

**ROLE OF PANCHAYAT RAJ INSTITUTIONS IN EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION**

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**MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME**  
**ROLE OF PANCHAYAT RAJ INSTITUTIONS IN EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION**

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**Introduction:**

Since Independence in 1947, India has become a power on the global stage. It is the world's largest democracy and the 10<sup>th</sup> largest industrial power, with solid, consistent economic growth. Of the total population of India, nearly three quarters live in rural areas characterized by their grinding poverty and social injustice. The future of rural India depends on overcoming enormous challenges in health, education, nutrition, population and environment.

Indian democracy saw a radical transformation in December 1992 through the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments, which provided a constitutional mandate to the basic principles of local self-governance. These amendments have had a far reaching impact on the nature of Indian State, governance and peoples' participation in politics. This envisaged a full-fledged decentralization of democratic governance in the country for the first time and empowered the local bodies with enormous administrative and development powers. Different states in India, however, approached this new reform of decentralization differently with varying views.

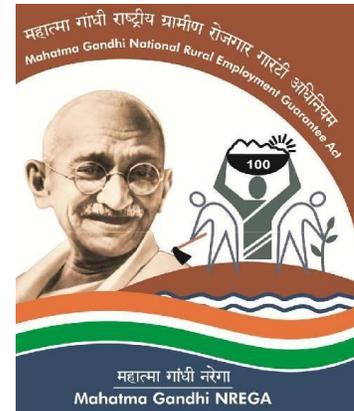
The 73rd Amendment to the Indian Constitution is a milestone in the evolution of Panchayats in India which carved out the third tier of the Indian Federal (Political) System. While the Panchayats have been the backbone of Indian villages to achieve economic development and social justice in rural areas, the constitutional amendment provided great emphasis to people's participation in all the spheres of development of the villages through Ward Sabha and Grama Sabha.

Labor is the key factor for the growth of any economy and is of particular importance in developing economies as these economies primarily depend on human force for development. Therefore, the growth by way of gainful employment of the labor is essential for the sustainable development. India is no exception to this

phenomenon. To this effect, the then UPA Government reinforced by the renowned economist Dr. J. Drèze, a Belgian created economist, at the Delhi University of Business economics, has been a significant impact on this venture. A wide range of individual's motions and organizations definitely campaigned for this act. So, Political background of MGNREGA is influenced by UPA government.

### **What is MGNREGA?**

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 (NREGA) guarantees 100 days of wage employment in a financial year to any rural household whose adult members are willing to participate in unskilled manual work. The Act is an important step towards realization of the right to work and aims at arresting out-migration of rural households in search of employment simultaneously enhancing people's livelihood on a sustained basis, by developing the economic and social infrastructure in rural areas.



The scheme is designed at improving the income protection of the people in rural areas by ensuring hundred days of salary occupation in a financial year, to a rural family whose associates offer to do inexperienced guide work. The purpose of the Act is to make resilient resources and enhance the income source platform of the rural inadequate. The choice of works recommended in the Act deal with causes of serious hardship such as famine. The high deforestation, complete land problem, in order to course of action of occupation creation is on a maintainable basis works recommended in the Act details causes of serious hardship like famine, deforestation and land break down completely, in order to the modus operandi of occupation creation is managed on a maintainable base. Therefore, by observing the main aims and objectives of this government scheme, people can easily understand the benefits of the program.

## **What does the Act say??**

An Act to provide for the enhancement of livelihood security of the households in rural areas of the country by providing at least one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in every financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

This Act may be called the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005.

It extends to the whole of India except the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

Starting from 200 districts on 2 February 2006, the NREGA covered all the districts of India from 1 April 2008. The statute is hailed by the government as "the largest and most ambitious social security and public works programme in the world". In its World Development Report 2014, the World Bank termed it a "stellar example of rural development". The MGNREGA was initiated with the objective of "enhancing livelihood security in rural areas by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year, to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work". Another aim of MGNREGA is to create durable assets (such as roads, canals, ponds, wells). Employment is to be provided within 5 km of an applicant's residence, and minimum wages are to be paid. If work is not provided within 15 days of applying, applicants are entitled to an unemployment allowance. Thus, employment under MGNREGA is a legal entitlement.

MGNREGA is to be implemented mainly by Grama Panchayats (GPs). The involvement of contractors is banned. Labour-intensive tasks like creating infrastructure for water harvesting, drought relief and flood control are preferred. Apart from providing economic security and creating rural assets, NREGA can help in protecting the environment, empowering rural women, reducing rural-urban migration and fostering social equity, among others.

The law provides many safeguards to promote its effective management and implementation. The act explicitly mentions the principles and agencies for

implementation, list of allowed works, financing pattern, monitoring and evaluation, and most importantly the detailed measures to ensure transparency and accountability.

The Act aims to follow the Directive Principles of State Policy enunciated in Part IV of the Constitution of India. The law by providing a 'right to work' is consistent with Article 41 that directs the State to secure to all citizens the right to work. The statute also seeks to protect the environment through rural works which is consistent with Article 48A that directs the State to protect the environment.

### **Provisions under MGNREGA**

- Adult associates of a non-urban family, willing to do inexperienced guide perform, are needed to make signing up in composing or by mouth to the regional Gram Panchayat
- The Gram Panchayat after due confirmation will offer a Job Cards. The Job Cards will keep the picture of all mature associates of the family willing to perform under NREGA and is free.
- The Job Cards must be released within 15 times of program.
- A Job Cards owner may publish an itemized program for career to the Gram Panchayat, revealing the time and length for which perform is desired. The lowest times of career have to be at least 14.
- The Gram Panchayat will problem an old invoice of the published program for career, against which the assurance of offering career within 15 times operates
- Employment will be given within 15 times of program for perform, if it is not then everyday lack of career allocation as per the Act, has to be compensated responsibility of transaction of lack of career allocation is of the Declares.
- Work should normally be offered within 5 km distance of the town. In situation perform is offered beyond 5 km, additional income of 10% are due to fulfill additional transport and residing expenses
- Wages are to be compensated according to the Minimum Wages Act of 1948 for farming laborers in the State, unless the Center is aware a salary quantity which

will not be less than about INR60 (around US\$1.09) per day. Equivalent income will be offered to both men and women.

