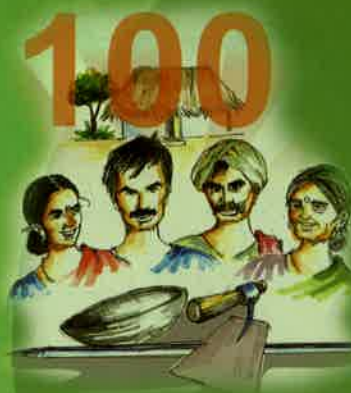




RIGHT TO INFORMATION (RTI)

&

National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS)

Information Booklet
For
Village Level Functionaries



NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Ministry of Rural Development

Government of India

HYDERABAD

NIRD's Mission

- To examine and analyse the factors contributing to the improvement of economic and social well-being of people in rural areas on a sustainable basis with focus on the rural poor and the other disadvantaged groups through research, action research, consultancy and documentation efforts.
- To facilitate the rural development efforts with particular emphasis and focus on the rural poor by improving the knowledge, skills and attitudes of rural development officials and non-officials through organising training, workshops and seminars.

**RIGHT TO INFORMATION (RTI)
&
National Rural Employment
Guarantee Scheme (NREGS)**

Information Booklet
For
Village Level Functionaries

Compiled & Edited
Dr.S. Rajakutty



NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Ministry of Rural Development
Government of India
HYDERABAD - 500 030.

**RIGHT TO INFORMATION &
National Rural Employment
Guarantee Scheme**

**Information Booklet for
Village Level Functionaries**

NIRD encourages re-production,
translation and dissemination of this material
with due acknowledgement to NIRD

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Government of India
HYDERABAD

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FOREWORD

National Rural Employment Guarantee Act and Right to Information Act are two landmark legislations in the country. While the employment guarantee scheme is expected to make significant dent in the poverty situation in the rural areas, its implementation requires active involvement of people and a responsive administration. Transparency, accountability and participation are the keys for the success of the programme. This is the first time a government programme has in-built provisions of the Right to Information Act. In that sense, NREGS and RTI mark an important milestone in the history of development process in the country.

NREGS will be implemented by Panchayati Raj Institutions and major decisions relating to providing work and execution will be taken in the Gram Sabha. The pre-eminent status of Gram Sabha in the Gram Panchayat ensures transparency and accountability in implementation of programmes as well as their active involvement in the programmes in the Panchayats. It is a felt need that the relevant provisions of these two Acts and the philosophy behind this initiative are disseminated widely among all the stakeholders particularly, at the grassroot level. Keeping this in mind, NIRD has brought out this simple booklet to disseminate information about the key aspects of the RTI and NREGS as well as role of Gram Sabha in the implementation of the programmes. This booklet also provides information on the level of preparedness required by implementing agencies to meet the demands likely to arise out of the provisions of RTI Act on the one side and gives useful tips on how to access the RTI Act, on the other, by the community. We do hope that this booklet will help the grassroot functionaries, elected representatives of the three levels of PRIs as well as community members at large in better implementation of the NREGS and RTI.


(V.S. Sampath)
Director General

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Honourable Minister for Rural Development, Government of India, has been voicing concern that information on the rural development programmes have not reached most people in rural areas. Simple and ready to use type of information materials need to be developed for the use of grassroot functionaries and common people. Keeping this concern in mind NIRD has embarked on designing information material on important programmes of the Ministry of Rural Development. This booklet deals with Right to Information and National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme.

While preparing these materials constant guidance and suggestions were provided by Shri V.S. Sampath, Director General and Shri Chinmay Basu, Dy. Director General. My faculty colleague Dr.S.K. Singh offered valuable comments on this booklet.

This booklet was also discussed in the two Regional Workshops in Jaipur and Pune and the comments and suggestions were useful in improving the presentation.

Watershed Support Services & Activities Network (WASSAN), an NGO based in Hyderabad designed the layout, cover and illustrations.

S. Rajakutty

RIGHT TO INFORMATION

Salient Features

Central Information Commission and State Information Commission are established under this Act. This sets an institutional and functional system:

- ◆ to enable the right to information for citizens,
- ◆ to access information under the control of public authorities,
- ◆ to promote transparency and accountability in the working of every public authority.



