should be ample scope for user defined parameters and user entry of measurements. This will enable innovative responses to ground level challenges. For each structure, the dimensions should be entered by the user rather than generated on a standardized basis by the system. The software should link these parameters and measurements to generate a set of tasks which are required to execute the work. The software should calculate the volume for each task and select the applicable rate on the basis of user defined parameters (soil type, lift and lead, geological strata, vegetation type).

Such software will add to the efficiency of the technical staff while leaving them room for tailoring design of works to local conditions. In addition, such software will facilitate revision of estimates when there is a change in the base rates. (See below)

## 25. REVISION OF ESTIMATES

There have been several revisions of the prescribed minimum wages and rates for materials used in works approved under MGNREGA. These require **immediate revision of cost estimates** for proposed works. It has been observed that several works remain incomplete because the estimates have not been revised in keeping with increased base (wages or material) rates. There is need for a smooth and quick process of revision of estimates.

The Working Group recommends that the DPC prepares a status report on the progress of works within 15 days of any such substantial revision of base rates. The DPC may within 15 more days revise the cost estimates of all ongoing works for which AS has been granted. These revised estimates must be formally conveyed to the respective PIAs within one month of revision of rates. This will ensure that ongoing works need not be stopped if base rates are revised.

There is need for provision for concomitant revision of the annual budget for the district. In case budget revisions are not possible the DPC in consultation with the district level TSC may revoke administrative sanction granted to specific works on which execution hasn't commenced. The DPC will do so to accommodate the revised cost estimates of works already commenced within the prevailing approved MGNREGA budget for the district.

## 26. MATES

The Working Group recommends that **one mate be appointed for every group of 30 workers** instead of the 1:50 ratio in the current guidelines. This will serve to improve the quality of works and better record keeping. Further the mates may mobilise groups of workers and support the articulation of demand for work.

## 27. MATERIAL PROCUREMENT BY GPs & OTHER PIAs

The DPC should prepare **a rate list for commonly consumed material components**

of MGNREGA interventions in September of every year for the next fiscal year. The DPC may fix these rates after a market survey and will clearly indicate quality parameters for the material supplies. This may include differential rates for supply depending on the location and distance of the works. In addition the DPC may prepare a list of suppliers who have agreed to supply at the prescribed rates. This list may include suppliers at the level of every block within the district.

Every PIA will be required to procure material components at the prescribed rates and the prescribed quality. The PIA must procure material from the list of suppliers approved by the DPC. In case the PIA is unable to obtain materials at the prescribed rates from the prescribed suppliers they may approach the PO for assistance.

## 28. MIS

As per Section 10.1.7 the State Government will monitor the scheme in all aspects of implementation and may set up a **computerised MIS** for this purpose. The PO will be responsible for the initial entry into the data system. At the level of the state government it is important that a select few indicators be monitored at a very high level at frequent intervals. This Dashboard of indicators must include:

1. Number of households provided work as a proportion of the total number of job cards;
2. Number of person days of employment provided to each household demanding work;
3. Employment (persondays) provided as a proportion of demand for work as per labour budget;
4. Number of persons and unemployment allowance amount provided;
5. Number of cases where workers have received wages more than 15 days after performing work;
6. Proportion of all money released under MGNREGA accounted under each of the following heads:
  - Money held in bank accounts at various levels;
  - Advances to implementing or payment agencies;
  - Vouchers of actual expenses; and
  - Number of works completed as a proportion of works for which work orders have been issued

## 29. ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

It is the considered view of the Working Group that the provision for **administrative costs be increased from the current 6% to 8%**. Of this 8%, 6% should be reserved to support the costs of Planning & Execution at the Block level and below. This will support a team at the Block level under the PO and a technical team at the level of every VCD. This will

also ensure one EGA for every GP. While these personnel have to be deployed at all blocks, **for the most backward 2000 blocks**, the Working Group recommends the provision of additional staff as follows:

- One Community Mobiliser for every GP;
- One Additional Technical Assistant (TA) at the level of the VCD; and
- Additional Data Entry Operator at the Block.