- The unique edition of the Act was accepted with only Rs 155/ day as the lowest salary that needs to be compensated under NREGA scheme. However, many states in Indian already have salary rules with lowest income set at more than INR100 (about US\$1.81) per day. NREGA's lowest salary has since been modified to around INR130 (about US\$2.35) per day.
- Wages are to be compensated according to item quantity or everyday quantity. Payment of income has to be done on every week base and not beyond a couple weeks in any situation.
- At least one-third recipients shall be females who have authorized and asked for perform under the program.
- Work's main features such as crèche, water, resources have to be provided
- The display of venture for a town will be suggested by the local gram sabha as well as accepted by the particular zilla panchayat.
- Minimum 50% of performs will be utilized local Gram Panchayats for execution
- Permissible performs primarily consist of water and ground preservation, a forestation and area growth works
- A 60:40 around salary and content rate has to be operated. No contractor's organization and technical apparatus is allowed
- The Govt. of India holds the 100 % salary price of inexperienced guide labor and 75 % of the content price such as the income of experienced and partial experienced workers
- Social Review has to be done by local Gram Sabha
- Grievance redresser systems have to be put in place for guaranteeing a sensitive performance process

- All information and information about the Scheme should be available for community scrutiny

One of the objectives of NREGA was to improve the bargaining power of labour who often faced exploitative market conditions. Several studies have found that agricultural wages have increased significantly, especially for women since the inception of the scheme. This indicates that overall wage levels have increased due to the act, however, further research highlights that the key benefit of the scheme lies in the reduction of wage volatility. This highlights that NREGA may be an effective insurance scheme. Ongoing research efforts try to evaluate the overall welfare effects of the scheme; a particular focus has been to understand whether the scheme has reduced migration into urban centers for casual work.

Another important aspect of NREGA is the potential for women's empowerment by providing them opportunities for paid work. One third of all employment is reserved for women, there is a provision for equal wages to men and women, provision for child care facilities at the worksite - these are three important provisions for women in the Act.

Following the Act, the current Government under the leadership of Shri. Nitin Gadkari the then Rural Development Minister proposed to limit MGNREGA programmes within tribal and poor areas. He also proposed to change the labour : material ratio from 60:40 to 51:49. As per the new proposal the programme will be implemented in 2,500 backward blocks coming under Intensive Participatory Planning Exercise.

This paper tries to look at the functioning of MGNREGA and the participation of Panchayat Raj Institutions with special reference to the participation of women - bringing in equity across all sections of the population.

### **MGNREGA in four southern states - what does the Act perceive?**

Wages under MGNREGA varies from state to state and are revised by indexing them to the consumer price index for agricultural labourers (CPIAL) for a particular state. Given below is the wages across 4 southern states of India:

Sl. No	State	Wages
1	Kerala	240
2	Karnataka	224
3	Tamil Nadu	203
4	Andhra Pradesh	194

### Results across the four Southern States<sup>1</sup>:

The four southern states - Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu, despite their smaller populations, have also provided employment to a much larger number of households, generated more person-days of work and took up a greater number of works.

During the first 10 months of 2015-16, till 29 January, 2016, the four southern states received MGNREGA central releases totaling Rs.10,397.10 crore, which is 31.01 percent of the total all-India central releases of Rs.33,528.09 crore, and their total expenditure was Rs.9,723.94 crore, which was 27.77 percent of the all-India expenditure of Rs.35,011.06 crore. Similarly, the four southern states provided employment to 11,017,358 households (29.10 per cent of the all India total of 37,849,382 households); generated 48.61 crore person-days; and took up works totaling 2,967,803.

The four northern states - Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh - (BIMARU States), during the same period of 2015-16, received central releases totaling Rs.7,918.34 crore (23.61 of the all-India central releases) and their total expenditure was Rs.8,683.09 crore (24.80 percent of the all-India total). These four states provided employment to 10134581 households (26.77 percent of the all-India total); generated 37.99 crore person-days; and took up works totaling 2,750,923.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.nrega.nic.in](http://www.nrega.nic.in)

### **Utilization of funds:**

Sixty percent of the works undertaken under the scheme have to relate to agriculture and enhancing agricultural productivity. The works relate to rural connectivity, flood control, water conservation and harvesting, minor irrigation, drought-proofing, renovation of traditional water bodies, fisheries and rural sanitation, among others.

### **MGNREGA in Karnataka:**

MGNREGA - is being implemented in Karnataka since 2006. Now it covers all the 30 districts of the state. The objective is to ensure livelihood and food security by providing unskilled work to people through creation of sustainable assets. We strive to implement the scheme in the most transparent and effective way. The Karnataka Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (KREGS) (Under Section 4 of National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 specify the objective as under:

**Enhance the livelihood security of the people in rural areas by generating wage employment. The choice of works suggested addresses causes of chronic poverty like drought, deforestation and soil erosion. The primary objective of the Scheme is to provide livelihood security to the households in rural areas of the notified districts by providing not less than 100 (one hundred) days of guaranteed wage employment in every financial year to every household, whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled and manual work. Creation of durable assets and strengthening the livelihood resource base of rural poor.**

The Government of Karnataka formulated the Scheme called Karnataka Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme to provide not less than one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household in rural areas covered under the Scheme and whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work subject to the conditions stipulated in the Act and notified in the Scheme.

### **FUNDING PATTERN:**

The MGNREGA is implemented as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme on a cost-sharing basis between the Centre and the States as determined by the Act.