Right to Information

It is the right to access the information which is held by or under the control of any public authority.

It includes the right to:

- ◆ inspect works, documents or records
- ◆ take notes, extracts or certified copies of document and records
- ◆ take certified samples of material;
- ◆ obtain information in the form of diskettes, floppies, tapes, video cassettes or in any other electronic mode or through printouts where such information is stored in a computer or in any other device.

Information

Information means any material in any form including records, documents, memos, e mails, press releases, orders, logbooks, contracts, reports, papers, samples, models, data material held in any electronic form

It also includes any information relating to any private body which can be accessed by a public authority under any other law in force.

Records

These include any document, manuscript and file; any micro film, micro fiche and facsimile copy of a document; any reproduction of image or images embodied in such micro film (whether enlarged or not); and any other material produced by a computer or any other device

Public Authority

- ◆ It means any authority or body or institution of self government established or constituted by or under the Constitution; by any other law made by Parliament; by any other law made by state legislature; by notification issued or order made by the appropriate Government
- ◆ Also includes any body owned, controlled or substantially financed; or non-government organisation substantially financed, directly or indirectly by funds provided by the appropriate government.

Duties of Public Authority

- ◆ Maintain all its records duly catalogued and indexed in a manner and form which facilitates easy access to enable the right to information
- ◆ Ensure that all appropriate records be computerised (within a reasonable time and subject to the availability of resources) and



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connected through a network all over the country so that access to such records is facilitated

- ◆ Provide as much information *suo moto* (voluntary disclosure) to the public at regular intervals through various means of communications including internet so that the public have minimum resort in getting such information.
- ◆ Disseminate all information material taking into consideration of aspects such as the cost effectiveness, local language, effective communication and accessible method.
- ◆ Appropriate fee can be collected which covers the medium or the print cost.

Disclosure of 'confidential' information

- ◆ If the information or record is related to or supplied by any other citizen and is treated as confidential, providing such information or record to any other citizen is subjected to following certain conditions. Within five days from the request for such information, the concerned authority should give a written notice intimating the person who has initially given such information and take his/her view and submission in writing before taking a decision about disclosure of the requested information.

Rights of Citizens

Concerned citizen can approach the higher authorities or complain to the central / state information commission;

- ◆ If the request for information is refused by the designated public authority without any reasonable cause or with malafide intention
- ◆ If he/she is asked to pay an amount of fee which he/she considers unreasonable
- ◆ If he/she is given incomplete, misleading, destroyed or false information

Penal provisions

Penalty is imposed if the Central/State Information Commissioner

- ◆ refuses to receive any application for information without any reasonable cause
- ◆ does not furnish information within the specified time
- ◆ denies the request for the information with malafide intention
- ◆ gives incorrect, incomplete, misleading or destroyed information knowingly.

In such cases, a penalty of Rs.250 per day is imposed till the application is received or information is furnished. But the total amount of such penalty should not exceed Rs.25,000.

Right to Information Act and Rural Development Programmes and Functionaries

Investment in Rural Development programmes in a district is the largest in terms of resources as well as the number of people it directly deals with. It also affects the livelihoods of people and hence it is important that all rural development functionaries are fully aware of their responsibilities under this Act. Transparency and Accountability are the core of this Act.

Steps to be taken by Rural Development Departments/ Agencies as required by the Act

1. Designating Public Information Officer (PIO)

As per the Act an Officer has to be designated as Public Information Officer at each level, e.g. DRDA/ BDO level and the following details of such persons should be widely publicised and made known. It may be prominently displayed in each of the offices at all levels:

- ◆ Designation
- ◆ Postal address
- ◆ Phone/ fax number
- ◆ E-mail address

2. Preparedness

- ◆ Making available format, procedures, fees and methods of seeking information to any person who wish to make use of RTI Act.
- ◆ Creating necessary arrangements/ facilities to make available the information sought by any person using RTI Act.
- ◆ Open and maintaining a record of (at block/ district level pertaining to:)
 - ☐ number of requests received for information (date-wise)
 - ☐ number of requests declined and reason thereof (date-wise)

- ☐ number of requests complied with (date-wise)
- ☐ number of appeals referred to different higher levels, nature of appeals and outcome of appeals
- ☐ Amount of fee collected (charges, fine, etc) at different levels under this Act.
- ☐ Particulars of any disciplinary action against any officers under this Act.

