

**Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Gaurantee Act
and Impact on Livelihood**

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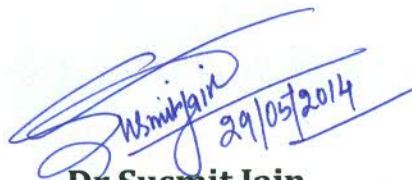
This is to certify that **Mr. Bhawani Shankar Sharma** student of PGDRM, Batch 3rd School of Rural Management, Institute of Health Management Research; Jaipur has undergone his Dissertation on the topic entitled “**A Study of MGNREGA and Impact on Livelihoods**” from **March 2014 to May 2014**.

The Candidate has successfully carried out the study assigned to him during dissertation and his approach to study has been scientific and analytical. This dissertation is partial fulfillment of the course requirements for the award of Post Graduate Diploma in Rural Management.

I wish him all success in all his future endeavors.



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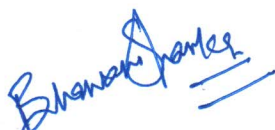
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This is to certify that the dissertation titled "MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYEMENT GAURANTEE ACT and IMPACT ON LIVELIHOOD".Enrollment No. 46 under the supervision of Dr Susmit Jain for award of Postgraduate Diploma in Rural Management of the Institute carried out during the period from March2014 to May, 2014 embodies my original work and has not formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma associate ship, fellowship, titles in this or any other Institute or other similar institution of higher learning.



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Abstract

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is considered as a “Silver Bullet” for eradicating rural poverty and unemployment, by way of generating demand for productive labour force in villages. It provides an alternative source of livelihood which will have an impact on reducing migration, restricting child labour, alleviating poverty, and making villages self sustaining through productive assets creation such as road construction, cleaning up of water tanks, soil and water conservation work, etc. For which it has been considered as the largest anti-poverty programme in the world. But the success of this Act depends upon its proper implementation. Thus, the present study attempts to critically examine the implementation process of this programme and its impact on livelihoods i.e. to what extent does MGNREGS has given justice in sustaining the livelihoods of poor communities in a Mohacha panchayat of Sawai madhopur district, Rajasthan. The study reveals that there is little impact of MGNREGA on livelihoods. After the analysis it was found that there were faults in the implementation of the programme. Religion and street biasness and favouritism in case of distribution of job card, dominance of dominant families, defective leadership and improper coordination among the stakeholders were found as major hurdles in this programme.

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“It is necessary to acknowledge all those persons who have directly shaped our work as well as lives”

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Abbreviation

MGNREGA Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Gaurantee Act

NREP National Rural Employment Programme

JGSY Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana

SGRY Sampoorna Grameen Rojgar Yojana

NFFWP National Food For Work Programme

EAS Employment Assurance Scheme

RLEGP Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme

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Executive summery

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is considered as a “Silver Bullet” for eradicating rural poverty and unemployment, by way of generating demand for productive labour force in villages. Rural poverty and unemployment in India have grown in an unprecedented manner during the last few decades. There is a growing incidence of illiteracy, blind faith, hungry people, mal-nourished children, anaemic pregnant women, farmer suicides, starvation deaths, migration resulting from inadequate employment, poverty, and the failure of subsistence production during droughts. In order to make solution of these problems and to provide livelihood security to rural unemployed, Government of India (GOI) enacted the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) in 2005. This Act is now called as Mahatma Gandhi NREGA. The Act provides a legal guarantee for 100 days of employment in every financial year to adult members of any rural household will to do public work related unskilled manual work at the statutory minimum wage.

The **objectives** of the study were:

- Understanding the implementation procedure of MGNREGA in the study village.
- Understanding the impact of MGNREGA on livelihoods.

The study was carried out in Rajasthan. However, the study area was confined to Mohacha Gram Panchayat of wazeerpur Block in Sawai Madhopur District. Using Random sampling method the study area was selected.

Key findings

Mismanagement of Job Cards- Majority of households (84.14%) expressed that they got their job cards without waiting for much time and without unnecessary visits to GP office while 15.86% claimed that they had to run many times to GP office even Block office for getting job cards.

Poor Quality of Works- There is no proper execution of works. Hence, it is a matter of concern that throughout the GP, the approved works are not always publicly displayed. It was revealed by the villagers that there was no Gram Sabha meeting regarding the activities of NREGS. Even maximum numbers of people are not aware about Gram Sabha meeting, which reflects non-participation of villagers or community in decision making.

Payment of Wages- The data from the field reflected that there is huge irregularity in payment of wages. While only 28% of beneficiaries claimed that they received the wages within a month, the rest claimed that there is no certainty in getting wages. But they received it mostly after 2 months. The contractors were quite conscious while paying the wages.

Worksite Facilities- But it was observed during field work that except drinking water no other facilities were arranged near worksite. Even some respondents claimed that in some

cases drinking water was also not available. While discussing worksite facilities like shade, some of the respondents claimed that the trees near to worksite were used and treated as shady shelters.

Suggestions

- There should be continuous efforts towards creating adequate awareness on different provisions of MGNREGS amongst the people. Creating awareness is necessary not only to motivate the people to work under the scheme but also to encourage them to participate in its planning and implementation.
- Efficient utilization of resources under the scheme requires bringing in transparency and accountability. Provision for social audit at the panchayat level on a regular basis can play a significant role in this regard.
- The leadership style should be democratic in nature. This will facilitate greater community participation, information sharing, expression of opinion by the rural mass, and development of social networks
- There is also the important role of the Govt. in implementation of MGNREGS. Thus the Govt. must take immediate steps to stop corruption in its implementation by which the MGNREGA wages reaches to the workers directly. We can surely ensure that the money goes to those who need it.
- There should be the ability and willingness of local Govt. and Panchayat to plan works and run the programmes effectively.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is considered as a “Silver Bullet” for eradicating rural poverty and unemployment, by way of generating demand for productive labour force in villages. Rural poverty and unemployment in India have grown in an unprecedented manner during the last few decades. There is a growing incidence of illiteracy, blind faith, hungry people, mal-nourished children, anaemic pregnant women, farmer suicides, starvation deaths, migration resulting from inadequate employment, poverty, and the failure of subsistence production during droughts. In order to make solution of these problems and to provide livelihood security to rural unemployed, Government of India (GOI) enacted the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) in 2005. This Act is now called as Mahatma Gandhi NREGA. The Act provides a legal guarantee for 100 days of employment in every financial year to adult members of any rural household will to do public work related unskilled manual work at the statutory minimum wage. Thus it is a universal programme. This minimum wage varies from state to state, in some states it is Rs. 80 whereas in other it is Rs. 125 or Rs. 120. According to the Act the minimum wage cannot be less than Rs. 60. The 100 days of work figure was estimated because the agricultural season is only supposed to last roughly around 250 days and unskilled workers have no alternative source of income in the remaining parts of the year.

