
NREGA Significance and Status

Macro-analysis on the status and
implementation of the National Rural
Employment Guarantee Act

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Growth in India

The recent emergence of India as a global power surely illustrates India's achievements. India has shown spectacular macro-economic rates of growth, has a booming stock market, and has climbing foreign investments. Why just recently, the World Investment Report of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) announced India as the second most attractive destination for Foreign Direct Investment.

Conventional measures of a country's well-being, development, and growth is usually measured by a country's GDP. In terms of economic growth, India's 8 percent growth rate of national income for three consecutive years should surely indicate the country's success in development. The GDP is the most predominant means in obtaining valued outcomes in the course of development. However, measuring the well-being of a country in terms of GDP is limited in capturing the wider aspects of well-being and the contingent process of development. The GDP does indeed capture desirable outcomes and therefore shows the extent of opportunities available to people. However, it does not capture the nuances of exactly which people are benefitting from those opportunities and which are not. The GDP does not correctly represent the growth of India as a whole because studies show many **regional imbalances** within the country.

- The National Human Development Report of 2001 indicates that in India, there is a considerable difference in the level of attainments of people on various aspects of well-being, dependent on their place of residence, as well as gender of the person. In general, most indicators show substantially lower levels of attainments for women and for people living in rural areas (1).
- Deaton and Dreze (2002) found strong evidence of divergence in per capita consumption across states in the 1990s. Growth rates of per capita expenditure point to a significant increase in rural-urban inequalities at the all-India level, and also within most individual states (2).
- A pioneering study by the Economic and Political Weekly Research Foundation (EPWRF) found that low-income and poorly-performing major states of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Prissa and Assam, have not only persisted with their low-growth syndrome but have also experienced further deceleration in growth rates in the 1990s (2).

These studies show that there are large imbalances within the country. There is a growing realization over the last decade, however, that not addressing issues of equity has been a central failure of development models. And this neglect has had a decelerating impact on growth itself. Hence---the **paradox** in India's growth.

Poverty in India

These significant imbalances in India point to the problems of substantial poverty in India's most backward regions. The Planning Commission, which is the nodal official agency for poverty estimation, has estimated that 27.5% of the population was living below the poverty line in 2004-2005. The source for this was the 61st round of the National Sample Survey (NSS) and the criterion used was monthly per capita consumption expenditure below Rs. 356.35 for rural areas and Rs. 538.60 for urban areas. This further shows that despite significant overall growth in India, ¼ of the nation's population earns less than the government-specified poverty threshold. Furthermore, poverty is more concentrated in certain regions than others: the World Bank's latest country report, "India: Policies to Reduce Poverty and Accelerate Sustainable Development," released in Feb 2000 notes that there is a wide disparity in poverty across and between Indian states. More than 40% of people in six states (Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Orissa and Bihar) live below the poverty line with the figure in Bihar being as high as 60%. Most of the poor states are bankrupt and cannot spend on social sectors. The report urges that a second wave of reforms would be crucial to boost India's growth and reduce poverty.

Problems plaguing Lack of livelihood for people living in poverty

Why are the poor in India struggling to secure livelihood for themselves? To be able to solve this question, we have to get to the root of the problem. Many studies point to agriculture and infrastructure as the most important issues relevant to rural livelihood.

Agriculture

About 70% of the population, and about 75% of the poor, live in rural areas and most depend on agriculture, states The World Bank. Agriculture provides livelihood to 60% of the rural people and remains vital for food security. In recent years, the slowdown in agricultural growth has become a major cause for concern.

- **Slowdown in Agricultural growth:** In the past decade, India's agricultural growth slowed down to less than 2 percent per year, compared to about 3.5 percent per annum in preceding decade. In the poorest states, such as Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, and Rajasthan, growth in the last decade was below 1 percent per year. The stagnation of agriculture and the high proportion of poor dependent on it are major concerns of India.
- **Low Agricultural Productivity:** With the fixed availability of land and water, higher agricultural growth can only be achieved by increasing productivity through effective use of better technology. Yields of major crops (food grains, oilseeds, other cash crops) in India are lower than in many other countries - for example, rice yields in India are one-third of China's and about half of those in Vietnam and Indonesia. Average yields are well below those attained in crop trials within India itself. Moreover, yields in many of India's poorest states (Bihar, Orissa, Rajasthan, North-east states) are far below those of the richer states (Punjab, Haryana, Tamil Nadu). The virtual collapse of the agricultural extension system in most states limits farmers'

access to better technologies and practices. The effectiveness of the public agricultural research system is undermined by weaknesses in the agricultural research system such as a bias towards irrigated agriculture, weak prioritization and the proliferation of programs, top-down programs, and weak cost effectiveness.

- **Increasing Natural Resource Degradation:** The sustainability of land and water resources is at risk with increasing soil degradation and the overexploitation of groundwater in many areas. In addition to erosion, salinity, and alkalinity, soils are also losing carbon and micronutrients due to unbalanced fertilizer use. Nearly 30 percent of the blocks in the country are presently classified as semi-critical, critical, or overexploited as groundwater use exceeds the rate of groundwater recharge.

Infrastructure

The Asian Development Bank pointed out that studies by ADB and others have established that there is a strong linkage between infrastructure investments, economic growth, and poverty reduction.

The mission's consultations focused on the critical importance of infrastructure development to the success of the strategy in India—particularly in transport, energy, and the rural sector. Such development includes rural roads, rural electrification, and assured irrigation as well as systems of power grids and national highways, which link poor rural producers to their power sources and to their markets in towns, cities, and ports.

It was hypothesized that the development of infrastructure which increases people's access to the external economy and environment (such as roads, communication linkages, rural transport) are likely to play a crucial role in reduction of poverty and access to livelihood options (3).

S. Mahendra Dev states how rural works programs have become important instruments in the strategies for alleviating poverty and hunger in many developing countries (4). This concept has been well recognized for a long time. For example, in India, employment provision has been used extensively as a tool for protecting entitlements for centuries. Since the fourth century B.C., when Kautilya, the ancient Indian political economist wrote his Arthashastra, India's rulers and governments have emphasized public relief works, particularly during famine. Employment in public works later became the main element of strategies for critical periods in India.

The link between Rural Public work Programs and Poverty Alleviation

Raghav Gaiha states that even if land reforms are carried out successfully and the beneficiaries are provided with access to credit and modern agricultural inputs, a large fraction of the rural poor in a densely populated agrarian economy—such as India—is likely to remain unaffected simply because there is not enough surplus land to distribute among them (5). Furthermore, the potential beneficiaries may find that the income from cultivation of small plots falls short of subsistence requirements. Most of those without access to land are forced to rely primarily on agricultural employment with long seasonal spells of inactivity. In such a context, Rural Public Works have a potentially significant role in poverty alleviation. Also, given the difficulties of targeting anti-poverty interventions, there is a strong need for these programs. Specifically, through a work-requirement, these programs are expected to exclude the more affluent sections.

Weaknesses in Rural Public Work Programs

After India's independence, many employment programs have been created during times of need in India. And even though the programs provided temporarily relief, it did not solve India's long term problem of chronic poverty. Some reasons why these programs were not sustainable in the long run are as follows:

- 1.) The jobs created by these programs were casual jobs—temporary in nature—and worked more as supplementary sources of employment in times of crisis.
- 2.) These programs did not provide large scale adequate relief. They have provided some relief to the rural areas, but their reach has been inadequate in view of the magnitude of the unemployment problem in India. These programs created just 44 lakh jobs a year (before the NREGA was implemented)—a small number compared to the gigantic employment demand in rural areas.
- 3.) Despite a stated focus on creation of durable assets at villages for livelihood generation, the programs failed miserably on this account. Going by various evaluations done by government and independent agencies, a large part of the funds spent under these programs was used in more capital-intensive activities such as building roads and

government houses, rather than in labor-intensive activities. Productive assets were never a priority.

There is one program that attempts to solve these previous shortcomings. In the semi-arid region to which the state of Maharashtra in India belongs, agriculture is a highly-seasonal activity. During lean periods, large numbers of rural households eke out a bare subsistence through short spells of mostly unremunerative employment. The aim of the **Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Scheme** (EGS) is to address this problem by providing guaranteed employment at a wage level sufficient to ensure a minimum level of subsistence. Not only does the program aim to solve this short-term problem, but also, the program has a long-term developmental role as well. By reducing risks faced by poor households, and by constructing productive assets and infrastructure, this program is aimed to be sustainable in alleviating the chronic problem of poverty in India.

The important difference between EGS and previous programs is the element of guarantee.



The Significance in the Element of Guarantee

A wage employment program, with a legal guarantee of work, can remove many of the above listed weaknesses. The advantages to a program with a legal guarantee of work are as follows:

- 1.) To start with, a legal guarantee gives a legal right to the poor to demand work and thereby transfers some power to the powerless at the bottom of the ladder.
- 2.) Secondly, under the guarantee, the demand for work (by workers) and not the supply of work (by officials) determines the size of the program. Starvation deaths and related sufferings can be avoided only through such a guarantee.
- 3.) Thirdly, the element of guarantee provides the required flexibility to the program, as the size of the program will expand when the demand for work increases, and vice versa.
- 4.) Fourthly, the guarantee will also result in reduced delays in starting works and in wage payment, as such delays can be challenged in a court of law.
- 5.) Fifthly, it will reduce distress migration, as workers are assured of the availability of work during the lean season, which in turn will improve the access of workers to education, health and other welfare facilities.
- 6.) And lastly, the guarantee of work can ensure asset generation, particularly ecological regeneration and infrastructure development in backward regions, both of which can promote economic growth

Therefore, the element of guarantee will thus ensure that the program reaches the poor, on the one hand, and promotes development of backward/poor regions, on the other (6).

The Maharashtra EGS

The EGS guarantees that every adult who wants a job in rural areas will be given one, provided that the person is willing to do unskilled manual work on a piece-rate basis. The piece-rates are fixed so that an average person working diligently for seven hours a day would earn an amount equal to minimum wage.

The EGS is financed through a combination of taxes which are levied specifically for the scheme, and a matching contribution from the state government. It is implemented via a three-tier set up, comprising committees for planning, direction and coordination at the State, District, and Panchayat Samiti levels.

Conceptually, the EGS seeks to tackle poverty at two levels:

Short Term

- EGS seeks to provide employment especially during bad agricultural years and in a given year during the lean agricultural season. The wage income from EGS is to serve as supplementary income during the period when agricultural work is not available and in this way provide food security and minimize other effects of severe fluctuations in income, thereby mitigating the evil effects of poverty, rather than alleviating it. In this capacity, it works as a relief program.

Long Term

- EGS has the ultimate potential for poverty alleviation by working through building productive assets, mainly rural infrastructure: minor irrigation works, structures for water and soil conservation, forest development, land development works and roads. Well-designed and appropriated located rural infrastructure was expected to alleviate poverty by expanding mainstream job opportunities through
 - Increasing productivity of land and labor,
 - Diversifying agriculture and
 - Creating/expanding agriculture-allied activities

The significant difference in EGS that sets it apart from other employment programs is that it guarantees the right to work. **Hence, the EGS is viewed as a permanent program that is required to ensure a recognized basic human right to work.** The EGS facilitates collective political action by the poor, promoting power and making politicians more responsive to the demands of the poor. Programs before were mostly temporary programs used to deal with an economic and social crisis, rather than as commitment to a job guarantee to fulfill a human right. In that respect, EGS is a model to build on because it always recognized employment as a human right, which in turn, promoted EGS as a necessary and permanent system.

Studies show that EGS is successfully targeted to the poor, even though it is open to all rural adults. It provides about a third of the income of the typical poor family. The EGS reduces employment and underemployment by 10%- 30%, and accounts for about half the number of days of employment of participants.

EGS was highly successful in these following areas:

- Empowerment of women – In Rural Maharashtra, EGS is known as the ‘program of women’. The proportion of women among EGS laborers is close to 45%. EGS is an important source of gainful employment for women, which contributes to their economic independence and social empowerment.
- Economic benefits – EGS contributes to the creation of rural assets such as roads, percolation tanks, etc. that boost agricultural growth and wages. There is also evidence that the EGS raises agricultural wages by strengthening the bargaining power of rural laborers, and protects the rural poor from seasonal fluctuations in employment and income. Furthermore, EGS has helped to contain rural-urban migration, by expanding employment opportunities in rural areas.
- Mobilization of poor – Concentrating large numbers of workers in one place in similar conditions and increasing their interaction has helped to break down social differences. It has been possible to organize agricultural laborers, who are otherwise scattered and disorganized, to fight against oppression and exploitation. If employment is an entitlement then EGS can facilitate effective political action by the poor and can promote the realization of their common interest by making rural politicians more responsive to the demands of the poor.

All of these successes led to the expansion of EGS and consequently, a new law that has been passed in 2005—NREGA—that is heavily based on the foundations and ideas of EGS.

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act

“This Employment Guarantee Act is the most significant legislation of our times in many ways. For the first time, rural communities have been given not just a development program but a regime of rights. This Act will also unlock the potential of the rural poor to contribute to the reconstruction of their environment. The NREGA gives hope to those who had all but lost their hope. It has a clear focus on the poorest of the poor. It seeks to reach out to those in need of livelihood security. The NREGA gives employment, gives income, gives a livelihood, and it gives a chance to live a life of self-respect and dignity.”

- Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh

The NREGA has given a legal instrument in the hands of the poor based on the demand of the worker. The obligation to respond to demand is a legal compulsion. NREGA has a universal reach in all the areas where this law applies. India is the first country to offer a legal guarantee like this on such an unprecedented scale and it hopes to empower the poor to fight poverty, disease, and indebtedness.

Though modeled on the EGS of Maharashtra, there are certain gray areas in NREGA as compared to EGS. And certain points which make NREGA more powerful than EGS.

NREGA	EGS
Purpose	
Alleviate unemployment and poverty	Mitigate drought situation and prevent migration
100 days in a year to a rural family	365 days in a year to each unemployed unskilled person
Meant for rural area	Implemented in Rural area and Class C of municipal wards in semi urban area
Nature of job	
Proportion of jobs— Unskilled (60) and Skilled (40) Special attention that women get work	Proportion of jobs— Unskilled (60) and Skilled (40) Water conservation (51) Roads (49)
Implementing agency	
Jilla Parishad	District Collector and district level administration
Gram Panchayat and NGOs	
Agency responsible for Planning	
Jilla Parishad, Gram Panchayat, Gram Sabha	District and block level administration
Daily wages suggested not less than Rs 60/- (State governments have been asked to fix the wages based on the agricultural wages in the respective areas.)	As per Minimum wages act
Funded by Government Proportion of contribution— Union government—90% State government—10%	Contribution of people 'having' job to those 'not having' through various taxes and levies
Compensation Rs 25,000/-	Compensation Rs 50,000/-
People's participation	
Councils on National and State level Gram Panchayats, Gram Sabhas and NGOs.	Committees at village, block and district levels. Also at legislative assembly
Social Audit	
Social Audit through Gram Sabha.	Social Audit through attendance sheets at Gram Panchayats
Social Audit in presence of the villagers Yearly report to be tabled in the respective state assemblies Consolidated report to be submitted to Parliament every year.	Social Audit in presence of government officers and Sarpanch. Copy to be exhibited at Chavdi (Chaupal).