3. Basic features to be disseminated as per the Act

- ◆ Particulars of the organisation/ agency, functions and duties.
- ◆ Directory of officers and employees and their function, duties and powers (schemes/ programmes allotted) at different levels.
- ◆ Supervising officers and their location.
- ◆ Copies of manuals/ guidelines/ orders pertaining to various schemes/ programmes.
- ◆ Plans and budget at District/ Block/ Gram Panchayat level for various schemes/ programmes including (releases and expenditure) amount of subsidy received and disbursed.
- ◆ Details of beneficiaries (full address) of various schemes and the process of their selection.
- ◆ Arrangement for executing the programmes and work-wise/ scheme-wise approved budget (tendering process, selection of executing agency).
- ◆ Committees/ Groups constituted at different levels, terms of reference and their reports/ recommendation.
- ◆ Notice Boards at each work/ assets/ sites giving details of cost, dates of completion, name of works, schemes, implementing agency, etc.

4. Training and Awareness

- ◆ Develop and organise training programmes to orient officials/ non officials
- ◆ Organise public awareness campaign on RTI and encourage citizens to take advantage of the Act.
- ◆ Prepare guidelines in easily comprehensible and local language for public who wish to use the Act.

- ◆ Publicise the provisions of the Act and procedure through mass media and public display.

5. Suo moto/ mandatory information

The Panchayat Raj Act promotes and emphasises transparency and accountability. Accordingly, stipulations like public display of information and the institution of Gram Sabha for submission of the works/ performance of Gram Panchayat under various schemes have been made. This is a means of public/ social audit. Every scheme/ programme guidelines specify the mandatory information/ details that need to be put/ displayed on the public information boards in prominent places besides placing them on notice boards.

Scheme-wise details of information that need to be maintained at different levels are given specially under each scheme. In order to reduce the burden of too many applications and inconvenience to both officials and common citizens officials/ PIOs at different levels are encouraged to expand the list of this suo moto information. Some examples are:

- ◆ Funds allocated, received, released, expenditure under each scheme (Gram Panchayat/ Block/ District) for at least last three years.
- ◆ Targets and achievements under each scheme.
- ◆ Work-wise cost estimate, actual expenditure, period of work, implementing agency (Gram Panchayat/ Block/ District).
- ◆ Assets list of Gram Panchayat (at least last 5 years with source of funds, i.e. scheme)
- ◆ BPL list (Gram Panchayat/ Block/ District); Scheme-wise number of beneficiaries including gender, caste and other classification (Gram Panchayat/ Block) for the current and past years.
- ◆ Number of SHGs formed, given grades, linked to Bank credit.
- ◆ Number of Ration Card holders.
- ◆ Number of workers registered (name and address)
- ◆ Quantity of foodgrain allotted, received, distributed and stock (FFW)
- ◆ Name and address of persons executing the work.
- ◆ Bank branches: number of loan applications received/ processed/ sanctioned/ disbursed (individuals/ groups – targets and achievements).
- ◆ Repayment and recovery performance (individuals/ groups).

NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME (2006)

Introduction

National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme 2006, (NREGS 2006 or "Employment Guarantee Act" for short), came into force from 2 February, 2005. The Scheme is designed as per the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA-2005) passed by the Parliament. Initially the Scheme is launched in 200 districts. It will be gradually extended to the whole of rural India (except the state of Jammu and Kashmir) within five years, i.e., by mid-2010. Urban areas are not covered under this scheme.

The objective of the Scheme is to provide for the enhancement of livelihood security of the households in rural areas of the country by providing at least one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.

Salient Features

Legal Guarantee for Wage Employment

The Employment Guarantee Act and NREGS ensures a legal guarantee of wage employment to anyone who is willing to do casual manual labour at the statutory minimum wage. It provides a universal and enforceable legal right to the most basic form of employment.