The Working Group expects that its recommendations on Planning & Execution will enable an increase in coverage of MGNREGA (more households provided with work as a proportion of the total number of job cards) as well as more person days of work per employed household. The Working Group expects an increase in coverage of MGNREGA from the 5.25 crore households (2009-10) to 8 crore households. Additionally, the Working Group expects that 60 person days of employment will be provided to each participating household, which is higher than the 53 person days achieved in 2009-10.

The Working Group has **recommended intensive technical and administrative support in the 2000 most backward blocks** and a relatively less intensive but effective support in the other 4000 blocks of the country. It is expected that with such support in the 2000 most backward blocks (covering roughly 1 lakh GPs), about 400 households in every GP will be able to demand and get 80 person days of employment every year (total 32,000 person days of employment per GP). The total person days of employment generated in 2000 most backward blocks of the country will, thus, be 320 crores. In the other 4000 blocks (covering roughly 2 lakh GPs), the Working Group expects that 200 households per GP will demand and get employment for 40 person days per year (total 8000 person days per GP). The total person days of employment generated in these 4000 blocks will be 160 crore. Thus, a total of (320+160 =) 480 crore person days of employment will be generated by the programme every year. The wage cost (@Rs. 100/day) of the programme comes to Rs. 48000 crores. Under the assumption of a labour : material ratio of 70:30 (which approximates the actuals for 2009-10), this requires an annual outlay of Rs 68000 crores for MGNREGA annually. This will provide 60 days of employment per year to each of eight crore households in rural India.

The Planning & Execution arrangements recommended by the Working Group will require an annual outlay of 4000 crores for the system at the block level and below. This comes to 6% of the annual outlay on MGNREGA. If we add 1% for administration expenses above the block level and 1% for Capacity building, there is a requirement for provision of upto 8% of the overall annual outlay of MGNREGA for administrative and other components. The Working Group, therefore, **recommends that 8% of the outlay on MGNREGA works be allocated as administrative costs which will include costs towards capacity building, community mobilisation, planning and execution and monitoring**. Within the above provision, a sub provision of 6% should be made for expenditure at the block level and below towards community mobilisation and planning and execution of MGNREGA works.

The projected expansion of the employment guarantee programme to cover more

households and to provide more days of employment per employed household is substantial. However, it must be remembered that at present the bulk of the financial expenditure and employment generation is confined to a few states. For instance, in 2008-09, five states (Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Chhattisgarh) accounted for about 66% of the expenditure and persondays of employment generated under MGNREGA in the country. When the processes of planning and execution suggested in this report are adopted on a large scale, the Working Group expects that the pace of implementation of the programme will pick up in many hitherto laggard states (like Orissa, West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand and Maharashtra). Moreover, this report also outlines possibilities of convergence of MGNREGA with agriculture, forests, animal husbandry and other livelihood generation activities. The Working Group is of the view that if work starts on all these components, the projected expansion of MGNREGA to cover more households and provide more employment per employed households is quite within the realm of possibility in the coming years.

## ANNEXURE 1: STATE VISIT & CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN BY WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

During the process of preparation of their report, the members of the Working Group on Planning and Execution visited various state governments and held meetings with officials and other consultations. Depending upon the availability of different members at different times, the tasks were split up in order to save time and resources.

The details of these visits are provided below.

### **Andhra Pradesh**

The team visited two districts of Andhra Pradesh (Mahboobnagar and Nalgonda) between 28<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of March, 2010. In Mahboobnagar, the team visited Bomraspet Mandal and Daulatabad Mandal. The team reviewed the ongoing work under MGNREGA. At the Mandal office, the team held discussions with Madhusudan Prasad, Assistant Programme Officer and Venkat Reddy, member of the WDT. The officials explained how the planning and execution processes under MGNREGA actually unfold at the district, block and mandal levels. They explained that a total of 84 types of works have been identified which have been clubbed into 16 projects (project mode of planning). The team discussed the way work flow is organised in Andhra Pradesh on the basis of the TCS software. We were told that the shelf of projects is prepared every year and sanctioning process is done annually. The perspective plans were either not in existence or not used actively to guide the execution of works under MGNREGA. We also got to know that the SoRs have been revised in Andhra Pradesh to allow for a higher rate for the months from February to May. The team learnt about the additional personnel deployment done under MGNREGA, in the form of employment of full time Technical Assistants and Field Assistants and dedicated categories of personnel like the Muster Verification Officer and Check Measurement Officers (to verify Measurement Books). The team undertook field visits to understand how planning and execution of works is being done under MGNREGA in the district.