1.2. History of MGNREGA

NREGA has come after almost 56 years of experience of other rural employment programmes, which include both Centrally Sponsored Schemes and those launched by State Govt. These comprise the National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) 1980-89; Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) 1983-89; Jawahar Rojgar Yojana (JRY) 1989-1990; Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) 1993-99; Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY) 1999-2002; Sampoorna Grameen Rojgar Yojana (SGRY) from 2001; National Food For Work Programme (NFFWP) from 2004 were national rural employment schemes. Among these, the SGRY and NFFWP have been merged with NREGA in 2005.

1.3 Time-line of MGNREGA

The following table 1.1. Shows the time line of MGNREGA whereby the scheme got its modifications during the years of its running.

Table 1.1: The Time line of MGNREGA

Aug 2005	Feb 2006	Apr 2007	Apr 2008	Oct 2008	16 Feb 2009	Oct 2009
NREGA legalized	Came into force in 200 districts	130 more districts included	Universalization Of the scheme	Wage transaction through banks/post offices	MOU with the postal dept.	Name changed to MGNREG A

As the table 1.1 depicts, when the Act got first introduced in 200 most backward districts of the country in Feb 2006, it was proposed to extend to the remaining districts only after 5 years, after seeing the popularity of the Act. But in the next year itself the Act was extended further to 130 more districts & within a year after the Act got universalized by bringing the entire country under its horizon with the exception of districts that have a hundred percent urban population & got soon named after Mahatma Gandhi (in Oct 2nd 2009) to make the Act more reachable to the masses and thus it became Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA).

1.4 Significance of MGNREGA

MGNREGA aims to achieve the objective as enunciated in the Article: 41 of the Indian Constitution- “giving citizens the right to work”. The Act is significant due to the following reasons:

- While the earlier wage employment programmes did not provide any guarantee of job, this Act provided guaranteed job. This guarantee for wage employment is now uniformed all over the country like never before.
- It is a development initiative, chipping in with essential public investment for creation of durable assets, without which the growth process can't be possible in the most backward regions of rural India.
- The key element of MGNREGA is the provision of employment by the state to those people who are unable to find alternative employment, which provides a form of social safety net to the rural unemployment people.
- In other wage employment programmes, anyone can be engaged as labour while in MGNREGA only job card holders that apply for employment can be engaged as laborers.

- There is no time frame in other wage employment programmes but in MGNREGA, employment will be given within 15 days of demand, payment also within 15 days of work.
- In other wage employment programme the duration of employment is dependent on duration of work by implementing agency while in MGNREGA, a job card holder applies for maximum 100 days. The other key attributes of this Act are labour-intensive work, decentralized participatory planning, women's empowerment, work-site facilities and above all transparency and accountability through the provision of social audits and right to information. The use of information technology in this programme is considered to bring about greater transparency through intensive monitoring and faster execution. The payment of wages through bank and post office accounts is other innovative step that is likely to reduce fudging of muster rolls on the part of the implementing agencies since the actual payments are beyond their reach.

1.5 Goals of MGNREGA

Long-term objectives of the Act include:

- Enhancement of livelihood security in rural areas by guaranteeing 100 days of wage employment in a financial year to every registered household.
- Creating productive assets
- Protecting the environment
- Reducing migration
- Empowering rural women and the poor through the provision of a right-based law.
- Fostering social equity.
- To create strong social safety net for the vulnerable groups by providing employment source, when other alternative are inadequate.

Thus MGNREGA has 3 distinct goals:

- Protective
- Preventive
- Promotive

It protects the rural poor from vulnerabilities by providing them demand based employment. It prevents risk associated with agricultural investment and forced migration of rural poor. It brings prosperity in rural economy via increased consumption demand. Thus MGNREGA can be considered as a growth engine.

1.6 The Implementation Structure of MGNREGA

MGNREGA has a five-tier structure of implementation starting from GP at the bottom to the central government at the top.

1. Gram Panchayat (GP)

GP is the nodal agency at the bottom level that has the authority to select, design and implement 50% of the works. Selection of works, monitoring and supervision are done by the Gram Sabha (village council). GP has the responsibility to register households, issue job cards, receive applications for employment, provide employment and monitor the NREGA works.

2. Block Panchayat

The rest 50% may be undertaken either by the block Panchayat or the district Panchayat or both. Block Panchayat monitors and coordinates the plans and works at the block level. Computer updating of MGNREGA works, muster roll entries, etc is done at the block level under the guidance of the MGNREGA programme officer.

3. District panchayat:

District Panchayat, in addition to implementing non-mandatory works, coordinates MGNREGA activities at the district level. Besides, it has the responsibility to prepare both the district annual plan and the five-year perspective plan. These two plan documents are the bases which guide the implementation of MGNREGA at the village level. These documents are prepared at the district level in consultation with the GP and block Panchayats.

4. State Government

Next in hierarchy is the state government which acts as a facilitator in the flow of MGNREGA funds and helping in preparation of manpower. It has the responsibility to set up the State Employment Guarantee Council. The latter has the role to advise the government from time to time on MGNREGA implementation in the state. Besides, the council is also entrusted with the responsibility of monitoring and evaluation of the MGNREGA in the state.

5. Central Government

At the top of the hierarchy comes the central government. The Ministry of Rural Development, New Delhi is the nodal agency for MGNREGA implementation. It has the responsibility to set up Central Employment Guarantee Council for receiving advice on MGNREGA implementation. It may also undertake independent evaluation and monitoring of the scheme. It has the responsibility to prepare the budget and disburse funds.

1.7 Decentralized planning & MGNREGA

MGNREGA is a unique Act which recognizes the legitimate role of Panchayats in addressing their fundamental duty as expressed in the 73rd constitutional Amendment of providing “economic development and social justice” in their area. The recognition of PRI as the principal agency of implementation under MGNREGA has opened up enormous opportunities for decentralizing development respecting local solutions to local people.

1.8 Review of Related Literature

Since the date of implementation of NREGS various social scientists have made attempt to study the impact of NREGS and also its implementation procedures.

Sen et al (2009) attempted to measure the outcome of good governance practiced by Gram Panchayats (GPs) of West Medinipur district of West Bengal through the employment generated under NREGS. Data regarding different parameters related to core characteristics of good governance such as participation, transparency, accountability, effectiveness and efficiency, equity was taken into consideration in this study. This study mainly gives importance on potential implementation of MNREGA needs adequate efficient governing body and motivation.

As per the Panchayat and Rural Development Dept. Report on the performance of NREGA in 2007-08, the average number of person days created per household in West Bengal was 25; whereas in the study area it is 19 clearly shows under performance. The average participation rate of 19% with maximum of 40% and minimum of 5% shows a good performance compared to 13.1% state average rate (WB Human Development Report 2004). Average women participation rate (22%) is rightly better than the overall participation rate; showing good equality among genders. Equity which states the equality of men and women in decision making procedure found statistically significant. Accountability also found significant and shows positive relation with the NREGS performance. This represents efficiency and effectiveness of Govt. plays a positive role in successful implementation of NREGS. More transparency will tend to increase person days creation. Likewise more participation, i.e. the attendance in Gram Sansad meeting the more average person days will be created. Thus, to conclude it, this study says increasing the performance of governing body (here GPs) can improve the NREGS performance, hence helps to reduce the poverty level.