Analysis of NREGA with respect to EGS

Though both the programs address the issue of poverty, there is a difference in the purpose, nature and process of implementation between EGS and NREGA. To understand the differences lead to a greater understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of NREGA itself.

Funds

- In NREGA, the guarantee of employment to the poor is solely depending upon the guarantee of funds. NREGA is government funded whereas EGS is a contribution or a partnership of people and government. NREGA asks central (90%) and state governments (10%) to provide money. State governments are in no position to bear even 10% of the burden and that could prove to be one of the weak links of the scheme.

Management for Implementation

- In EGS, there is a top-down style of management. The line agencies, which are far removed from the policy center, are likely to make unsystematic choice of assets depending primarily on their employment potential. (It is due to this bias, for example, that more roads continue to be built in water-starved Jawhar in preference to water and soil conservation works).
- The advantage of NREGA is through its bottom-up style of implementation which provides better location and timing of projects based on the identification of specific sections of the poor through careful panchayat based manpower planning.
- However, there is a danger of doorway for a 'third party' in NREGA with vested interests who could possibly make proposals on behalf of villages.

100 days of work versus whole year relevant scheme

- NREGA guarantees 100 days of work for every household. It specifies that the wages will not be less than Rs. 60/- per day with special emphasis on the poorest of poor and women who must form at least one third of the beneficiaries..
- Under EGS, a poor couple is guaranteed 624 days of work in a year (assuming work for 6 days a week for 52 weeks a year). The NREGA guarantees only 100 days for that couple. If the guarantee is for poverty eradication, the limit of 100 days will work to the disadvantage of the rural people. Also, implementing the ceiling of 100 days will not be easy. It will only add to the burden and costs of administration.
- There are large and small families. NREGA would work to the disadvantage of joint families and the 'second' wives of men. This could lead to family quarrels and divisions.

Unemployment Allowance—NREGA offers more

- There is a provision of unemployment allowance for those who cannot be provided work in spite of proper demand being made in both the schemes. The unemployment allowance has been pegged at 1/4th the wage rate (Rs 15/-) for the first 30 days and then ½ of the wage rate (Rs 30/-) for the remaining 70 days.

Possible entry of Machines

- It is mentioned in NREGA that 'As far as practicable, a task funded under the Scheme shall be performed manually.' Does it mean machines 'could' be allowed? In EGS, machines are banned by rule.

Highlights of NREGA Provisions

Details of the Guarantee:

- 1. Eligibility:** Any person who is above the age of 18 and resides in rural areas is entitled to apply for work.
- 2. Entitlement:** Any applicant is entitled to work within 15 days, for as many as he/she has applied, subject to a limit of 100 days per household per year.
- 3. Distance:** Work is to be provided within a radius of 5 kilometers of the applicant's residence if possible, and in any case within the Block. If work is provided beyond 5 kilometers, travel allowances have to be paid.
- 4. Wages:** Workers are entitled to the statutory minimum wage applicable to agricultural laborers in the state, unless and until the Central Government "notifies" a different wage rate. If the Central Government notifies, the wage rate is subject to a minimum of Rs. 60 per day.
- 5. Timely payment:** Workers are to be paid weekly, or in any case not later than a fortnight. Payment of wages is to be made directly to the person concerned in the presence of independent persons of the community on -pre-announced dates.

6. Unemployment allowance: If work is not provided within 15 days, applicants are entitled to an unemployment allowance: one third of the wage rate for the first thirty days, and one half thereafter.

7. Worksite facilities: Laborers are entitled to various facilities at the worksite such as clean drinking water, shade for periods of rest, emergency health care, and child-minding.

Employment guarantee scheme

1. Employment Guarantee Scheme: Each state government has to put in place an “Employment Guarantee Scheme” within six months of the Act coming into force.

2. Permissible works: A list of permissible works is given in Schedule I of the Act. These are concerned mainly with water conservation, minor irrigation, land development, rural roads, etc. However, the Schedule also allows “any other work which may be notified by the Central Government in consultation with the State Government.”

3. Program Officer: The Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme is to be coordinated at the Block level by a “Program Officer”. However, the Act allows any of his/her responsibilities to be delegated to the Gram Panchayats.

4. Implementing agencies: Works are to be executed by “implementing agencies”. These include, first and foremost, the Gram Panchayats (they are supposed to implement half of the works), but implementing agencies may also include other Panchayati Raj Institutions, line departments such as the Public Works Department or Forest Department, and NGOs.

5. Contractors: Private contractors are banned.

6. Decentralized planning: A shelf of projects is to be maintained by the Program Officer, based on proposals from the implementing agencies. Each Gram Panchayat is also supposed to prepare a shelf of works based on the recommendations of the Gram Sabha.

7. Transparency and accountability: The Act includes various provisions for transparency and accountability, such as regular social audits by the Gram Sabhas, mandatory disclosure of muster rolls, public accessibility of all documents, regular updating of job cards, etc.

Other provisions

1. Participation of women: Priority is to be given to women in the allocation of work, “in such a way that at least one-third of the beneficiaries shall be women”.

2. Penalties: The Act states that “whoever contravenes the provisions of this Act shall on conviction be liable to a fine which may extend to one thousand rupees”.

3. State Council: The implementation of the Act is to be monitored by a “State Employment Guarantee Council.”

4. Cost sharing: The Central Government has to pay for labor costs and 75% of the material costs. State governments have to pay the unemployment allowance and 25% of the material costs.

5. Time frame: The Act is to come into force initially in 200 districts, and is to be extended to the whole of rural India within five years of its enactment.

Chapter three: Status of NREGA from an Ecological Perspective

The Importance of Regenerating Ecological Resource

The Foundation for Ecological Security states that the major weaknesses of many of the past poverty alleviation schemes have been the inadequate emphasis on creating community capabilities and durable assets that enhance the livelihood security and augment the natural resources (7). Previous experiences show that for rural poverty to be mitigated or reversed there has to be a greater emphasis on systematic and comprehensive rural area development that focus on the regeneration of the agro-ecological resources.

India is facing a crisis as it generates more poverty than it eradicates. Excessive focus on conventional economic growth as the instrument of poverty alleviation has not worked. Economic growth has not generated employment. FES stresses that one must understand that India’s poverty problem is ecological based. India being a dominantly biomass-based society, ecological degradation triggers poverty here. The solution lies in regenerating the ecology with the people at the helm of the affairs. Healthy lands and ecosystems, when used in sustainable ways, can provide all the wealth that is needed for economically viable and healthy lives. The challenge today lies in empowering and mobilizing people to enable them to escape from their ‘ecological poverty’ in order to create natural wealth, and develop a robust economy.

Ecological assets like land and forests are the key employment sources for rural people in India. Any attempt to create employment must focus on these sectors. The NREGA, with focus on assets creation, attempts to be relevant to local needs. But it does not do enough to address the institutional and management gaps that exist in the programs of soil, water and forest conservation. These are fragile assets. They require management and maintenance. This is where the NREGA must be worked on. The challenge is to use the Act to solve the problem of creating sustainable livelihoods through asset creation—facilitate the use of ecology for economy.

Nature of physical asset creation

Under NREGA there is a list of preferred works that must be undertaken using the employment opportunity. The table below details exact works to be undertaken in each of the preferred works.

Types of work	Nature of work
Water conservation and harvesting	Digging new tanks/ponds, small check dams, others, etc
Drought proofing and plantation	Aforestation and tree plantation, others
Flood control and protection	Drainage in water logged areas, construction and repair of embankment, others
Land development	Plantation, land leveling, others
Micro Irrigation Works	Minor irrigation canals, others
Renovation of Traditional Water Bodies	Desilting tanks/ponds, Desilting of old canals, Desilting of traditional open well, others
Provision of Irrigation facility land owned by	Scheduled caste and schedule tribes, beneficiaries of land reform, others
Rural connectivity	Construction of roads, others
Any other activity approved by ministry of rural development	Other works, etc.

Source: Union ministry of Rural Development

How each work relates to Ecological Regeneration:

Rural connectivity

The main nature of work here is the construction of roads and the main purpose is to connect villages to national highways and thus facilitates connectivity with markets.

Provision of Irrigation facility land

These are facilities provided by the government to the people to make their land more productive. Under NREGA, rural people can use the act to develop their own land to make it productive as well as obtain wages.

Renovation of Traditional Water Bodies

This consists of works such as widening, deepening, desilting, and removal of vegetation, with the purpose of collecting more water in the water bodies. By collecting more water, rural people will be able to have better support systems for agriculture, livestock, etc.

Micro Irrigation Works

Irrigation makes it possible to double the productivity of land by taking a second crop and it has an important protective role in case of monsoon failure, which is common especially in Rajasthan. Such works include developing vermin-compost pits, biogas, etc.

Land Development

Land leveling makes the land more productive by making the land suitable for agriculture. Contour bunding and small trenches can be done to retain moisture in the soil.

Flood control and protection

During floods, water will erode the surface and wash away the topsoil. Work is aimed to protect soil erosion and soil loss.

Drought proofing and plantation

These works have the purpose of removing useless vegetation from particular land.

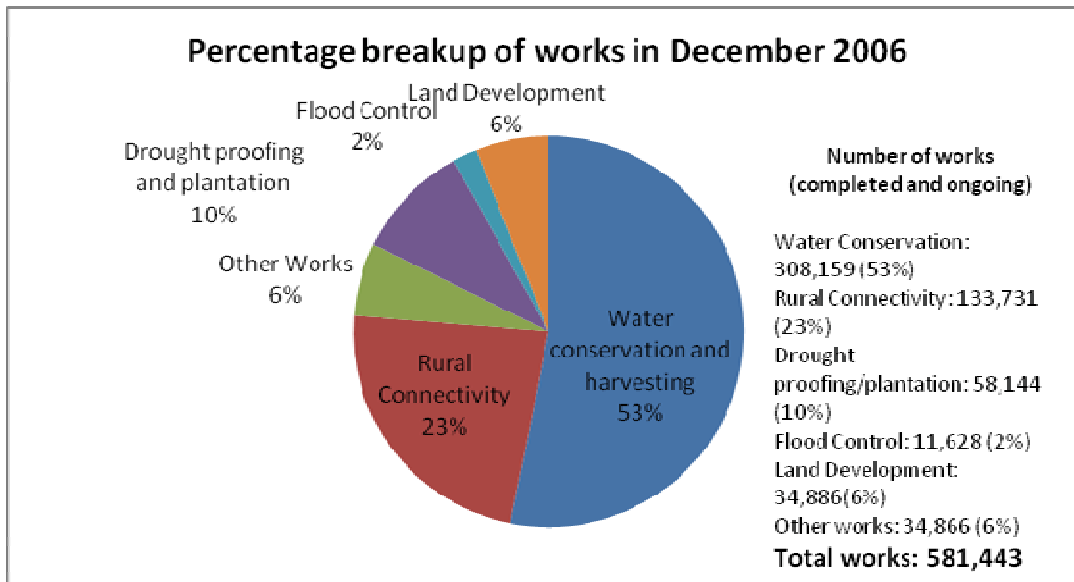
Water harvesting and conservation

These works consist of digging new tanks/ponds, small check dams. Proper planning for retaining water makes sure there is no water loss.

Percentages break up of preferred works to total works –NATIONAL

Though there has been an increase in the number of works under water conservation, in comparison to the total number of works under NREGA, this has come down by around 3.5 percent in the last five months. In other components, there is a marked increase. Flood control and drought proofing remain the two least preferred works.

Water conservation accounts for 53 percent of the total works until December. Seven states have not undertaken any work on water conservation. On the other hand, 10 states account for 91 percent of total water conservation works under NREGA. This points to the fact that focus on water conservation is not uniform across the 27 states implementing NREGA.



Source: Union ministry of rural development, December 2006
Study on Uneven Spread of Water Conservation Works

CSE's NRML unit analyzed data accessed from the ministry of rural development to put in place a trend analysis on what types of works are being given priority under the scheme (August 2006). The NGO states that development effectiveness of the NREGA crucially depends on what types of works it gives priority to. A trend analysis points that NREGA is on the right track to begin with but shows signs of drifting away.

Creation of productive assets is one of the main objectives of NREGA. Productive assets like water tanks will lead to sustainable livelihoods at village level thus reducing poverty. This Act has fixed a set of "preferred works" to be undertaken under its implementation. Water conservation and drought proofing are priority activities besides rural connectivity.

Overall water conservation works remain a priority going by current and completed works under the NREGA. But it seems that not all states are giving equal priority to water conservation. Rather it shows that a handful of states are giving more importance to water conservation while many states seem bypassing the water sector. Ten states are implementing close to 97 percent of all water conservation works being undertaken under the scheme. Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh alone contribute 76 percent of the total water conservation works though they constitute one-fourth of total 200 districts.

Refer to **Table 1** in Annexure

Drought Proofing Lagging

CSE went on to state that drought proofing and plantation sectors seem to be lagging behind despite the fact that 94 out of 200 districts are officially declared drought-prone, and another eight of them are under desert development schemes. CSE's analysis shows that it is in the fourth position based on number of works being undertaken. Only 10 percent of total works under the NREGA are related to drought proofing and plantation. Interestingly, Assam and Karnataka, both facing severe drought this year, have undertaken the least number of drought-proofing works.

Only Madhya Pradesh is implementing around 66 percent of total drought proofing works under the NREGA. Despite severe droughts in Karnataka and Assam, their spending on drought proofing remains negligible.

Refer to **Table 2** in Annexure

Analysis of works at National Level

For my analysis, I am looking at these four states that are in different geographical locations of India:

- **Rajasthan (Western)**
- **Orissa (Eastern)**
- **Kerala (Southern)**
- **Madhya Pradesh (Eastern)**

Refer to **Table 3** in Annexure for a Geographical Map of India

Agro-Ecological Summary of each state(8):

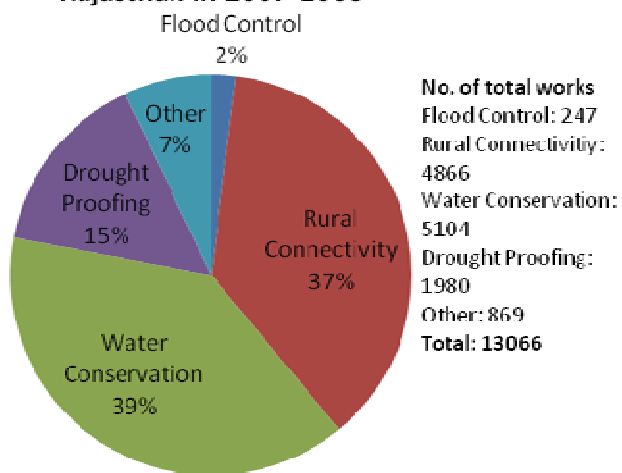
- **Rajasthan (Western)**
 - Hot Arid and Hot Semi Arid Ecoregion. The eastern portion of Rajasthan's climate region is characterized by hot and wet summer and dry winter. The annual precipitation in the region ranges from 500 to 1000 mm. It covers 40 to 50 per cent of the annual PET demand (1600 to 2000 mm) resulting in gross annual water deficit of 800 to 1200 mm. The parts of the district Banswara (Rajasthan) are subject to drought hazard once in three years. The frequent inter drought spells of lead to crop failure and the region thus earmarked as drought-prone area.