In Nalgonda district, the team visited Turkappally and held discussions with Srinivas Babu, Programme Director, DWMA and Shekhar Reddy, Assistant Programme Director, DWMA. The officials informed us that there were 7.51 lakh job cards in the district, covering 18 lakh adult workers. In the previous year (2009-10), the district provided employment to 4.10 lakh households at a total financial expenditure of Rs. 221.57 crores. 92% of this expenditure was on wages. The team learnt that in Andhra Pradesh, the guarantee of 100 days of work is not taken as the maximum to be provided. The policy is to provide as many days of employment as there is demand. Hence, the system is under great pressure to generate adequate employment and pay wages in time. The officials informed us that the major activity for which MGNREGA funds were being used was for land development, which included bush removal, silt application, deep ploughing, stone removal and construction of water harvesting structures. Clearly most of these activities were taken up in private land. During field visit, the team visited

Tumalapalli in Ramanapet Mandal where the activity of bush removal was being conducted. We found that the employment as per job cards almost never reached 100 and the average would have been around 80. We also saw that the physically challenged persons were not given any special treatment. Instead, a blanket increase in their wages was being used as a way of ensuring fair treatment. We found this is far from being fair.

## **Rajasthan**

Rajasthan has the record of being the highest spending state under MGNREGA. In 2009-2010, the state seems to have spent about Rs. 6200 crores under the programme. The team visited Rajasthan between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of May 2010. On 3<sup>rd</sup> May, the team visited Jaipur and held meetings with Shri CS Rajan, Principal Secretary, Rural Development, GoR and Shri Tanmay Kumar, state NREGS Commissioner. We also met Shri Mukesh Vijay, Shri Ramnivas Mirdha and Mr. G. Gupta at the state NREGS office. Shri Rajan informed the team that the stipulation of 60:40 wage:nonwage ratio was a serious handicap for the progress of MGNREGA in the state. He mentioned the example of Sriganaganagar in the command area of the Indira Gandhi Canal, where the irrigation schedule of the farmers could be regularised with more investment in water harvesting structures with cement lining. The Rajasthan officials seemed to be extremely concerned about the durability of assets and clearly favoured more durable masonry works (“pucca works”) in place of the seemingly non-durable “kucha works”. Shri Ramnivas Mirdha took the example of the need for lined canals in Dungarpur district, where irrigated area could be considerably enhanced if this activity is taken up on scale. He agreed, however, that the beneficiaries of such works could be largely rich farmers with access to canal irrigation. The WG team tried to engage the officials in a discussion that the quality of works is more appropriately seen in relation to the appropriateness of the chosen work to the area or in terms of the robustness of the planning and execution processes rather than on the basis of the material used in construction.

Shri Tanmay Kumar, NREGA Commissioner, explained to the WG team that Rajasthan as a state is very prone to frequent droughts. The state, therefore, has developed the required capacities to deliver drought relief at a scale. Therefore, execution of MGNREGA works is very much within the capacity of the state structures in Rajasthan. However, the officials were not open to the idea of convergence of NREGA with watershed and similar programmes. The major work being implemented under MGNREGA in the state was road construction. Plantation was another major activity.

