

Women and the NREGA

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Women and the NREGA

Chapter 1: Objectives and Methodology

1. Background

The Employment Guarantee Act (2005) seeks 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. Specifically, the Act seeks the ‘creation of durable assets and strengthening the livelihood resource base of the rural poor’.

The Act envisages a collaborative partnership between the Centre and the State Governments, the *panchayats* and the local community. The Central Government has developed a set of operational guidelines which lay out the broad parameters of the programme and the non-negotiables, while leaving considerable scope to the State Governments to formulate the details of works and other aspects of the programme. State Governments may formulate projects to address local needs. Worksite facilities are to be ensured by the implementing agency, including medical aid, drinking water, shade, crèche if there are more than five children below six years.

While the EGA itself builds upon a long history of wage employment programmes in India it is different in that it is a guarantee, not reversible with any changes of government; provides scope for implementation by local groups and agencies; devolves considerable powers to local *panchayats*; mandates a high quality of conditions of work through provisions for medical aid, drinking water, shade, crèche, on the worksite; and encourages the use of the Right to Information and Social Audit to ensure transparent and effective implementation.

Among the outcomes expected, the following are listed:

- an increase in employment and purchasing power
- participation of women workforce
- strengthening of rural infrastructure through creation of durable assets
- regeneration of natural resources that provide the livelihood resource base of local rural economy
- increase in productivity

- reduction in distress migration.

In the first phase, the Act is to be implemented in 200 districts across the country, or around 80,000 *panchayats*.

2. Wage-employment programmes in India, and challenges for the EGA:

The EGA builds upon a long history of wage employment programmes in India. The origin of the EGA can be traced back to the famine relief codes of the pre-independence era. However, this is claimed to be only partially correct (Bagchi, 2005).

Among the important predecessors of the EGA (at the national level) are the following

- ☐ National Rural Employment Programme [NREP]: 1980-89
- ☐ Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme [RLEGP] : 1983-89
- ☐ Jawahar Rozgar Yojna [JRY]: 1989-99
- ☐ Employment Assurance Scheme [EAS]: 1993-99
- ☐ Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojna [JGSY]: 1999-2002
- ☐ Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojna [SGRY]: since September 2001
- ☐ National Food For Work Programme [NFFWP]: launched on November 14, 2004
- ☐ National Rural Employment Guarantee Act: 2005

And an important inspiration of the EGA is the important Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Scheme.

A major criticism of wage employment programmes has been that they generate relief-type employment rather than employment through creation of productive assets. Without this, public works programmes cannot contribute to the generation of sustainable and productive employment. (Hirway and Terhal, 1997; Dev, 2004).

Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Scheme (MEGS):

The Employment Guarantee Scheme in Maharashtra is the longest ever surviving programme of its kind, and secondly it is unique because its design and execution exhibit an unusual clarity of goals and consistency in approach. (Bagchi, 2005).

The scheme grew out of the pilot experiment carried out in Sangli, Maharashtra in 1965, known as Page scheme named after V S Page. Later in 1970, the same was extended to cover eleven districts and subsequently in 1972 to entire state. The employment was guaranteed to all able bodied adults who come for it. This was implemented by the existing administrative system in the state at very little additional cost. The important features of the scheme was largest state sponsored public works program focussed on the alleviation of poverty, and guaranteed gainful employment to all adults above 18 years of age in rural areas and 'C' class Municipal councils. Selection for employment was based on willingness to undertake unskilled manual work on a piece rate basis and self-targeting. The important short-term objective listed was to add to household income based on employment and to contribute to development of rural infrastructure and create sustained employment opportunities in the long run. There were provisions like unemployment allowance, provision of shelter and first aid, no discrimination on the basis of gender or caste. Benefits of EGS were many such as employment and income earning opportunities, food security for the poor, income stabilization and parity of wages offered to men and women (Krishnaraj, et.al, 2003). Some of the lacunae that were identified are as follows: gap between commencement of work and payment; non-availability of continuous employment; leakage due to under- utilisation of the fund; no unemployment allowance or compensation paid to anyone in the history of the scheme; low awareness of entitlements; absence of linkages between works and larger plans for the district; skill upgradation provided for under the Act was not achieved, so dependence on EGS for employment; calculation of wages was subjective; the muster role of a particular site is almost impossible to trace after the period of 15 days required for the payment of wages; work is done by a group of both men and women ,so calculation of the individual share of wages especially of women is somewhat subjective and depends on the team leader who is usually male ,as well as the other co-workers; expected benefits in the form of equalization of wages and increased access to income did not materialize; maternity benefits did not reach women as eligibility for this benefit requires proving 75 days of work, and shifting work sites and inadequate records made it difficult for women to show the stipulated days of work; shelter and crèches were not provided as work sites are temporary; no toilets were found near/on the EGS sites; under utilisation of EGS funds and failure of EGS expenditure to keep pace with the receipts (Krishnaraj,2003).