- In the western portion of Rajasthan, annual precipitation is less than 400 mm. It is just adequate to cover 15-20 per cent of annual PET demand (1500 and 2000 mm). This results in large deficit of water (1500-1800 mm) throughout the year.
- Constraints
 - The intermittent dry spell periods.
 - Erratic and scanty rainfall leading to high water deficit.
- **Orissa (Eastern)**
 - Hot Subhumid to Semi Arid Ecoregion. Receives 1200 to 1600 mm of rainfall of which 80 percent is received as during June to Sept. The PET varies between 1400 to 1700 mm. The annual deficit of water is 600 to 800 mm.
 - Constraints
 - Imperfect to poor drainage conditions and limiting oxygen availability adversely affect crop yield.
 - The area is prone to cyclone during monsoon and retreating monsoon periods.
- **Kerala (South)**
 - Hot Humid Eco region. The climate is characterized by hot and humid summer and warm winter. The mean annual temperature varies between 25°C and 28°C. The mean annual rainfall exceeds 2000 mm in most of the areas. The water balance shows that rainfall exceeds PET demand (1400-1600 mm) in most of the months, except seasonal deficit of 300 to 400 mm during February to mid-April.
 - Constraints
 - Waterlogging, resulting from imperfect drainage conditions affects crop growth in the coastal plains.
 - Steep slopes, causing runoff, leads to severe soil erosion.
- **Madhya Pradesh (Central)**
 - Hot Semi Arid Eco region. The climate of the region is characterized by hot and wet summer and dry winter. The annual precipitation in the region ranges from 500 to 1000 mm. It covers 40 to 50 per cent of the annual PET demand (1600 to 2000 mm) resulting in gross annual water deficit of 800 to 1200 mm. Jhabua and Dhar (M.P.) are subject to drought hazard once in three years. The frequent inter drought spells lead to crop failure and the region is earmarked as drought-prone area.
 - Constraints
 - The intermittent dry spell periods.

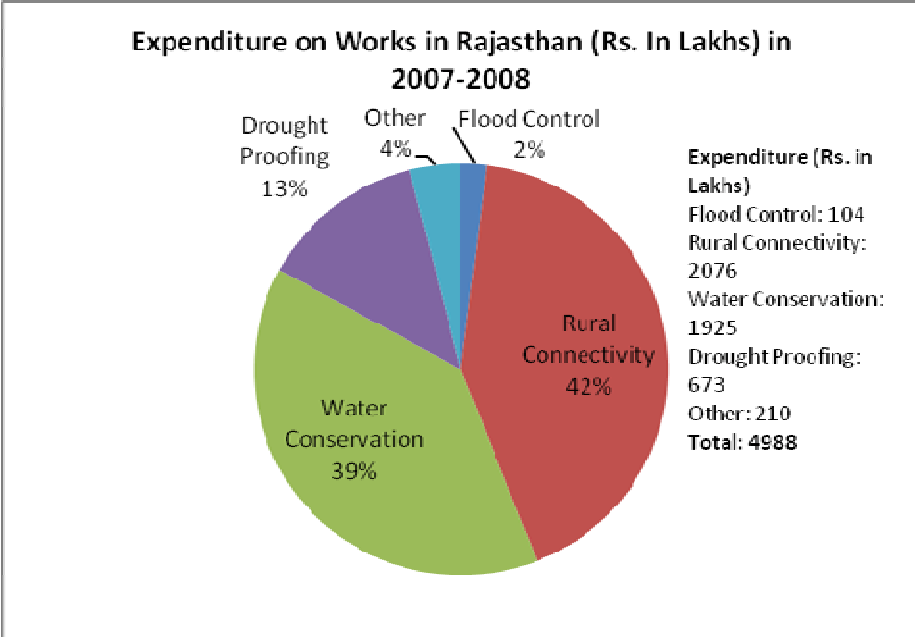
Data Collected on Works Completed and Expenditure on each work in each state:

RAJASTHAN

Number of Total Works (Completed and Ongoing) in Rajasthan in 2007-2008

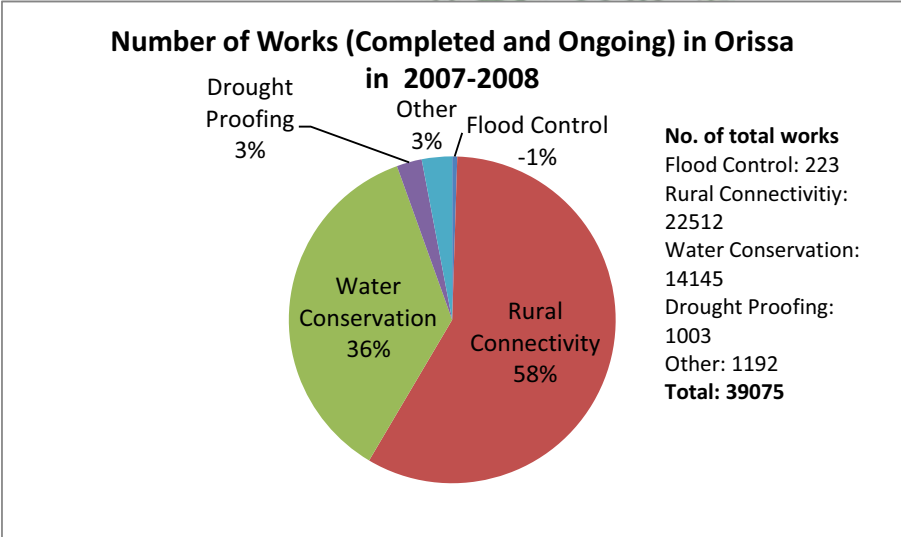


Source: Ministry of Rural Development, 2007-2008



Source: Ministry of Rural

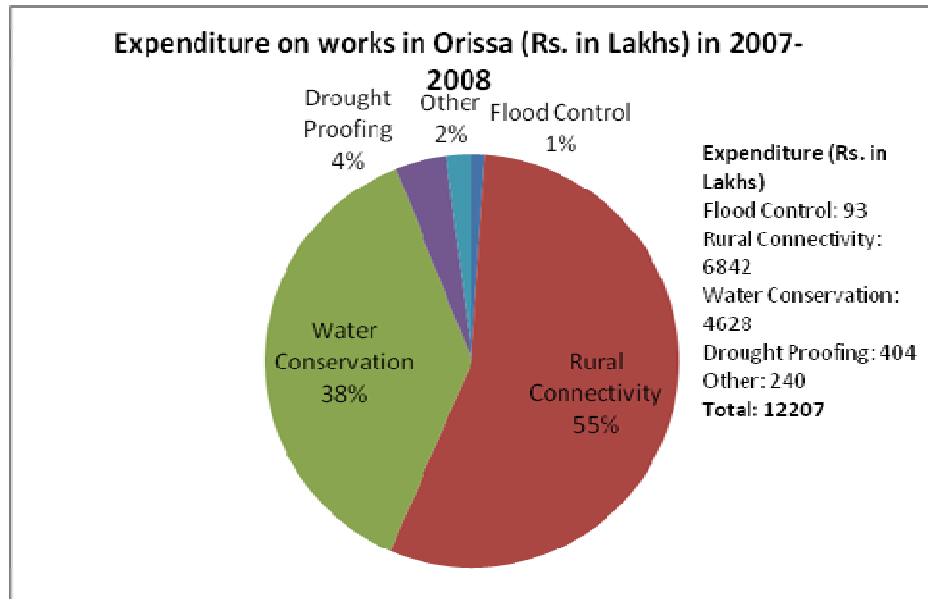
Development, 2007-2008



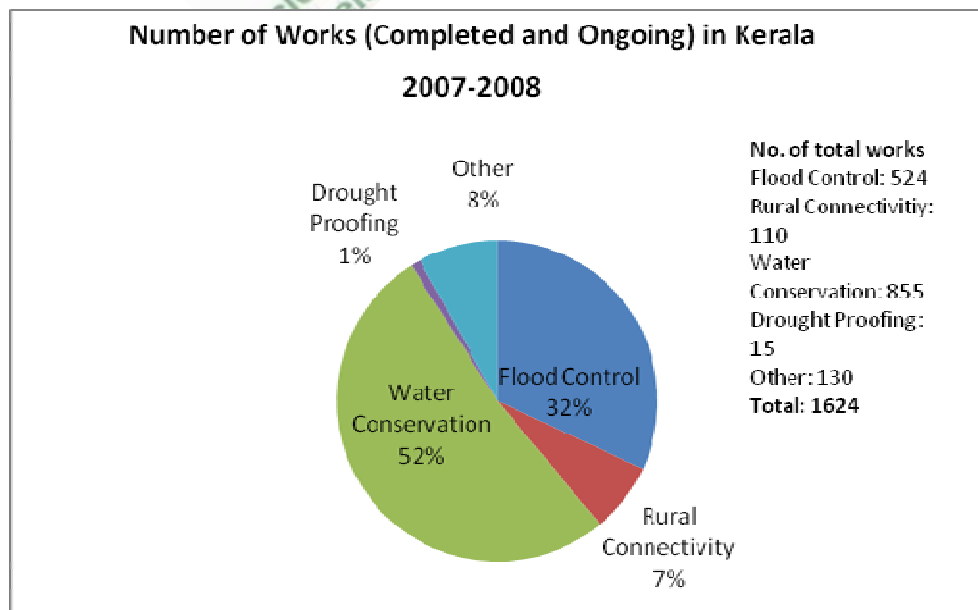
Source: Ministry of Rural

Development, 2007-2008

ORISSA



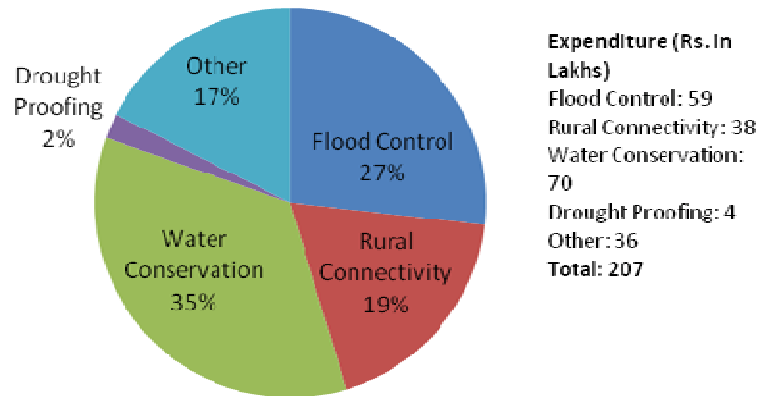
Source: Ministry of Rural Development, 2007-2008



Source: Ministry of Rural Development, 2007-2008

MADHYA PRADESH

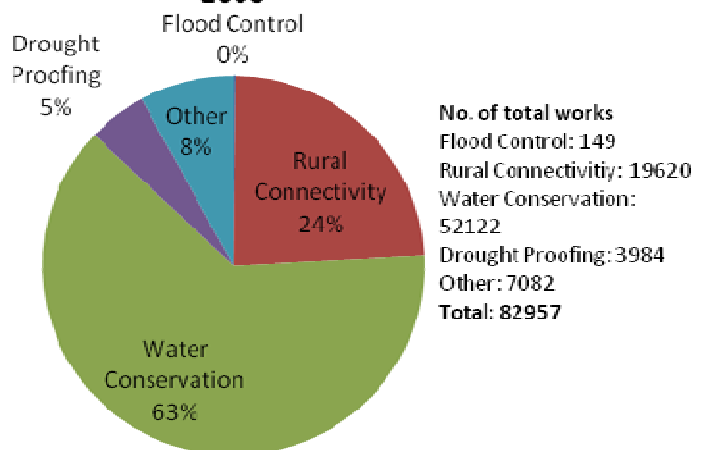
Expenditure on works in Kerala (Rs. in Lakhs) in 2007-2008



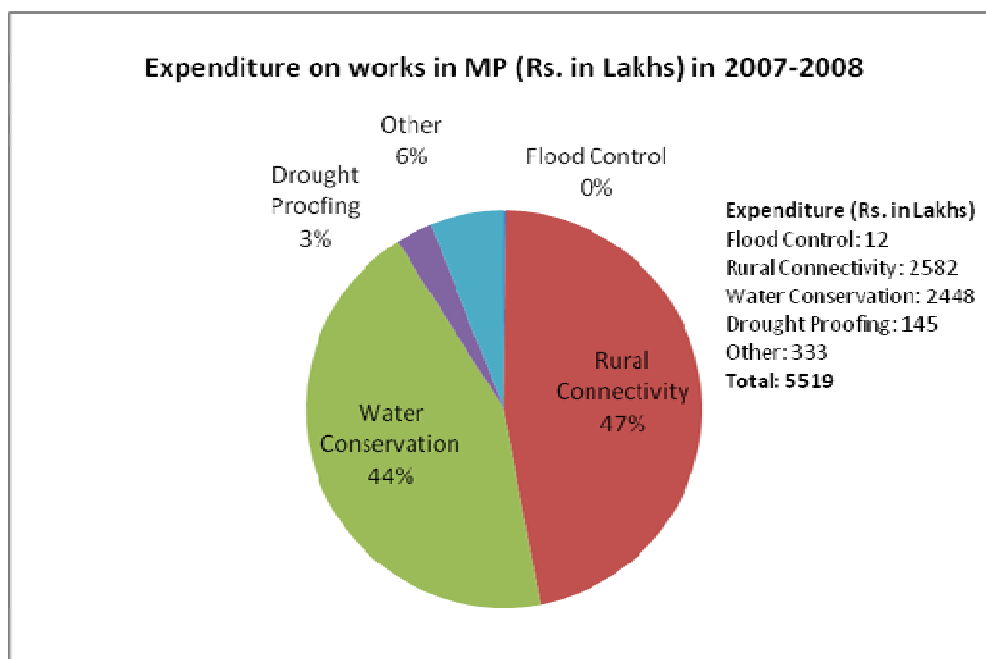
Source: Ministry of Rural Development, 2007-2008



Number of Works (Completed and Ongoing) in MP 2007-2008



Source: Ministry of Rural Development, 2007-2008



Development, 2007-2008

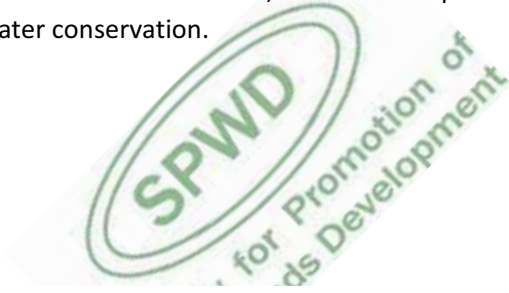


Summary of Analysis:

- **Similarity between works completed and expenditure on works across all data tables**
 - In Rajasthan, rural connectivity works completed is 37% and rural connectivity expenditure is 42%, only 5% difference
 - In Rajasthan both works completed and expenditure on water conservation is 39%.
 - The order of preference in works completed and expenditure is also almost the same. In works completed in Rajasthan, water conservation is first, and rural connectivity follows, where as in expenditure, rural connectivity is preferred ahead of water conservation. However, preferences in drought proofing, other works, flood control, are similar.
 - All across the other three states, there is a similarity between works completed and expenditure on works as well.