The WG team visited Dungarpur and Udaipur districts and held meetings with district officials. In Dungarpur the team met Shri Purnachandra Kishan, District Collector and KL Sisodiya, Executive Engineer. The DM explained that he is deeply mindful of three ratios under MGNREGA, namely, the percentage of households completing 100 days of employment, the proportion of households being covered under the programme and the persondays of employment provided to each employed household. In terms of choice of works, the DM said that the major works being undertaken include road construction, deepening of water

harvesting structures and plantation including fodder development. He agreed that workwise sanctions are the order of the day and no annual or perspective plans are prepared by the GPs. He felt that the GPs lacked required capacity. However, the DM claimed that he was able to check corruption in material procurement by instituting a process of open tender at the district level. Still, there is high corruption in earthwork and the effort is to check leakages here. Shri Sisodiya informed the team that job card separation is done as soon as the adult member gets married and sets up a separate establishment. He said that the SoRs have been revised in Rajasthan sufficiently to take into account the problems of the physically challenged, the aged, malnourished and women.

In Udaipur, the team held discussions with Shri Anand Kumar, District Collector, Shri RS Shekhawat, CEO, Zilla Panchayat and Shri SC Suklecha, Executive Engineer. The officials repeated the argument earlier proposed by the Principal Secretary about durable assets and quality of works in terms of “kutchha” and “pucca” activities. Shri Suklecha gave a number of useful suggestions about how to strengthen the planning process under MGNREGA. He also had several useful insights on how to organise work, arrange for labour payments and muster verification and overall monitoring of works under the programme. He explained that they had worked out a system of issuing muster rolls in a staggered manner to enable timely verification by the concerned technical staff and to enable payment of wages within 15 days as stipulated in the Act. The DM agreed that there is the need to consider convergence of the works taken up under MGNREGA with watershed programme. However, his view is that this convergence is more relevant for the tribal areas of Rajasthan only.

During field visits, the team visited worksites at village Balicha (road construction and repair of water harvesting structures), Bhisada Khurd (fodder development and stone bunds) in Udaipur district and village Dhavadi in Dungarpur district. In Dhavadi, many check dams have been constructed and irrigation channels (“dhora”) have been lined. This activity is supposed to have enabled irrigation in large areas in the village. However, the beneficiaries were largely big farmers and per hectare cost of this activity came to nearly Rs. 50-80000. In Balicha, conversion of kutchha road to pucca road was being done but it is doubtful who could use these roads unless they are black-topped. The uniqueness of worksites in these Rajasthan districts was the high proportion of women employed (over 80%). In some sites like Balicha, even the mates employed were women. The works taken up did not seem to follow any plan. They were more in the form of randomly chosen activities response to the huge pressure on the system to create employment.

## **Bihar**

The working group met Suman Singh, Secretary, SAKHI, Jitendra Kumar of Navjagriti and Mohua Roy Choudhri of BASIX at the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) office in Patna on April 13<sup>th</sup>. Mihir Sahana of BASIX met the group at the AKF office on April 14<sup>th</sup>. Meeting with Sh.Santosh Mathew, Principal Secretary, Rural Development, Govt of Bihar was held on April 14<sup>th</sup>.

Following is the summary of the conclusions arrived through various meetings.

### **Choice of Works**

There appears to be adequate opportunity for planning and execution of 'works' permissible under NREGA in the flood plains of North Bihar. These works can generate much more employment than what is being currently created. Among the feasible options which are primarily labour intensive are:

- Desilting or deepening of public ponds, which are being currently leased to Fishermen's cooperatives
- Clearing/desilting drainage channels in lowlying areas (locally called char) where water collects and prevents cultivation.): Drainage lines as govt land. By clearing these, the char land will be drained out and reclaimed .
- Excavating canal networks (we are informed that several small canal networks are in an incomplete state, whereby the land under the canal cannot be cultivated, even while the canal runs dry).
- Embankment repair: Several embankments are in need of repair due to minor breaches or erosion. Such preventive measures are important for all cultivable land outside the embankments.
- Social forestry along embankments (shrubs, bamboo) which will strengthen the embankments
- Earthen dams across seasonal streams, which serve to impound water in dry season and which get washed away during rains

Individual lands are being lost due to siltation caused by large floods. In such areas desilting can be done and silt can be used for making approach roads.

