

**Minutes of the Round Table on NREGA with IITS, IIMS, Agricultural Universities and other Professional institutions held on August 1, 2008, Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi.**

A round table conference of technical/management institutes, agricultural universities and other institutions was held under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister of Rural Development on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2008 at Vigyan Bhavan in New Delhi. A list of the participants is enclosed.

The agenda for discussion was as follows:

- a) Familiarizing the participants with the various components of the NREGA
- b) Identifying/highlighting areas of research interest
- c) Exploring the possibility of selected academic institutions being part of the concurrent monitoring and evaluation of NREGA
- d) Exploring the possibility of curriculum development including in courses on Rural economics, Rural sociology, Political Science and Rural management.
- e) Working jointly with selected Universities/Institutes, NREGA implementing agencies to develop case studies which can be used in teaching as well as training institutions
- f) Encouraging under graduate and graduate students in different programmes to work a summer interns in the NREGA programme and earn a certificate at the end of their internship.

1. At the outset, Secretary (RD) welcomed the participants and highlighted the distinctive features of NREGA.

NREGA is a path breaking legislation and a flagship programme for promoting inclusive growth by ensuring a legal guarantee of 100 days of employment to rural poor. Its Rights based framework creates a paradigm shift from earlier wage employment programmes. The Acts' objective is to generate employment opportunities, and regenerate the natural resource basic of rural livelihood through an implementation process that strengthens grass root democratic processes. She said that the objective of the workshop is to engage professional institutions with NREGA implementation through a variety of activities like debates, seminars, research, action research internships, curricula and training, monitoring and evaluation documentation. The aim is to evolve a professional network of resources institutions to contribute towards improving the quality of NREGA processes.

The scale of operation of NREGA has increased from a coverage of 330 districts to 614 districts in 2008-09. NREGA is likely to provide employment to 5 crore households this year with an estimated expenditure of Rs. 30,000 crore out of which 70% shall be spent as wage payment to labourers. This has also been the basis of a major momentum towards financial inclusion by opening workers' accounts in Post Offices and Banks.

2. Hon'ble Minister of Rural Development, Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh, addressed the participants drawing attention to the fact that poverty and unemployment are the basic problems faced by rural India. Generation of employment will lead to eradication of poverty in rural India and NREGA is a big step towards meeting this goal. NREGA is unique in that it provides a legal guarantee of 100 days of wage employment to all adult members of a rural household whose adult members are willing to do unskilled manual work. He said NREGA is successfully working on its basic goal of providing employment to rural poor and stemming distress, he emphasized on the five components of NREGA: i) Awareness ii) Participation iii) Vigilance and Monitoring iv) Transparency v) Accountability. He highlighted the immense potential and possibilities for co-operation and collaboration between the Ministry of Rural Development and all participating institutions.

3. Joint Secretary (NREGA) made presentation on NREGA to the participants outlining opportunities and areas of co-operation and collaboration. A copy of the presentation is attached.

4. The views of the representatives of professional institutes are summarized below:

1. **Professor Dr. B.B. Ray**, Director Development, Allahabad Agriculture University informed that the University has already included NREGA in the curriculum of Rural Sociology and has taken up case studies in seven districts. He pointed out that only 0.08 percent of funds are earmarked by States for Agriculture Universities. These funds are not adequate and financial support from the MoRD will be welcome. He suggested that seminar, workshops and University publications can be used for awareness generation. He, on behalf of his university assured cooperation to the Ministry.

2. **Dr. C.R. Hajara, Vice Chancellor, Indira Gandhi Agricultural University Raipur** appreciated the initiative of the Ministry. He assured full support for the professional collaboration initiatives of the Ministry. He mentioned that there were sixteen Krishi Vigyan Kendras under their University and each Krishi Vigyan Kendra had adopted a village to carry out programmes. He said the university would undertake activities like training, awareness generation as part of collaboration through KVKs. NREGA has already been taken up in their sociology curriculum.

**3. Shri G. Singh, Chitrakut Grammodaya Vishvavidyalaya** said that the University undertakes studies on Rural Development. He assured that the University would support professional collaboration with the Ministry. He also suggested that NREGA can be taken up as research projects for doctoral thesis. His institute can actively be associated in technical training and awareness generation about NREGA in monitoring and evaluation and case studies. He also suggested that all Agriculture institutes may initiate training on NREGA.