- Central Government -100% of wages for unskilled manual work, 75% of material cost of the schemes including payment of wages to skilled and semi-skilled workers.
- State Government- 25% of material including payment of wages to skilled and semi-skilled workers cost. 100% of unemployment allowance by state government

It is mandatory to maintain the wage material ratio of 60:40 under the scheme. Wage portion is fully borne by Government of India. With regard to material portion, Central and State Government are to be shared in the ratio of 75:25 respectively & overall funding to be shared between GoI and GoK is nearly in the ratio of 90 :10

### **Stakeholders of MGNREGA:**

While the implementation of the scheme primarily lies with the job card holders, the Act as such provides for key stakeholders of the Act as under:

1. Wage seekers
2. Gram Sabha (GS)
3. Three-tier Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), especially the Gram Panchayat (GP)
4. Programme Officer at the Block level
5. District Programme Coordinator (DPC)
6. State Government
7. Department of Rural Development and Panchayat Raj (RDPR)
8. Civil Society Organisations
9. Other stakeholders [viz. line departments, convergence departments, Self-Help Groups (SHGs), etc.]

### **OMBUDSMAN:**

While giving focus on rightful implementation of the scheme, it was found that there was a necessity for effective monitoring of the scheme to enable that it reaches '*the unreached*'. In keeping with the principles of transparency and accountability, the State Government will establish the office of Ombudsman in all districts for expeditious redressal of grievances regarding implementation of MGNREG Scheme. Depending on

requirement, the States may initially appoint one Ombudsman for two districts and watch the workload.

**Salient features of Ombudsman System:**

The Central Government constitutes State Level Committee for selection and appointment of Ombudsman/Deputy Ombudsman under the Chairmanship of the Chief Secretary, Government of Karnataka.

The Selection Committee shall prepare a panel of suitable persons who shall be considered for appointment as Ombudsman. The panel of names suggested will be put up in the public domain and comments/suggestions will be invited.

No person who is a member of a political party shall be considered for appointment as Ombudsman.

**Qualification-** Persons of eminent standing and impeccable integrity up to 65 years of age with at least twenty years of experience in public administration, law, academics, social work or management will be eligible.

**Tenure-** Two years extendable by one year on satisfactory performance or upto 65 years of age, whichever is earlier. There shall be no reappointment.

**Autonomy-** Ombudsman will be independent of State and Central Government.

**Location of Office** - At District Headquarters, there will be not more than three Ombudsman in every District. Technical and administrative support will be provided by the District Rural Development Agency or any other body specified by the State Government, in this behalf in whose premises the office of ombudsman shall be located.

**Key roles of Ombudsman:**

- Receive complaints from Mahatma Gandhi NREGA workers and others on specified matters, consider such complaints and facilitate their disposal in accordance with law.
- Require the Mahatma Gandhi NREGA authority complained against to provide any information or furnish certified copies of any document relating to the complaint.

- Issue direction for conducting spot investigation, lodge FIRs against the erring parties and initiate proceedings suo moto.
- Engage experts for inquiring into the technical aspects relating to complaint.
- Direct redressal, disciplinary and punitive actions.
- Report findings to the Chief Secretary of the State and the Secretary, of the Department dealing with Mahatma Gandhi NREGA for appropriate legal action against erring persons.
- Ombudsman will be responsible for the conduct of business in his office.
- Ombudsman will be responsible to make all Mahatma Gandhi NREGA related documents public and ensure that they are easily accessible. The Ombudsman shall apply the norms relating to third parties as specified in the RTI Act 2005. Before placing the information in the public domain, the concerned party should be given an opportunity to be heard.
- Ombudsman will send monthly and annual report and list of awards passed to Chief Secretary (CS) and Secretary in charge of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA. In the reports, Ombudsman will highlight action to be taken against erring Mahatma Gandhi NREGA functionaries.
- Summary report of cases disposed by Ombudsman will be reported to the State Employment Guarantee Council by the State Secretary dealing with Mahatma Gandhi NREGA in the meetings and will also form part of the Annual Report which will be placed in the Legislative Assembly.
- Ombudsman will compile a list of all orders passed in a financial year in respect of every MGNREGA Authority complained against and report it to the Chief Secretary of the State and the Secretary in charge of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA. Text of Orders shall also be put on the MGNREGA website.

#### **SOCIAL AUDIT:**

Social audit is a process of reviewing official records and determining whether state reported expenditures reflect the actual monies spent on the ground. Social Audit is an effective means for ensuring transparency, participation, consultation and

accountability under MGNREGA. The process of Social Audit combines people's participation and monitoring with the requirements of the audit discipline.

Rule 4 of Audit of Schemes Rules, 2011 stipulates that each State Government shall identify or establish an independent organization, "Social Audit Unit" (SAU) to facilitate conduct of the Social Audit of MGNREGS works. This Social Audit Unit may be either a Society or a Directorate, independent of the implementing departments/agencies. The Director/chief executive officer of the society/directorate shall be a person who has worked in the social sector for the rights of the people for at least 15 years. The work may also be outsourced to an outside agency preferably an NGO which is not involved in the planning and implementation of the Scheme but possesses adequate experience of having worked in rights and entitlement based programmes.

#### **RULES OF SOCIAL AUDIT:**

The State Government shall facilitate conduct of social audit of the works taken up under the Act in every Gram Panchayat at least once in six months in the manner prescribed under these rules. A summary of findings of such social audits conducted during a financial year shall be submitted by the State Government to the Comptroller and Auditor General of India. The State Government shall identify or establish, under the Act, an independent organization (hereinafter referred to as Social Audit Unit) to facilitate conduct of social audit by Gram Sabhas. The Social Audit Unit shall be responsible for the following, namely:—

- a. Build capacities of Gram Sabhas for conducting social audit; and towards this purpose, identify, train and deploy suitable resource persons at village, block, district and state level, drawing from primary stakeholders and other civil society organizations having knowledge and experience of working for the rights of the people.
- b. Prepare social audit reporting formats, resource material, guidelines and manuals for the social audit process;
- c. Create awareness amongst the labourers about their rights and entitlements under the Act;

- d. Facilitate verification of records with primary stakeholders and work sites;
- e. Facilitate smooth conduct of social audit Gram Sabhas for reading out and finalising decisions after due discussions;
- f. Host the social audit reports including action taken reports in the public domain.

