

**Experience sharing Workshop with select DPCs of Phase-I NREGA  
Districts, 9<sup>th</sup> April, 2007  
Record of Key Issues discussed**

**Context for the Workshop**

The context of the meeting and key issues to be discussed were delineated by Secretary (RD). The meeting was intended to listen to the problems arising at the field level and share the solutions formulated by some DPCs. The feedback would also enable formulation of the Plan of Action for new financial year. The Programme would also be calibrated based on the feedback received from the DPCs. Finally, the feedback would serve as a resource input into the Orientation Workshop on April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2007 of the new 113 NREGA districts.

**2. Critical issues for discussion**

(i) NREGA contributed a paradigm shift in the wage employment programme. NREGA is not supply driven but demand driven, it is pull based rather than push based. This has not been sufficiently appreciated and understood at the State level. Earlier programmes were allocation based. Wage employment was a bye-product of an allocation based strategy. In NREGA wage seekers register themselves, demand work and then works are opened. At present under NREGA works are opened without demand. This has to change. The second distinction is that this programme is backed by a

Statute, which provides 100 days of employment guarantee. The third distinction is in the nature of works that can be taken up. Labour intensive works from the permissible list of works can be taken up. Further, the primary focus is on wage or employment provision, while the secondary goal is of asset creation. But concerns have been raised on the quality of asset creation.

(ii) There is need for detailed and clear planning. Perspective Plan preparation is of immense importance. There are legacy guidelines from NFFWP. There is a lack of precision in these Guidelines. The key question is : How can a system be worked out through which there is a creation of assets even while employment is the primary focus? Another area of concern is the involvement of Gram Panchayats and Gram Sabhas. This is a people's programme, but tends to be driven by DPC/PO and Panchayat Secretary. In the absence of standard processes and lack of trained functionaries, the programme has been adversely affected.

(iii) The importance of understanding the role of various stakeholders also has to be realized. The primary stakeholder is the wage seeker. While planning for works, twin dimensions should be seen, what kind of works does the wage seeker want to work on, whether the choice of work will improve his/her quality of life and economic condition and also the kind of

works those are good for the area development – as determined by Gram Sabha. Other PRIs and elected representatives also need to understand their roles in realizing the objectives of Act.

(iv) Another area of concern was transparency and accountability. Social audit has not been rigorously undertaken, as this has been a new activity. The capacity to conduct social audit has also been a concern. In this respect proactive disclosure of information needs to be emphasized.

(v) The rigor needed to implement or comply with the National Guidelines is often not there. For instance, Muster roll maintenance is an area of concern.

(vi) The scale and quality of monitoring and implementation is not uniform in all the States due to differences in infrastructure and available human resource. Performance of States has been affected because of this.

(vii) The Programme requires a lot of record maintenance. Reporting requirements are also huge. This can be handled by augmenting personnel, use of IT and by training and orientation of various stakeholders. Timely updating and quality of information on the web is also a concern. The periodicity and frequency of meetings to monitor the programme, deployment of personnel, specially engineering staff and the Gram Panchayat level staff also merits attention.

### 3. Discussion on critical issues

#### (i) **Generating awareness among stakeholders through Information, Education, Communication, IEC.**

The DPCs present from the States shared their experiences.

**Dy. Commissioner Pakur:** Panchayat Vikas Utsav for one day at each panchayat were organized with pamphlets, CD and Folk forms. Pamphlets were made in 5 languages. Health camps were also held in Gram Panchayats along with IEC camps. The State CM visited these IEC camps and briefed the people about NREGA.

**CEO, Bilaspur, Chattisgarh :** Following activities were taken up: Publicity awareness campaigns, painting of buildings government and private, hoardings on Highways. Kala Jathas and campaigning through SHGs were used. A path was made in which all the Jatha members were used. PRIs were used for local communication. Pamphlets with pictures rather than written material were used. Huge cement boards stating NREGA provisions were put on main roads and highways.

**DPC, Bhandara, Maharashtra ::** Special Gram Sabha was held on January 26, 2007 in which the important aspects of NREGA were highlighted. Wage rates need to be revised as incentive and motivation for households to work.

The constraints in Maharashtra have been largely due to the legacy of Maharashtra EGS of more than 35 years. A critical communication gap was that people felt they would be paid Unemployment Allowance without working or that the wage rate of Rs. 60/- would be given irrespective of output. The quality of communication software was also important. Mistakes that have been made could also be spelt out.

**DPC, Dungarpur, Rajasthan :** Gram Panchayats were divided among senior officers. Each officer was allotted 3-4 Panchayats. 5 Member team was sent to each GP to familiarize people about NREGA. Local tribal features were used. Tribals were requested to come for registration through yellow rice. Tribal leaders were also oriented towards NREGA.