**4. Professor Manish Thakur, IIM, Kolkotta** appreciated the efforts of the Ministry to bring academic institutes and universities on board in the implementation of NREGA. He emphasized the need to use the expertise of IIMs for monitoring, evaluation and training. He informed that the Centre for Management of Rural Development in IIM Kolkatta was already functional. Rural Development and Social Change and Social Policy are already part of the curriculum. The institute would be willing to undertake training of trainers. He said that there were immense possibilities in research projects on NREGA. He extended an invitation to the Minister Rural Development for a lecture on NREGA at IIM, Kolkatta.

**5. Professor Samar Dutta, IIM Ahmedabad:** He suggested that IIM students after graduation adopt a village each for development work and village visit is part of their curriculum. Organizing workshops, symposia for stakeholders by IIMs will help the programme. He suggested the creation of a Chair dedicated to research on NREGA. He also emphasized collaborative researches, pooling of resources, consultancy, creation of material for teaching and training of grass root level functionaries by faculty of IIMs. He suggested that the e mail ID of all participants be shared for future interactions.

**6. Dr. Rajinder Prasad, IIT, Delhi** assured of the institutes' cooperation as and when required by Ministry of Rural Development. He informed that there was a Centre for Rural Development Technology already functioning in IIT. They could provide assistance in GIS/MIS programmes to Ministry of Rural Development.

**7. Prof. Shah, IIT, Mumbai** informed that there was a Centre for Rural Development Technology functional in IIT, Mumbai also. They offer M Tech. in Development Technology with 10 weeks field study where students are sent to villages for sensitization. He indicated his willingness to work out possibilities of including NREGA's implementation and implication for rural governance in their course. He evinced interest in working jointly to develop case studies which may be used in teaching as well as training institutions.

**8. Shri R R Jha, Banaras Hindu University** said that his university would definitely encourage undergraduate and graduate students to work as summer interns in NREGA programme and earn a certificate at the end of their internship. He also requested the Ministry to clarify if financial support can be provided for

the initiatives. He said that he would come up with concrete proposals after discussing the issue with his colleagues at the University.

**9. Prof. Kannan, Vice Chancellor, Nagaland University** said that Nagaland had a different social, geographical and political environment which distinguished it from the rest of the country. NREGA was fundamental to the needs of the people in the State. He made a presentation on the education grid to reach the remotest village.

**10. Mr. S David, Association of Indian Universities** emphasized seminars, workshops, debates, visit to rural youth to create interface with rural youth. He said that their association could help in exhibitions, skits folk media for propagation of NREGA. Weekly newspapers can also incorporate news of rural development.

**11. Prof. Khan, Aligarh Muslim University** said that problems faced at the implementation level of NREGA could be effectively addressed through active participation of Universities.

**12. Prof. Wahab, Aligarh Muslim University** highlighted the positive impact of NREGA, the most significant being the increase in minimum wages and reduction in distress migration. He said that NREGA was already included in the curriculum of the University but generating awareness about NREGA at the ground is a big challenge. They would be willing to join hands in organizing workshops, seminars etc. to create awareness at the lowest level of implementation of NREGA. He further added that a separate cell for monitoring and evaluation could be created in the University to give feed back to the Ministry of Rural Development on NREGA.

**13. Dr. Baldev Singh, Indian Agriculture Research Institute** said that rural development and agriculture were inseparable as agricultural development invariably results in rural development. The institute has integrated development programmes and is already in a collaborative mode with other institutes for their implementation. It has already developed village-based integrated model on marketing for agricultural development. He assured that they would join hands with Ministry of Rural Development on HRD and research issues but would need financial support from the Ministry of Rural Development.

**14. Dr. Mukherjee, Centre for Fisheries Education, Mumbai** said that they were already implementing rural fisherwomen development programme. They have incorporated rural economics and rural development in their curriculum of Master in Fisheries Science. They would be willing to include case studies and start summer internship for their students. They would be happy to partner with Ministry of Rural Development in monitoring and evaluation of NREGA projects.

**15. Dr. Parmar, Veterinary University, Ludhiana** suggested convergence of works like providing labour component from NREGA for removal of wheat and livestock vaccination. It was clarified that the dovetailing of NREGA funds with other schemes can be done only within stipulated norms of NREGA.