The Maharashtra experience is often cited for non-payment of minimum wages. This perhaps explains to an extent the absence of a perceptible impact on rural poverty in Maharashtra. Despite increases in capital formation that now includes private land of farmers, real wages for agricultural laborers in Maharashtra with highest (or second highest) per capita income, have

remained one of the lowest in the country (Kannan, 2005). Despite having implemented EGS for such long time, rural poverty in Maharashtra was higher than the national average till 1993-94. Kannan argues that the reason could be that the minimum wages were fixed at such low rates that they made very little difference from the prevailing market rates. Further, he suggests that the percentage of poor women seeking work under the EGS has been on the rise presumably due to the unwillingness of men to work at such low wages.

Impact of MEGS on women:

In a seminal study of the MEGS and women's participation (Devaki Jain/ISST 1979) it is reported that a higher percentage of women than men were seen on the sites, that more women came to work than were registered, majority were between 30-50 years of age principally from landless, small and marginal farmers and lacking any other work. The women reported an improvement in family food/ nutrition as a result of the MEGS work.

Female employment under the scheme as a percentage of total employment in person days was reported as 38% in 1995-96. It increased to 73% in 1998-99 but declined to 57% in 1999-2000 (Krishnaraj et.al, 2004). Studies have also shown that in terms of family strategies, men are the first to use the option for migration or alternative employment as a means of improving the family's economic status while women hold the responsibility for basic survival strategies (Krishnaraj and Pandey 1990; Ranadive 2002).

In another study Dattar (Dattar, 1990) found that EGS supplies core income to many women and that this economic power accorded them higher status within the family. Concentrating a large number of women in one place can increase interaction, break down social taboos and expand social awareness and instill confidence in women (Dattar, 1987).

Micro studies have shown that wealth in the form of total assets was very strongly and inversely related to participation in EGS for women. More women from households with low or no assets participated in the scheme than from land-owning households (Krishnaraj, 2003).

While all studies report that more women are seen on work sites than men, women have not been able to influence the actual choice of works.

Against this background, some of the challenges before the EGA include avoiding outcomes such as

- lack of local participation (poorest often continue to work for contractors even when public works are going on)
- over dependence on bureaucracy
- rigidity of schemes
- corruption in implementation
- lack of transparency in employment and cash disbursement
- fudging of muster rolls
- delayed payments
- cheating of illiterate villagers
- employment of children
- inadequate provision of works – sometimes the number of people needing work was 3 times that given work
- excessive emphasis on roads
- lack of flexibility re work time

(see for example Ghosh 2005; Gopal 2005; Hirway 2005; Pellissery 2006)

Despite the observed shortcomings in implementation, the importance of the EGA lies in its implications for the development process, giving emphasis to domestic markets and to full participation of the poor in economic processes (Bhaduri 2005).

3. Objectives of this study

This study seeks to understand the practical ways in which the NREGP can be designed so as to allow women to participate fully and benefit from it as best as possible, and to examine whether such participation leads to empowerment of women.

The crucial aspects of productive participation include

- a. participation itself, i.e. women should be able to participate on an equal basis with men, there should be equal awareness about the programme, and work given at equal wages
- b. conditions of work that enable women's participation, including especially child care, water and toilet facilities, suitable timings

- c. work that builds upon existing skills and is able to use, strengthen or upgrade existing skills, and/ or generate new skills
- d. procedures for managing the programme that eliminate the possibility of leakages

In addition, in order to assess the benefits to women, the ways in which the process of planning and putting together a shelf of projects can be engendered in different local situations need to be understood.

4. Methodology

The study has been conducted in selected villages in one district each of four states. The districts studied are Sirohi in Rajasthan, Dhar in Madhya Pradesh, Gulbarga in Karnataka and Sundergarh in Orissa. Available information on these areas from census surveys and other sources has been compiled to present as background to the field studies, district profiles showing the population, income, and main sources of livelihood and employment, etc.

The states were selected so as to get a picture of the implementation of the EGA in different parts of the country. The districts were selected from the list of 200 districts identified for the initial implementation of the EGA. The selection of block and villages for survey was done in consultation with local partner agencies. The choice of villages was thus not based on statistical sampling methods. The villages are similar – socially, geographically, economically – to others in the block. Within the village, households were selected so as to include households from each segment of the village and from different socio-economic groups.

The data collection from these areas has been done with a view to understanding the experience at the level of the village and from the perspective of the people living there. It has been done in collaboration with *Doosra Dashak* (Rajasthan), SEWA MP (Madhya Pradesh), ISST Bangalore with local women's groups (Karnataka), and THREAD (Orissa).

Information has been collected and validated in the following ways:

- Discussions with district officials in charge of implementing the Act
- Discussions/ workshops with individuals and groups of men and women in the selected villages; sharing of information on the operational guidelines.

- Group discussions and interviews in the selected villages on the first visit to find out the level of awareness about the Act, the different types of work that women do and the seasonal variations in availability; skills possessed, experience with other work/employment programmes (such as SGSY etc), the existence of leakages or other factors preventing effective implementation, any other problems or felt needs that are experienced by the women, as such information will help in designing suitable works
- Survey in selected villages to supplement and confirm the quick findings above.
- Analysis of data to be shared with officers, *panchayat* members, activists, and others

The survey questions were the same in each place. However, while the general approach to data collection has been similar, it has not been identical in each of the four places, and so there are differences in sample size and the exact mix of methods used.