Khan, Ullah and Salluja (2007) have discussed the direct and the indirect effects of NREGP on employment generation and poverty reduction in a local area. For this, a detailed survey was done in a poor agricultural village with 400 households, nearly 2500 people. The survey recorded income and expenditure levels by type of household including large, small and marginal farmers, agricultural labour etc. The survey also recorded production activities undertaken by the inhabitants. This village study reveals that most people do not access the

scheme, as they haven't heard of the programme. They would like a more proactive role of the panchayat in deciding the infrastructure to be constructed.

Nayak, Behera, and Mishra (2008) conducted their study in 2 districts of Raj.. NREGA programme was first introduced in 200 most backward districts of the country. This study shows that the state as a whole as well as the two sample districts are well in certain physical and financial parameters like provision of employment to those who demand jobs and maintenance of wage and non-wage ratio. However their performance in certain other important parameters like utilization of funds and creation of demand for jobs is not very encouraging. While the target is to guarantee 100 days of employment to each household, not many households have achieved this target. According to this report well thought out effort is necessary to address these problems of NREGA in the state.

Dreze (2007) looks at the corruption in rural employment programs in Orissa and how this has continued in a NREGS as well. However, he believes that there is tremendous potential of NREGA in the survey areas. Where work was available, it was generally found that workers earned close to (and sometimes more than) the statutory minimum wage of Rs 70 per day, and that wages were paid within 15 days or so. This is an unprecedented opportunity for the rural poor, and there was evident appreciation of it among casual labourers and other disadvantaged sections of the population. There is the hope among workers that NREGA would enable them to avoid long-distance seasonal migration. Further, there is plenty of scope for productive NREGA works in this area, whether it is in the field of water conservation, rural connectivity, regeneration of forest land, or improvement of private agricultural land.

Institute of Applied Manpower Research, Delhi (2009), "All India Report on Evaluation of NREGA, A Survey of Twenty Districts". This study is based on evaluation of the NREGS which assess its impact by taking 20 districts from Northern, Western, Southern and North-East region of India and 300 beneficiaries from each districts. This study reveals that in many districts, affixing of photograph on job cards is not followed and in some places the beneficiary paid money for getting it. Job card was not designed to have sufficient space for all the entries in detail. Many households did not get the work within the stipulated 15 days time of demand for work, neither were they paid any unemployment allowance. On the utility of maximum number of days of works, only small fractions of households could utilize more than 35 days of work, remaining still lagging behind. The reason for non-utilization of maximum permissible 100 days of work is late starting of the scheme. In most of the worksites, excepting crèche, other facilities like shed, drinking water were provided. Due to the income generation through this scheme, the numbers of beneficiaries at the low earning level are reduced to nearly half in size. There is a rise of families who are spending more on food and non-food items.

1.9 Statement of the Problem

The literature review carried out above reflects that though some researchers have done study on NREGS most of those are confined to economic aspect only. It is not comprehensive. Very few people have emphasized on implementation aspects of NREGS. Social aspects are not much highlighted. The present study will discuss both implementation and the impact of NREGS. While studying the study will emphasis on following questions:

1. What extent MGNREGA has helped in sustaining the livelihoods?
2. Does MGNREGA become successful in improving the living condition of the poor?
3. Does it promise job to the needy?
4. Does it successful in reducing migration?
5. Is it really a livelihood generating programme than wage-earning scheme?
6. Are the people really aware about MGNREGA work?
7. Is the Act properly implemented as per its rules?

1.10 Objective of the study

The main objectives of the present study are:-

- Understanding the implementation procedure of MGNREGA in the study village.
- Understanding the impact of MGNREGA on livelihoods.

1.11 Research Methodology

Universe of Study

The study was carried out in Rajasthan. However, the study area was confined to Mohacha Gram Panchayat of wazeerpur Block in Sawai Madhopur District. Using purposive sampling method the study area was selected.

Sampling Procedure

For the selection of beneficiary respondents two stages were followed. In the first stage purposive sampling method was adopted for the selection of the study area.

In the second stage, for selecting the sample respondents, random sampling method was adopted.

Sample Size

A sample of 150 households including both job card holders and non-job card holders were selected. Here, non-job card holder households were selected to explore the reasons Sfor their non-participation in the MGNRES activities. Out of 150 households 68 households are not having job card.

Data Collection

Data was collected both from primary and secondary sources. Primary data was collected from all the stakeholders of NREGS. Questionnaire surveys with the different stakeholders

engaged in NREGS in the study site were organised. Semi structured informal interviews also taken from selected households. Transect walk into the MGNREGS worksites were conducted to have firsthand experience on the MGNREGS works at the community level. The secondary data was collected from official records, policy documents, published reports of similar projects, journals and literature form social science discipline.

1.12 Significance of the Study

The present study attempts to understand the implementation procedures of MGNREGS and its impact on livelihoods in a panchayat of Sawai Madhuopur district. This project focuses on the role of GP to generate sufficient employment opportunities, the procedures for registration, issuance of job cards, and application for employment. This would enable us to understand and examine the institutional mechanisms under which the entire programme is being implemented. The problems and prospects of MGNREGA can then be better understood and accordingly, necessary measures can be devised to make the programme realize its set objectives. The outcome of the study will help in understanding the problem of implementation of the project. It will help in formulating the better policy and strategy for the future.

Chapter 2 Findings and Analysis

2.1. Introduction

Starting from 200 districts, the coverage of NREGA was increased to all the rural districts in the country. However, despite coming out of a countrywide struggle for enactment of EGA, the performance of the NREGA varies a lot across the states.

The major question raises how to implement the Act, which can give justice to the poor for whom the act was designed. To a certain extent, the effective implementation is consequent upon greater awareness and participation of beneficiaries and PRIs, since they have a greater role to play according to the Act. However, technicalities apart, effective implementation of the Act is also conditional on the effort of the state governments in ensuring effective implementation of the Act by doing away with the contractor system, simplifying the implementation design and above all, the political will to ensure its successful implementation.