**16. Dr. Panda, IIM, Shillong** said that NREGA was an important programme of the Government of India. It has resulted in empowerment of rural poor and increased their purchasing power. He offered that case studies related to sustainability of NREGA, impact of NREGA on terrorism and business can be taken up by their institute. He assured that his institute will be willing to partner with the Ministry of Rural Development on their initiatives.

**17. Dr. S.P. Singh, IIT, Roorkee** said that physical as well intellectual infrastructure exists in his institute to carry out collaborations with the Ministry of Rural Development in the field of awareness generation, curriculum, convergence, labour budgeting, building of data base. He suggested that a fellowship/chair for NREGA can be created exclusively in the University.

**18. Dr. K.S. Risam, Director, Extension Education, Sher- E -Kashmir University** said that the implication and implementation of NREGA can be included in the curriculum of undergraduates. He said that the University can partner with the Ministry of Rural Development on the impact on social economics, natural resource regeneration by NREGA. They already have RAWE programme and internship. He suggested that livestock activity and pasture development can be included in the works schedule of NREGA.

**19. Dr. N. Nagraj, Professor, University of Agriculture Science, Bangalore** indicated the Institute's willingness was to collaborate on the issues already taken up in the meeting. A couple of proposals for research on NREGA are under active consideration. Programme for rural areas are being conducted. Studies could be undertaken on how resources created under NREGA were being utilized. Technical feasibility of works can also be a subject of study.

**20. Dr. R.K. Malik, Director, Chowdhary Charan Singh Haryana Agriculture University, Hisar** pointed out that water conservation was the most important work undertaken in NREGA. Lining of canals can be undertaken under NREGA as it minimizes water losses. By creation of durable assets job seekers could become job creators. He on behalf of his University assured of all possible collaboration with Ministry of Rural Development.

**21. Dr. N. Narayanasami, Professor, Gandhigram Rural University, Tamil Nadu** indicated that the University was actively associated with NREGA in Tamil Nadu in the development of district perspective plans. They could provide technical assistance as well. In the field of awareness generation, small workshops could be organized and impact assessment, can be carried out by

their University. The University would like to collaborate with the Ministry of Rural Development on all possible aspects of NREGA.

**22. Dr. H. R. Sharma, Professor, Himachal Pradesh Agriculture University** indicated that the University would be interested in collaborating with the Ministry of Rural Development in the field of research and awareness generation. Such a professional network will create 'watchdog' institutions throughout the country to monitor and evaluate the implementation of NREGA. Inclusion of NREGA in the curriculum was possible as RAWE and Rural Sociology are already part of their curriculum.

**23. Dr. Piyush Jani, Assistant Professor, Maharana Pratap University of Agriculture & Technology, Udaipur** said that indepth study of NREGA could be done through Krishi Vigyan Kendras that were working in 150 villages under the University. They can also impart training to farmers about NREGA. Uniform indicators of assessment can also be formulated for impact study. The University is willing to participate in activities as and when required by the Ministry of Rural Development.

**24. Dr. H.D. Behra, Assistant Professor, IIT, Kharagpur** stated that the Institute can be involved in areas like teaching, training and research & development on aspects of NREGA. It can provide help through remote sensing, GIS and GPS in monitoring and assessment of NREGA if the Ministry thinks fit.

**25. Dr. R.K. Doharey, Associate Professor, M.D. University of Agriculture and Technology, Faizabad (UP)** assured that the University will actively participate in any professional network the Ministry of Rural Development sets up.

**26. Dr. Singh, Agriculture University, Ranchi:** The University endorsed collaboration with the Ministry. He suggested that creation of 50 cm bund in rainfed areas and sowing of sankar napier at the distance of 1 meter each will help in soil stabilization and creation of fodder for cattle can be taken in schedule of works under NREGA.

**27. Dr. Balraj Singh, Principal Scientist, IARI, New Delhi** emphasised convergence with NREGA with other schemes.

**28.** Secretary Rural Development summarized the proceedings of the Round Table and the issues that emerged for follow up are as follows:

- a) A general consensus evolved that there was considerable potential and scope for professional collaborations. A professional network of resource institutions on NREGA could be created with partners and the Ministry.