The survey canvassed to households included questions on the household (members, education, work details including migration information, ownership of land and livestock); whether any member of the household was a member of a group (such as a woman's group, a self help group, a trade union, etc) and information on the level of awareness about the NREGA as well as experience with earlier wage employment programmes and preferred mode of payment. (copy of questionnaire is appended). Information on the work sites could be collected only in Rajasthan as in other places the works had not started at the time of survey; this is based on visits to operational sites and discussion with villagers.

The findings from this initial study are intended to point to certain issues for further, more careful study. While the work site is the arena of actual implementation, the household structure and background is important to understand the likely impact of the programme both on the household as a unit, and on men and women within the household. The data presented here is in the nature of baseline information against which the contributions of the EGA works could be assessed.

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Chapter 2: Rajasthan (Abu Road Block, Sirohi District)

Sirohi district, situated in the south west part of Rajasthan is one of the six districts selected for the implementation of NREGA. It is bounded by district Pali in the north-east, district Udaipur in the east, Jalore in west and Banaskantha district in Gujarat in the south. It is one of the smaller districts of Rajasthan- it has a total geographical area of 5139 sq. kms, which is 1.5% of the total area of the state.

The district is one of the drought prone areas of the state and in the past few years the average rainfall (735mm) has been on the decline. This has important implications for agriculture in the area since it is mostly rain fed.

The district has 5 *tehsils*. Abu Road which has been selected for the study is one of the *tehsils*. It has 25 panchayats and 91 (revenue) villages¹.



¹ www.sirohi.nic.in

The chapter is divided as follows: Section 3.1 discusses the secondary data pertaining to the district and the state, Section 3.2 and Section 3.3 describes the area and the implementation of NREGA based on field visits/ observations and Section 3.4 presents findings from the household survey.

Section 2.1: Census information about Sirohi district

Table 1: Basic Demographic and socio-economic indicators of Sirohi district and Rajasthan

Indicators	District	State
Population	850756	56507188
Average annual exponential growth rate	0.02630	0.02494
Population density (per Sq Km)	165	166
Sex ratio (females per 1000 males)	944	921
Percent urban	17.8	23.4
Percent Scheduled caste	19.1	17.2
Percent Scheduled tribe	24.8	12.6
Percent of literate population age 7+ years:		
Person	54.4	60.4
Male	70.6	76.5
Female	37.4	43.9

Sources: Census of India (2001), <http://www.rchindia.org/rep/raj/sirohi/chep1.pdf>

The population of Sirohi district is 850,756 which is 1.51% of the state's population. Its density at 165 persons per sq. km is roughly same as the state's figure of 166. The sex ratio of the district stands at 944 as compared to the state's sex ratio of 921. Around 43.9% of the population in the district consist of SC and ST communities. The individual percentages are 19.1% for SC and 24.8% for ST vis-à-vis 17.2% and 12.6% respectively at the state level. Literacy rate for the district is 54.2%, which is lower than the state level rate of 60.4%. The female literacy rate (37.4%) in the district is almost half of the male literacy rate (70.6%).

Table-2 indicates that the percentage of workers in Sirohi district is 40.4% as against state average of 42.0%. Percentage of women workers in the district stands at 30.1% as compared to the state average of 33.5%. This shows that the concentration of workers in general and female workers in specific is less in the district as compare to the state average. Rural women constitute 22.8% of the main workers. As far as marginal workers are concerned, 76.5% of the women are marginal as against 23.5% men.

Table 2: Distribution of main, marginal and non-workers in Sirohi district and Rajasthan

			Total population	Total workers	Main workers	Marginal workers	Non-workers
Rajasthan	Total	Persons	56507188	23766655	17436888	6329767	32740533
		Males	29420011	14695802	12841318	1854484	14724029
		Females	27087177	9070853	4595570	4475283	18016324
	Rural	Persons	43292813	19856423	13962042	5894381	23436390
		Males	22426640	11379536	9771540	1607996	11047104
		Females	20866173	8476887	4190502	4475283	12389286
	Urban	Persons	13214375	3910232	3474846	435386	9304143
		Males	6993371	3316266	3069778	246488	3677105
		Females	6221044	593966	405068	188898	5627038
Sirohi	Total	Persons	851107	343905	245762	98143	507202
		Males	437949	219491	195040	24451	218458
		Females	413158	124414	50722	73692	288744
	Rural	Persons	700217	297621	204055	93566	402596
		Males	357178	179595	157587	22008	177583
		Females	343039	118026	46468	71558	225013
	Urban	Persons	150890	46284	41707	4577	104606
		Males	80771	39896	37453	2443	40875
		Females	70119	6388	4254	2134	63731

Source: Census of India (2001).