#### **RIGHT TO INFORMATION:**

While giving emphasis to transparency in the Act, the Right to Information Act shall be followed both in letter and in spirit in all matters relating to Mahatma Gandhi NREGA. Section 4 of the Act, which concerns proactive disclosure of information, must be strictly complied with at all levels.

The information as available in the Management Information System (MIS) i.e. NREGASoft shall be painted on the walls of buildings in the Gram Panchayat. The information painted will include number of days of work provided and payments made to every Job Card holder in a year, list of works sanctioned, expenditure on labour and material component, quantity of various material items and rates at which these were procured. This system (Janata Information System) will ensure access of MIS information to villagers who cannot access the internet. Requests for copies of Mahatma Gandhi NREGS-related documents submitted under Mahatma Gandhi NREGA shall be complied with within three days. No information shall be withheld by invoking Clause 8 of the RTI Act. All Mahatma Gandhi NREGA-related information is in the public domain.

#### **ROLE OF GRAMA PANCHAYATS:**

M.S. Swaminathan described NREGA as the world's largest ecological security programme, which can successfully strengthen the ecological foundations for sustainable agriculture (The Hindu, June 1, 2009). The NREGA is thus a truly historic opportunity for dramatic socioeconomic transformation in rural India. (Shah, 2004).

The implementation of the NREGA assigns a considerable organisational responsibility at the level of the Gram Panchayat. The role of the Gram Panchayat in the registration of beneficiaries is significant. In order to authenticate the registration, the Panchayat verifies whether the applicant resides in that village and is an adult. The unit of registration is the household. After verification, the Gram Panchayat issues a Job Card to the household. The gram panchayats will have the power to take up any work in their jurisdiction, on the basis of the

decision arrived at in the gram sabhas. It will be up to the gram panchayats to decide which work will be taken up, irrespective of the priority that the MGNREGA schedule might list.

Under MGNREGA, Gram Panchayats have three broadly categorized responsibilities: planning, implementation and monitoring at the village level. Specifically, they need to plan the work to be conducted in the village, issue job cards, allocate employment, and execute 50 per cent of the work. All these activities require consultations with the gram sabha. With this high degree of involvement and delegation of authority to gram panchayats, MGNREGS acknowledges gram panchayats' responsibility for development and governance:

**Planning:** Gram panchayats have a pivotal role in the planning of projects under MGNREGS. First, they have to prepare a development plan comprising the projects recommended by the gram sabha. Once the plans are finalized, gram panchayats have to submit them to block-level officials who can either accept the plans or request for revision.

**Implementation:** MGNREGS mandates that the gram panchayat must carry out a minimum of 50 percent of the budgeted work. First, gram panchayats have to maintain a proper record of all MGNREGS works implemented. They have to maintain 9 specific types of records, including a muster roll receipt register, job card application register and employment register.

**Monitoring:** Transparency and accountability are integral to MGNREGS. The scheme mandates that the gram sabha should monitor all the work at the village level as well as the provision of employment to every villager that asks for it. Monitoring mechanisms like the formation of Vigilance and Monitoring Committee (VMC) and Social Audits are instituted in the scheme to promote transparency, participation, consultation and consent, accountability and redressal. In this way, the scheme institutionalizes public vigilance—an essential component of democracy.

#### **WORKS PERMISSIBLE TO BE UNDERTAKEN:**

Paragraph 1B of amended Schedule I provides that the focus of the Scheme shall be on the following works and the order of priority shall be determined by each Gram Panchayat (GP in meetings of the Gram Sabha(GS) and the Ward Sabha. The works included in para 1B are:

1. water conservation and water harvesting including contour trenches, contour bunds, boulder checks, gabion structures, underground dykes, earthen dams, stop dams and spring shed development;

2. drought proofing including afforestation and tree plantation;
3. irrigation canals including micro and minor irrigation works;
4. provision of irrigation facility, dug out farm pond, horticulture, plantation, farm bunding and land development on land owned by households specified in paragraph 1C of Schedule I;
5. renovation of traditional water bodies including desilting of tanks;
6. land development;
7. flood control and protection works including drainage in water logged areas including deepening and repairing of flood channels, chaur renovation, construction of storm water drains for coastal protection;
8. rural connectivity to provide all weather access, including culverts and roads within a village, wherever necessary;
9. construction of Bharat Nirman Rajiv Gandhi Sewa Kendra as Knowledge Resource Centre at the Block level and as Gram Panchayat Bhawan at the Gram Panchayat level;
10. agriculture related works, such as, NADEP composting, vermi-composting, liquid bio-manures;
11. livestock related works, such as, poultry shelter, goat shelter, construction of pucca floor, urine tank and fodder trough for cattleshed, azolla as cattle-feed supplement;
12. fisheries related works, such as, fisheries in seasonal water bodies on public land;
13. works in coastal areas, such as, fish drying yards, belt vegetation;
14. rural drinking water related works, such as, soak pits, recharge pits;
15. rural sanitation related works, such as, individual household latrines, school toilet units, anganwadi toilets, solid and liquid waste management;
16. Construction of anganwadi centres.
17. construction of playfields
18. Any other work which may be notified by the Central Government in consultation with the State Government.

## **WHAT IS IN GROUND: THE GROUND REALITIES:**

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is the most powerful intervention of the Government to transform rural livelihoods in India. NREGA fosters conditions for inclusive growth ranging from basic wage security and recharging rural economy to a transformative empowerment process of democracy. A number of literature based on empirical studies are available on the role of MGNREGA in achieving livelihood security and promoting sustainable development. These studies depict that MGNREGA programme has shown mixed results so far in whole rural India. Few studies have actually focused on an assessment of the impact of the MGNREGA in terms of the realization of its development potential. IIM-(Bangalore), study relating to '*NREGS Surveys in Anantpur, Gulbarga, Adilabad and Raichur*' (2008) was conducted across four districts of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka to appraise the MGNREGA processes and procedures. The report emphasised the need for capacity building, awareness generation and strengthening of MGNREGA demand process. The results also indicated that the programme appears to be better implemented in the districts of Andhra Pradesh as compared to Karnataka. Agricultural Development and Rural Transformation Centre and Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bangalore conducted a study on '*Impact of NREGA on wage rate, food security and rural urban migration in Karnataka*'. Hyderabad Karnataka Centre for Advanced Learning (HKCAL), conducted a study on '*Scientific Field Appraisal Study on MGNREGA in Bidar District of Karnataka*', (2010). The study looks at the different aspects of the programme implementation in a scientific and systematic way. The study notes that through the implementation of the MGNREGA, the GP is able to position itself as the benefactor of the poor and the downtrodden.