- b) All participating institutions agreed to incorporate NREGA dimensions in their on going programmes such as curricula, evaluation, adoption programme, RAWE (Rural Awareness Work Experience).
- c) Development of case studies could be undertaken as this was not only an effective tool for teaching and training but would also provide Ministry of Rural Development with useful feedback.
- d) Encouraging graduate and under graduate to work as summer interns in NREGA could be considered. Issues of financial support would be examined under RAWE programme that are already going on, students may be encouraged to take up the study relating to NREGA as part of their exercise in rural areas.
- e) Involvement of institutions in concurrent monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment could be considered immediately.
- f) On the issue of convergence, the first level work was done under NREGA either on community land or private land of certain sections of the rural community. For the next stage, convergence was needed to improve productivity. The Ministry has set up a Task Force on Convergence and would be issuing guidelines shortly on convergence with NREGA at the planning stage and in specific activities as well as evolving a technical consortium of interalia Krishi Vigyan Kendras, DRDAs, Agricultural and technological management agencies including district forest agency.
- g) Action Research was another area of collaboration. It was mentioned that ICAR is implementing the National Agriculture Innovation Project (NAIP) which has a strong component on rural livelihood research. Institutions/universities sending the proposals for funding were urged to keep NREGA into these action research projects.
- h) The issue of endowment of fellowships and endowment of rural development chair was also raised. Endowment of chair and research through professors who concentrated on the issue of rural development would also be explored by the Ministry.
- i) On the issue of network grid, it was possible that such a grid could be linked up with institutions to work on issues of evaluation and impact assessment. One model institution could be developed for this purpose. Data base built up could help in knowing how the rural poor as a result of NREGA have developed over a period of five or six years.
- j) Seminars, Workshops and awareness generation programmes on a continuous basis would be effective.

- k) Use of Universities newsletters to disseminate information about NREGA could be considered.
- l) Tapping of Universities Radio Stations and sharing information like spots, small video films, radio jingles etc. could be considered for greater outreach.
- m) Special certificate course for 3 to 4 months was also suggested. However, this required some thinking and deliberation.
- n) Legal issues in NREGA could be discussed with legal institutions and on the lines of the present round-table with academia, similar exercise would be conducted with legal institutions.
- o) E mails and addresses of participants for inter-action would be shared.

Secretary Rural Development thanked the participants.

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

S.N.	Name&Designation	Address	Email address	Contact number
1.	DR. B.B.RAI Director Development	Allahabad Agricultural Institute Deemed University, U.P.		9415410668
2.	Dr. Nahar Singh Director Extents	Allahabad Agricultural. Institute Deemed University, U.P.		9415017229
3.	Dr. B. Panda Asth. Professor	Indian Institue of Management, Shillong, Meghalaya.	Bhagirathi2@yahoo.com	9436117613
4.	Prof. R.R. Jha Professor	Deptt. of Political Sc. Banaras Hindu University Vananasi, U.P.	Jharajavi2004@yahoo.com	9415780888
5.	Dr. N. Narayana- Sami Professor	Gandhi Gram Rural University Gandhi Garam Tamil Nadu	<a href="mailto:Nani2002@yahoo.com">Nani2002@yahoo.com</a>	9443804693
6.	Dr. M.R.Sharma	CSKMPKV Palampur 7H.P.	<a href="mailto:nanoraj@hillofficernet.in">nanoraj@hillofficernet.in</a>	9816632861
7.	Prof. Imnayongdang	Nagaland University, School of Agriculture Science& RD Medzihema, Nagaland.		9436018029
8.	Dr. V.K. Pyasi Prof. Ext. Educ. college of agriculture JHK V.V.	Professor Deptt of Extension Education, Jawaharlal Nehru kirshi Vishwavidyalaya Krishinagar, Adhartal Jabalpur-482004, Madhya Pradesh.	Vinay-pyasi@yahoo.com	9424309922
9.	Dr. K.S. Risam Director ext.edu	Sher-e-Kashmir Univ& Agri.sc &Tech-Jammu Chatta, Jammu(J&k)	Ksriram2004@rediff.com	09419210023
10.	Manish Thakur	IIM Calcutta - 700104	mt@iimcal.ac.in	9903883379
11.	Dr S.C. Mukherjee	CIFE	Subhasmukherjee48@gma	9821086297