Section 2.2: Initial Observations about the area (February 2006)

The following section is based on general observations, focus group discussions and case studies conducted in 6 villages comprising of *Bhakar* and *Bhittrot* area. The field visits, case studies, focus group discussions and subsequent household survey were carried out with the assistance of *Doosra Dashak*, which is working in 21 villages in the block.

The Area

Geographically, Abu Road is divided in two parts- *Bhakar* (hilly area) and *Bhittrot* (plain area). The distribution of villages between these two areas is roughly sixty and forty percent respectively. The hilly area is considered more “backward” and drought prone than the plain area.

70% of the inhabitants of villages of Abu Road block are from a tribal community called **Grasiyas**. The villages are generally divided into 4-5 hamlets or *phallis*, though in some cases as for example in village Meen there may be as many as 11 *phallis*. The number of households in each *phalli* varies from 15 to 45.

Many of the villages are not electrified and do not have motor connectivity. Some villages are connected to Abu Road by a *pucca* road, however there are very few *pucca* roads connecting one village to another. The various hamlets within a village are connected to each other either by *kutch*a roads or *pagdandi* (pathways or footpaths).

There is an acute shortage of water in the area. Hand pumps have been installed in some places but with poor maintenance, most are not in working condition. There are many wells but the water level is low. This increases the responsibilities of women, who have to shoulder the burdens of household maintenance, and it is quite common to find women walking for 4 kms to fetch water.

The main sources of livelihood in these villages are subsistence agriculture (including sharecropping), wage labour (agricultural and non-agricultural), and animal rearing. In the plains, where there is a greater supply of water, agricultural yields are higher. While the main crops in the *Bhakar* area are wheat, maize and in some cases mustard, in *Bithrot* area apart from these crops, *arundee* (castor plant) and fennel seeds (both of which are cash crops) are also grown. Most households own some livestock, usually cows, goats and hens. The produce is consumed by the household and rarely sold.

Work is not available locally throughout the year and the usual practice is that the men migrate out of the village for daily wage labour, but in cases of extreme distress entire families migrate out of the village (locally termed *palayan*). Migrants usually settle down and work as daily wage labour or as sharecroppers in a neighbouring town or village for a period of 3-4 years and return to their native village only when the situation improves (for instance drought condition may subside or employment opportunities may improve). Ownership of land is often disputed and not all residents have *patta* (or land titles). Often people are settled on land that is claimed by the Forest Department- this makes these settlements “illegal” and people are under constant threat of eviction.

Each of the villages visited had one *Aanganwadi* centre (catering to pre school children and nursing mothers). Given the dispersed nature of settlements, not all the hamlets find it easy to access the *aanganwadi*. A number of complaints were voiced regarding the quality of food distributed to young children. All the villages visited had a primary school and some had a middle school as well. The mid day meal programme was being implemented in all the primary schools. All the villages were served by an Auxiliary Nurse Midwife (ANM). Other than the ANM however other health personnel and facilities for health care were not seen.

Section 2.3: Initial observations on EGA implementation (Feb. 2006)

This section briefly reports on the observations made regarding the implementation of the Employment Guarantee Act immediately after it was notified in **early February (2006)**.

- ***Awareness***

Awareness about the programme is very high but not about its details; people know that the Act has been passed under which each household is guaranteed 100 days of work in a year.

One of the possible reasons for this is that the information regarding the EGA has largely been disseminated through “word of mouth” (this is an important source of information given that not all people particularly those living in far away hamlets and women attend *gram sabha*), NGOs and what is generally known to people is the information available through the local newspapers and broadcasts.

- ***Applying for Job Cards***

Though people may not be aware of the details of the Act and the operational guidelines, almost all households have registered themselves for Job Cards. In informal discussions the District Collector said that roughly 80% of people have been registered and the distribution of Job Cards after verification had been started. In Abu Road block, the distribution of Job Cards was due to start from the 14th of February.

- ***Interpretation of the term ‘household’***

A ‘household’ is being interpreted against ownership of ration card. *It must be noted that this is not as per the operational guidelines which defines household as a nuclear entity with parents, children and any person dependent on them either wholly or substantially. Single person households are also to be seen as a household unit. And no proofs like ration card are required, it is required only that the gram panchayat*

*certify that the applicants are residents of the village, comprise a household and are adult members of the household*². Moreover the Act does not allow for any exclusion on grounds of income, age, or disability.

However since this information seems not to have reached the *panchayat*, in Abu Road applications were not being accepted from those who have lost or don't have ration card; those near to or over 60 years of age, disabled.

- ***Building up a shelf of projects***

The Act allows for flexibility in the works to be taken up. The *gram sabha* is expected to identify people's needs and the most desirable works. Villagers who had attended the last *gram sabha* said that the projects that had been proposed at the *gram sabha* mainly pertained to water conservation structures (*anicut*s/ small dams, check dams, *medbandi*³), roads and office buildings.