- **Socio-Economic factors influence**
 - Comparing works preferred in Rajasthan and Orissa, rural connectivity is the number one preferred work for both. Madhya Pradesh and Kerala have rural connectivity as a less preferred work.

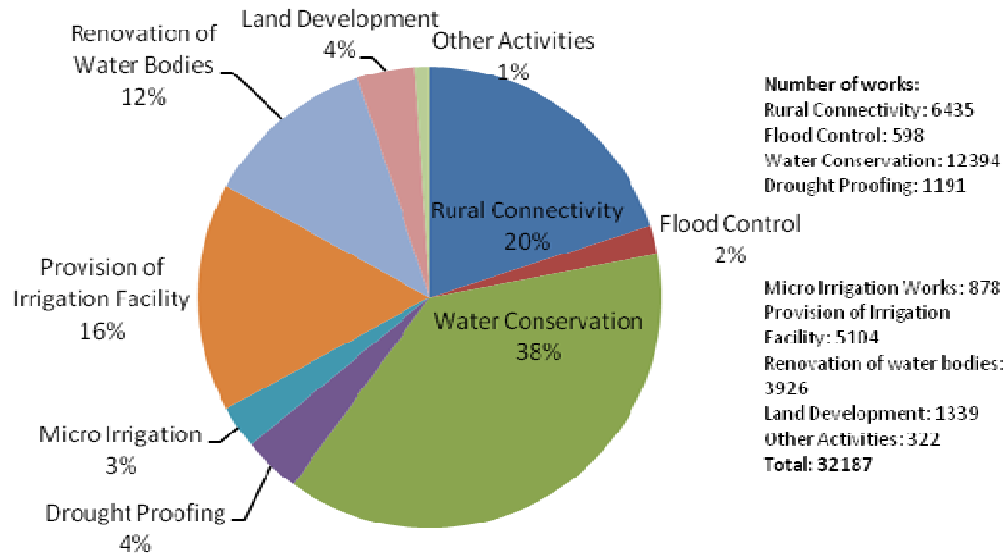
- The districts covered in NREGA in Rajasthan and Orissa mainly consist of more tribal communities than Madhya Pradesh and Kerala. Because these districts consist of more tribal communities, it is poorly connected. Therefore, rural connectivity is the number one preferred work in these two states, even though in the country, it is not one of the preferred works.
- **Agro-Ecological factors influence**
 - Madhya Pradesh is centrally located, so there is less amount of rainfall, and is therefore marked as a drought-prone area. There are also less tribal communities in Madhya Pradesh than Rajasthan, so therefore, water conservation comes out as the number one preferred work, and rural connectivity follows second.
 - In Madhya Pradesh, flood control is near 0% because flood is not a major issue due to the ecological conditions
 - Kerala has relatively rich rainfall, with an annual precipitation of around 2600 mm. Due to the agro-ecological conditions, the two main issues in the area is waterlogging, resulting from imperfect drainage conditions, and severe soil erosion because of steep slopes which cause runoff. Therefore, the two main preferred works in Kerala is flood control and water conservation.



Analysis of works at State Level

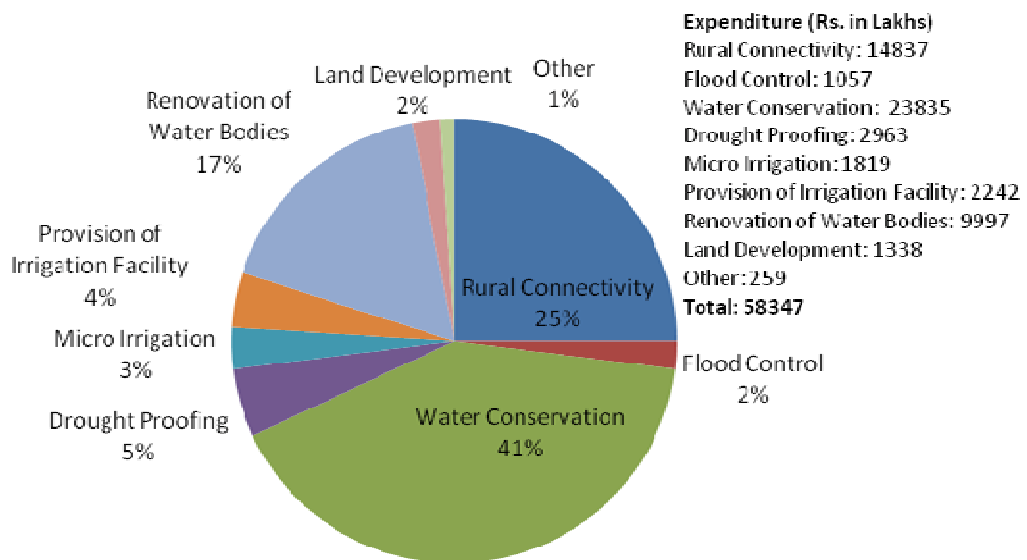
Number of Works and Expenditure on works in Rajasthan:

Number of Works (Completed and Ongoing) in Rajasthan 2007-2008



Source: Ministry of Rural Development, 2007-2008

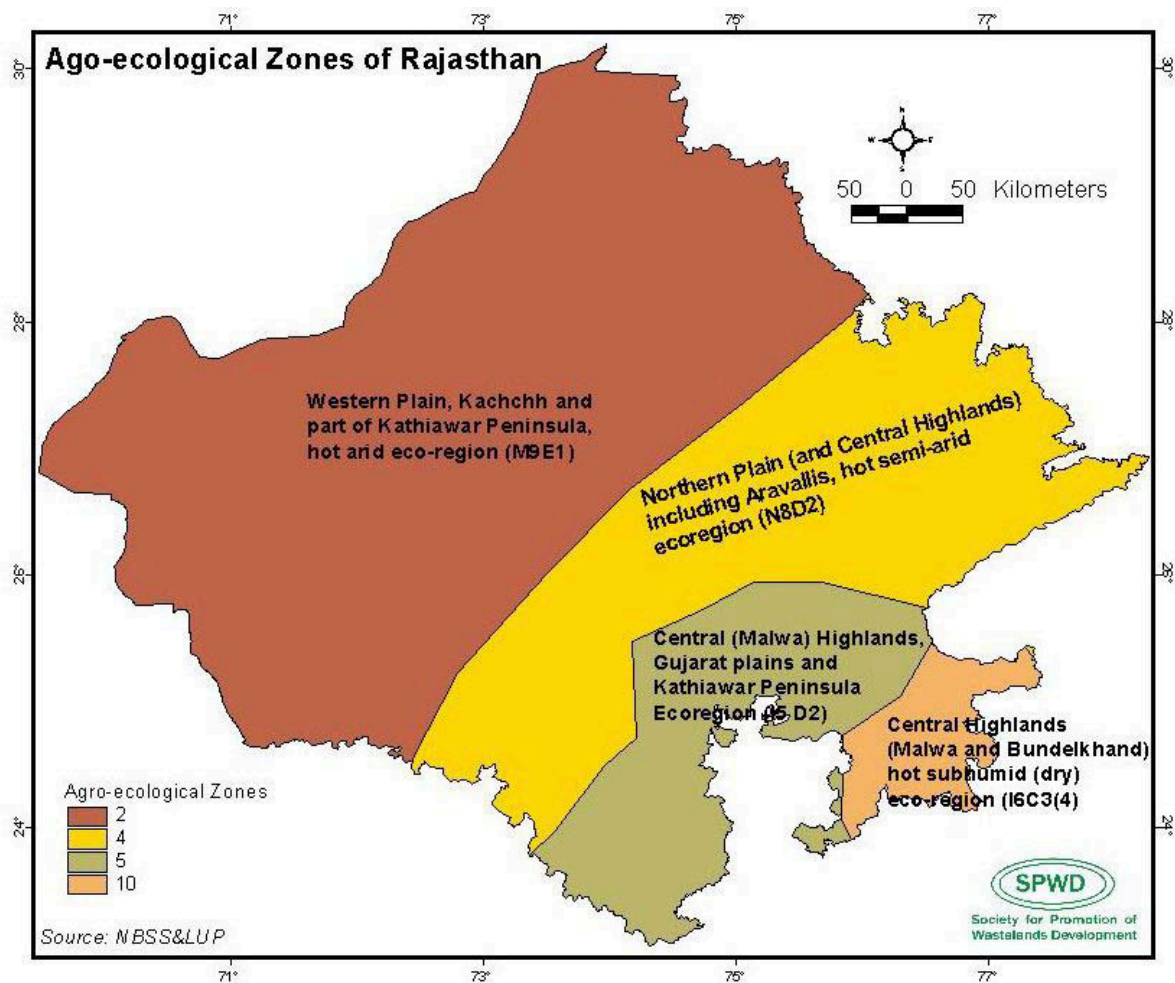
Expenditure on works in Rajasthan (Rs. in Lakhs) in 2007-2008



Source: Ministry of Rural Development, 2007-2008

- Note that there is a similarity between works completed and expenditure on works across all data tables, again as well.

Agro –Ecological Zones in Rajasthan



Summary of Agro-Ecological Characteristics in Rajasthan:

- Low and erratic rainfall is the most conspicuous feature of the arid/semi-arid regions. The natural rainfall variability is very high: there is a large year-to-year variation in the total annual rainfall and the distribution of the rain across regions within each year. Therefore, rainfall patterns are unpredictable and are subject to great fluctuations.
- Rajasthan is the most water stressed state in the country. The state has only 1% of the country's water resources and supports 5.5% of country's population spread over 10% of the country's total area. Ground water depletion is the biggest threat to water sector. Out of 237 blocks of state, only 32 blocks are considered safe, the rest are all considered unsafe.
- Water conservation, preservation and systematic utilization of every drop of water now constitute the basis for water resource planning in the state. That's probably why almost half of NREGA funds are allocated to water conservation.

Main Sources of Livelihood in Rajasthan

- A study done by Aajeevika on livelihoods (3) in Rajasthan identified two main sources of livelihood in the state, agriculture and animal husbandry.

Agriculture

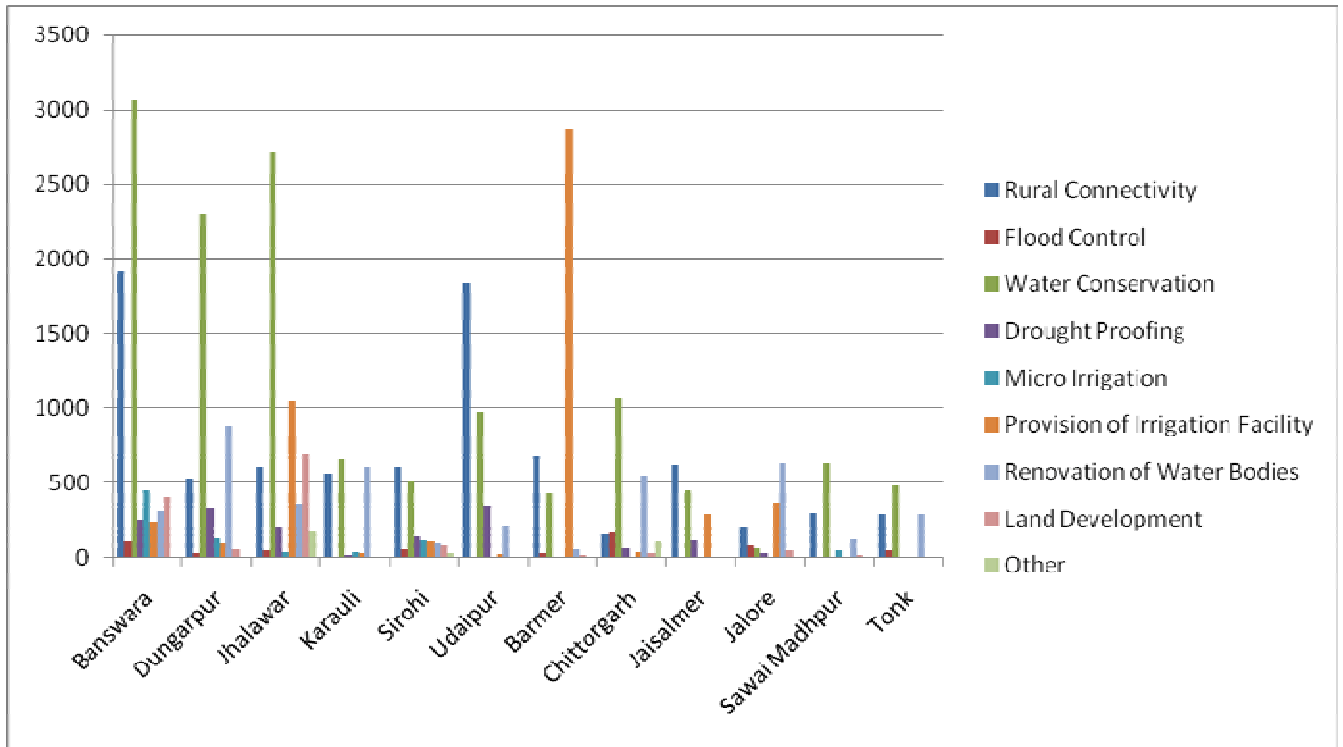
- Agriculture remains the single most important source of household income in most regions in the state. Despite low rainfall, many parts of Rajasthan have witnessed a process of agricultural intensification. Among the four agro-ecological zones, agriculture intensification is widespread in the Semi-Arid North Central and Canal Irrigated East. Even in the other two areas, there are pockets of agriculture intensification. Thus commercialization of agriculture seems feasible even in rain-fed conditions provided certain other conditions are favorable.
- **Irrigation** is one of the basic preconditions for the process of intensification. Irrigation makes it possible to double the productivity of land by taking a second crop and it has an important protective role in case of monsoon failure, which is common in Rajasthan. Significant proportions of cultivated land are now under irrigation in different zones of Rajasthan. Irrigation is almost one hundred percent in the canal irrigated areas and over a third of cultivated land is under irrigation in the North Central and Tribal Zones; only in the Desert West is irrigation still very limited.
- Looking at the data, expenditure on irrigation works only account for 7% of total money spent on works, perhaps there should be an increase in this area.