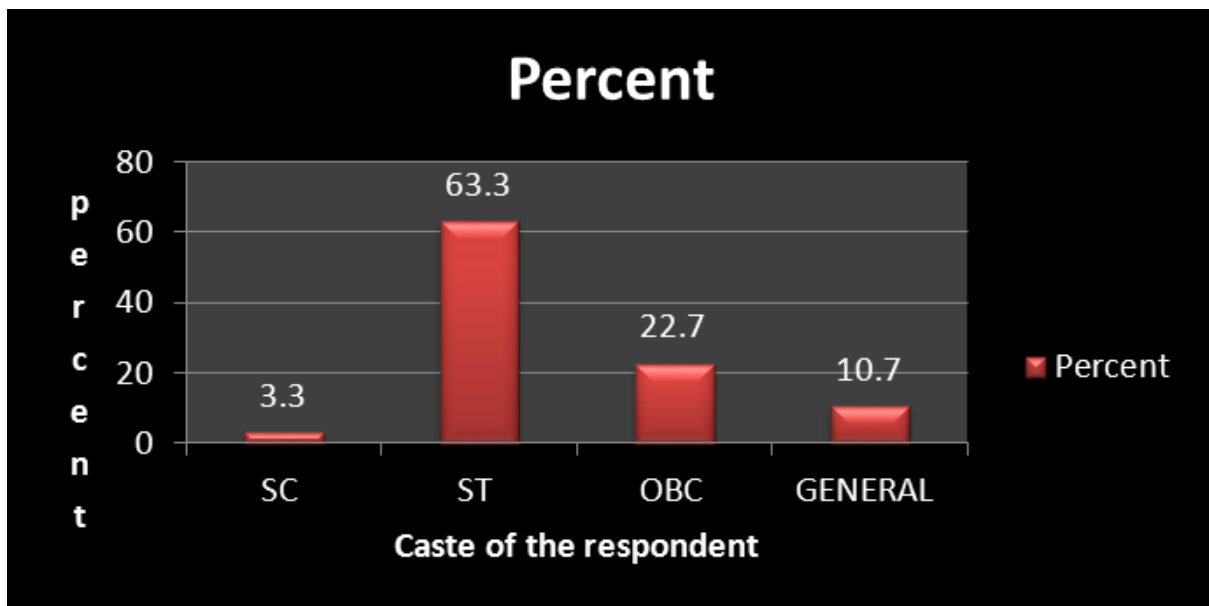
2.2. Socio-Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The sample households selected for the study cover households from various caste and ethnic communities.

2.2.1. Caste of the Respondents

Caste and ethnicity plays a major role in any kind of development project. The presence of various castes and ethnicity creates a heterogeneity situation, which stands as a hurdle in the process of implementation (Mishra, 2007).

Figure 2.1: Caste of the Respondents

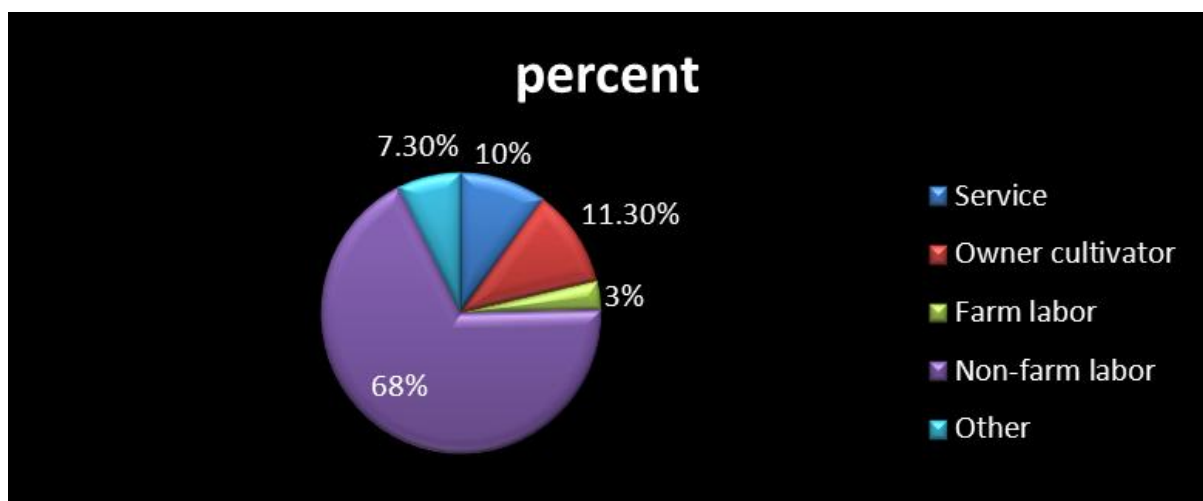


The above figure shows that out of 150 households, majority (63.3%) of the households are belonging to ST population. The rest of the households distributed among OBC, SC and General Communities. They are respectively 22.7%, 10.7% and 3.3%.

2.2.2. Main Source of Livelihood

All most all the households were depending on forest resources for their livelihoods. However, in course of time lots of change has seen. The intervention of various development projects, outsiders have brought a lost to the forest resources. It has disturbed the symbiotic relation between man and nature. The dependence of forest has gone down.

Figure 2.2: Main Source of Livelihood



The majority of populations (68%) in Mohacha village are involved in non-farm sector having poor economic status and livelihood insecurity (Figure 2.3). Among the non-farm laborers the number of STs (54.9%) and OBC (29.4%) are more in comparison to other castes.

2.3. Implementation of MGNREGA

2.3.1 Awareness

NREGA is distinctive for its unique vision to redefine avenues of providing employment opportunities to the deprived in rural India. But the possibility and efficient chances of employment largely comes with the better level of awareness as it marks the level of accessibility. This issue of awareness emerges one of the hindrances to the local community. It thus necessitates sufficient awareness amongst the intended beneficiaries regarding provisions like guaranteed days of employment, unemployment allowance, minimum wages, availability of complaint register, etc. However, the situation in this front is not very encouraging in the study area. As most of the worker respondents are illiterate and belong to the economically poor class, the extent of awareness about NREGA has emerged out to be a major concern in all the hamlets. Around 93% of the villagers are aware about the NREGS. Among them the majority are the STs (63.3%) and illiterate (48%). But workers' awareness on how to apply for job cards, awareness about minimum wages and demand for work was reportedly very low. Around 7% villagers are not at all aware about NREGS. Those who are aware about it out of them only 41% of the respondents are aware of the number of minimum days of employment guaranteed to each household under the scheme. Only 54% households in this panchayat are having job cards.

The procedural and implementation aspects of NREGA have never been free from confronting some basic challenges like general awareness, understanding policy nitty-gritty, sufficient access etc. Having given the socio - economic background of the respondents, the structural issues such as transparency, maintenance of documents and accountability were difficult things to actualize from the workers' point of view. When asked whether beneficiaries knew about the time span of getting employment from the date of the submission of applications under the NREGA, only 20 per cent respondents revealed that they were aware of any such guidelines like to get employment within the 15 days from the date of application for jobs.

2.3.2. Source of information:

Table 2.1:Source of getting information on MGNREGS

Source of information	percent
panchayat office	71.3%
media-radio	0.7%
neighbour	17%
any other	4.0%
NA	7.0

The major source of information for the villagers regarding MGNREGS is PRIs including Sarapanch, Members and GP officials. Around 71.3% of the villagers claimed that they informed about MGNREGS from GP office which indicates that GP officials playing a significant role in spreading information on MGNREGS. However, the GP has not played any major role in proper implementation of this project. It has confined itself mostly in spreading the message about job card. Even not in distributing the job cards in an ethical procedure.

Provisions for safeguard of transparency and accountability are incorporated into the Act and also in the NREGA guidelines. For instance the NREGA guidelines require muster rolls to be available in the Panchayat office and also at work sites. This can go a long way to preventing corruption in wage payments, since it makes the muster rolls available for public scrutiny and social audit. But the reality is somewhat else.

Interestingly, a large section of the respondents (40.7%) across panchayat report that they hardly see notifications in advance regarding the NREGS meetings. This perhaps indicates that notices are not widely circulated by the panchayat. The place and mode of notification may also cause hindrance. This is so because the notifications are generally put in the government offices and villagers hardly visit these offices. They visit such offices only when they desperately feel to do so. Further, most of the job seekers being illiterate do not have the ability and inclination to read the notification even when it is written in vernacular language. This is likely to restrict not only the job-seekers' participation in the scheme but also incorporation of their needs and views in works.