- ***Expectations***

To understand what people expected from the EGA, an attempt was made to find out the experience with past drought relief programmes. Over the past few years the area has been declared as drought afflicted and government has been offering wage labour under the *Akal Rahat* programme. It was reported that all households had got a chance to participate in these works, that is, employment is distributed in such a way that all households get a chance to participate in these programmes at least once though priority is given to poor households. On an average a household got between 12-20 days of work. The wage rate was @ Rs.50-60/- per day and men and women were paid the same wage rate. Often payment is actually less than the promised/minimum wage rate. The wage to be paid is linked to the work done. However, there is a lack of clarity regarding what is expected, so that it is only upon completion and after inspection by a Junior Engineer (JE) that the wages to be paid are determined. If the target has not been met, according to the JE, the payment due to workers is re-computed to reflect this.

Women did not report any crèche facilities at the work site. Works undertaken were usually either water harvesting structures or roads. However, in many cases the structures were *kutcha*, so they proved not to be durable assets.

² See Operational Guidelines (p. 14-15).

³ *Medbandi* is a stone embankment built on the lower side of an agriculture field on a hill slope to conserve soil and moisture and create a level field for cultivation.

The following section reports the observations during a second visit in **end March- early April (2006)** when NREGA was in its early stages of implementation in the block. These observations are based on a group discussion held with a group of villagers in *Mathara Phalli, Nichla Khejra* village, and a visit to the site of a road construction project initiated under NREGA.

- ***Lack of proper information about works to be undertaken under the Act***

All the participants claimed that they had filed applications for jobs under the new law. They had gathered at that particular spot since early in the morning as they had been informed by the *Gram Sevak* that a gravel road project would be started in this particular hamlet, however the works had not started as expected.

- ***Employment under NREGA is being provided on a rotational basis***

The participants informed us that a gravel road construction work is being carried out in the village as part of NREGA. Two muster rolls of 10 and 14 days respectively have been completed to carry out this work. (*Of the 9 participants, 2 had already worked on this project for around 14-15 days*). A third muster roll of around 14-15 days is now in progress. Since the demand for work at a point in time may exceed the capacity of the *panchayat* to generate employment, the *panchayat* functionaries are ensuring that the column in the job application form specifying dates during which employment is needed broadly coincides with the dates when different developmental projects proposed under the new act is scheduled to start. In this way, the *panchayat* functionaries hope that the demand for work broadly coincides with its supply.

- ***Non-payment of minimum wages stipulated under NREGA⁴***

The participants reported that attendance at the work site is marked regularly and entries are made in the job card at the time of wage payment. However, the main complaint is that the wages paid are far less than the minimum wage rate of Rs.73/- per day. The labourers working at the road construction site have been paid at the rate of Rs.38/- per day. Wages are being paid on a piece rate basis but because the JE (Junior Engineer) has not visited the site even once since the beginning of the project there is a great deal of confusion as to the appropriateness of the task allocated and the final measurements taken. Both these functions are being carried out by the mate and/or other *panchayat* functionaries. Also, the payment of wages took place after 25 days of the muster roll being completed, again in violation of the norms of the Act⁵.

⁴ Also refer News Item 2 and 3.

⁵ See Operational Guidelines (p. 26-29).

- ***Lack of facilities at the work site***

A visit to the gravel road construction site in *Upla Khejra* confirmed the absence of facilities. As per the operational guidelines, all work sites must have a basic medical aid, drinking water facilities shade, and crèche facilities⁶. However, the construction site does not have any of these arrangements except for drinking water facilities.

It was therefore no surprise that when *Jamku Bai* (32 years) of this village felt unwell and subsequently fainted at the site itself, there was little help at hand. She had to be transported to the government hospital at the block headquarters for treatment. Transportation costs and the cost of medicines (around Rs.500/-) both had to be borne by the woman herself. Moreover, she could not come to work for 2 days and she received only half a day's wage for the day she fell ill⁷.

Another woman accompanied by her two toddlers had little option but to leave them under the hot sun while she carried out her work (crèche facilities at a site are obligatory if there are more than 5 children below 6 years of age⁸).

- ***Nature of the works***

During the last visit (Feb. '06) in the discussions that took place with various stakeholders (villagers and *panchayat* functionaries), it emerged that given the drought condition in the region water harvesting structures were a priority in the proposals put forth by the *gram sabha*. However, in the present visit it was observed that instead of water conservation structures, a greater emphasis was being given to road construction. (Both the current and proposed work in *Upla Khejra panchayat* is of road construction).

- ***Social audit***

Finally, it should be noted that the Act places a lot of importance on the ability of social audit to ensure effective implementation. It was observed that protests against the low wages being paid have led to a hostile situation (some examples as reported in the local papers are reproduced below) between villagers and *panchayat* functionaries responsible for implementation.

⁶ See page 25.

⁷ Also refer News Item 4.

⁸ See Operational Guidelines (p. 25).

Section 2.3: Findings from household survey data

Methodology

The two villages selected for the survey are typical of the hill and the non-hill area in Abu Road block. The village *Nichlagarh* located in the hill area has a total of 379 households distributed in 8 hamlets. The village *Mahikheda* was selected from the plain area. The total number of households in this village is 280 distributed over 8 hamlets. In the survey, a total of 50 households were selected randomly from village *Mahikheda* and 65 households from village *Nichlagarh* with equal proportional representation of the different hamlets.