Animal Husbandry

- The significance of animal husbandry seems to be true across agro-climatic zones in Rajasthan, as borne out by the relative importance of this activity both in terms of the occupational classification of the work force, as well as the analysis of household incomes.
- Animal husbandry is an important source of supplementary income throughout the state, accounting for about fifteen per cent of household incomes across all regions. Household income analysis indicates that the contribution of animal husbandry is around fifteen percent all over Rajasthan, varying from a low of 13.5 percent in the Tribal Areas to a high of 17.8 percent in the Semi-Arid zone.
- Drought also has a severe impact on animal husbandry with increasing fodder prices leading many farmers to even abandon their animals.
- Looking at the data, expenditure on drought proofing works only account for 5% of total money spent on works, perhaps there should be an increase in this area.

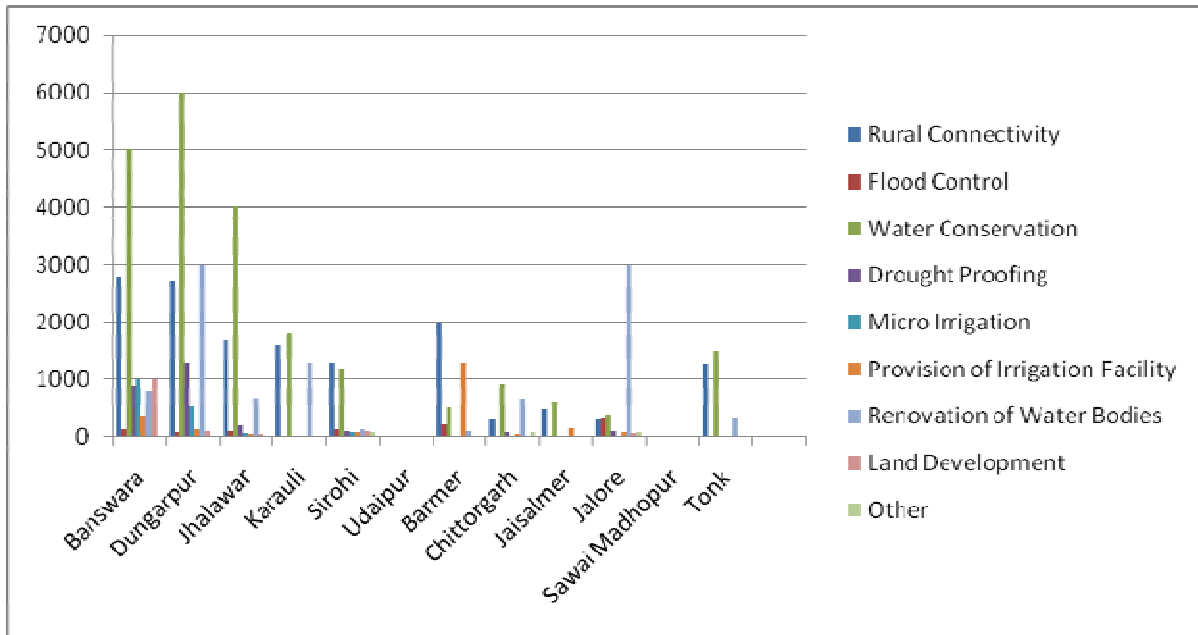
Analysis of works at District Level

Number of total works done in Rajasthan (By District)



Source: Ministry of Rural Development, 2007-2008

Expenditure on each work done in Rajasthan (By district)



Source: Ministry of Rural Development, 2007-2008

Summary of Analysis:

- Again, similarity between works completed and expenditure on works across all districts.
- In 7 districts, water conservation is #1 preferred work
- In Barmer, provision of irrigation facility is high because of desert like conditions.

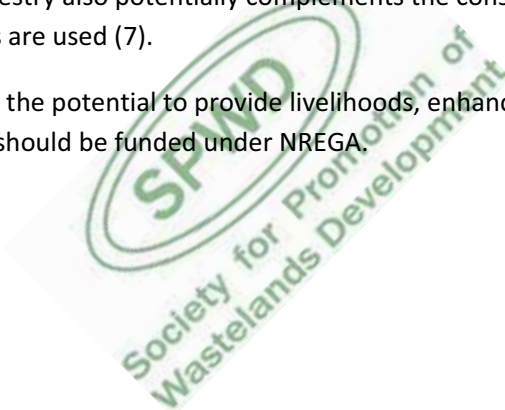
Ecological Gaps that need funding within NREGA

Significance of Agro-Forestry (not included under works funded in NREGA)

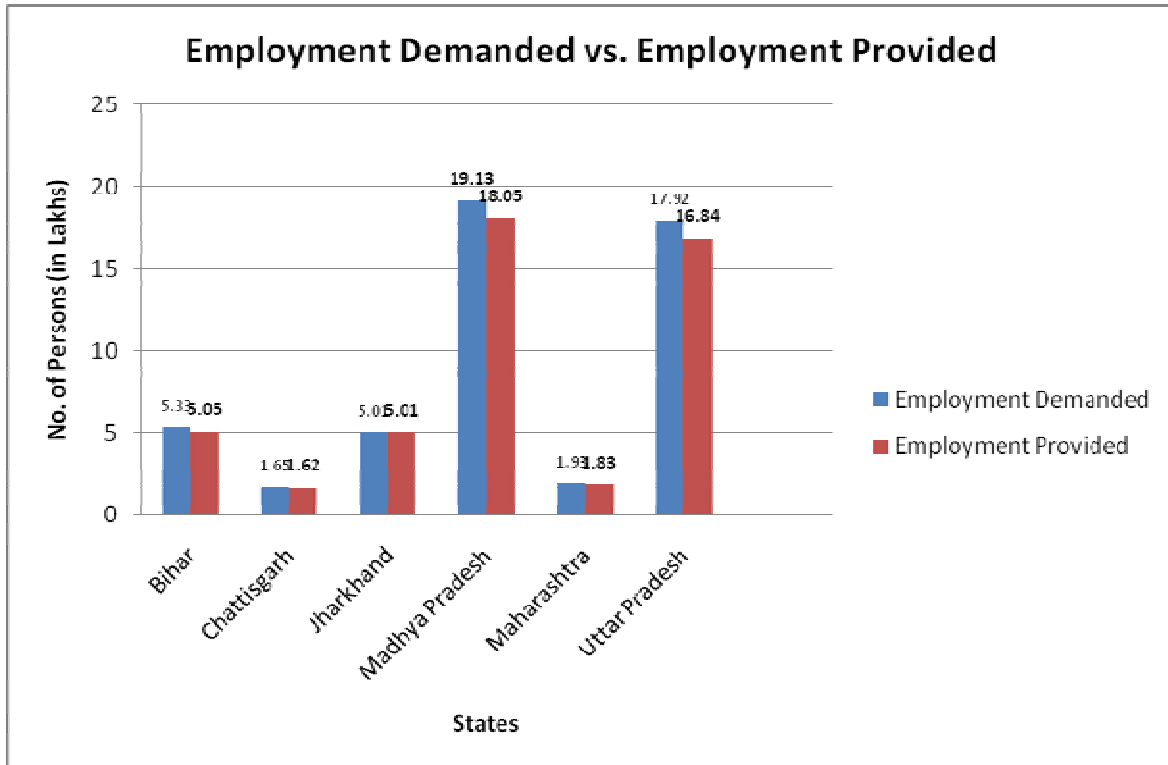
- Refer to **Table 4** for percentage of forest cover in 200 districts of NREGA states. The data shows that 23% of the areas covered under NREGA consist of forests.
- Agro-forestry, also called farm-forestry, is a collective name for land-use systems in which woody plants like trees and shrubs are grown in association with crops in a spatial arrangements, and in which there are ecological and economic interactions between the woody and crop components of the systems. Agro-forestry is seen as a means of:
 - Providing an alternative source of timber and fuel needs and thus protecting forests
 - Providing stable income to the farmers
 - Enhancing environmental values of the region
 - Enhancing the productivity of agriculture

In addition to above, agro-forestry operations offer many ecosystem services including the sequestration of carbon, maintenance of hydrological balances that prevent dryland salinity, and the purification of water. Agro forestry also potentially complements the conservation of biodiversity if native trees and shrub species are used (7).

Therefore, if agro-forestry has the potential to provide livelihoods, enhance productivity in agriculture, as well as conserve forests, it should be funded under NREGA.



Employment Generated under NREGA

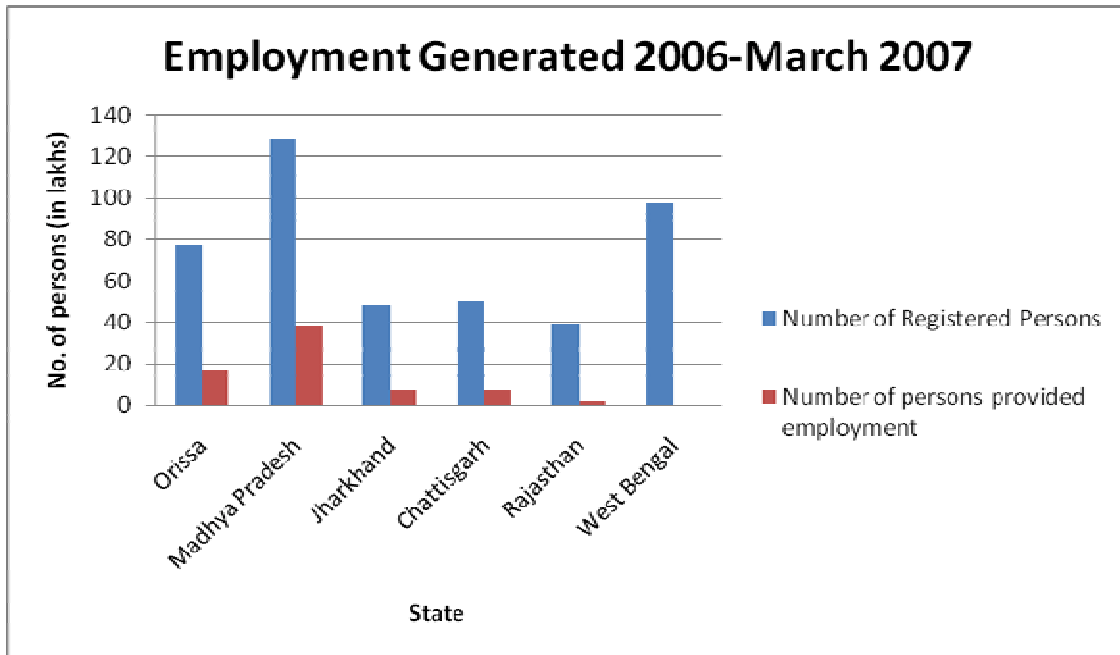


Source: PACS study 2006

Data based off The Poorest Area Civil Society (PACS) Programme study. Primary data was collected directly during the NREGA week that was observed in these states during July 3rd-9th, 2006 as well as through a schedule that was handed out later. The data covers these states: Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Chattisgarh.

- Data shows that of the total cases where employment was demanded, almost 95% people were given employment.

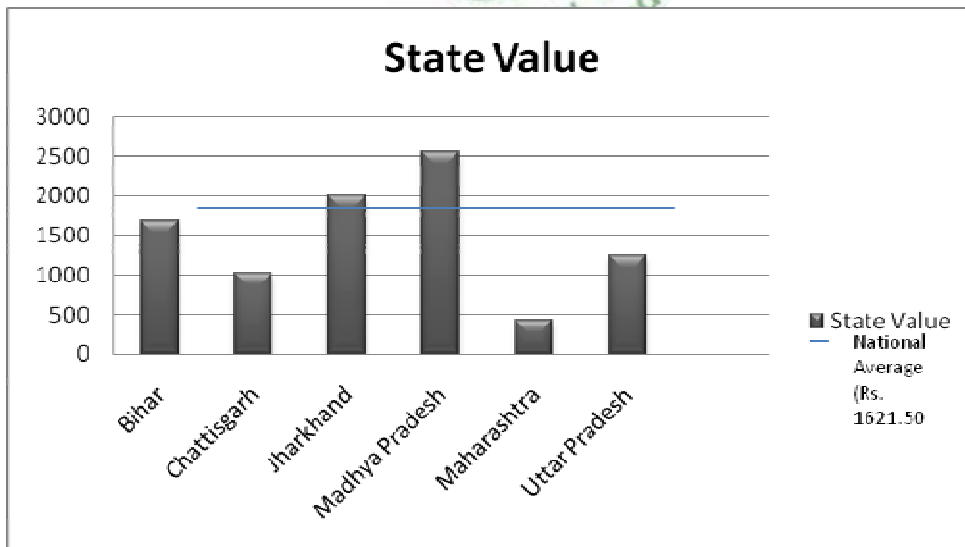
However, when looking at information from the Ministry of Rural Development for 2006-2007, employment paints quite a different picture:



Source: Ministry of Rural Development, 2007

- Employment generation is very low in this data table, with West Bengal almost at zero.
- Perhaps this indicates that certain studies paint a brighter picture of NREGA than how it really is functioning at the ground level.

Release of Resources



Source: PACS study 2006

Data based off The Poorest Area Civil Society (PACS) Programme study.

- Under NREGA, the state governments are supposed to create a fund called the State Employment Guarantee Fund, which will receive the grant from the Central Government. The states have to provide 10% of the total amount sanctioned for implementation of the scheme.
- The PACS study states that most states have complied by allocating the state's share. The data available from different states reveals that Bihar, Chattisgarh, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh have actually released the state's share, while Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra are yet to release their share of resources. In Madhya Pradesh, the state's share has not been released because the State Employment Guarantee Fund has not yet been created. The government is in the process of creating this fund.

Awareness of Program

Data based off The Poorest Area Civil Society (PACS) Programme study.

- Extremely low level of knowledge on the scheme among the community members.
- Elected representatives, especially the Panchayat head and Secretaries of the Panchayat, were reasonably aware.
- It was also observed that the people who formed the upper strata of the society were better informed than the workers. Many of these upper class families were not seeking employment under NREGA. Therefore, efforts of awareness are not reaching the people who need it.
- Most of the road side Panchayats had walls painted with the main features of the scheme. But does it effectively impact the awareness of the predominantly illiterate populations that reside in these villages is the question.