MGNREGA has been in force for a decade now and it is imperative to know the presumptions and assumptions of the enforcement of the Act in its effectivity. This triggered the need to study the efficacy of MGNREGA in Karnataka. For the purpose of the study, Bidar district was chosen. Considering the district as one of the most backward district in Karnataka and with higher level of migration to other cities, towns and states, the study focused on knowing the role of Panchayat Raj Institutes in effective implementation of MGNREGA. Bidar district in Karnataka is one of the most backward districts in the State and occupies a low position in economic as well as human

development. The position of the district in human development is 21st among the 27 districts in the state. The district is a drought prone area, which also adds to the vulnerability of the poor and the minorities.

**Convergence:**

There are basically three modes of Convergence: a. Labour work under MGNREGS, Material component under departmental programmes b. Each work divided into two parts-one part under MGNREGS, another under departmental programmes c. Entire work under MGNREGS implemented by Line Department, either before or after the departmental work (Pre / Post Convergence).

**Converged Schemes:**

Sl. No.	Scheme	Department
1	Central / State Finance Commission Grants	Concerned line department and GPs
2	National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM)	RD&PR Department
3	Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP)	Watershed Department
4	Total Sanitation Programme (TSC)	Nirmal Bharath Abhiyan (SBM)
5	Backward Region Grant Fund (BRGF)	RD&PR Department
6	Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY)	Agriculture Department
7	RRR (Ministry of Water Resources)	Minor Irrigation Department
8	National Afforestation Programme (NAP)	Forest Department
9	Pradhan Mantri Gramin Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)	RD&PR Department

10	National Horticulture Mission (NHM)	Horticulture Department
11	Schemes funded from State budget	Concerned line department and GPs

In the year 2014-15, Shri. Siddaramaiah, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Karnataka on 26th October launched 15 RD&PR programmes, out of which 10 programmes are being implemented under MGNREGA. With a purpose to take the programmes of the scheme to the people, 50,000 sets of Kannada and 1000 sets of English booklets on the below mentioned subjects were released and made available to all the Gram Panchayaths and field level functionaries. Details of the works and mode of implementation have been covered in local, easily graspable language.

- i. Farmers' Land Development
- ii. Toilet to every home
- iii. Our Village - Our Water
- iv. Our Village Tank (12,000 tanks targeted to be rejuvenated)
- v. Sheep / Cattle Sheds
- vi. Developing Burial Grounds (5000 targeted @ one per GP)
- vii. Our Land- Our Way
- viii. Play Grounds (5000 no, @ one per GP)
- ix. Farmers' Threshing Yard
- x. Rajiv Gandhi Seva Kendra

Agriculture is a basic sector of Bidar District economy. 85.59 percent of net area sown is under dry land agriculture where only one crop is grown in a year. During the lean season, labourers migrate to nearby urban areas in Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh in search of employment. This was catered to for a large extent by the said Act.

#### **NATURAL RESOURCE REGENERATION:**

The works undertaken through MGNREGA give priority to activities primarily water harvesting, groundwater recharge and so on. Almost 80% works relate to soil and water conservation.

## **INDIVIDUAL ASSETS FOR VULNERABLE SECTIONS**

Para (iv) of Schedule I permits work on individual land “provision of irrigation facility to land owned by households belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes or to land of beneficiaries of land reforms or that of the beneficiaries under the Indira Awas Yojana of the Government of India”. NREGS thus provides an opportunity for the households from SC/ST/ BPL families, beneficiaries of land reforms /IAY and of SF/ MF to take up land development, irrigation facility, and horticulture plantation on their land to mitigate drought, enhance agricultural productivity and generate steady income.

In the last three years, most of the NREGA works were carried out on common land i.e. water conservation and water harvesting; drought proofing (including afforestation & plantation); irrigation canals including minor irrigation works; renovation of traditional water bodies including desilting of tanks; land development; flood control and protection works including drainage in water logged areas; and rural connectivity to provide all weather access.

Over the years there is increase in individual based works but concentrated in few states only. Number of field studies carried out in the field also show that there is increase in production on the individual land treated under NREGA. Therefore, there is need for the guidelines to facilitate the works on individual lands to have some standard norms with flexibility to cater the local needs, so that the positive impact of such works is maximized.

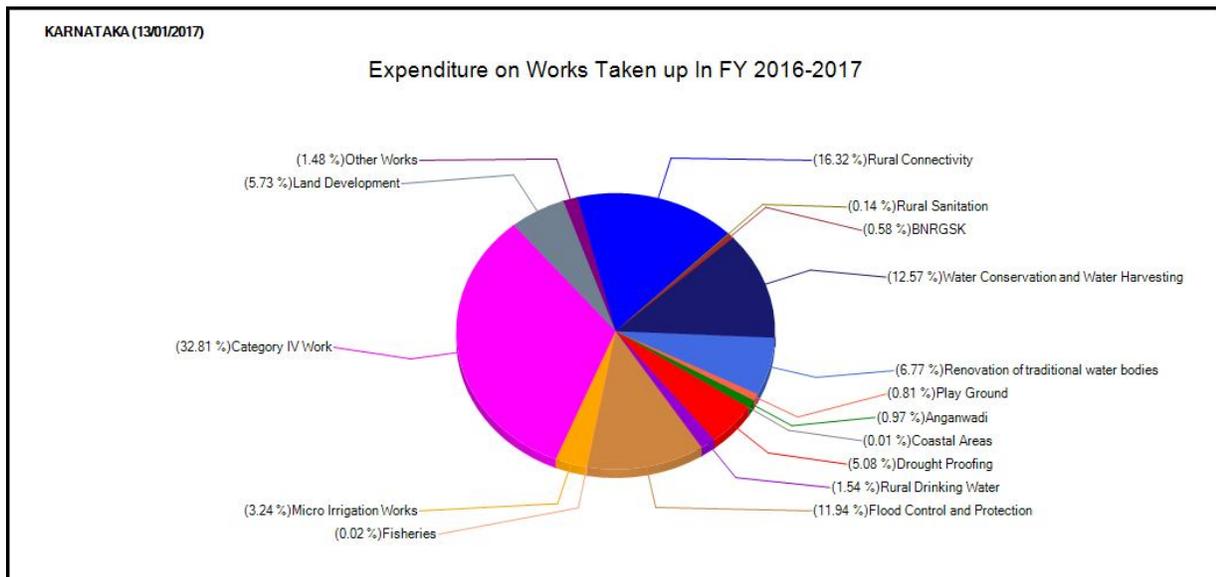
## **COMMON INFRASTRUCTURE FOR NRLM COMPLIANT SELF HELP GROUPS**