2.3.3. Mismanagement of Job Cards

Majority of households (84.14%) expressed that they got their job cards without waiting for much time and without unnecessary visits to GP office while 15.86% claimed that they had to run many times to GP office even Block office for getting job cards. Some interesting things were found in the initial days during 2006. It was revealed that few villagers first got employment without card and after working some days, got their job card at the work place. Bribe was also taken from Govt. employees, rich families, by the Sarapanch, Members and GP secretary in order to give one or two job cards to a single household. Not only that but also there is religion and street biasness and favoritism seen in case of getting job card. Some of the Muslim women claimed that as the Sarapancha is belonging to ST community he has ignored their demand for card in many times. However due to interference of Block Development Officer few of them got the card.

“After complaining through the member of Disha office, BDO came to our village and at last we got our job cards,” Said Sabina khan (35 years), a women from Muslim community. She also said, they faced some trouble in getting their payment for which they had to do strike/dharna at BDO office”.

As per the MGNREGA guideline, affixing of photographs on job cards is mandatory without any charge. However, not a single job card found with photograph in the field. There is also manipulation of job cards by the panchayat secretary for which in most of the job cards,

entries were either fake or blank. With respect to average days of employment provided to the households, it is 50 man days according to muster roll, while according to job card entries and labor statement it is 60 and 15 respectively.

Sobha Jatav (40 years), a woman from SC community, had worked for 15 days and was paid for those number of days, but in her job card, 60 days of work mentioned. Likewise (28 years) Baber Ansari, has worked only for 15 days but there was entry of 72 days in his job card. It shows that this system is highly corrupted. No officials are worried about the poor regarding the job card updating, no such initiation is being taken by GP.

While large majority of the job card holders reported that they keep the cards in their own custody, few respondents (20%) have reported that their cards are normally kept in the custody of the ward members or sarpanchs . This may largely be due to the ignorance of the job-seekers on custody of the cards. It is also giving an opportunity for officials to manipulate.

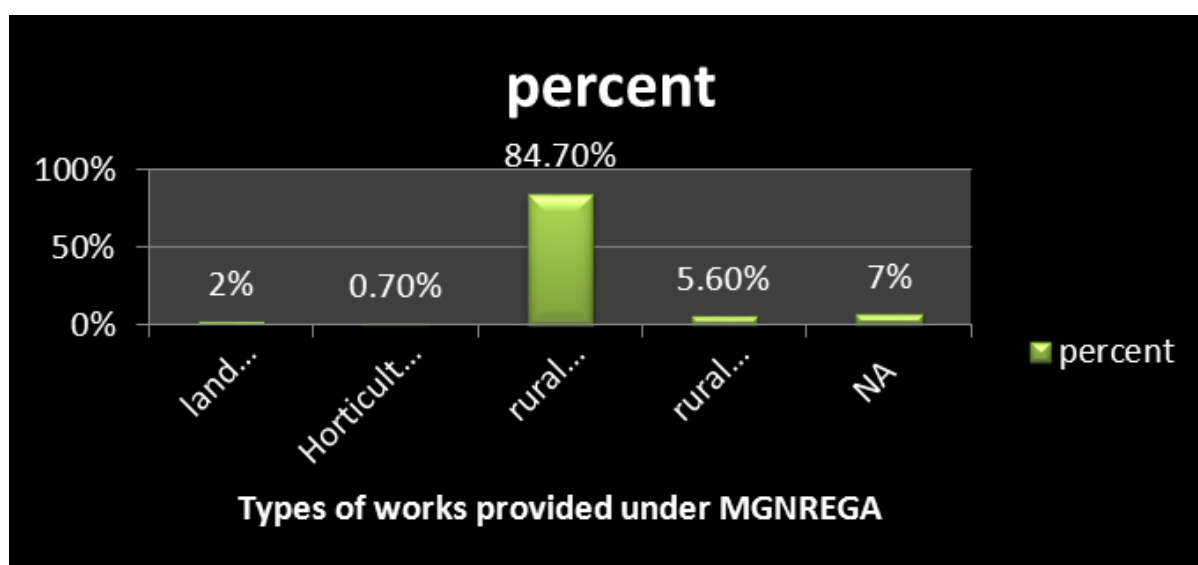
2.3.4. Poor Quality of Works

There is no proper execution of works. Hence, it is a matter of concern that throughout the GP, the approved works are not always publicly displayed. It was revealed by the villagers that there was no Gram Sabha meeting regarding the activities of NREGS. Even maximum numbers of people are not aware about Gram Sabha meeting, which reflects non-participation of villagers or community in decision making. The villagers used to work in any work assigned by the contractor or Sarpanch. The internal understanding between contractors, Sarpancha and JEn used to confine the work in paper only. Site account registers in respect of receipt and issue of materials to the work and Temporary advance register in respect of advance availed for payment of wages had not been maintained, despite their mandated requirement for departmental execution. MGNREGA guidelines permit execution of road projects providing all weather connectivity in rural areas. However, during field work it was observed that the road remain kuchha and incomplete and is not able to provide all weather access.

Drawing an example of village infrastructure a villagers said that the road which was constructed 2 year back through NREGA project has not meet the needs of villagers. The quality of road was so bad that it did not continue even for a year. The road is totally wiped out in last rainy season and now it is same as before.

2.3.5. Poor Planning And Lack Of Coordination Among Villagers And Official Members

Figure 2.3: Types of works undertaken in study village under MGNREGA



The majority of population said that only road work has been undertaken in their Gram Panchayat which is incomplete due to conflicts among villagers as well as between 27 members of panchayat office and forest dept. Though, there was fund around Rs. 300000 came for watershed activities in 2010 but it was returned to Block office, as the work stopped before it starts due to above reason.

2.3.6. Payment of Wages

The data from the field reflected that there is huge irregularity in payment of wages. While only 28% of beneficiaries claimed that they received the wages within a month, the rest claimed that there is no certainty in getting wages. But they received it mostly after 2 months. The contractors were quite conscious while paying the wages. They used to delay in paying wages to those laborers who are illiterate and no voice. It is observed from the field that around 81% of the beneficiaries are not having the minimum wages fixed by the centre. While the MGNREGA guidelines permit equal wages for equal work, it is not happening in reality. As per the views of few villagers widow and old women are receiving lesser wages in comparison to men.

Sumitra Gauda, this woman already crossed 65 years, earned only Rs. 30 from MNREGA work for supplying water to workers. According to her, the Scheme from Govt. is good, but those who are taking in charge of it, are not implementing properly.