### **Staffing requirements:**

An average GP covers 7000 people (1200-1500 households) and roughly 12-17 GPs exist in one block. Currently one Rozgar Sevak has been appointed per GP. There is need for more technical support for GPs. For each cluster of GPs (4-5 GPs), we need one technical staff for structure design, cost estimation, periodic site inspection, MBs, valuation. In addition, there is need for a small intersectoral technical team at the block level to help preparation of the Perspective plan and to ensure that the assets are appropriate for supporting livelihoods

The Rozgar sevak's role may include working with the GP on issue of jobcards, estimating demand for work, the muster roll, other required records, site supervision, ensuring that on-site facilities are provided, payments, etc

### **Role of facilitator**

One major suggestion is an institutional arrangement for facilitating MGNREGA implementation: This may be through a state-wide society (which is being very actively considered by GoB) employing facilitation teams on contract or by designating one NGO per block/district or a combination of both. This facilitator can be assigned the task of working with GPs on community mobilisation and spreading awareness, technical support in planning and execution of works, monitoring progress and compliance. We may consider designing a performance based payment system for the facilitation functions

### **Schedule of Rates**

Bihar has specific rates for women workers. But this provision is impractical. Payment of special rates for women is arbitrary. Even if there were no corruption/capacity issues, this feature is difficult to implement. Women rarely work in all-women groups. Specific sub-tasks may be entirely executed by women, but that will require splitting up rates for each sub-task.

**Worksite facilities:**

In the meeting it was felt that worksite insurance is important, including on-site minor dependents. There was a suggestion to make NGOs responsible for provision of worksite facilities.

**Labour Budget**

The Labour Budget is an important feature of the Scheme that is not being utilised at all. In Bihar currently, there is ex-post matching of employment provided with 'work demanded'. At present most states require this to be done in October, which is suitable.

The Labour Budget must have two distinct parts. The first and the more important one should be an estimation of the demand for work on the basis of a job-cardwise listing. Each job card holder should be invited to convey when and for how many days does the household require work from MGNREGA. This demand should be estimated for each season/quarter, while collated into an annual demand. This should be approved by the Gram Sabha and individual details entered in job-cards.

The Gram Panchayat should then calculate the employment that can be generated by its proposed works, once again broken into seasons/quarters. This requires that the GP plans its works well in advance and prepares an Annual plan for approval, along with the labour budget.

Matching demand for work with the employment potential of work proposed by the GP, helps estimate the volume of employment required to be generated by other agencies in the GP or beyond. This is a very important process for households which typically migrate in search of work. If they are not informed well in advance, they will make arrangements to migrate typically once the kharif crop is harvested (and occasionally even while the kharif crop stands). These households are the most needy and they need to be able to anticipate when and how much work will be provided locally under NREGS. Predictability of works is very important.

**Madhya Pradesh**

The members of the working group also met Sh. Parasuram, Principal Secretary, Deptt of Panchayats & Rural Development, GoMP. Some of the issues on which there was agreement was on unit of planning. A pilot is being initiated in the state of MP where the unit of planning is a cluster of villages and is on watershed basis. Active participation of the CSOs is being sought. The need for a survey to ascertain a accurate figure of households demanding work and in what seasons was also felt but the issue was of cost of such a survey. It was also felt that the system of granting Technical Sanction and Administrative Sanction to Annual Plans as mentioned in the guidelines instead of individual works and issuing of work order to individual works merits greater attention and such an approach might help in pushing up the momentum which currently tends to get slow because of GPs not getting sanction on time.

A consultation was organized on 25<sup>th</sup> May BAIF, Pune with the Rainfed Livestock Network. Members of the Working Group on Planning & Execution and the Working Group on Individual lands participated in the consultation.