- i. Works for promoting agricultural productivity by creating durable infrastructure required for bio-fertilizers and post-harvest facilities including pucca storage facilities for agricultural produce; and
- ii. Common work-sheds for livelihood activities of self-help groups.

## **RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE:**

- i. Rural sanitation such as individual toilets, toilets in schools and anganawadi to achieve ODF status

- ii. Providing all-weather rural road connectivity to unconnected villages and to connect identified rural production centres to the existing pucca road network
- iii. Construction of play fields;
- iv. Works for improving disaster preparedness or restoration of roads or restoration of other essential public infrastructure providing drainage in water logged areas, deepening and repairing of flood channels, chaur renovation, construction of storm water drains for coastal protection;
- v. Construction of buildings for Gram Panchayats cyclone shelters, Anganwadi centres, village haats and crematoria at the village or block level.
- vi. Construction of Food Grain Storage Structures for implementing the provisions of The National Food Security Act 2013 (2)
- vii. Production of building material required for construction works under the Act as a part of the estimate of such construction works.
- viii. Maintenance of rural public assets created under the Act; and
- ix. Any other work which may be notified by the Central Government in consultation with the State Government in this regard



### MGNREGA Statistics (Bidar):

Employment provided to households:	0.33153 Lakh
Persondays [in Lakh]:	
Total:	14.89
SCs:	3.35 [22.48%]
STs:	1.86 [12.48%]
Women:	6.85 [46.02%]
Others:	9.69 [65.04%]
Total works taken up:	16431
Works completed:	1335
Works in progress :	15096

### THE STUDY:

The basic premise was to look at:

- The MGNREGA in total.
- The role played by Grama Panchayat in Programme Planning and Implementation of MGNREGA
- Participation of the community in development works
- Planning, Implementation, transparency and accountability

### COVERAGE:

For the purpose of the study, 20 Grama Panchayats in 5 taluks of Bidar district - Aurad, Basava Kalyan, Bhalki, Bidar and Humnabad were chosen. The Grama Panchayats were chosen in a manner with a gender perspective - 2 GPs with both President and Vice President Posts held by women members; 9 women headed and 9 male headed Grama Panchayats. Of the 60 Grama Panchayats selected amongst the five taluks of Bidar district, the following were women headed Grama Panchayats:

Sl. No.	Taluk	Grama Panchayat	President	Vice President
1	Bidar	Amalapura	Prakash	Haseena Begum
2	Basavakalyan	Dhannur (K)	Hemavathi Nagashetty Biradar	Nagamma
3	Basavakalyan	Sastapur	Brahmareddy Veerareddy	Utthama Bai
4	Basavakalyan	Gortha (B)	Roopa Shivalinga	Anuradha Rajkumar

5	Basavakalyan	Partapur	Nagesha Machendra	Meena Bai Bhima Rao
6	Basavakalyan	Rajeswar	Chinamma Basavaraj	Deepak Kumar
7	Basavakalyan	Kitta	Vitobha Gurunath	Jyothi Rajakumar
8	Basavakalyan	Narayanapura	Mahadevi Raghunath	Raghavendra Reddy
9	Basavakalyan	Tadola	Revanasiddappa Biradar	Sharanamma Manik
10	Humnabad	Talamadagi	Sharanabasappa	Goribi Ibrahim
11	Humnabad	Nandagaon	Mahantesh Arjun Kundana	Khairon Bi Mehboobsaab
12	Humnabad	Hudugi	Shakuntala Shamrao	Prabhu Sidrama
13	Humnabad	Dubalagundi	Anilkumar Sidramappa	Rukkamma Nagappa
14	Aurad	Santapura	Padmavathi Raghunath	Vidyasagar Manikrao
15	Aurad	Nagamarapalli	Sujatha Peerappa	Ramareddy Basareddy
16	Aurad	Mudhol (B)	Shobhavathi Shivanand	Baburao Shivabasappa
17	Aurad	Belkuni (C)	Haseena Be Shadul Shah	Bandeppa Shivaram
18	Aurad	Bhandarkumtha	Umakanth Venkatareddy	Prayoga Bai Maruthi
19	Aurad	Chikli (J)	Shobha Prabakara Rao	Kiran Chandrakanth
20	Bhalki	Dhannur (H)	Nabasahida Firdauskhan	Gurunath Shanmukhappa