A questionnaire was designed and canvassed to one senior member of the sample households. The list of questions dealt with information on social and demographic characteristics of the households, economic status, experiences with past public employment programmes. Also, a section has been dedicated to know the extent of awareness among the people regarding NREGA and their perceptions and expectations about the same.

Social and Demographic characteristics

Table 1 to 3 describes the social and demographic characteristics of the sample population selected for the study.

Table 1: Village wise distribution of households by total members

Family size	<i>Mahikehda</i>	<i>Nichlagarh</i>	Total
Up to 5	17 (33.3)* <i>37.0**</i>	29 (44.6) <i>63.0</i>	46 (39.6)
6-10	31 (60.8) <i>47.0</i>	35 (53.8) <i>53.0</i>	66 (56.9)
Above 10 ⁹	3 (5.9) <i>75.0</i>	1 (1.5) <i>25.0</i>	4 (3.4)
Total	51 <i>44.0</i>	65 <i>56.0</i>	116

Source: ISST survey (2006)

Note: * Figures in brackets indicate column percentage.

** Figures in italics indicate row percentage.

⁹ The maximum family size in *panchayat Shikarpura* is of 12 members.

Household size tends to be large, with 60% of the households, taking both villages together, having 6 or more members. In *Mahikheda*, which is a relatively affluent village as compared to *Nichlagarh*, 66.7 % of households have 6 or more members, and 60.8% with six to ten members. *Nichlagarh* has approx 55 % households with six or more members (Table1).

The gender-wise distribution of population (Table 2) shows that almost 54 % of the population is below 18 years of age in case of males and 46% in the case of females. In the case of both men and women, roughly 15 % are over 40, with around 3% of the population above 60 years. The dependency ratio is thus high.

The overall distribution of educational status of the population (Table 3) suggest that 47.6% males are illiterate followed by those who have studied up to fifth standard 29.2% and another 16.6% who have studied up to tenth grade. Among females 82.1% are illiterate followed by 10.1% who studied up to 5th standard and 4.3% are between class 6 and class 10. It is clear from the table that there has been a reduction in illiteracy over the generations, but the percentage of illiteracy is still very high, especially among women. Nearly 66.7% of the females in the age group of 7-20 years are illiterate. It is important that educational opportunities are provided to this group because they would form the potential workforce. Unless attention is given at this point of time, gender discrimination will remain in terms of basic education and skills.

Table 2: Distribution of total population by sex

	Male	Female	Total
Below 18 years	190 (53.8) 55.2	154 (46.1) 44.8	344 (50.1)
18-28	60 (17.0) 42.8	80 (23.9) 57.1	140 (20.4)
29-39	48 (13.6) 49.0	50 (15.0) 51.0	98 (14.3)
40-49	25 (7.1) 53.2	22 (6.6) 46.8	47 (6.8)
50-59	20 (5.7) 52.6	18 (5.4) 47.4	38 (5.5)
60+	10 (2.8) 50.0	10 (3.0) 50.0	20 (2.9)
Total	353 51.4	334 48.6	687

Source: ISST survey (2006)

Table 3: Distribution of population by education status

	7-20		21-59		60 and above		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Illiterate	37 (28.2) 28.0	76 (66.7) 42.8	85 (62.5) 64.4	125 (94.0) 57.1	10 (100.0) 7.6	10 (100.0)	132 (47.6)	211 (82.1)
Literate	3 (2.3) 50.0	3 (2.6) 42.8	3 (2.2) 50.0	4 (3.0) 57.1	-	-	6 (2.2)	7 (2.7)
≤ 5	58 (44.2) 71.6	25 (21.9) 96.1	23 (16.9) 28.4	1 (0.7) 3.8	-	-	81 (29.2)	26 (10.1)
> 5 and ≤ 10	30 (22.9) 65.2	8 (7.0) 72.7	16 (11.8) 34.8	3 (2.2) 27.3	-	-	46 (16.6)	11 (4.3)
> 10 and ≤ 12	2 (1.5) 28.6	2 (1.8) 100.0	5 (3.7) 71.4	-	-	-	7 (2.2)	2 (0.8)
> 12	1 (0.8) 20.0	-	4 (2.9) 80.0	-	-	-	5 (1.8)	-
Total	131 47.3	114 44.3	136 49.1	133 51.8	10 3.6	10 3.9	277	257

Source: ISST survey (2006)

Economic Indicators

Table 4: Village wise distribution of households by land owned

	<i>Mahikhedda</i> ¹⁰	<i>Nichlagarh</i>	Total
No land	1 (2.0) 16.7	5 (7.7) 83.3	6 (5.3)
< 1	7 (14.3) 43.8	9 (13.8) 56.2	16 (14.0)
≥1 and ≤ 5	30 (61.2) 38.5	48 (73.8) 61.5	78 (68.4)
>5 and ≤ 10	9 (18.4) 75.0	3 (4.6) 25.0	12 (10.5)
> 10	2 (4.1) 100.0	-	2 (1.7)
Total	49 43.0	65 57.0	114

Source: ISST survey (2006)

5.3 % of households taking the two villages together, (2 % in *Mahikheda* and 7.7% in *Nichlagarh*) are landless. In *Nichlagarh* there is no household that has land more than ten *bighas*. There are nine households in *Nichlagarh* which have land less than one *bigha* against seven households in *Mahikheda*. Further, 70% households have irrigated land in *Mahikheda* as against 38% of the households in *Nichlagarh*. Or to put it another way, 53% of land in *Nichlagarh* is un-irrigated vis-à-vis only 10% in *Mahikheda* (see Table 6 below).