Now MGNREGA has become very organized. The bank accounts are opened in the name of the wage workers. The money is directly transferred to the accounts and there is no one in between. But in the study area, around 46.35% of the beneficiaries have not opened their account either in bank or in post office while 53.65% beneficiaries have account. It may be due to lack of interest or lack of awareness. According to some villagers, if there is regular work and regular payment, we will be interested to open account. Around 67.07% of the beneficiaries have received their wages directly through cash while 32.93% beneficiaries

received their wages through account transfer. Reading out of the muster roll at the time of payment is mandatory under the MGNREGA. However, the situation is not very encouraging in this regard. All the respondents have pointed out that the muster roll is not read out.

2.3.7. Worksite Facilities

Any studies on MGNREGS would sound incomplete if it doesn't talk about worksite facilities. A proper working condition is a primary necessity for ensuring safety and efficient condition for workers which particularly in the case of women is much more important. According to MGNREGS guidelines, it is mandatory to have basic facilities such as safe drinking water, first-aid kits, shades, period of rest and also crèche facility. But it was observed during field work that except drinking water no other facilities were arranged near worksite. Even some respondents claimed that in some cases drinking water was also not available. While discussing worksite facilities like shade, some of the respondents claimed that the trees near to worksite were used and treated as shady shelters. Thus manipulation by the local implementing agencies and absence of any monitoring mechanism at the same time resulted in the creation of unsafe and sub-standard working conditions.

2.3.8. Compulsion of works on Workers

There is also compulsion on worker regarding work i.e. one cannot dig more than ½ chokadi a day. This compulsion has given injustice in getting minimum wage. While the present minimum wage is Rs.120/- per day half of the chokadi work gives only RS. 70/-.

2.3.9. No Social Audit Held

The operational guideline detailed the procedure of Social Audit forums to be held by gram sabha on NREGA works on 6 months basis. But in this village Social Audit is never held. Even all most all the villagers are not aware about the concept of social audit.

2.3.10. Small Children are working Under MNREGA

As per the MNREGA guidelines, only adult members above 18 years who are interested to do unskilled work at the statutory minimum wage can work under MGNREGA. But in Mohacha, small children are found to work under it. Thus, it fails to stop child labour which is one of its targets.

2.3.11. Names of dead people are there in the job cards:

There is no proper verification while allotting the job card also allotting the works. In some cases it was found that the ghosts have received job and job card. There are some incident found in field that the children are using job card of their father who is already dead. For example Rambabu Meena(30 years), whose father is already dead is still using the card in getting job.

2.3.12. Redressal of Grievances

Redressal of grievances is an integral part of the NREG scheme. Majority of the respondents of the field do not know that there is provision for grievance redressal.

2.4. Profile of Non-Job Cardholder Households

Around 45% households are the non-job cardholders. This may be due to their lack of interest to work under the MGNREGS as they have greater mobility for alternative money making job opportunities even at a distance place. Among the sample non-job card holder households around 50% households have already applied for job cards. The waiting time after the applications for job cards as reported by the respondents vary between 5 to 24 months. The reasons for non-issuance of job cards may be due to several factors such as relative socio-political and economic strength of the households in the village, awareness level, close relationship with the PRI functionaries' etc. Those who have not applied for job cards may be due to lack of interest and awareness.

2.5. Role of Gram Meth

To make the MGNREGS activities more vibrant Govt. of Rajasthan launched the Gram muster roll meth scheme. In this scheme two persons in each village are recruited to assist the implementation of MGNREGA especially organize cardholders to start a job, write muster rolls, check measurement, payment of laborers etc. However, Gram Meth in this panchayat is not trained and aware about the policies.

2.6. Role of Sarpanch in MGNREGA

The sarpanch is the most important agent of implementation of the MGNREGS as he/she works at the local level with the help of members and Village Level Workers (VLW). As the GPs are authorized to spend 50% of the NREGA fund, the sarpanchs need to play a major role in this regard. They are involved in the planning, designing and implementation of NREGS. Awareness of the sarpanchs regarding different aspects of the scheme is thus crucial for its successful implementation. The observation from the field reveals that the Sarpanch is not much aware about the scheme. Kilash jatav, who is Sarpanch in this Panchayat is not much active and aware about NREGS. Her husband who acts as a contractor is misleading the entire programme. While distributing work and job cards he is taking care of those who voted for him. Even though he is well about some rules and regulations, he is not ready to share it among villagers.

From the above discussion it is conclude that the MGNREGS, which was introduced in giving justice to the common man, has failed in meeting the desired needs. The famous statement given by our former Prime Minister Mr Rajiv Gandhi that of the rupee spent for the development programmes in the rural areas only 15 paisa reaches in the beneficiary is absolutely true in this case. There is no denying that MGNREGA has turned to be a big pot for the intermediaries rather than true beneficiaries. Here, the real beneficiaries are the people in the chain who get the money for distributing to the poor . They should be called the true beneficiaries. Thus, the implementation was done halfheartedly. There is an urgent need to remove the corruption in the delivery system. We have to work out a mechanism by which the MGNREGA wages reaches the workers directly.

Chapter 3 MGNREGA and Livelihoods

MGNREGS is the most significant scheme to uplift the overall quality of life of rural households. One of the major objectives of the scheme is the improvement of the income levels and enhancement of livelihood security in rural areas by guaranteeing 100 days of wage employment in a financial year to every registered household. However, the data from the field reflected that there is little impact of MGNREGA on livelihoods. By comparing the annual income of beneficiaries before MGNREGA and after MGNREGA, it is found that there is increase of 28.52% in income of the beneficiaries. Like that there is increase of 47.42% in expenditure of the beneficiaries. Before the implementation of MGNREGA the villagers were generally spending 64.24% from their income while after the implementation of this scheme they are spending 73.69% of their income.

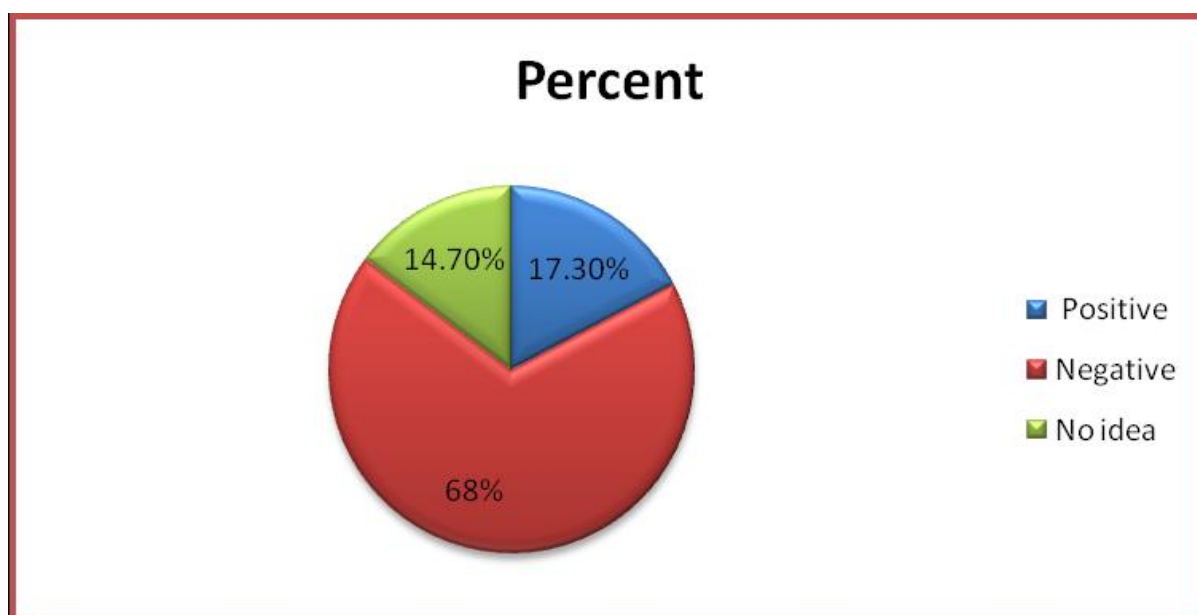
Table 3.1: Source wise annual households expenditure before and after MGNREGA