Awareness efforts by the government agencies

State	Situation on the ground
Bihar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal early awareness efforts by the government have resulted in very little awareness at the field level. The government efforts have been limited to wall writing at inconspicuous places along roads about schemes of family planning, drinking water and vector diseases. The awareness efforts of CSOs during the NREGA week were fully supported by the government and local administration which produced good results, but the government has failed to develop a proper policy in place to increase the awareness about NREGA.
Chattisgarh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In most of the places it was observed that the government officials did not provide the villagers with adequate information. The awareness generation effort in NREGA was being done as

	any other government scheme.
Jharkhand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During discussions with the government officials, it appeared that even the government officials at the block and panchayat level were not fully aware of the scheme and its guidelines.
Madhya Pradesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was observed that even at the block level, proper awareness material was not available. • The panchayat representatives said that they had not been provided with any publicity material (no pamphlets, handbills, posters etc.) • In some districts a few wall writings could be seen as the only sign of NREGA awareness efforts in villages.
Maharashtra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite having an employment guarantee scheme for the past 34 years, the Maharashtra REG Scheme formulated NREGA did not evoke very enthusiastic response from the villagers, as no clear signals about differences from earlier EGS and MREGS were sent by the administration.
Uttar Pradesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of political will was reflected in awareness creation as well. Some lower level officials in private conversations admitted that higher level of awareness could create problems for them as they would always have to be on their toes to provide work to the villagers.

Planning of the works

- Planning as per section 16 (1) of the NREGA for the works/projects to be implemented in the Gram Panchayat area should be undertaken by the Gram Panchayat. The plan proposals will then move upwards for approval and consolidation at the above Panchayat levels.
- Data based on PRIA study on Panchayati Raj Institutions: current report is based on statistical sample survey conducted in 14 major states of the country. Refer to **Table 5** in Annexure for Detailed number of Panchayats and Households sampled.
- Refer to **Table 6** in Annexure for data table on planning of works. Statistics include percentage of Blocks in which annual plans were prepared, percentage of Gram Panchayats for which annual plans were prepared. And percentage of households attending Gram Sabha meeting for planning
- Percentages show that places that show lower percentage of works planned is due to the lack of people's participation. Across the districts, it was observed that the Gram Sabha meetings were not held in true spirit.

Implementation of works by the Panchayat

- NREGA states that at least 50 per cent of the works in terms of costs will be allotted to the Gram Panchayat for execution.
- Data is based on PRIA on Panchayati Raj Institutions. The report is based on statistical sample survey conducted in 14 major states of the country.
- Refer to **Table 7** in Annexure for data table on number and cost of work sanctioned to the Gram Panchayats and percentage of works implemented by them.
- The data presents that in most of the districts more than 50% of works are being carried out by the Gram Panchayats.

Deployment of functionaries to Panchayats

- According to the PRIA study, Panchayats have not been able to perform to their full potential due to lack of functionaries. They have become paralyzed and are not able to perform their roles and responsibilities.
- Data based on PRIA on Panchayati Raj Institutions. The report is based on statistical sample survey conducted in 14 major states of the country.
- Refer to **Table 8** in Annexure for data table on Deployment of Functionaries: specifically for Program Officers, Assistant Engineers, Junior Engineer for every 10 GPs, Exclusive Panchayat Secretary, and Employment Guarantee Assistant.
- In almost all the states the status of deployment of functionaries at different levels is poor. In none of the districts the table shows good percentages of availability of all the officials required at all the levels. In this situation where the prime authorities are not able to perform well due to unavailability of the staff, the scheme gets hijacked by vested interests and this leads to corruption and malpractices.
- Employment Guarantee Assistants are very important technical staff which ensures the payment of wages on time. It can be observed from the data that there are improvements in six months in the status of availability of the EGA to the Gram Panchayats. States like Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Chhattisgarh show a significant improvement in the status of availability of EGAs to the GPs but states like Uttarakhand, West Bengal, Himachal and Bihar shows negligible percentages of improvement in the availability of the employment guarantee assistants.

- Observations from the field show that there has been a significant delay in measurement of work due to lack of technical staff to the Panchayats which in turn has resulted in delayed wage payments to the workers.

Wage Payments

- Central Operational Guidelines states that wages should be paid on a weekly basis and in any case within a fortnight of the date on which the work was done (Section 3(3) of NREGA). Data based on PRIA on Panchayati Raj Institutions shows that where work has been initiated under NREGA, reported that wages are not paid in time. The percentage of such malpractices are observed to be high in states like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Kerala and Jharkhand as shown in these tables. Refer to **Table 9** in Annexure on Estimated Percentage of Households not getting wages within prescribed 15 days.
- Section 6(1& 2) of the Chapter III of NREGA delineates that every person working under NREGA shall be entitled to the minimum wages fixed by the State Government for agricultural laborers under the Minimum Wages Act, 148, unless the wages have been notified by the Central Government. Data based on PRIA on Panchayati Raj Institutions shows that in many states, households were getting less than the minimum wages. Refer to **Table 10** in Annexure on percentage of households getting wages less than minimum wages.
- *PACS study* also reported delays in wages as well as payment of wages below the minimum wages.

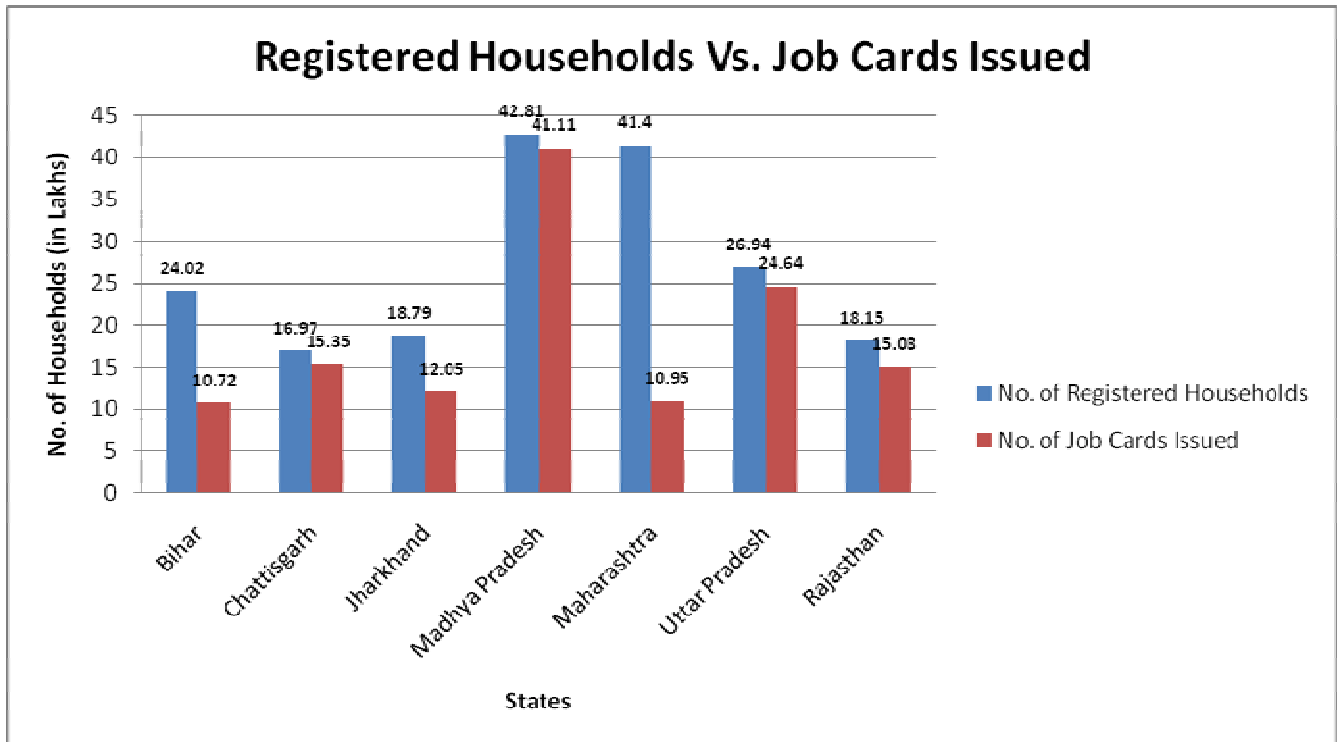
Payment of Wages

State	Situation on the ground
Bihar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Till date, work has been started at very few places. • In some districts it was observed that wage payments was lower than what was stipulated and there were also report of delayed payments for the work undertaken under NREGP.
Chattisgarh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was gross discontent among villagers about low wages, especially in areas of hard soil strata. Payment was done on the basis of the work done, however it seems there is no difference in the rates for normal soil and hard strata. Thus people did not get the complete wage for the work done.
Jharkhand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The state government hiked the minimum wage from Rs. 60 to Rs. 73. However the wages being paid at the NREGA worksites appear to be lesser than the old minimum wage rate.
Madhya Pradesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rampant delay was observed in making payments due to the non-availability of overseers for evaluation of works undertaken.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At some places wages being paid were lower than the stipulated minimum wage for the agriculture labour, • At some places, there was difference in wages being paid to male and female workers.
Maharashtra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delays in wage payment was common at worksites, Sarpanch's attribute this to non-release of funds from the Taluka office. • In some places, gender discriminatory in wage payment was also observed.
Uttar Pradesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In some of the areas wage rate stipulated by the government was less than the current market rate creating a disincentive for the people to come to the NREGS work sites.

Job Cards

- Delay in the issue of the Jobcards is also one of the problems resulting from lack of staff to the Gram Panchayats. Even after a year, implementation of the NREGA happens at a snail's pace. Refer to **Table 11** in the Annexure for Estimated percentage of households issued job cards after 15 days. In all the states, most of the households have received Jobcards after and more than a month of their registration. Some have not yet got the Jobcards.
- People also reported that Job cards are retained with the secretaries resulting in wrong entries in the cards. This is preventing people from getting 100 days of entitled employment and unemployment allowance in case work is not provided.
- PACS study shows that of the total rural households in NREGA districts of states under study (not including Rajasthan), 52.8% households have applied to be registered under the scheme. Of this, 67.4% families have been issued job cards.



Application for Job Cards

- Though the guidelines of the act say that everyone who registers for work, shall be provided with job cards free of cost, it was observed that in some districts of these states, people were being charged money for getting job cards.
- There were no photographs on most of the job cards. People were not aware that they had to apply for jobs.
- It was observed in some villages of the district that a fee of Rs 2 to Rs 5 was levied even for the application forms.

Applications for work and their receipt

State	Situation on the ground
Bihar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to government figures, except two districts, work has been provided to everyone who demanded • Conscious demand for work was observed in some areas however, more demand for work is not coming because of confusion related to nature of work, work duration, distance of worksite from the village

Chattisgarh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People were not aware of the procedure to apply for work. • There was no priority to women in allocation of work. • Presence of contractors was also reported at worksites. • In some instances people from outside the panchayat were found working at the village work sites.
Jharkhand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In absence of information about procedures for demanding work, the work allotment was dependent upon officials' interest or CSO's activism. • At some places work was being provided through contractors.
Madhya Pradesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of the people were not aware that they had to apply for work separately after getting their job cards. At some places, even if people knew that they had to apply for work they had no idea about where to apply and the modes of application. • According to the Sarpanch, the block level officials were not forthcoming with information and this caused undue delay in providing work.
Maharashtra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was lack of information about procedures for applying for work. Since in some of the districts farmers had committed suicides recently, the administration was being proactive in providing work.
Uttar Pradesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In most of the district there were no written receipts of job application given. • There was lack of awareness of the procedure because the Sarpanch did not know that he was not authorized to take applications since work had to be provided by the block. The block level officials said that there was no such provision in the act to give dated receipts of applications received.

Availability of Job Cards

- In the PACS study, 30 villages surveyed in 6 blocks of Aurangabad district of Maharashtra, of a total of 30,002 households, 8,881 were found to have registered for job cards, and 5,920 got them. This means that only 67% of the registered households had received the job cards till June 2006.
- In several villages it was observed that the job cards were taken back by the panchayat secretary before making the payment. These cards were returned after a long period and that too without entering any details in the card.

Registration of job cards

State	Issues on the ground
Bihar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was observed that there was undue delay in issuing Job cards after receipt of application • Job cards were being issued without any registration number and/or photos of adult members

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In some villages, people were being asked to pay for the photographs in direct contravention of the due procedures • It was also observed that no details (job done, wages paid etc) were being recorded in the job cards
Chattisgarh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was observed that money was being demanded for making job cards • Generally people were not clear about the procedures of getting job cards • It was found in most of the places that the job cards prepared were incomplete (for instance there were no photos, no registration number, no Sarpanch's signature) • Job cards were being made on joint family basis in contravention of rules of NREGA
Jharkhand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was observed that people in all the NREGA districts have paid money ranging from Rs. 20-120 for getting the job cards. • Majority of the people have been charged between Rs. 30-60 for photographs (officials contend that since no fund has been provided for photographs, it is being charged to the beneficiary), • It was also observed in some districts that deadlines were fixed for applying for job cards and in some cases job card applications were not accepted after the due date
Madhya Pradesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job cards were not being distributed timely. In some districts jobs cards were lying with the Panchayat Secretary for the past few months • Photographs were not pasted on the job cards which was being put forward as an excuse for non-issuance of job cards • It was also observed that people were not aware of the utility of the job cards • There were also reports of touts asking for Rs. 200 in lieu of helping in getting the job card made
Maharashtra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite having history of EGS in the state less than 50% of those who have registered have got NREGS job card • In Aurangabad district the government claims to have distributed 100% job cards but in reality just two of the five blocks in the districts have got 100% job cards • In some districts APL people not being registered for the scheme by saying that the scheme is only for the BPL families
Uttar Pradesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A situation has been created where it seems mandatory to have a printed registration form for application and most of the cases the forms are not available • It was also observed that the authorities are taking a dilly-dallying approach to avoid paying unemployment allowance in case of non-provision of work

Unemployment Allowance

- The act enjoins upon the concerned officials to pay unemployment allowance to those holding valid job cards if they are unable to provide work to the applicants. This provision has hardly been implemented even when work was not granted. The PACS study shows that while officials have made claims in this regard they are difficult to verify due to lack of valid receipts. The people were also hardly aware that they could claim such an allowance.

Unemployment allowance

State	Situation on the ground
Bihar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No unemployment allowance payment yet. The chief minister reportedly said to the officials that if unemployment wages were paid in any block that amount would be deducted from the concerned officials salary- this he said in front of TV cameras- (He probably meant that work should be provided to everyone who demands and he won't bear any laxity on this account)-but the result is that officials are trying to discourage application for jobs.
Chattisgarh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since there are no dated receipts given either for registration or job application it was very difficult to verify the official claim on delay in job provision. Hence there was no payment of unemployment wages.
Jharkhand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The awareness level of people regarding unemployment allowance is very low. • At places the work was being done through contractors hence there had been no reports of actual unemployment allowance payment.
Madhya Pradesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There had not been any case of unemployment allowance being paid till date. However, this was basically because people were either not getting any receipt for their application or they were not getting a dated receipt.
Maharashtra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even in Maharashtra there had not been any case of unemployment allowance payment till date. This can be attributed to many reasons like lack of awareness among the villagers and lower level government officials, and non availability of dated receipts.
Uttar Pradesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no instances of unemployment allowance payment from the state till date. • It was also observed that awareness level was very low and most of the people did not even know about such provisions in the act.