Around 8.6% (10 out of 116 households) do not possess any animals (see Table 6). Of the different types of livestock possessed by the remaining households, goat is the most common followed by cows and ox. Goats are more reared more often because selling of goats is one of the fall back options during crisis periods. There are households that have nothing to survive on but goats. They can be sold for prices between seven hundred and two thousand rupees. This indicates that the place has potential for rearing goats. Animal rearing could be strengthened so as to build on the existing household assets. This could be explored further while designing micro-projects under NREGA.

¹⁰ The maximum land size in *Mahikheda* is 33.0 *bighas* while it is only 7.5 *bighas* in *Nichlagarh*.

Table 5: Village wise distribution of households by land owned and type of irrigation

Land size (<i>Bighas</i>)	Non-irrigated	Irrigated	Partially irrigated	Total
<i>Mahikehda</i>				
< 1	2 (40.0) 28.5	5 (15.1) 71.4	-	7 (14.9)
≥1 and ≤ 5	3 (60.0) 10.0	25 (75.7) 83.3	2 (22.2) 6.7	30 (63.8)
>5 and ≤ 10	-	3 (9.1) 37.5	5 (55.5) 62.5	8 (17.0)
> 10	-	-	2 (22.2) 100.0	2 (4.2)
Total	5 10.6	33 70.2	9 19.1	47
<i>Nichlagarh</i>				
< 1	7 (21.9) 77.7	2 (8.7) 33.3	-	9 (15.0)
≥1 and ≤ 5	25 (78.1) 52.0	19 (82.6) 39.6	4 (80.0) 8.3	48 (80.0)
>5 and ≤ 10	-	2 (8.7) 66.6	1 (20.0) 33.3	3 (5.0)
> 10	-	-	-	-
Total	32 53.3	23 38.3	5 8.3	60

Source: ISST survey (2006)

Table 6: Types of livestock possessed by sample households

Livestock	<i>Mahikehda</i>	<i>Nichlagarh</i>	Total
No animal	4	6	10
Cows	25	32	57
Buffaloes	18	7	25
Goats	35	38	83
Ox	20	27	47
Hen	6	6	12

Source: ISST survey (2006)

Note: This is a multiple response question.

Table 7: Distribution of reported working population by sex and age

	Male	Female	Total working population
Below 18 years	6 (4.1) 60.0	4 (2.5) 40.0	10 (3.3)
18-28	49 (33.8) 42.6	66 (41.5) 57.4	115 (37.8)
29-39	45 (31.0) 50.0	45 (28.3) 50.0	90 (29.6)
40-49	23 (15.9) 54.8	19 (12.0) 45.2	42 (13.8)
50-59	17 (11.7) 50.0	17 (10.7) 50.0	34 (11.2)
60+	5 (3.4) 38.5	8 (5.0) 61.5	13 (4.3)
Total	145 47.7	159 52.3	304

Source: ISST survey (2006)

The distribution of reported workers (see Table 7) indicates that there is a gender difference with more percent of female workers (54.7%) vis-à-vis men (42.6%) in the age category of 18-28 years and a similar trend in age-group of 60 years and above. In all other age groups, either the proportion of men and women are equal or women are less in proportion than men.

Work participation of men in different types of activities indicates that 46.7% are engaged in own agriculture, followed by 36.7% in non-agriculture activities. The trend is slightly different for women, 43.3% go for non-agriculture work and another 41.8% are engaged in own agriculture. Apart from agricultural work and wage labour, other important activities that women engage in are plantation of saplings; nursery raising as well as taking animals for grazing.

Table 8: Village wise distribution of workers by sex and type of work done¹¹

	Male	Female	Total
Own agriculture	98 (46.7) 63.6	56 (41.8) 36.4	154 (44.8)
Agriculture for others	4 (1.9) 80.0	1 (0.7) 20.0	5 (1.5)
Non-agriculture	77 (36.7) 57.0	58 (43.3) 43.0	135 (39.2)
Own grazing	6 (2.8) 40.0	9 (6.7) 60.0	15 (4.4)
Student ¹²	6 (2.8) 85.7	1 (0.7) 14.3	7 (2.0)
Skilled (wage) worker	3 (1.4) 100.0	-	3 (0.9)
Salaried	13 (6.2) 81.2	3 (2.2) 18.8	16 (4.6)
Pensioner	-	2 (2.2) 100.0	2 (0.6)
Plantation of saplings and nursery raising	3 (1.4) 42.8	4 (3.0) 57.1	7 (2.0)
Total	210 61.0	134 39.0	344

¹¹ This is a multiple response question since a household member may be engaged in more than one activity.