Source of expenditure	Before MGNREGA	After MGNREGA
Food	69.13%	59.29%
Clothing	7.68%	8.28%
Health	3.46%	3.57%
Cooking fuel	0.99%	1.24%
education	0.9%	1.2%
Transport	2.14%	2.63%
Social/religious function	3.95%	4.55%
Alcohol	1.91%	2.19%
Electricity bill	0.96%	2.83%
Phone bill	0.35%	2.55%
Agri.Equipments and seeds	2.36%	2.31%
Household assets	1.38%	2.04%
Recreation	0.27%	0.31%
Maintenance of House	4.52%	7.01%

The above data shows that due to change in income there is also change in expenditure. Generally the expenditure of villagers was more on food items. Around 69.13% of their expenditure used to go to food. But after the implementation of this scheme the expenditure on food items gradually shifted to non-food items which include both luxury and necessity items. For this the expenditure on food items is gradually decreasing (59.29%) and on non-food items is increasing. This reflects that there is some impact on livelihoods but this impact is considered as very little. This is because no proper and regular work which is the direct result of poor implementation.

On the issue of asset creation nothing much is observed from the field. Except road work no other works are being taken here. Recently some initiations have been taken by Sarapanch for the SC/ST land development. Here, the following diagram shows that maximum numbers of respondents (68%) have the negative opinion on MGNREGA.

Figure 3.1: Positive and Negative Response on MGNREGA:



According to some villagers, whatever the poor gets from MNREGA work spends only to feed his stomach and also in alcohol for few days, nothing left for saving, clothing, and maintenance of house as well as children's education.

The above discussion reveals that though MGNREGA is a well thought-out legislation, a powerful tool in the hands of the common people to get their basic livelihood, but its poor execution deprives them from their basic rights. While the target is to guarantee 100 days of employment to each household, this GP has not achieved this target. The way in which MGNREGA should function is not happening in the study area. Job cards are not reaching the beneficiaries. The unemployment allowance for the failure to provide employment within 15 days of application as per the guidelines of MGNREGA was not followed. Though there is a little change in expenditure pattern of households but it fails to stop the flow of distress rural-urban migration, restricting child labour, alleviating poverty, and making village self-sustaining through productive assets creation as only incomplete road works being taken here. Therefore, a well thought out effort is necessary to address these problems of MGNREGA in this Gram Panchayat. To make the Act more effective for securing the desired objectives of rural poverty eradication and livelihood security, there is an urgent need to ensure citizen participation in all stages of the implementation process. A proper mechanism should be developed to check the corruption in distribution of job cards, assured timely payment of actual wage and substantial asset creation.

Chapter 4 Suggestions

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is considered as a “Silver Bullet” for eradicating rural poverty and unemployment, by way of generating demand for productive labour force in villages. It provides an alternative source of livelihood which will have an impact on reducing migration, restricting child labor, alleviating poverty, and making villages self-sustaining through productive assets creation such as road construction, cleaning up of water tanks, soil and water conservation work, etc. For which it has been considered as the largest anti-poverty programme in the world. But the success of this Act depends upon its proper implementation. Thus, the present project critically examined the implementation process of this programme and its impact on livelihoods. Using a random sampling method, a total 150 households including MGNREGS beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries were selected. This field study was carried out during the period from march to may, 2014. Both close ended and open ended questionnaires were used to gather information from all the stakeholders in MGNREGS. Sarapanch, Members and Nayab Sarapanch questionnaire were designed to elicit information at the GP level. Transect walk into the MGNREGS worksites were conducted to have firsthand experience on the MGNREGS works at the community level.

Suggestions

- The success of the programme depends upon its proper implementation. Much of the pitfalls of MGNREGA implementation can be overcome if proper processes and procedures are put in place. Thus, there should be continuous efforts towards creating adequate awareness on different provisions of MGNREGS amongst the people. Creating awareness is necessary not only to motivate the people to work under the scheme but also to encourage them to participate in its planning and implementation.
- Efficient utilization of resources under the scheme requires bringing in transparency and accountability. Provision for social audit at the panchayat level on a regular basis can play a significant role in this regard.
- The leadership style should be democratic in nature. This will facilitate greater community participation, information sharing, expression of opinion by the rural mass, and development of social networks
- There is also the important role of the Govt. in implementation of MGNREGS. Thus the Govt. must take immediate steps to stop corruption in its implementation by which the MGNREGA wages reaches to the workers directly. We can surely ensure that the money goes to those who need it.
- There should be the ability and willingness of local Govt. and Panchayat to plan works and run the programmes effectively.

- A proper monitoring mechanism should be developed that can assured correct procedure in job card.
- Social Audit should carry out in regular interval.

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Annexure

Questionnaire

Section 1: Demographic Information

- 1.1. Head of the Household (HH): _____
- 1.2. Name of the Respondent: _____
- 1.3. Respondent's Relation with HH: _____
- 1.4. Sex: _____
- 1.5. Marital status: _____ 1. Married, 2. Unmarried, 3. Divorce, 4. widow/widower
- 1.6. Educational qualification: _____
- 1.7. Caste: _____ 1. SC, 2. ST, 3. OBC, 4. General
- 1.8. Name of Sub caste/Tribe: _____
- 1.9. Religion: _____ 1. Hindu 2. Muslim 3. Christian 4. Others
- 1.10 a. Hamlet (in case not a revenue village) _____ b. Revenue village _____
c. Gram Panchayat _____, d. Tahsil _____, e. District _____
- 1.11. Main source of livelihoods: _____ (1) Service, (2) Owner cultivator, (3) Farm labour, (4) Non-farm labour
- 1.12. Number of family members: _____
- 1.13. Land holding: _____ (Acres) _____ (1) Landless, (2) Sharecropper, (3) Owner cultivator
- 1.14. BPL card holder: _____ 1. Yes, 2. No
- 1.15. Anthodia card holder: _____ 1. Yes, 2. No
- 1.16. Old age pension any body receiving at home: _____ 1.