Under NREGS any adult who applies for work is entitled to being employed on public works within 15 days. The work guarantee



applies in rural areas of 200 notified districts only, and it is limited to "100 days per household per year".

Target Community

The work guarantee is a 'universal' entitlement to all rural households – any adult (above 18 years) in a rural household is entitled to apply. Anyone who is willing to do unskilled manual labour at the minimum wage specified by the Scheme will be provided employment on demand. It is **not** restricted to Below Poverty Line (BPL) families only. The household should be a bonafide local resident of the area where he/she works.



Local Resident

'Local' resident means who is residing within the Gram Panchayat area. It will include the migrant families of that area including those that may have migrated since some time but may return.

Meaning of Household

Household means a nuclear family comprising mother, father, their children and it also include any person wholly or substantially dependent on the head of the family. A single member family is also treated as an household.

Number of days of guaranteed employment

The employment guarantee is restricted to '100 days per household per year' under the scheme. The 'year' here refers to the financial year, which starts on 1 April. In other words, on 1 April each household gets a new 'quota' of 100 days for the next twelve months. The quota of 100 days can be 'shared' between adult members of the household. Different persons can work on different days, or even on the same day, as long as their combined days of employment do not exceed 100 days in the financial year.



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Accessing the Scheme

It is basically a 'two-step' procedure. The first step is for every intended worker to 'register' with the Gram Panchayat. The second step is to 'apply' for work. Registration is required only once in every five years, but applications for work have to be submitted each time the work is required. Registration will be done throughout the year.

Application for Registration

The application for registration can be given on a plain paper. There are also printed applications provided by the State Government. Applying in printed form is not compulsory. Any person (say illiterate) may appear in person and make an oral request for registration. The application need to include details like name and address, age, sex, SC/ST and a photograph of all adult members. The main purpose of the registration process is to facilitate advance planning of works.

Job Card

Job card is the most critical legal document for work entitlement and its guarantee. If a household applies for registration, it is the duty of the Gram Panchayat to register it and issue a 'job card' within a week after registration. The job card will ensure that labourers are in possession of a written record of the number of days they have worked, wages paid, unemployment allowances received, and so on, instead of depending on government officials for this purpose. A person can apply for work only when he/she is registered.



Issuing a job card

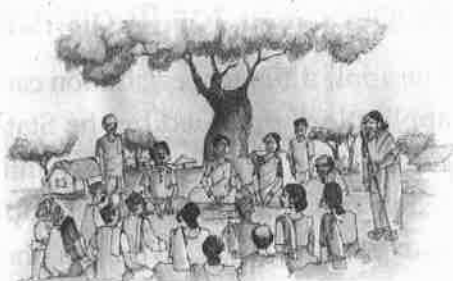
All applications will be physically verified for local residence, adult members etc. and registered by Gram Panchayat. After verification every registered household will be assigned a Registration Number. This number will be in accordance with the coding system prescribed for Below Poverty Line (BPL) census 2002. The whole list will be presented in the gram sabha of registered workers to ensure that registration is not done based on fraudulent information. The list of registered

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workers will be made public and sent to the Programme Officer for reporting to District Panchayat for further planning and record. The job card as designed by the state government will be issued by gram panchayat after the above process is completed. A copy of the job card should be maintained at gram panchayat.

Addition/deletions in job card

If there is any modification to be done in the job card, one should follow the prescribed process. If there is change of residence, the household should intimate the same to the panchayat and they can also request in writing for any addition/deletion. The gram panchayat also should take up annual updation of registration when individual households desiring changes can place a request. These changes will be read out in gram sabha for verification and approval. The list will be sent to programme officer for effecting the changes.



Identity for individual members listed in the job card

States may issue Identity Cards to individual members containing information on page 2 of job card and also the registration number. This provision may vary from state to state.

Charge/fee for registration of job card

The household need not pay any charge/ fee for registration of the job card. The cost of job card including photograph is included in the programme cost. The photograph can be affixed within three months of registration, if it is impractical to attach it at the time of the registration.