**PO Kudumbshri, Wayanad, Kerala :** SHGs in Kudumbshri were used for spreading awareness about NREGA.

**DPC, Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh:** Regular training and mobilization of SHGs has been a strength of AP. Women SHGs were used to reach out to all the households. Information wall - every GP has a wall, on which the details of Programme and its progress is printed. PRIs that did well were honoured.

**DPC Ranchi, Jharkhand :** Since there were no GPs in Jharkhand, District Administration used AIR for broadcasting. NREGA helpline was

developed, mobile phone number of DPC and other block officials were printed and were available for villages from 6-8 PM. The BDOs were also doing the same. Continuous education centres run by volunteers were used. D.O. letters were written to the village heads by the DPC, that made them feel that they were in direct touch with the DPC. The Gram Sabha is held on every 26<sup>th</sup> and the first agenda on it is social audit. Wages were paid on the basis of task rates. Work time motion studies are required as there is a problem pertaining to lead and lift. Secretary(RD) suggested that the DPC may make an analysis of how many villages were connected by mobile phone and whether the changes in the strategy of communication has resulted in increase of number of workers, registration and employment demand.

**DPC, Gumla, Jharkhand:** Use of direct access to DPC through a telephone was very effective. Where there was no access to mobile phone, land lines and STD booths were used for grievance redressal.

NGOs have also been used to create awareness.

**DPC, West Garo Hills, Meghalaya:** Village employment councils have been formed exclusively for NREGA. Partnership with NGOs, was used. Their representatives and officials went from village to village.

**DPC Sirsa, Haryana** : Key Institutional forum was Gram Sabha. Meetings were held in cluster of 15 villages, by officials. The district level team comprised Development Officers of the District/Junior Engineers. The team was trained. A detailed schedule of Gram Sabha was drawn up. The officers spent the night in the village as the wage seeker would be present in the village at that time. The officers spent half an hour to explain the Programme. They also undertook the following activities :

- Assessed the works that the Village Community wanted
- Identified eligible persons as Gram Rozgar Sevak and drew up a panel of Gram Rozgar Sevaks
- Enabled formation of Village Monitoring Committee
- Demarcated a few works
- Enabled registration

**DPC, Dhalai, Tripura** : Strong and vibrant Panchayati Raj system helped in communication. Administrative camps were held in different areas.

**DPC Gajapati, Orissa** : Pallasabha were held. NGOs were used to assess the impact of communication.

## ii) Training

Critical issues in training were stated by Secretary(RD) :

- Different stakeholders

- Role clarity
- Training design
- Managing large scale training without compromise on quality
- Duration of training

Awareness generation was different from training. Training was structured and specific and prepared the functionaries for their jobs.

**DPC Bhandara, Maharashtra:** Messages in training should be precise and clear. Sizing exercise should be done. Trainings should be reiterative and material constantly updated.

**Dungarpur, Rajasthan.** Training of mates was critical especially on works and measurement as he is incharge of the work site.

The experience of the districts is summarized below :

What are the resource for training, who prepares them, where is the training was conducted ?

**CEO Bilaspur:** Picture based material was used for training. Trainings for Village, Block and District level functionaries have been conducted separately. Since the teacher played an important role in tribal areas, he/she was also trained.

**DPC Pakur :** Seven different modules of training were developed, like a module for engineers, one for village headman, political parties

representatives are also called, one for data entry and MIS, one for Water and soil conservation works. For each different component master trainers were prepared. A pool of master trainers were prepared at the district and block level. Seven different contents have been also prepared. Master trainers were trained in the District level workshop. After every two months, the training rounds are repeated.

**Meghalaya:** Each block has around 200 villages. Four specific training modules have been devised for NREGA.

**Wayanad, Kerala :** Kerala Institute of Local Administration plays an important role in training. Master trainers are trained by SIRD.

**Gujarat :** SIRD is the nodal agency. Training of functionaries was held at the Block level.

**DPC Chittoor :** Different modules of training were developed for PRIs, DRDA, SHGs, Gram Sabha, Technical officials and Community Resource Persons. Handbooks and manuals were developed for these different groups of stakeholders and this proved effective in explaining to each stakeholder their key roles and responsibilities.

**Secretary (RD)** summarized the key issues of training.

- There has to be a two way osmosis process of training. Training of trainers at the district level and training at the village level.

- Gram Rozgar Sewaks is pivotal to the training programme.
- Critical areas of training are as follows: Preparing estimates and measurements and formulation of good quality projects.
- Computing skills.
- Accounts, for which a standardized software can be developed.
- Training of officials and PRIs together, at least for some sessions, can be organized as in the case of Karnataka.

iii) **Enabling Statutory Processes of application for registration and employment that emerged during discussion were:**

- Registration should be on the basis of demand by wage seekers but instead registration were being done automatically in some States for almost all local rural households.
- There was a tendency to refuse to registration on the basis of oral application
- Registration was sometime limited only families living below BPL.
- There was after inordinate delay in registration.
- Secretary (RD) emphasized that registration is not automatic. Wage seekers should know how and when to register.