Section 2: Implementation Related Information

1. Are you aware of NREGS? _____ 1) Yes, 2) No
2. If yes, from where you got Information? _____ A) Panchayat B) Media-radio C) Media-TV D) Media-newspaper E) Govt. Functionaries F) Friends G) Any other (specify) _____
3. Do you have Job card? _____ 1) Yes 2) No
4. If Yes, when you got it _____ (year mention)
5. Where you got it _____ 1) Panchayat office, 2) friend gave, 3) BDO, 4) any other
6. Did you face any problems in getting the job card? _____ 1) Yes, 2) No
7. What kind of problem you faced _____
8. How many job cards are there in your family _____ (Number)
9. If no, mention the reason _____
10. Do you have any idea who will issue this card _____ 1) Yes, 2) No
11. Mention the name of issuing authority _____ 1) Sarpancha, 2) GP secretary, 3) Grama sathi, 4) BDO, 5) Any other _____
12. Have you ever approached them for job card _____ 1) yes, 2) No
13. If yes, what was their reply: _____
14. If no, why you did not approach? _____
15. Are the job cards given freely? _____ -1) Yes, 2) No
16. If no, whom you paid _____ 1) Sarpancha, 2) Panchayat Secretary, 3) ward member, 4) Gram meth, 5) somebody else (specify)

17. If you paid, what for you paid? _____
 _____ Mention price (_____)
18. Whether photo of beneficiary exist on job card? _____ 1) Yes, 2) No
19. Have you ever received any work under this programme? _____ 1) Yes, 2) No
20. If yes, how many days in a year _____
21. If no, why _____
-
22. Have you ever approached for any work _____ 1) Yes, 2) No
23. If yes, whom you approached _____ 1) Sarapancha, 2) Panchayat Secretary, 3) ward member, 4) Gram meth, 5) somebody else (specify)
24. How many times you approached? _____
25. Have you given any written application to Sarapancha? _____ 1) Yes, 2) No
26. Whether panchayat issued dated receipt of written application (for work) _____ 1) Yes, 2) No
27. After how many days of written/verbal application you got employment _____
 1) Less than 15 days, 2) 15-30 days, 3) 30+ days, 4) No work at all.
28. Do you have any idea about the rules and regulation of NREGA? _____ 1) Yes, 2) No
29. Whether got unemployment allowance, if demanded the work and it was not provided? _____ 1) Yes, 2) No
30. If yes, how much you got _____
31. Have you ever demanded for unemployment allowance? _____ 1) Yes, 2) No
32. If yes, what was their reply _____
-
33. If no, why you did not demand? _____ 1) No idea, 2) they will not listen, 3) will not give, 4) anything else (specify)
34. How regularly you used to get your wages? _____ 1) Regular, 2) Irregular
35. If irregular after how many days you used to get? _____ 1) One month, 2) 2 Months, 3) more than 3 months.
36. How much wage you used receive per day _____
37. How you receive your wage? _____ 1) cash, 2) check, 3) account transfer
38. Do you have opened an account in bank/post office relating to NREGA? _____ 1) Yes, 2) No
39. If no, why? _____ 1) No idea, 2) No body guide me
40. Have you spent any money while opening account? _____ 1) Yes, 2) No
41. If yes, how much and for what, specify _____
-
42. Do they specify the wages and days you worked in your card _____ 1) Yes, 2) No
43. If yes, Do you cross check, whether the entry authority has entered the right thing or not _____ 1) Yes, 2) No
44. Do you feel they are entering wrong data in your card _____ 1) Yes, 2) No
45. If yes, have you complained _____ 1) Yes, 2) No
46. To whom you complain _____ 1) Sarapancha, 2) Panchayat Secretary, 3) ward member, 4) Gram meth, 5) somebody else (specify)
47. What reply you got from the authority _____
-
48. Who used to enter this data in your card _____ 1) Sarapancha, 2) Panchayat Secretary, 3) ward member, 4) Gram meth, 5) somebody else (specify)
49. If there is no entry, have you asked them _____ 1) Yes, 2) No
50. Do you have any idea about the NREGA activity in your village/Panchayat _____ 1) Yes, 2) No

51. If yes, what type of activities/works undertaken in your village under MNREGA scheme?

1) Water conservation, 2) Drought proofing, 3) Flood protection, 4) Land development 5) Minor irrigation, 6) Horticulture, 7) Rural connectivity, 8) Any other_____

52. From where you got this knowledge? 1) Gram sabha meeting, 2) Panchayat office, 3) Sarapancha, 4) Panchayat Secretary, 5) ward member, 6) Gram meth, 7) Friends, 8) by seeing, 9) somebody else (specify)

53. Did any gram sabha meeting held in your village was to decide the NREGA work_____

1) Yes, 2) No, 3) Not aware

54. If no, then who used to decide the work_____ 1) Sarapancha, 2) Panchayat Secretary, 3) ward member, 4) Gram meth, 5) somebody else (specify)

55. Describe the role of Panchayat in planning and implementation of NREGA works. (Information from worker)

(III) Impact Related Information

78. Do you feel is there any change in your income after working under MNREGA? 1) Considerably increased, 2) Increased somewhat, 3) Not increased & remains same, 4) Decreased

79. Are children attending school in your family?_____ 1) Yes, 2) No

80. If yes, what is the impact of MNREGA on their education?_____ 1) No drop-out of children, 2) Change in decision for opting higher education, 3) No change.

81. How much wage you used to earn from farm and non-farm activities before NREGA? _____ 1) 1000, 2) 2000, 3) 5000, 4) More than 5000, 5) less than 1000.

82. How much you earned from NREGA activities last year_____ 1) 1000, 2) 2000, 3) 5000, 4) More than 5000, 5) less than 1000.

83. State your annual income before NREGA?_____

84. State your annual income after NREGA?_____

Questionnaire for GP

1. State Name_____, District Name_____
2. Block Name_____, GP Name_____
3. Distance of GP from Block Hq _____
4. Name of main Respondent_____
5. Designation of Respondent_____
6. Sex of Respondent_____
7. Educational Qualification of Respondent_____
8. Caste of the Respondent_____
9. Occupation_____
10. Total Population of GP_____ ☐ BPL Households_____ ☐
SCs Households_____ ☐ General Households_____ ☐ Backward
Castes_____ ☐ No. of Voters_____ ☐ Landless Households_____ ☐ No.
of MGNREGA Job Card Holders in the GP_____
11. Fill up the following information about MGNREGA.
 - 11.1. Fund Purpose Works (1.completed, 2. incomplete, and 3.ongoing) 2006-07
2007-08 2008-09 2009-10 2010-11 2011-12
 - 11.2.
Records Available (1.yes, 2.No) Seen at Survey Time (1.yes, 2.No)
Record Updated (1.yes, 2.No)
Muster roll register

Register of job card Employment register Works register Fund register Grievance
register
12. Work of Meth _____
13. Whether Gram Sabha meeting held on MGNREGA? 1. Yes 2.No.

14. How many people attended the meeting(see the record)_____

15. Is there any social audit committee in your village? 1. Yes 2.No.

16. Who did social audit? _____

17. What is the role of social audit committee in your village_____?

18. Describe the main benefits occurring in your village due to MGNREGA activities: ☐

Wage earner_____ ☐ Empowerment of women_____ ☐

Panchayat_____ ☐ Poverty_____ ☐

Worker migration_____ 19. Describe the role of panchayat in planning and implementation of MGNREGA.