State: KARNATAKA District: BIDAR

Employment Generated During The financial Year 2016-2017

1	2	3				4	6	7	9					10	11	12
		a	b	c	d				a	b	c	d	e			
Sl. No	Block	Cumulative No. of HH issued jobcards (Till the reporting month)				Cumulative No. of HH demanded employment (Till the reporting month)	Cumulative No. of HH provided employment (Till the reporting month)	No. of HH working under NREGA during the reporting month	Cumulative Persondays generate(Till the reporting month)					Cumulative No. of HH completed 100 days (Till the reporting month)	No. of HH which are beneficiary of land reform/IA Y	No. of Disabled beneficiary individuals
		SCs	STs	Others	Total				SCs	STs	Others	Total	Women			
1	<a href="#">Aurad</a>	10710	3373	16874	30957	9070	6153	462	73307	25042	112548	210897	96484	204	97	56
2	<a href="#">Basavakalyan</a>	6581	5092	20735	32408	8582	6269	697	50919	37386	163409	251714	117936	350	127	20
3	<a href="#">Bhalki</a>	4742	1730	17351	23823	10450	8252	303	81027	21248	207775	310050	149011	478	37	30
4	<a href="#">Bidar</a>	5926	4089	16551	26566	9942	7584	526	48575	25451	115458	189484	100419	86	216	33
5	<a href="#">Humnabad</a>	7962	4695	11641	24298	9161	7264	627	65590	35424	104852	205866	107765	183	48	24
<b>Total</b>		<b>35921</b>	<b>18979</b>	<b>83152</b>	<b>138052</b>	<b>47205</b>	<b>35522</b>	<b>2615</b>	<b>319418</b>	<b>144551</b>	<b>704042</b>	<b>1168011</b>	<b>571615</b>	<b>1301</b>	<b>525</b>	<b>163</b>

**STUDY FINDINGS:**

Sl. No.	Taluk	Grama Panchayat	Participation/Employment			Families completing 100 days of employment		
			SC	ST	Others	SC	ST	Others
1	Bidar	Amalapura	41	4	200	0	0	2
2	Basavakalyan	Dhannur (K)	31	5	68	6	0	9
3	Basavakalyan	Sastapur	39	43	132	0	0	6
4	Basavakalyan	Gortha (B)	7	3	46	0	0	2
5	Basavakalyan	Partapur	48	45	107	0	1	5
6	Basavakalyan	Rajeswar	48	8	330	0	0	16
7	Basavakalyan	Kitta	38	39	38	0	0	1
8	Basavakalyan	Narayanapura	6	23	147	2	10	34
9	Basavakalyan	Tadola	34	21	124	0	1	7
10	Humnabad	Talamadagi	53	29	58	0	0	0
11	Humnabad	Nandagaon	40	38	52	0	0	0

12	Humnabad	Hudugi	25	12	29	1	4	5
13	Humnabad	Dubalagundi	261	71	259	1	0	5
14	Aurad	Santapura	73	30	153	0	1	5
15	Aurad	Nagamarapalli	65	27	201	0	0	2
16	Aurad	Mudhol (B)	106	20	113	1	0	1
17	Aurad	Belkuni (C)	37	3	72	1	0	0
18	Aurad	Bhandarkumtha	18	14	82	1	1	7
19	Aurad	Chikli (J)	52	10	51	5	1	11
20	Bhalki	Dhannur (H)	205	7	126	33	0	1

- Imambee, Member, Nagamarapalli has initiated MGNRGA Work at Manoor (K) Total 105 labors have worked under MGNREGA.
- Vandana, Member, Partapura GP took the initiative to construct 80 toilets through MGNREGA for SC and ST families in Nilkantwadi village.
- Being one of the major drought prone areas, Bidar has been more priority to pitting and plantation. Nurseries are being grown in and around schools, tank beds and so on.
- Suvarna has ensured proper potable drinking water facilities to 75 households by laying individual water taps costing Rs. 1 lakh. She also helped the community through construction of two community toilets at a cost of Rs. 1 lakh each.



make her panchayat and her taluk a model one. She says: ***'SUGRAMA<sup>2</sup> has given me an opportunity, ray of hope and I shall continue to strive hard for the development of my GP and Taluk'***.

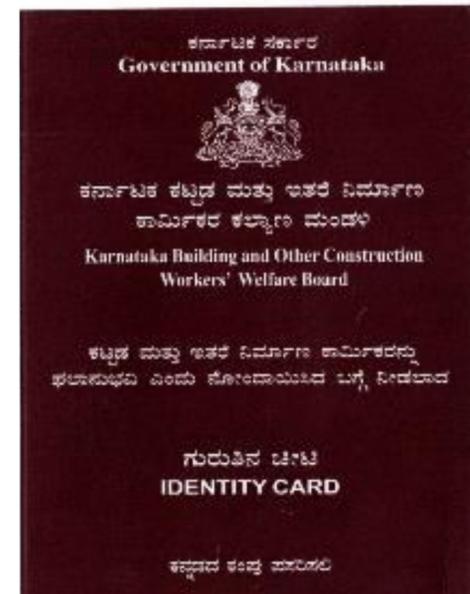
Ma Bai had filed a petition in her own GP to seek information on the funds received by the GP from the Government. But PDO and President of GP refused to give the details and they frightened her saying that they will boycott her if she raises her voice against it. They complained with her husband about her act. Uttama's husband told her to take back the RTI application from PDO. During the follow-up workshop this EWR shared the incident with the other members. Basavakalyan Taluk federation President Hemavathi and Netty Biradar, Dhannur (K) Grama Panchayat called the PDO and spoke to him why he is not giving any information to the EWR? She blamed the PDO about his attitude towards the EWR and she frightened the PDO that she will take this issue to the higher officials. If they boycott the EWR they will protest in front of the PDO against both the President and PDO. PDO suddenly felt guilty about his act and requested the women not to take any such kind of agitation against him. Today she is recognized in the community and respected by all and all.

**Ma Ni (C) Grama Panchayat of Aurad Taluk** Haseena Be Shadul Shah EWR took initiative to start EWR work in her village. In the initial stage she had to face many problems. The GP was not responding to her queries (though she being a President) or Labors. With the support of other EWRs, Haseena DECIDED TO CONTACT MEDIA and submitted a complaint to the District court. The officials responded and the work has started.