The summary of the recommendations are :

- Core focus on fodder, drinking water and infrastructure.
  - Fodder:
    - Focus on promotion, protection and plantation of 'browsable' species of grasses and shrubs etc on commons.
    - Initiatives to enhance availability and quality of fodder during scarce periods such as silage, fodder blocks preparation, storage of hay etc.
  - Water
    - Creation of water bodies along grazing tracts/migratory paths exclusively earmarked for animals. If surface water bodies cannot be constructed then creation of open wells with necessary infrastructure.
    - Construction of water troughs for community and private purposes
  - Infrastructure
    - Facilities for fodder chaffing, preparation of fodder blocks etc that add value and storage life for fodder
    - Simple slaughter facilities at GP level or at the site of local haats/ market for towards improving quality of meat and hygiene.
    - Infrastructure for livestock health service centers such as trevis etc.
- A strong civil society partnership and/or deployment of facilitators is required for planning and execution. An independent agency responsible for participatory planning and facilitation is recommended.
- Gram Panchayats are to be the Program Implementation Agency. Support should also be enlisted from all the line departments also.

## ANNEXURE 2: WORK CLASSIFICATION ACCORDING TO THE CAPACITY OF DIFFERENTLY ABLED PERSONS

### Priority Works Under NREGA

Water Conservation and Harvesting

- For drought-proofing, afforestation/ tree plantation.
- Canals for irrigation (small and medium irrigation work).

To provide irrigation facilities on private land of SC/ST beneficiary families under Land Improvement and Indira Awas.

Repair of traditional water structures.

Desiltation of ponds.

Land development

Flood control/ security, drainage in water accumulation areas.

All-weather roads for village connectivity

Any other work as notified by central government on advice of state government.

<b>Keeping the above in mind, possible classification of work according to the capacity of differently abled people under NREGA:</b>	
1. Drinking water arrangements	2. Helping in looking after children
3. Plantation	4. Irrigation - canal digging
5. Earth backfilling	6. Dumping mud outside or in trolleys
7. Building construction - making concrete material	8. Shifting concrete and other building material from one place to the other
9. Carrying cement and bricks	10. Filling sand or pebbles in pans
11. Sprinkling water on newly built wall	12. Well deepening – filling baskets with excavated mud inside the well
13. Helping in pulling out the sludge from the well	14. Transferring the sludge to trolley
15. Digging out the sludge from the ponds	16. Putting the waste in iron containers
17. Transferring contents of filled up pans into trolley	18. Carrying stones
19. Setting stones in the right place	20. Land levelling
21. Farm bunding	22. Digging pits in water conservation land
23. Setting the mud from the pits in a different place	24. Road construction – sweeping the kuchcha roads with brooms
25. Sprinkling water, putting pebbles	

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## Work which could be done by orthopaedically handicapped people

- **Possible work for a person with one weak hand**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Drinking water arrangements</li> <li>6. Plantation</li> <li>7. Filling pans with sand/pebbles</li> <li>8. Sweeping <i>kuchcha</i> roads with brooms</li> <li>9. Farm bunding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. Assisting in looking after children</li> <li>11. Carrying cement and bricks</li> <li>12. Sprinkling water on newly built wall</li> <li>13. Pouring water, putting pebbles</li> </ul>
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- **Work done by a person with both hands weak**

- 14. Assisting in looking after children (family members or children can also help – or they can also get employment. This way the handicapped person will feel more self confident)

- **Work done by a person with one weak leg**

Work done with help	Work done independently
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15. Drinking water arrangements</li> <li>16. Assisting in looking after children</li> <li>17. Plantation</li> <li>18. Sprinkling water on newly built walls</li> <li>19. Filling pans with sand or pebble</li> <li>20. Sweeping <i>kuchcha</i> roads with brooms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>21. Drinking water arrangements</li> <li>22. Assisting in looking after children</li> <li>23. Plantation</li> <li>24. Irrigation - digging canals</li> <li>25. Filling earth</li> <li>26. Digging out mud / putting in the trolley</li> <li>27. Construction – repairing concrete material</li> <li>28. Transferring concrete material from one place to other</li> <li>29. Carrying cement and bricks</li> <li>30. Filling metal containers with sand or pebble</li> <li>31. Sprinkling water on newly built walls</li> <li>32. Deepening wells – putting the sludge inside the well into baskets</li> <li>33. Helping in pulling out the sludge from wells</li> <li>34. Transferring the sludge to trolleys</li> <li>35. Digging out the sludge from ponds</li> <li>36. Filling up pans with waste</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>37. Transferring filled up pans to trolleys</li> <li>38. Carrying stones</li> <li>39. Setting stones in the right place</li> <li>40. Land levelling</li> <li>41. Farm bunding</li> <li>42. Digging pits in land meant for water conservation work</li> <li>43. Transferring the mud from pits to another site</li> <li>44. Building roads</li> <li>45. Sweeping <i>kuchcha</i> roads with brooms</li> <li>46. Sprinkling water, putting pebbles</li> </ul>
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• **Work done by a person with both legs weak**