	Joint Direction	Mumbai-400061	il.com	
12.	Dr. R.S.Biradar Principal Scientist	CIFE, Mumbai-400061	<a href="mailto:rsbiradar@cife.edu.in">rsbiradar@cife.edu.in</a>	09819744687
13.	Dr. MD Behera Rural development Center, IIT Kharagpur	I.I.T. Kharagpur W.B.-721302	<a href="mailto:mdbehera@hijli.iitkgp.ernet.in">mdbehera@hijli.iitkgp.ernet.in</a>	03222-281802
14.	Dr. Piyush Jani Asth Professor	Directorate of extension MPUAT, Ydapur	Janipp2001@yahoo.com	9929033639
15.	Prof. K. Kannan	Vice chancellor Nagaland university School of Agriculture Science & RD Medzihema- 797106	vicechancellornu@yahoo.com	9856070746
16.	Prof. G. Singh Vicechancellor	Mahatma Gandhi Chitrakoot Gramodaya Vishwavidyalaya, Chitrakoot, Satna District M.P.	drgsingh@rediffmail.com	9425391198
17.	Dr. C.R. Hazra Vice Chancellor	Indira Gandhi Agricultural University, Raipur Chhattisgarh.	<a href="mailto:hazraer@yahoo.co.in">hazraer@yahoo.co.in</a>	09425207484
18.	Prof. N.G.Shah CTARA, IIT- Bombay	Indian Institute Of Technology, Powai Mumbai-400076	<a href="mailto:nshah@iitb.ac.in">nshah@iitb.ac.in</a>	022-25767874
19.	Dr. Baldeo singh Joint Director(Ext)	Joint Director (Ext) IARE New Delhi 12	Baldeo_singh31@rediffnet.com	011-25733387
20.	Dr. R.S. Chhiccar Head, CATAT	IAEI-New Delhi	Raj-ghillar@yahoo.com	25842905
21.	Dr. Balraj Singh Principal Scientist CPCT	CPCT IARI,MD,2	Drbsingh2000@yahoo.com	25842481
22.	Dr.R.K.Doharey	Assic.Prof(Ext) NDVAT, Kumarganj Faizabad, UP	rkdoharey@yahoo.co.in	9415067544
23.	Dr. A.J. Mishra	Lecturer in Sociology IIT roorkee	anindfhg@iitr.ernet.in	01332-285355
24.	Prof.Abdul Wahab	Charman Deptt. of Eco A.M.U. Aligarh	Awahab_econ@yahoo.co.in	09719666026

25.	Sampson David	AIU House New Delhi	Sampsondavid2004@rediff mail.com	9811407542
26.	Dr. J.P. Sharma	Principal Scientist ATIC, IARI Posia, New Delhi	Jps_cat@iari.res.in	9811721815
27.	Dr. O.S. Parmar	Director Extension Guru Angad Dev veterinary and Animal. Science University- Ludhiana	Parmaros1948@yahoo.co m	98143-30319
28.	Prof. S.P.Singh	Dept of HSS IIT Roorkee	singhfhs@iitr.ernet.in	9837714002
29.	Profersor. Murtaza Khan	Deau..Frenltz of Sainl Science A.M.U.		9897809549
30.	Rahul Nilhcantal Research Associate	IIM Ahmedabad Vastrapur ABAD 380015 (Gujarat)	nilakantusc@gmail.com	09725052733
31.	Dr. Bijay Laxmi	AIU House New Delhi		9811407342
32.	Dr. N.Nagaraj Professor	Dept.of.Agri.Econ. UAS, Bangalore-65	nagarajnareppa@yahoo.co m	9880004823 080-23637002
33.	Dr. D.K. Nauriyal Professor	Dept.of.HSS IIT Roorkee	dknarfhs@iitr.ernet.in	9897179179
34.	Prof. S.K. Datta	Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad	sdnth@iimabd.ernet.in	09427358845
35.	Dr. B.N. Singh	Banaras Hindu University Varanasi	Bnsigh2004@yahoo.co.in	
36.	R.K. Malik	HAU, Hisar	doe@haw.ernet.in	09416380245