- Employment in almost all cases was not provided on demand, but simply allocated to a job card holder, after opening a work.

**Response of districts was as follows:**

**Maharashtra:** Inordinate delay in registration and issue of job card was due to unavailability of stationery and lack of man power.

**West Bengal:** Applications were verified on the basis of electoral roll, verification was of adult and local resident.

- Tamil Nadu: Each individual was given an identity slip
- Rajasthan: BPL list was used for verification.

It was suggested that once the operations are computerized then issuing individual identity slips can be considered, but the unique job card number would remain the same. Electoral Photo Identity Card number should be indicated on the job card. Application forms for employment can be printed with perforated counterfoil of dated receipts, so that any employment demand – whether written or oral can be documented in a format and dated receipt be issued immediately. †

**c) Planning for works**

Problems pertaining to the planning and opening of works that the discussion highlighted were as follows:

- Works tend to be opened without a precedent demand. The procedure for works approval varied among States. Multiple levels of approval also causes delay. Perspective Plans need to be revised. The SGRY pattern of fixed allocation of work to PRIs at District/Intermediate/Gram Panchayat levels persists in some States

Secretary (RD) made the following suggestions in order to resolve of the problems that are being faced in the course of planning and opening works. No work should start unless demand was received. Initially an annual Shelf of Projects should be prepared by taking into account the number of BPL families in the Gram Panchayat. Since there is a statutory commitment to provide 100 days' of employment to each household the initial and immediate shelf of projects should absorb twice the number of BPL families multiplied by 100 persondays so that adequate ceiling is available. There will be roughly 3-4 works at Gram Panchayat level. Administrative Sanction and Technical Sanction of the Shelf of Projects should be given in advance. This Shelf of Projects should be kept ready in advance before demand for employment. Exact geographic location of the project site has to be captured. Panchayats are to implement at least 50% of works in terms of cost. Para 2.2.3 of Guidelines creates confusion in terms of implementation of NREGA. Panchayats can execute upto 100% of the works. Formal

clarification to this effect would be issued. Already Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan are doing more than 90% through Gram Panchayats. States may proceed as Unique Project Code on this basis. Pre-project and post-project condition of asset should be given with map. Priority of works is to be determined by Gram Sabha. Minimizing the number of levels that accord approval, needs consideration.

d) **Measurement of works and payment:**

AP, Bihar, TN, Gujarat have done Work Time Motion Studies and revised their SOR according to them so that the revised norms of work out turn will enable payment of minimum wages to workers after seven hours of work, as per the stipulation of the Act.

Rajasthan had formed small groups of about four workers so that the distribution of wages for work done is more equitable.

e) **Deployment of Gram Rozgar Sewak**

**Maharashtra:** Gram Rozgar Sewak appointment has been done according to minute planning. It is done contractually, minimum age is 35 years. Payment is on the basis of 0.75% of the estimated works and women and backward sections get priority

**Rajasthan:** Gram Rozgar Sewak is selected through a placement agency. He has to be computer literate as well. Out of Rs. 2000 payment to be paid

to the Gram Rozgar Sewak, the placement agency has to be paid an amount that leaves only Rs. 1500/- to be paid to the Gram Rozgar Sewak.

**Secretary (RD)** made the following observations:

Rozgar sewak was the most critical functionary. He should be from the same village. Therefore, his appointment cannot be made in a centralized manner. Gram Rozgar Sewak should be appointed by the Gram Panchayat

e) **Fund management:**

**Maharashtra :** Money is released to the GP directly from the districts.

**Kerala :** DPCs give money directly to the GP on the basis of new works and money required to finish ongoing works.

AS & FA stated that this is a Programme linked to demand for employment and mandays generated. This is not an allocation based scheme. Programme Officer is the most critical official in NREGA implementation setup. He should not be kept out of loop. As SGRY has been subsumed in NREGA a UC has been designed for some information. The guarantee provided under NREGA is not unconditional guarantee, but is based on demand, following some processes, setting up some kind of infrastructure, preparation of some plans with provision for social audit. The demand for funds submitted to the Ministry by the districts should be based on the absorption levels.

f) **Wage payment through Bank and Post Offices:**

States have different models of wage payment.

**Andhra Pradesh:** Entire payment is made through Post Offices. 2% Service Charge is paid to the Post Office. State Government is agreeable to pay this from their account.

**Maharashtra:** Wage payment is in cash directly to workers registrations with Post Offices.

**Dungarpur:** Payment is in cash. Payment through banks and Post Offices has also started. Part payment is made on a weekly basis.