- 5. Assisting in looking after children
- 6. Plantation
- 7. Filling pans with sand or pebble
- 8. Pulling out the sludge from wells (*the sludge from the wells is filled in huge containers and to pull it out at least 10 – 15 people are required. But if this sludge is filled in smaller containers, 3 – 4 handicapped people can do the same, even while they are sitting. The benefit is that the work will be faster, the labour required will be less as well as the handicapped people will be employed*)
- 9. Sweeping *kuchcha* roads with brooms

• **Work done by a person with one weak hand and one weak leg**

Work done with help	Work done independently
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>47. Organizing drinking water</li> <li>48. Assisting in looking after children</li> <li>49. Planting trees</li> <li>50. Sprinkling water on newly built wall</li> <li>51. Filling pans with sand or pebble</li> <li>52. Sweeping <i>kuchcha</i> roads with brooms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>53. Organizing drinking water</li> <li>54. Assisting in looking after children</li> <li>55. Planting trees</li> <li>56. Sprinkling water on newly built wall</li> <li>57. Sweeping <i>kuchcha</i> roads with brooms</li> <li>58. Sprinkling water, putting pebbles</li> </ul>

**6. Work which could be done by hunch-backed persons**

- 59. Drinking water arrangements
- 60. Assisting in looking after children
- 61. Plantation
- 62. Sprinkling water on newly built wall on construction sites
- 63. Sweeping *kuchcha* roads with brooms
- 64. Sprinkling water, putting pebbles

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## Possible work for visually handicapped people

- ***Possible work for a person blind in one eye whose other eye is weak also***

1. Drinking water arrangements	2. Helping in looking after children
3. Plantation	4. Irrigation-digging canals
5. Filling earth	6. Dumping mud outside or in trolleys
7. Building construction- making concrete material	8. Shifting concrete and other materials from one place to the other
9. Carrying cement and bricks	10. Filling sand or pebbles in pans
11. Sprinkling water on newly built wall	12. Helping in pulling out the sludge from the well
13. Transferring the sludge to trolley	14. Digging out the sludge from the ponds
15. Putting the waste in pans	16. Transferring the filled up pans into trolley
17. Carrying stones	18. Setting stones in the right place
19. Land Levelling	20. Farm bunding
21. Digging pits in land for water conservation	22. Setting the excavated mud in a different place
23. Building roads – sweeping the <i>kuchcha</i> roads with brooms	24. Sprinkling water, putting pebbles

- ***Work done by completely blind people***

- Assisting in looking after children
- Plantation
- Filling pans with sand or pebble
- Drinking water arrangements

6. *other family members should also be employed on the site so that they realize that the handicapped person is not a burden but is instead a source of income for the family*

7. *the handicapped person should be patiently trained. Proper training should be given on the way to do work as well as to measure the distance covered in terms of their footsteps*

- ***Work done by a person with a weak vision***

1. Organizing drinking water	2. Helping in looking after children
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3. Planting trees	4. Irrigation-digging canals
5. Filling soil	6. Dumping mud outside or in trolleys
7. Building construction- making concrete material	8. Shifting concrete and other materials from one place to the other
9. Carry cement and bricks	10. Filling sand or pebbles in metal pans
11. Sprinkling water on newly built wall	12. Helping in pulling out the sludge from the well
13. Transferring the sludge to trolley	14. Digging out the sludge from the ponds
15. Putting the waste in iron containers	16. Transferring the filled up metal container into the trolley
17. Carrying stones	18. Setting the stones in the right place
19. Land Levelling	20. Farm bunding
21. Digging pits in water conservation land	22. Setting the excavated mud in a different place
23. Building roads – sweeping the <i>kuchcha</i> roads with brooms	24. Sprinkling water, placing pebbles