Grievance Redressal

- The Programme Officer will be the Grievance Redressal Officer at the Block level, and the District Programme Coordinator at the District level. Action taken on the complaints received by the Programme Officer and the District Programme Coordinator shall be placed before the meetings of the Intermediate Panchayats and the District Panchayats respectively.
- In the PRIA study, it shows that the Grievance Redressal mechanism has not yet become functional. Due to lack of information and awareness on the part of the Gram Panchayat the grievances and the problems of the workers are not provided any solutions. The redressal mechanism is not yet institutionalized and complaints of the workers remain unaddressed. Refer to **Table 12** for percentage of households approaching for grievance redressal.

Monitoring and Vigilance or Works

- For every work sanctioned under the scheme, there should be a local Vigilance and Monitoring Committee, composed of members of the locality or village where the work is undertaken, to monitor the progress and quality of work while it is in progress.
- District Panchayats will monitor all aspects of implementation, including registration, employment, unemployment allowances, and social audits, flow of funds, progress and quality of works, qualitative aspects of implementation, timely and correct payment of wages, and timely payment of unemployment allowances. The State Government shall monitor the performance of all districts on the quality and pace of implementation.
- The data collected in the PRIA study shows the poor status of vigilance and monitoring of works. Refer to **Table 13** for percentage of GPS where worksites were inspected by, percentage of GPS where Vigilance and Monitoring Committees have been formed, and percentage of GPs where sanction orders from program officers were received. Official data collected, represents the percentages of GPs where the elected representatives of the district and intermediate Panchayats had inspected worksites. In states like Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh 40-50% worksites of the gram Panchayats have been inspected by the representatives of the District Panchayats. However, in rest of the states monitoring of works by the district representatives was found to be very low.
- Data presented in the table shows higher percentages of monitoring and inspection of the worksites by representatives of the Intermediate Panchayat (IPs). Data from Andhra Pradesh,

Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Rajasthan, UP, Uttarakhand and West Bengal shows good percentages of worksite inspection by the representatives of IPs.

Capacity Building of Panchayats

- The Central Operational Guidelines clearly state that all key agencies including Gram Panchayats and other PRIs need to be trained in discharging their responsibilities under the Act. In addition to helping various agencies in performing their duties under the Act, training programmes should give priority to the competencies required for effective planning.
- Lack of capacity and skills of the Panchayat officials is one of the major critical issues which is restricting Panchayats from effective participation in the NREGA. Lack of technical skills, low awareness of the provisions of the scheme, lack of clarity on their roles and responsibilities are some of the problems putting off the Panchayats from active functioning.
- Panchayat representatives lack capacities and skills to efficiently perform their duties and as a result, they get dependent on the government officials for each and everything resulting in a passive participation.
- Refer to **Table 14** in the Annexure for data tables on % of GPs where training of Ers undertaken and % of Blocks where training of Ers undertaken. The data shows that capacity building has not been enough and data shows that proper trainings and orientation of the elected representatives have not been done in most of the states resulting in low awareness levels and lack of skills. However, it is encouraging to see that Uttar Pradesh (Banda) Haryana and Himachal Pradesh, data shows good percentages of the training programmes undertaken in the Gram Panchayats for the ERs.

Women in NREGA

- The most important demand in NREGA is to ensure equal participation and wages for women. Priority is to be given to women in the allocation of work, “in such a way that at least one-third of the beneficiaries shall be women”.
- However, the data collected by the Ministry of Rural Development shows huge discrepancies across states. Refer to **Table 15** in the Annexure for data table on the share of women in NREGA employment.

- From the data, It is encouraging to note that women’s share of NREGA employment is not far from half (40 percent to be precise) at the all-India level
- However, many states are violating the Act by failing to ensure that the share of women in NREGA employment is at least one third: Jammu and Kashmir (4 per cent only), Himachal Pradesh (12 per cent), Uttar Pradesh (17 per cent), among others

Inadequate worksite facilities

- NREGA provides for facilities for safe drinking water, shade for children, periods of rest and a first-aid box at the work site (Section 27, Schedule II of the NREGA).
- Section 28 of Schedule II provides for crèche facility at the worksite for five or more children below 6 years of age accompanying working women
- However, data collected from PRIA study shows inadequate availability of resources at worksite facilities. Refer to **Table 16** for data tables on estimated percentage of households responding that crèche facilities are available.
- The status of worksite facilities is not found to be good in the table above. Crèche was found to be not available in a large number of worksites. Women with young children are being discouraged to participate in the scheme due to unavailability of crèche facilities at the worksite.
- Because of the lack of facilities at work sites, small children remain unattended, in the heat. As a consequence, women are hesitant to bring their children to the sites. It also forces them to rethink about applying for work in the first place. Better arrangements for child care are urgently required to facilitate the participation of women in NREGA.
- PACS study as stated the same thing: while the act provides for extensive worksite facilities such as crèche and first-aid to be made available to the people there is little evidence of this in practice. Women with small children have been badly hit by this omission while the lack of first aid has endangered the workers since earth works do involve the possibility of injuries. At the most drinking water has been provided and that too has not been universal.

Inadequate worksite facilities

State	Situation on the ground
Bihar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In most of the cases inadequate worksite facilities were present. Apart from drinking water no other facility like crèche, first aid, shade were available at the worksites.
Chattisgarh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The worksite facilities in Chattisgarh were also very poor. There were no facilities like first aid kit or crèche.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women often complained that since the worksites did not have any facility for crèche, they either did not go for work or had to leave their children at home.
Jharkhand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was complete lack of facilities at the work site • People had very low level of awareness about the provisions related to facilities at work site
Madhya Pradesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As observed in most states worksite facilities were non existent, • Even the PRI representatives did not know about the facilities to be provided at the worksite.
Maharashtra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilities as per the provisions of the act were not being provided at the work sites. • The local officials were ignoring directions of higher authorities with regard to the facilities that had to be provided.
Uttar Pradesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work had started in very small pockets hence it was difficult to draw conclusion at this stage, however at the few worksites there is hardly any facility available.

NREGA Status and Implementation from Media Perspective

The purpose of the review of the media coverage is to consider issues reflected/highlighted in the media on NREGA. This has been divided into three sections.

Media Response at the time of enactment

The coverage of the NREGA in the media has changed over a period of time. When the bill was being discussed in Parliament several journalists and columnists denounced the bill as:

- 1.) an economic hoax because: it was not the duty of the state to guarantee employment; it burdened the tax paying public that actually funded such schemes; the nation should maximize production not work, and; government actually destroys jobs
- 2.) a corruption guarantee scheme because: it was a planned drain of wealth from the productive sector to the underground economy; perpetuates the populist legacy of politicians; would not only be wasteful but entail fresh taxes and erode India's competitiveness, and; encourage a network of patronage
- 3.) bountiful and wasteful because: already the Central government spent over Rs 40,000 Crore per annum for poverty alleviation which was wasted; the scheme would be implemented first in districts represented by powerful politicians who would get the competitiveness, and; encourage a network of patronage

- 4.) a means to call mid term elections because it allowed purchasing power worth Rs 12000 crores to 20 million Indians in the first phase of the programme.
- 5.) a still-born child because: it would generate vast rents with small transfer benefits; leakages of government programmes were as high as 98%; reduce growth rate of the economy; but land reform could generate capitalist employment
- 6.) create a hole in government finances to the tune of 0.6% of the GDP
- 7.) a means to siphon off money because the NREGA was to be evaluated on the basis of the number of days of employment generated not outputs like creation of assets and therefore could lead to massive fraud by the bureaucrats to show generation of employment

Thus costs of the scheme as well as widespread corruption along with capitalist rhetoric were the main objections. The same sentiments were shared in sections of the international media which wondered as to how the government would sustain the program.

Media Response on NREGA programme implementation

Since then the coverage of the NREGA has changed. The media has either started looking at success stories on the positive side or lamented lapses in implementation, which prevented the poorer sections from receiving their due. Benefits from the scheme that have been highlighted include:

- 1.) Rural unemployed labourers in Panchayats in Delhi gaining productive employment for a longer period of time. This was being facilitated by a smooth flow of information from Delhi to all tiers of the district officials and the Panchayati Raj
- 2.) Higher participation of women in Dungarpur district of Rajasthan where 90% of the workers under the NREGA scheme are women
- 3.) Corruption being minimized in Rajasthan due to public vigilance leading to more than one and a half lakh people gaining employment in Dungarpur district. There was massive participation of rural folk Tribal women looked forward to seeing their men back home. A Padyatra of activist groups in Rajasthan revealed little corruption and a pro-active administration.
- 4.) Reduced rural-urban migration in Gujarat and Rajasthan since it enabled laborers to avoid costs of migration

State-wise highlights on performance

These are specific case studies, stories, and news items on selective states focusing on problems in implementation:

- 1.) Lack of assessment especially in Uttar Pradesh where there is no data available on jobs required to provide livelihood security. In fact Uttar Pradesh is seen as a laggard in this regard.
- 2.) Lack of rationalization of work norms which are too demanding so that few are able to earn the wage rate of Rs 73 per day
- 3.) Corruption and neglect hindering implementation of the programme in Haryana and UP
- 4.) Low ground awareness, low wages and lack of attendance in gram sabhas in Gujarat which also has the distinction of having the first court case on lack of payment of adequate wages
- 5.) Difficult work sites, underpayment, violation of social security norms, uninformed people and children in scorching heat characterizing the implementation of NREGA in Madhya Pradesh. Discrimination on the basis of caste, community, disability and proximity to sarpanch, panchayat secretary have been noticed across the country
- 6.) Several states failing to implement provisions of the programme. Haryana, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal and Kerala have not issued state specific operational guidelines. Chattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh have issued their own amendments which violate the provisions of NREGA.

Thus, public vigilance and the emerging success stories have induced many media persons to change their outlook towards the program. The difference in coverage is now only a matter of degree with some media being more supportive than the other. An interesting issue is that those sections of the media that had championed the Act such as the Hindu are playing the role of watchdogs by pointing out lapses in implementation while other sections that had been negative or ambivalent such as Business Standard & Indian Express are coming to a grudging acceptance of the merits of the program.

Potential Subjects for Further Micro-Analysis

- Post Implementation follow up
- Social Audits
- Capacity building in Panchayats



Annexure

Table 1

Water Conservation works

State	No. of total works in water conservation (both in progress and completed)
Andhra Pradesh	37,104
Jharkhand	15,636
Madhya Pradesh	63,920
Rajasthan	9,596
Orissa	7,911
West Bengal	3,214
Bihar	2,802
Karnataka	2,616
Uttar Pradesh	2,530
Chattisgarh	2,418
Total	147,747

Source: Ministry of Rural Development, August 2006

Table 2

Drought Proofing works

State	No of works
Madhya Pradesh	11,790
Orissa	1,815
West Bengal	1,255
Chattisgarh	698
Karnataka*	552
Assam*	176

*Currently both the states are facing drought Source: Ministry of Rural Development, August 2006

Table 3

Geographical Map of India



Table 4

Forest Cover in 200 districts of NREGA states

State	% of total forest cover to State's Geographical Area
Andhra Pradesh	16.93%
Arunachal Pradesh	82.58%
Assam	19.52%
Bihar	7.08%
Chattisgarh	45.06%

Gujrat	17.61%
Haryana	1.86%
Himachal Pradesh	40.57%
Jammu and Kashmir	37.91%
Jharkhand	27.93%
Karnataka	3.97%
Kerala	49.13%
Madhya Pradesh	29.03%
Maharashtra	22.34%
Manipur	88.11%
Meghalya	79.37%
Mizoram	80.72%
Nagaland	78.44%
Orissa	35.86%
Punjab	18.72%
Rajasthan	14.86%
Sikkim	31.38%
Tamil Nadu	17.23%
Uttar Pradesh	7.73%
Uttaranchal	44.63%
West Bengal	12.87%
TOTAL	23.42%

Source: CSE Briefing Draft



Table 5**Number of Sampled Gram Panchayats and Households**

Sl. No.	State	Sample Size	
		No. of G.Ps.	No. of Households
1.	Andhra Pradesh	42	420
2.	Bihar	44	440
3.	Chhattisgarh	54	540
4.	Gujarat	37	370
5.	Haryana	30	300
6.	Himachal Pradesh	18	180
7.	Jharkhand	23	230
8.	Kerala	5	50
9.	Madhya Pradesh	60	600
10.	Orissa	36	360
11.	Rajasthan	22	220
12.	Uttar Pradesh	106	1060
13.	Uttaranchal	30	300
14.	West Bengal	23	230
Total		530	5300

Source: National Study of Role of Panchayats by PRIA, Sept 2007

Table 6**Planning of works under NREGA**

Sl. No.	State	Names of Selected Districts	% of Blocks in which annual Plans were prepared	% of GPs for which annual Plans were prepared	Estimated percentage of households attending Gram Sabha meeting for planning	
					August 2006	March 2007
			(1)	(3)	(3)	
1.	Andhra Pradesh	Medak	100.0	80.1	36.1	22.4
2.	Bihar	Madhubani	100.0	100.0	44.0	57.3
		Muzaffarpur	100.0	87.0	77.0	29.6
3.	Chhattisgarh	Raigarh	100.0	96.7	77.0	40.5
		Rajnandgaon	100.0	100.0	60.0	25.8
4.	Gujarat	Sabarkantha	100.0	82.3	33.0	24.7
5.	Haryana	Mahendergarh	100.0	100.0	34.0	45.2
6.	Himachal Pradesh	Sirmour	100.0	100.0	75.4	72.1
7.	Jharkhand	Jamtara	100.0	100.0	40.3	38.2
		Pakur	100.0	89.2	21.6	23.3
8.	Kerala	Wayanad	50.0	100.0	0.0	25.0
9.	Madhya Pradesh	Shivpuri	100.0	100.0	44.0	2.9
		Sidhi	61.4	76.4	66.0	43.9
10.	Orissa	Dhenkanal	100.0	91.2	67.0	52.0
		Ganjam	100.0	95.8	44.0	14.4
11	Rajasthan	Karauli	100.0	100.0	28.9	21.7

12.	Uttar Pradesh	Banda	100.0	89.3	16.6	5.9
		Mirzapur	100.0	100.0	23.3	32.7
		Sitapur	100.0	94.5	41.1	30.2
13.	Uttarakhand	Chamoli	100.0	87.7	60.0	26.6
14.	West Bengal	24 Pargana South	100.0	100.0	70.7	90.1

Source: National Study of Role of Panchayats by PRIA, Sept 2007

Table 7

Number and cost of work sanctioned to the gram Panchayats and percentage of works implemented by them