**In Bihar, Chattisgarh, Assam, Haryana and Gujarat:** Wage payment is made directly to workers. In Sirsa, Haryana 83 villages, where Bank branch exists, payments through Banks.

**Pakur:** Payment is through Post Offices and Banks. No service charge is paid to Post Offices.

**Karnataka :** Entire wages are paid through Banks.

Secretary (RD) informed that the issue of Service Charge to Post Offices is being addressed by the Ministry.

**g) Insurance for NREGA workers:**

**Gumla** has introduced like Janshree Bima Yojna for NREGA workers.

Presentations on NREGA implementation were made by Bilaspur, Pakur, Wayanad, Chittoor and Meghalaya.

iv) Summary of Best Practices and problems discussed constitute significant resource inputs and will be shared with the new NREGA districts in their Orientation

List of Participants of Workshop on NREGA with District Programme Coordinators  
on 9th-10th April 2007 at Vigyan Bhawan  
9th April 2007

1	Aradhana Patnaik,DC,Gumla,Jharkhand
2	A. K. Pandey, Collector, Chindwara, M. P.
3	K. M. Ahmed, CEO, Wardha, Maharashtra
4	D. D. Agarwal, CEO, Katni, M. P.
5	Gudur Bheemsim, PD, DRDA, Chikmagalur, Karnataka
6	M. Chandershekhar, DC, Chikmagalur, Karnataka
7	K. K. Khare, DM, Annupur, M. P.
8	L. S. Poosan, CEO, Annupur, M. P.
9	P. H. Srivastava, CEO, Reeve, M. P.
10	Madhu Rajpal, Collector, Dungarpur, Rajasthan
11	C. M. Pandey, P. O., Bilaspur, Chattisgarh
12	Sandip Chopda, APO, Bilaspur, Chattisgarh
13	Sudhir Panchbhai, CEO, Mahabansund, Chattisgarh
14	Onit Panyamb, DC, Dapong, Arunachal Prd.
15	Vishwas Tayagi, OSD Ministry of RD, Arunachal Pradesh
16	S. K. Singh, Head NIRD, Hyderabad
17	Lallanji, DDC, Kishanganj, Bihar
18	Swami D. V., CEO, Gajapati, Orissa
19	S. Alok, Dy. Commissioner, NREGA, Raipur, Chattisgarh
20	Siddharath Pardesi, Add, DPC, Bilaspur, Chattisgarh
21	Indra Mallo Jain, District Collector, Bhandara, Maharashtra
22	P. R. Sompura, DDO, Banaskantha, Gujrat
23	Roopwant Singh, DDO & DPC, Sabarkantha, Gujrat
24	V. Umashankar, DC & DPC, Sirsa, Haryana
25	T. Pame, DC/DPC, Tamillong, Manipur
26	G. Radha, PO/DPC, Nagapattinam, TN
27	Motsuthua Latha, PD, Wokha, Nagaland
28	Hillo Simp, PD, Kohima, Nagaland
29	M. C. Sahu, DC, Bongaigon, Assam
30	Narendra Sharma, S. A. Hosiarpur, ZP, Punjab
31	Marsoba, AO/DPO, Mon, Nagaland
32	L. Murial, PD, Chittoor, AP
33	Mukesh Bagauh, CDO/Addl. DPC, Chamoli, Uttarakhand
34	Mandakni Devashar UNDP, 55, India Habitat Center, New Delhi
35	F. Lalhira, PD, Saiha DRDA, Mizoram
36	C. Rakpa, DPC, Lawngtlai, Mizoram
37	L. K. Purushottam, MIS Officer/DWMA, Chittoor, AP
38	Bhanwar Lal, DDG, NIRD, Hyderabad
39	C. V. Joy, PD, Wayanad, Kerala
40	P. Sampatkumar, DC/DCF, West Garo Hills, Meghalaya
41	Shankar Prasad Paul, Nodal Officer, Purulia, WB
42	KISHOR AMBULY, DM, DHALAI, Tripura
43	KAMAL KISHORE, DC, RANCHI, Jharkhand
44	ARADHANA PATNAIK, DC, GUMLA, Jharkhand
45	THUNGCHAMO, APO, WOKKA, NAGALAND
46	POOJA SEGHAL PURWAR, DC, PAKUR, Jharkhand
47	RADHEY SHYAM COLLECTOR NANDED, Maharashtra
48	TSHEWANG GYACHHO, DPC, NORTH SIKKIM
49	S. K. SHILAL, ADDL. Secy. RD, SIKKIM
50	D. T. BHUTIA, DDO/DPC, SOUTH SIKKIM
51	GULSHAN BAMRA, COLL. BALAGHAT, MP