Loss of job card

If there is loss of job card, the household should apply to the Gram Panchayat for issue of new/ duplicate job card. This application will be processed similarly to that of issuing new job card. The only difference is that the particulars can be verified from duplicate copy of the job card in the Panchayat.



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Grievances/complaints

If a person has a grievance against the non-issuance of job card, he/she may bring it to the notice of the Programme Officer. If the grievance is against the Programme Officer, he/she may bring it to the notice of the District Programme Coordinator or designated grievance redressal authority at the block or district level. All such complaints shall be disposed off within 15 days.

Applying for work

Application for work may be submitted by a job card holder in writing either to the Gram Panchayat or to the Programme Officer, as may be specified in the Scheme. State Government Employment Guarantee Scheme will specify the authority to which the application for work has to be made.

A single application may be given for number of days in different periods during the year for which wage employment is required. A number of applicants may give a joint application also. Every applicant should be issued with a dated receipt of the application by the Gram Panchayat or Programme Officer.



Entitlement for disabled persons

If a disabled person applies for work then work suitable to his ability and qualification will have to be given. This may also be in the form of services that are identified as integral to the programme.



Choice for labourers over the work

There is no choice for labourers over the work. They have to accept whatever employment is given to them by the Gram Panchayat or Programme Officer.

Works

Sanctioning Works

The primary responsibility of allocating employment opportunities is with the Gram Panchayat. It shall be open to the Programme Officer and the Gram Panchayat to direct any person who has applied for employment under the Scheme to do work of any type permissible under the Scheme.

If the request for work is made to a Gram Panchayat, then work will be given out of the works already taken up or to be taken up by the Panchayat. Priority will be given to allot employment locally. If some persons have to be directed to report for work beyond 5 km, persons older in age and women will be given preference to work on the work-sites nearer to their residence.

If the Gram Panchayat is not able to provide work, it can also allocate employment in a work to be executed by any other Implementing Agency (IA) within the area through the Programme Officer or directly asking IA and by informing the Programme Officer.

If the Gram Panchayat decides that employment cannot be given under the shelf of works with the Gram Panchayat and employment needs to be given outside the Gram Panchayat, the Gram Panchayat will inform the Programme Officer, who will then allot the work at some place outside the gram panchayat and also intimate the Gram Panchayat.

Time-frame for getting work

The Gram Panchayat/Programme Officer is responsible for providing wage employment to the applicant within 15 days from the date that the employment has been sought or the date of receipt of application whichever is a later date.



Village Level Functionaries

If a gram panchayat does not allot employment within 15 days, the Programme Officer will allot employment to the persons concerned. The employment allotted will be intimated to the gram panchayat.

Kinds of Work

The works that can be taken up under the scheme include ;

- (1) Water conservation and water harvesting;
- (2) Drought proofing (including afforestation);
- (3) Irrigation canals including micro and minor irrigation works;
- (4) Provision of irrigation facility to land owned by households belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, beneficiaries of land reforms, or beneficiaries of Indira Awaas Yojana;
- (5) Renovation of traditional water bodies including desalting of tanks;
- (6) Land development
- (7) Flood control and protection works" including drainage in water logged areas;
- (8) Rural connectivity to provide all-weather access,
- (9) Any other work which may be notified by the Central Government in consultation with the State Government.



Initiating 'new works'

"New works" can be initiated only if;

- (1) At least fifty labourers become available for such work, and
- (2) The labourers cannot be absorbed in the ongoing works.

However, this restriction can be waived by the State Government 'in hilly areas and in respect of afforestation'

Wages

Wage rate

Labourers are entitled to the statutory minimum wage applicable to agricultural workers in the State, unless the Central Government 'overrides' this by notifying a different wage rate. If the Central Government notifies a wage rate, it is subject to a minimum of Rs.60 per day. **Equal wages will be paid for both men and women.**



Mode of payment

Daily wages or piece-rates – both are permitted under the Act. In both cases, the minimum wage defined by the state will apply. If wages are paid on a piece-rate basis, the schedule of rates has to be such that a person working for seven hours would normally earn the minimum wage.