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### Work which could be done by mentally handicapped people

#### 1. *Work that can be done by a people who are severely mentally challenged*

1. Drinking water arrangements	2. Helping in looking after children
3. Plantation	4. Irrigation-digging canals
5. Filling earth	6. Dumping mud outside or in trolleys
7. Shifting concrete and other material from one place to the other	8. Carry cement and bricks
9. Filling sand or pebbles in metal pans	10. Transferring the sludge to trolley
11. Digging out the sludge from the ponds	12. Putting the waste in pans
13. Transferring the filled up pans into the trolley	14. Carrying stones
15. Setting the stones in the right place	16. Land Levelling
17. Farm bunding	18. Digging pits in land for water conservation

19. Setting the excavated mud in a different place	20. Building roads – sweeping the kuchcha roads with brooms
21. Sprinkling water, putting pebbles	

*Note: Such people should be instructed sequentially and slowly. They can produce good work once they have understood it well.*

**2. Work that can be done by a person who is mildly mentally challenged**

1. Drinking water arrangements	2. Helping in looking after children
3. Plantation	4. Filling earth
5. Dumping mud outside or in trolleys	6. Filling sand or pebbles in metal pans
7. Transferring the sludge to trolley	8. Building roads – sweeping the <i>kuchcha</i> roads with brooms
9. Sprinkling water, putting pebbles	

Such people are good at assisting and supporting others. They can carry pans of sludge and dump it if they are assisted in lifting them.

**Work which could be done by people under treatment for mental illness – such people can do all kinds of work. Only the amount of work done could be quantitatively less.**

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**Work which could be done by hearing and speech impaired people – such people can do all kinds of work but it is required that they are instructed properly in sign language.**

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**ANNEXURE 3: PERSONNEL DEPLOYMENT AND PROPOSED SALARIES  
UNDER MGNREGA**

	Particulars	Contractual/ Govt employee	Educational Qualifica- tions	GP	VC D	Blo ck	Com pen- sa- tion	Per- sonnel (Total / Block)	Total Salaries
<b>A. For 2000 MOST BACKWARD BLOCKS of the Country</b>									
1	Average Size of GP (Persons)			300 0					
2	Average Workers			400					
3	EGA	Contractual	As per guide- lines	1			2500	50	125000
4	Community Mobilis- er	Contractual	10 +2	1			2000	50	100000
5	Assistant Pro- gramme Officer	Contractual	Post-Gradu- ate in any dis- cipline		1		1800 0	3	54000
6	Technical Special- ists								
a	Community Mobilis- ation & Gender & Inclusion	Contractual	Post Gradu- ate in Social Sciences/Soc- ial Work		1		1400 0	3	42000
b	Soil & Moisture Con- servation	Contractual	Graduate in Natural/Phys- ical Sciences		1		1400 0	3	42000
c	Agriculture & Allied	Contractual	Graduate in Agriculture/liv- estock/forestr y/biological Sciences		1		1400 0	3	42000
8	Technical Assistants	Contractual	Graduate in any discipline		3		1200 0	9	108000
9	Programme Officer	Govt employee				1	3000 0	1	30000
10	Junior Engineers	Contractual	Diploma in civil engg/agrl engg			1	2000 0	1	20000
11	Accountant cum Admn Astt	Contractual	Graduate in Commerce			1	1300 0	1	13000
12	Data Entry Opera- tors	Contractual	Graduate in any discipline			3	1000 0	3	30000
Total	Salaries Per Month								<b>606000</b>
	Months								12
	Blocks (assume 50 GPs per Block)								2000
	<b>Total Salaries for 2000 Most Back- ward Blocks (Rs. Crore)</b>								<b>1454.4</b>
<b>B. For OTHER 4000 BLOCKS of the Country</b>									
1	Average Size of GP (Persons)			300 0					
2	Average Number of Workers			200					