Sl. No.	State	Names of Selected Districts	Sanctioned Works			
			Number of works	Total Costs of works (Rs. Lakhs)	Funds Allocated to GPs (Rs. Lakhs)	%age of works implemented by the GPs
			(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
1.	Andhra Pradesh	Medak	12,531	23,066.0	23,066.0	100.0
2.	Bihar	Madhubani	1,451	2,734.0	1,863.1	68.1
		Muzaffarpur	3,369	5,593.3	3,000.2	53.6
3.	Chhattisgarh	Raigarh	2,018	7,312.5	5,581.5	76.3
		Rajnandgaon	6,595	8,453.5	7,927.0	93.8
4.	Gujarat	Sabarkantha	1,805	4,354.9	4,142.1	95.1
5.	Haryana	Mahendergarh	751	1,116.7	1,110.9	99.5
6.	Himachal Pradesh	Sirmour	1,974	836.1	799.2	95.6
7.	Jharkhand	Jamtara	2,233	2,318.3	1,429.9	61.7
		Pakur	863	2,550.7	668.2	26.2
8.	Kerala	Wayanad	4,914	2,063.1	2,063.1	100.0

9.	Madhya Pradesh	Shivpuri	4,305	9,395.7	9,033.6	96.1
		Sidhi	53,253	29,455.8	27,763.7	94.3
10.	Orissa	Dhenkanal	832	2,659.0	2,520.7	94.8
		Ganjam	1,803	2,414.8	1,398.3	57.9
11.	Rajasthan	Karauli	4,953	22,150.7	20,784.3	93.8
12.	Uttar Pradesh	Banda	10,950	26,821.3	21,963.3	81.9
		Mirzapur	2,292	6,064.4	5,356.0	88.3
		Sitapur	7,301	5,051.2	2,544.7	50.5
13.	Uttarakhand	Chamoli	3,484	3,493.9	2,805.2	80.3
14.	West Bengal	24 Pargana South	2,774	3,097.5	1,124.6	100.0

Source: National Study of Role of Panchayats by PRIA, Sept 2007

Table 8

Deployment of functionaries

Sl. No.	State	Names of Selected Districts	% of Blocks, having exclusively for NREG			% of GPs having	
			A Programme Officer	Asst. Engineer	Junior Engineer for every 10 GPs	Exclusive Panchayat Secretary	Employment Guarantee Assistant
			(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1.	Andhra Pradesh	Medak	75.0	75.0	5.0	82.7	97.9
2.	Bihar	Madhubani	0.0	75.0	51.9	63.5	0.0
		Muzaffarpur	0.0	75.0	50.0	69.3	0.0
3.	Chhattisgarh	Raigarh	100.0	100.0	0.0	70.0	76.7
		Rajnandgaon	100.0	100.0	0.0	68.3	72.6

4.	Gujarat	Sabarkantha	100.0	31.0	0.0	48.3	27.2
5.	Haryana	Mahendergarh	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	37.0
6.	Himachal Pradesh	Sirmour	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
7.	Jharkhand	Jamtara	0.0	50.0	0.0	29.5	0.0
		Pakur	0.0	100.0	0.0	78.5	0.0
8.	Kerala	Wayanad	100.0	0.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
9.	Madhya Pradesh	Shivpuri	51.9	48.1	51.9	83.0	100.0
		Sidhi	0.0	67.5	35.1	91.4	59.8
10.	Orissa	Dhenkanal	0.0	50.0	0.0	35.1	17.5
		Ganjam	40.9	59.1	59.1	51.9	59.6
11.	Rajasthan	Karauli	100.0	100.0	100.0	77.2	100.0
12.	Uttar Pradesh	Banda	0.0	50.0	50.0	5.3	78.7
		Mirzapur	0.0	25.0	50.0	2.9	80.4
		Sitapur	0.0	80.0	61.5	18.6	91.2
13.	Uttarakhand	Chamoli	100.0	100.0	66.7	0.0	4.0
14.	West Bengal	24 Pargana South	0.0	0.0	0.0	39.7	12.7

Source: National Study of Role of Panchayats by PRIA, Sept 2007

Table 9

Wage payments: Estimated percentage of households not getting wages within prescribed 15 days

State	Name of the District/s	Estimated percentage of households not getting wages within prescribed 15 days	
		August 2006	March 2007
Andhra Pradesh	Mehaboobnagar/ Medak	3.8	73.1
Bihar	Madhubani	0.0	38.9
	Muzaffarpur	6.9	73.3
Chhattisgarh	Raigarh	9.3	74.6
	Rajnandgaon	22.5	46.2
Gujarat	Sabarkantha	53.0	12.6

Haryana	Mahendergarh	19.0	26.4
Himachal Pradesh	Sirmour	11.1	71.3
Jharkhand	Jamtara	34.5	0.0
	Pakur	0.0	64.4
Kerala	Wayanad	Not Applicable	60.7
Madhya Pradesh	Shivpuri	38.0	46.1
	Sidhi	49.8	56.6
Orissa	Dhenkanal	69.4	49.6
	Ganjam	46.7	52.0
Rajasthan	Karauli	19.3	95.0
Uttar Pradesh	Banda	19.2	91.1
	Mirzapur	12.2	73.8
	Sitapur	61.7	37.4
Uttarakhand	Chamoli	28.0	59.9
West Bengal	24 Pargana South	0.0	42.7

Source: National Study of Role of Panchayats by PRIA, Sept 2007

Table 10

Adequacy of wage payments: Estimated percentage of households getting wages less than minimum wages

State	Name of the District/s	Estimated percentage of households getting wages less than minimum wages	
		August 2006	March 2007
Andhra Pradesh	Mehaboobnagar/ Medak	7.7	8.9
Bihar	Madhubani	0.0	4.1
	Muzaffarpur	4.6	100.0
Chhattisgarh	Raigarh	0.5	31.8
	Rajnandgaon	2.8	0.6
Gujarat	Sabarkantha	48.0	65.0
Haryana	Mahendergarh	9.8	85.8
Himachal Pradesh	Sirmour	4.7	2.7

Jharkhand	Jamtara	21.2	87.8
	Pakur	0.0	64.8
Kerala	Wayanad	Not Applicable	5.3
Madhya Pradesh	Shivpuri	40.4	64.0
	Sidhi	43.7	63.9
Orissa	Dhenkanal	21.6	25.1
	Ganjam	29.6	52.9
Rajasthan	Karauli	97.0	97.0
Uttar Pradesh	Banda	5.7	7.4
	Mirzapur	36.8	16.0
	Sitapur	3.8	15.7
Uttarakhand	Chamoli	2.0	14.2
West Bengal	24 Pargana South	0.0	75.7

Source: National Study of Role of Panchayats by PRIA, Sept 2007

Table 11

Timeliness in issuance of job cards

State	Name of the District/s	Estimated percentage of households issued job cards after 15 days	
		August 2006	March 2007
Andhra Pradesh	Mehaboobnagar/ Medak	83.0	73.3
Bihar	Madhubani	Not Available	86.9
	Muzaffarpur	69.5	52.5
Chhattisgarh	Raigarh	79.1	73.0
	Rajnandgaon	41.3	64.5
Gujarat	Sabarkantha	34.6	47.2
Haryana	Mahendergarh	100	38.8
Himachal Pradesh	Sirmour	78.6	66.8
Jharkhand	Jamtara	95.3	67.2
	Pakur	100	59.5
Kerala	Wayanad	-	83.4
Madhya Pradesh	Shivpuri	88.7	2.3
	Sidhi	33.1	56.2

Orissa	Dhenkanal	45.8	66.3
	Ganjam	64.9	47.1
Rajasthan	Karauli	47.9	41.3
Uttar Pradesh	Banda	91.3	47.6
	Mirzapur	87.3	50.9
	Sitapur	36.2	33.7
Uttarakhand	Chamoli	72.3	50.1
West Bengal	24 Pargana South	29.6	58.9

Source: National Study of Role of Panchayats by PRIA, Sept 2007

Table 12

Grievance Redressal

Sl. No.	State	Names of Selected Districts	% of Blocks where ERs examined Complaint Registers	% of Households approaching for grievance redressal			
				Chairpersons of GP	Panchayat Secretary of GP	Ward Members of GP	Programme Officer of GP
			(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1.	Andhra Pradesh	Medak	12.9	6.2	6.4	4.3	11.4
2.	Bihar	Madhubani	100.0	75.4	4.3	11.9	0.0
		Muzaffarpur	50.0	54.3	17.9	27.7	0.1
3.	Chhattisgarh	Raigarh	50.0	33.7	11.1	20.9	1.3
		Rajnandgaon	50.0	11.6	16.0	3.7	0.0
4.	Gujarat	Sabarkantha	69.8	13.0	6.2	1.5	0.7
5.	Haryana	Mahendergarh	0.0	29.2	0.4	0.6	0.0
6.	Himachal Pradesh	Sirmour	0.0	4.7	1.4	2.1	0.0
7.	Jharkhand	Jamtara	0.0	1.1	54.3	44.7	0.0
		Pakur	0.0	8.4	0.0	14.0	3.1
8.	Kerala	Wayanad	100.0	13.9	0.0	6.6	0.0

9.	Madhya Pradesh	Shivpuri	51.9	12.9	30.4	1.2	1.0
		Sidhi	61.4	19.6	16.1	2.7	5.1
10.	Orissa	Dhenkanal	100.0	14.7	11.4	4.1	0.0
		Ganjam	60.0	28.9	4.0	8.5	2.1
11	Rajasthan	Karauli	0.0	59.8	7.1	13.3	2.3
12.	Uttar Pradesh	Banda	0.0	6.7	2.2	77.3	0.0
		Mirzapur	50.0	44.9	0.4	2.6	2.0
		Sitapur	60.0	54.6	5.1	5.2	6.3
13.	Uttarakhand	Chamoli	66.7	43.5	7.7	4.0	0.3
14.	West Bengal	24 Pargana South	57.1	13.5	15.7	1.6	0.5

Source: National Study of Role of Panchayats by PRIA, Sept 2007

Table 13

Monitoring and Vigilance of works

Sl. No.	State	Names of Selected Districts	% age of GPs where worksites were inspected by		% of GPs where Vigilance and Monitoring Committees have been formed	% age of GPs where - in Sanction Orders from Programme Officers were received
			ERs of District Panchayats	ERs of Intermediate Panchayat		
			(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
1.	Andhra Pradesh	Medak	11.9	88.1	0.0	13.5
2.	Bihar	Madhubani	10.1	89.9	95.2	5.7

		Muzaffarpur	42.4	57.6	56.5	60.6
3.	Chhattisgarh	Raigarh	17.3	82.7	90.0	56.7
		Rajnandgaon	12.0	88.0	100.0	44.9
4.	Gujarat	Sabarkantha	27.2	72.8	88.0	12.7
5.	Haryana	Mahendergarh	24.8	75.2	93.3	6.5
6.	Himachal Pradesh	Sirmour	41.0	59.0	88.6	0.0
7.	Jharkhand	Jamtara	N.A.	N.A.	93.3	0.0
		Pakur	N.A.	N.A.	46.2	0.0
8.	Kerala	Wayanad	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
9.	Madhya Pradesh	Shivpuri	30.2	69.8	100.0	8.7
		Sidhi	48.5	51.5	90.7	33.8
10.	Orissa	Dhenkanal	50.0	50.0	91.2	82.5
		Ganjam	32.2	67.8	59.8	67.9
11	Rajasthan	Karauli	15.4	84.6	95.4	13.7
12.	Uttar Pradesh	Banda	40.2	59.8	5.3	0.0
		Mirzapur	14.4	85.6	96.8	5.6
		Sitapur	40.5	59.5	98.0	74.3
13.	Uttarakhand	Chamoli	19.6	80.4	93.7	73.8
14.	West Bengal	24 Pargana South	16.4	83.6	27.0	0.0

Source: National Study of Role of Panchayats by PRIA, Sept 2007

Table 14**Capacity building of the representatives of the Panchayats**

Sl. No.	State	Names of Selected Districts	% of GPs where training of Ers undertaken	% of Blocks where training of Ers undertaken
			(1)	(2)
1.	Andhra Pradesh	Medak	78.3	100.0
2.	Bihar	Madhubani	56.9	51.9
		Muzaffarpur	58.3	100.0
3.	Chhattisgarh	Raigarh	76.7	100.0
		Rajnandgaon	81.7	100.0
4.	Gujarat	Sabarkantha	63.9	31.0
5.	Haryana	Mahendergarh	96.6	0.0
6.	Himachal Pradesh	Sirmour	67.4	0.0
7.	Jharkhand	Jamtara	N.A.	N.A.
		Pakur	N.A.	N.A.
8.	Kerala	Wayanad	100.0	100.0
9.	Madhya Pradesh	Shivpuri	87.6	48.1
		Sidhi	82.6	100.0
10.	Orissa	Dhenkanal	64.9	100.0
		Ganjam	55.4	100.0
11.	Rajasthan	Karauli	77.2	0.0
12.	Uttar Pradesh	Banda	0.0	50.0
		Mirzapur	38.6	75.0

		Sitapur	51.3	61.5
13.	Uttarakhand	Chamoli	29.7	100.0
14.	West Bengal	24 Pargana South	78.9	100.0

Source: National Study of Role of Panchayats by PRIA, Sept 2007

Table 15

Share of women in NREGA Employment (State Specific) 2006-2007

State	Share of women in NREGA employment (%)
Rajasthan	67
Assam	32
Madhya Pradesh	43
North-East	49
Chhattisgarh	40
Orissa	36
Himachal Pradesh	12
Uttarakhand	30
Karnataka	51
Jharkhand	28
Jammu & Kashmir	4
Uttar Pradesh	17
Andhra Pradesh	55
Haryana	31
Tamil Nadu	81
Bihar	17
Gujarat	50
Punjab	38
West Bengal	18
Maharashtra	37
Kerala	66
INDIA	40

Source: Ministry of Rural Development

Table 16**Worksite facilities: Availability of crèche**

State	Name of the District/s	Estimated percentage of households responding that crèche is available	
		August 2006	March 2007
Andhra Pradesh	Mehaboobnagar/ Medak	4.5	0.5
Bihar	Madhubani	0.0	0.0
	Muzaffarpur	2.5	39.9
Chhattisgarh	Raigarh	12.1	0.7
	Rajnandgaon	24.7	5.5
Gujarat	Sabarkantha	1.8	0.6
Haryana	Mahendergarh	16.0	6.0
Himachal Pradesh	Sirmour	11.2	0.0
Jharkhand	Jamtara	0.0	1.1
	Pakur	0.0	2.3
Kerala	Wayanad	Not Applicable	0.0
Madhya Pradesh	Shivpuri	1.9	0.0
	Sidhi	14.5	0.2
Orissa	Dhenkanal	17.2	6.5
	Ganjam	0.0	9.5
Rajasthan	Karauli	1.3	1.3
Uttar Pradesh	Banda	0.0	0.0
	Mirzapur	1.5	0.0
	Sitapur	3.9	1.9
Uttarakhand	Chamoli	8.6	7.0
West Bengal	24 Pargana South	0.0	13.5

Source: National Study of Role of Panchayats by PRIA, Sept 2007

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