Wages may be paid in cash or in kind or both. Payment in kind would usually mean part payment in foodgrain. The cash component has to account for at least 25 per cent of the total wage.



Regularity of wage payments

Wages are to be paid every week or in any case not later than a fortnight after the date on which such work was done. A State Government may prescribe that a proportion of the wages in cash should be paid on a daily basis. If wages are not paid in time, labourers are entitled to compensation as per the provisions of the Payment of Wages Act 1936.

Entitlements/ specific facilities at the worksite

Labourers have certain entitlements at the worksite. Accordingly the following facilities are to be provided at the worksite:



Village Level Functionaries

- ◆ Safe drinking water
- ◆ Shade for children and periods of rest,
- ◆ First-aid box with adequate material for emergency treatment for minor injuries and other health hazards connected with the work.
- ◆ Care for children of labourers : In case the number of children below the age of six years accompanying the women working at any site are five or more, a creche will be provided and a person can be engaged to look after such children. Such a person is also entitled to the same minimum wage as other labourers.



Unemployment Allowance

Anyone who has not been provided with work within 15 days of applying for work (or within 15 days of the date for which employment is sought, in the case of "advance applications"), is entitled for **unemployment allowance**. If an applicant fails to report for work within 15 days of being informed that work is available, he or she stands debarred from receiving the unemployment allowance for a period of three months.



Rate of allowance

The unemployment allowance is fixed by the State Government. It would be no less than one-fourth of the wage rate for the first thirty days, and not less than one-half of the wage rate after that.

Time-frame for payment

The unemployment allowance is to be paid not later than fifteen days from the date on which it became due for payment.

Sanctity for the Plan from Gram Panchayat

Neither the Programme Officer nor the Intermediate Panchayat can reject the plan from Gram Panchayat. If the plan from Gram Panchayat is not within the parameters or technically not feasible, the Programme Officer will record the comments and submit to Intermediate Panchayat which will examine and ask Gram Panchayat to revise/modify the Plan.

Type of Plan Documents

A five-year Perspective Plan for a District is prepared on which annual budget is estimated and drawn. This Perspective Plan provides continuity and enables to work beyond the restriction of financial year. It also provides a Project Approach. Based on this, annual plan will be approved for District/Block/Gram Panchayat

Shelf of Projects

A Shelf of Project means a plan document containing the list of identified and approved works to be taken up in a Gram Panchayat / Block / District with prioritisation and annual work plans. Works will be taken out of the list of works in the shelf in the order of priority so that over a period shelf will become empty. It is also possible in the process new works are identified and priority decided. Such works will be added to the shelf. The idea here is to keep a list of approved works ready to be taken up for execution as and when demand for employment/work arises rather than looking for works after demand arises. This is a process to be in 'readiness' always.

Scope for Convergence

Convergence of NREGS with funds from other sources to create durable assets is permitted. However, it may be noted that NREGS funds are to create additional employment and **not** to shift the work of other departments. In other words, we can bring funds from other schemes and supplement them with NREGS but **cannot substitute** with NREGS. Convergence should avoid duplication.

Convergence of NREGS with schemes like Literacy Mission and Health Mission is must. With the consent of workers, part of the wages can be used for social benefit scheme like health, insurance etc.

Discontinuing Unemployment Allowance

The unemployment allowance can be discontinued in any one of the following circumstances:

- (1) When the recipient has been directed to report for work by the Gram Panchayat or the Programme Officer
- (2) When the period for which employment is sought has come to an end;
- (3) When the recipient's household has exhausted its "quota" of 100 days of work (within the financial year);
- (4) When the household has earned as much as the wages of one hundred days of work, from the unemployment allowance and wage employment combined, within the financial year.



Planning for NREGS

Planning Process

Planning process is coordinated at different levels. Gram Panchayat has to forward a proposal of development projects to the Programme Officer for scrutiny and preliminary approval prior to the commencement of the year in which it is proposed to be executed. The Programme Officer is responsible for matching the demand for employment with the employment opportunities arising from the project and prepare a plan for the Block by consolidating proposals of the Gram Panchayats and the Intermediate Panchayats. The Intermediate Panchayat has to approve and forward the block plan to the District Panchayat. The District Programme Coordinator is required to prepare a labour budget in the month of December for the financial year containing the details of the anticipated demands for unskilled manual work in the district and the plan for engagement of labourers in the works covered under the scheme and submit it to the District Panchayats.