- **Dubalgundi EWR Rukkamma Vice President Humnabad Taluk** stopped using JCB and motivated Labors and 148 New Job cards were issued.
- SUGRAMA is working as a pressure Group to start MGNREG, Orientation was done to the laborers on MGNREGA; Letters have been submitted to Taluk and dist Officers for releasing amount ,New Job cards, Opening accounts and tools charges. The work has been started in many villages 20-40 days work has completed and amount release.
- Work being carried out in Kitta Grama Panchayat. The Vice President Jyothi Rajakumar takes special interest in ensuring that with drought conditions, there are enough water resources for humans and cattles. She has also been instrumental in constructing 25 toilets to BPL families under Swatcha Bharat Mission.
- Members of Talamadagi were successful in getting the approval of 25 houses under Indira Awas Yojana constructed through MGNREGA. While the application was filed in 2015-16, the households were left in lurch. The members took note of it and the work is in progress.
- In Bidar district the works executed are considered to be good to average in quality & implementation and the beneficiaries have also express their satisfaction. With regard to quality of work, 60% of beneficiaries rated the work as good followed by 40% as satisfactory and none indicated their dissatisfaction. However, a few beneficiaries have expressed the need to increase the depth of wells depending on site conditions.



- There was no evidence found during evaluation to suggest any conscious effort done to bring about convergence in the implementation of land based activities, except that in the case of horticulture plantation, where the pitting and planting was taken up under MGNREGA and seedlings and planting material were supplied by the Department of Horticulture. The construction of cattle sheds has been linked with the construction of toilets involving the Gram Panchayats in Dhannur Gram Panchayat of Bhalki taluk.
- There has been no scope for machineries and contractors under MGNREGA in 12 GPs; 963 laborers availed work for 42 days and earned wage Rs. 8,65,444; Community asset created- rejuvenated 7 village tanks, plantation in 10 Ha., 40 Bunds;
- Members have been successful in getting labour cards to the community. 845 laborers availed work 32 man days under NREGA ; work completed worth 56 lakhs
- Under MGNREGA, Nabasahida has constructed 60 toilets in her village. She has been able to ensure proper sanitation facilities.



NREGA statistics based on data from <http://nrega.nic.in/>

- Amount over Rs. 20 crore is unpaid from NREGA wages for 2015-16 and the total NREGA expenditure from 2015-16, which has not been paid yet, is over Rs. 94 crore.
- The average wage per day for 2015-16 was Rs 203.69 and for 2016-17 so far has been Rs 222.88.
- In the financial year 2015-16, the expenditure on wages was a poor 61.38% of the total expenditure on NREGA.

- The average number of employment days per household in 2015-16 was 48.45 although the entitled number of workdays per household had been increased to 150 in the drought-hit districts. Of the households that worked under NREGA in 2015-16, 10.78% were employed for 100 days or more.

### **Participation of women in MGNREGA:**

In terms of opportunities for women, three key features of the programme set it apart. First, the Act prescribes that at least one-third of the workers should be women. Second, the Act mandates equal wages for men and women, a feature it shares with public works programmes that preceded it, for example, the SGRY. This is especially significant in a context where agricultural and non-agricultural wages have differed by gender for similar tasks for ages. Third, since the entitlement of 100 days is at the household level, the allocation of work within the household is left to its members, allowing space for women participation in the programme. Further, the Act provides for facilities such as childcare at worksites to reduce barriers to women's participation. There are others aspects as well that make the programme conducive to the participation of women; for example, work has to be provided within five kilometres of the applicant's residence.

Women play a major role in raising the economic resources for their family but their contribution remains uncounted because of their performance is not considered monetarily (unpaid work). In rural areas, the dominance of male in intra-household decisions has been seen. MGNREGA has significant impact in converting such unpaid work of women into paid work and widen the scope of decision making role of women in household matters. As the wages are paid through formal institutions, the intra-household status of women increases and they can control cash resources because withdrawn can be made only as per her own decision.

MGNREGA has widened the choice set for women by giving them independent income-earning opportunity. If a woman depends on the head of the household then her choice become the subject of household direction. It is reported

that MGNREGA has enhanced the choice of women to use earnings. The women person days out of the total for the year 2016-17 has been recorded at 47.22 while it was 47.12 in 2015-16 and with respect to Bidar district, it numbered 574025.

With a national participation rate of 47 per cent, evidence suggests that women are participating in the Scheme more actively than in other works. Research also indicates that MGNREGA is an important work opportunity for women who would have otherwise remained unemployed or underemployed. Women rely heavily on natural common property resources like water, fuel, etc., and since MGNREGA plays an important role in natural resource regeneration, the Scheme seems to be strengthening livelihood security for women. During the year 2016-17, employment provided to women in the district numbered to 39665 of which - Aurad 7451; Basavakalyan 7630; Bhalki 10383; Bidar 6958 and Humnabad at 7243.

**Limitations:**

- There is lack of transparency in the system. In Programmes like MGNREGA there is misutilisation of funds.
- Some other development programmes in housing, sanitation and water supply are also not implemented effectively.
- It is essential to promote capacity building of the Stakeholders and generate civic consciousness to promote good governance and human development. The water scarcity crisis has been compounded by lack of employment.
- There is no employment to be found in northern Karnataka, which has been an under developed region.
- NREGA work is also not provided although villagers are on the register.
- The daily wage under NREGA is Rs. 234 but the workers receive much lesser wage. The income is insufficient to meet the increased expenditure from having to purchase water. There have been reports of labourers falling ill from consuming unsafe water provided at work sites. The wages are also delayed by months.

- Non-availability of work-site facilities like crèches, is also a huge disincentive for women. Further, certain types of MGNREGA work also limit the participation of women.

### **Recommendations:**

- The NREGA planning can be made an opportunity to plan for enhancing the resource endowment based on people's needs and demands in a given area. These area development plans can be converted into a shelf of projects to be implemented under NREGA.
- Ideas for works should be generated from the people so that the works which are actually beneficial and caters to the aspirations of the community are taken up
- Need to ensure convergence of sub schemes with the resources of other schemes/ department for ensuring sustainable livelihoods of the rural poor.
- More transparency is needed about the sanctioned work and financial involvement therein.
- Improve institutional capacities of Gram Panchayat.
- Investments in private assets should be upscaled so as to create and develop small holders' assets providing them with sustainable incomes
- Sustainability of assets is an area of concern. This is an area that requires close monitoring and study.
- People's participation through *Gram Sabhas* needs to be ensured.

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