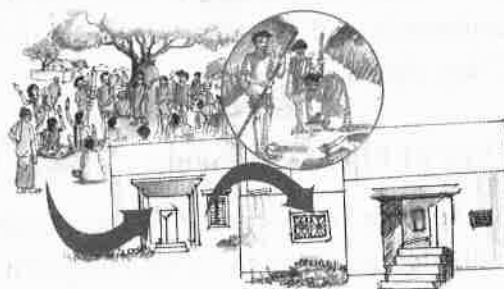
The Programme Officer will scrutinise the Annual Plan for its technical feasibility and satisfy himself that it meets the likely demand for employment based on the registrations and previous experience. If the programme officer feels that the list is insufficient to meet the demand, he may call for supplementary list.

Implementing Authorities

The Employment Guarantee Scheme is implemented by the State Government, with funding from the Central Government. The "principal authorities" for planning and implementation of the Scheme are the Panchayats at the District, Intermediate and village levels.

The basic unit of implementation is the Block. In each Block, a "Programme Officer" in the rank not less than the Block Development Officer (BDO), will be solely responsible for the

implementation of EGS. The Programme Officer is accountable to the "Block / Taluka" as well as to the District Coordinator.



At Village Level

Gram Sabha will recommend the work.

Gram Panchayat will identify works in consultation with Gram Sabha (GS) which will be called to estimate the demand for labour and to propose the number and priority of works to be taken up in the next financial year. The Plan formulated in the Gram Sabha will be forwarded to the Gram Panchayat. The Gram Panchayat will prepare an Annual Plan and forward to the Programme Officer. The Annual Plan should clearly indicate the existing demand for work, the demand in the previous year, the works taken up in the previous year, works on going and works proposed for the next year, likely costs, and proposed implementing agencies.

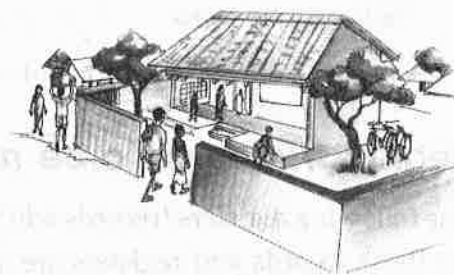
Gram Panchayat will implement the work; 50 per cent of the funds under the scheme will be allocated to Gram Panchayats.



At Block/Mandal/Tehsil Level

The intermediate panchayat will plan for works in the Block. The programme officer with his supporting staff will implement the works. The funds for these works will come from the remaining 50 per cent of funds (after allocating 50 per cent to Gram

Panchayats). This 50 per cent will be shared between intermediate panchayat and district panchayat.



At District Level

The District Programme Coordinator (CEO of Z.P./District Collector / any other senior officer designated by the District) will be the implementing officer.

Others

At all the three levels, the following can also be identified as Implementing Agencies:

- ◆ Line Departments
- ◆ Self-Help Groups
- ◆ NGOs
- ◆ Public Sector Undertakings

Duties of Panchayat and Government Officials

Notwithstanding the fact that individuals should give an application for registration, a team comprising President, SC/ST members and women members of gram panchayat along with a government functionary and panchayat secretary may carryout a door-to-door survey to identify persons willing to register for employment under the scheme

Capacity Building

Under the scheme, all identified Implementing Agencies (Gram.Panchayat., NGO, SHG, Line Departments etc) will have to be trained. The committee formed to monitor and supervise the work should also be trained. The various aspects of training are;

- ◆ Core elements pertaining to the scheme
- ◆ Roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders (Gram Sabha, Gram Panchayat, Programme Officer, SHGs, NGOs etc.)

- ◆ Skill specific tasks
- ◆ Social Audit and Right to Information etc

Registers/Records to be maintained

The following registers/records will be maintained under the scheme. The proforma for these records and registers are specified by the State Government.

- ◆ Application Registration Register
- ◆ Job Card Register at Gram Panchayat and Programme office
- ◆ Employment Register at Gram Panchayat level (demands received and employment provided).
- ◆ Employment Register at Programme Office
- ◆ Muster Rolls: All muster rolls should be duly numbered and issued by Programme Officer. All Gram Panchayats and implementing agencies must maintain the muster rolls
- ◆ Muster Rolls Register; at Programme Office level
- ◆ Assets Registers by Gram Panchayat and implementing agency
- ◆ Complaints Register at Gram Panchayat, Programme Office and District Office

Social Audit

Social audit is a mechanism to ensure transparency, accountability and participation. People are encouraged to inspect works, registers and records and satisfy with quality of works and expenditure.

Some of the mechanism of social audit is forming local vigilance and monitoring committee for each work through election in gram sabha. This committee will monitor and supervise the quality of works. Beneficiary/User Committees also can be formed. Report of these Committee will be placed in gram sabha and also submitted to Programme Officer.

Right to Information (RTI) and NREGS

Applicability of RTI to NREGS

NREGS is probably the only scheme where Right to Information is in-built. This is done through by incorporating following elements mandatory;

- ◆ Apprising Gram Sabha with the progress of scheme at every stage
- ◆ Social Audit based on a check-list suggested in the scheme.
- ◆ Physical Audit.



Information (Suo Moto) to be disclosed voluntarily

Under the scheme, following details should be put on notice board, website and through press release.

- ◆ List of persons Registered for Employment (monthly update)
- ◆ List of persons issued job card (monthly update)
- ◆ List of persons whose application for job card rejected (monthly update)
- ◆ List of persons applied for work (monthly update)
- ◆ List of locations, dates and names of person allotted work (monthly update)
- ◆ List of works with clear details of location (Gram Panchayat, Block, District) and implementing agency.
- ◆ List of persons whose names have been forwarded to Programme Officer for work
- ◆ List of implementing agencies and work allotted
- ◆ Dates and details of gram sabha
- ◆ Wage Rates / Schedule of Rates
- ◆ List of workers not reported for work
- ◆ List of workers entitled for unemployment allowance
- ◆ List of workers paid unemployment allowance

- ◆ Social Audit Report
- ◆ Financial information: Budget received, spent, balances.(date-wise / annual)

These are only illustrative list. More and more information can be added to the list.

Information to be disclosed on demand

- ◆ Muster rolls
- ◆ Bills, receipts, vouchers of purchases
- ◆ Measurement book
- ◆ Copies of sanction orders
- ◆ Assets Registers

Public Information Officer for NREGS

Public Information Officers (PIOs) are specified by the State government. As per the Act, an illustrative provision at different levels is as below.

Illustration of PIOs for NREGS

Level	Public Authority	APIO	PIO	Appreciable Authorities
Gram Panchayat	Gram Panchayat	—	Gram Savak Secretary	BDO
Taluka/ Block Mandal	Programme Office	Gram Sevak Secretary	BDO	District Programme Coordinator
District	District Programme Coordinators Office	BDO	Secretary of District Panchayat	District Collector Secretary State NREGS Committees

About NIRD

NIRD is the country's apex body for undertaking training, research, action research and consultancy functions in the rural development sector. It works as an autonomous organisation, supported by the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India.

Training is a major activity of the Institute. NIRD has a wide range of expertise and an excellent infrastructure to train senior officers and executives in policy formulation, management and implementation of rural development programmes.

NIRD gives equal importance to research for studying at first-hand, the needs and priorities of the rural people, the process of rural transformation and problems affecting implementation of rural development programmes in diverse socio-economic scenarios obtaining in various regions of the country.

NIRD is also involved in action research whose objective is to learn through 'action process', the field intervention methodologies that are workable and determine their implications for the policies and procedures of implementation of rural development programmes.

The consultancy services of the institute are made available to national and international organisations. NIRD has consultancy arrangements with UNDP, FAO, UNICEF, UNESCO, WHO, ILO, World Bank, ESCAP, CIRDAP, AARDO and others, besides many Ministries of State and Central Governments.

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