In village *Mahikheda*, 1 boy and 1 girl of 6 years and 14 years respectively are engaged in grazing of own animals while two children (1 boy and 1 girl of 14 and 17 years respectively) are engaged in (own) agricultural activities. In village *Nichlagarh*, 3 boys (the youngest is 11 years of age) are engaged in grazing of animals. One boy of 14 years and a 17 years old girl are engaged in non-agricultural activities.

¹² This category is only for household members 18 and above years of age.

Table 9: Distribution of workers engaged in non-agriculture (daily wage) labour by sex in the last year

	Male	Female	Total
5-15 days	13 (25.0) <i>41.9</i>	18 (40.0) <i>58.1</i>	31 (32.0)
16-30 days	10 (19.2) <i>40.0</i>	15 (33.3) <i>60.0</i>	25 (25.8)
31-60 days	13 (25.0) <i>56.5</i>	10 (22.2) <i>43.4</i>	23 (23.7)
61-90 days	5 (9.6) <i>71.4</i>	2 (4.4) <i>28.5</i>	7 (7.2)
Up to 6 months	6 (11.5) <i>100.0</i>	-	6 (6.2)
More than 6 months	5 (9.6) <i>100.0</i>	-	5 (5.1)
Total	52 <i>53.6</i>	45 <i>46.4</i>	97

46% of the males were engaged in wage labour for more than 30 days but less than 6 months. Only 10% of the men reported working as wage labourer for more than 6 months. For women, the figure for those working for more than 30 days but less than 6 months is only 27%. 73% of the women have reported working as wage labour up to 30 days. None of them worked for more than 6 months. Women's lower participation in paid work may reflect opportunity or other demands on time or both.

Table 10: Number of employment activities engaged in a year

	<i>Mahikehda</i>		<i>Nichlagarh</i>		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Single	54 (80.5)	64 (85.3)	46 (56.7)	58 (69.0)	100 (68.9)	122 (78.6)
Two	8 (11.9)	8 (10.6)	16 (19.7)	19 (22.6)	21 (14.5)	27 (16.1)
Three	3 (4.5)	3 (4.0)	16 (19.7)	6 (7.1)	19 (13.1)	9 (5.4)
Four	2 (2.9)	-	3 (3.7)	1 (1.2)	5 (3.4)	1 (0.6)
Total	67	75	81	84	145	159

Source: ISST survey (2006)

Of the total, 31% male and 23% female have been engaged in multiple activities in the preceding year. Village *Mahikheda* is relatively better off in economic terms. Hence, more people (men as well as women) have been found to be engaged in one activity only. On the other hand, *Nichlagarh* which is a relatively poor village, comparatively higher percent of both men and women are engaged in multiple activities.

Overall, of the total number of persons above the age of 18 years (that is taking into account the people who are eligible to register under NREGA), 10% of men and 4.5% of women reported migrating out of the village for employment (Table 11). This might give the impression that work is available within the village or nearby, but in reality (as emerged from case studies and focus group discussion) this is not true. In most cases, men commute a distance more than 5kms daily to earn a livelihood. Mostly people walk instead of taking any transport to save money. This is physically strenuous given the terrain of the place and nature of work as well as time consuming. Therefore, it can be argued that if work is provided within 5 kms and wage rate is equal or higher than current payment¹³, it is likely to help stem this kind of migration. This will also contribute towards enhancing labour productivity as time and energy spent in commuting gets reduced.

¹³ The market wage rate in the area studied is around Rs. 50-60/- per day which is lower than the minimum wage rate fixed by the state government (Rs. 73/- per day).

As far as places of migration are concerned, all those who migrated for a period of 1 year went to Gujarat. Of the remaining who migrated for less than a year, most (5 persons) migrated to another place within the district itself, while 3 migrated to neighbouring Pali district, 1 to Mumbai as well as to Gujarat.

Table 11: Places and duration of migration by gender

Place	Duration	Male	Female
Gujarat	2 months	1	-
Gujarat and Bhosa (Abu road block)	3 months	3	-
Mumbai	4 months	1	1
Sirohi	5 months	1	-
Pali district (Rajasthan)	6 months	1	1
Pali district (Rajasthan)	7 months	1	-
Sheoganj (Sirohi district)	8 months	1	-
Mandar (Sirohi district)	10 months	-	1
Gujarat	1 year	8	4
	Total	17	7

Source: ISST survey (2001)

Experience with past public employment programmes

In response to the kind of corruption that people have experienced in the public employment programme, 37.3% of respondents listed various forms of corruption including payment of wages lower than the stipulated one. The manipulation in wage distribution, providing poor quality material for construction resulting in weak and poor structure, preparing false muster rolls are some of the very common corruption. The charges for such anomalies are directed towards *mate/sarpanch*. Also, *mate/sarpanch* often subject people to ill treatment and harassment. However, 11 (10.8%) of households did not report any form of corruption.

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Table 12: Persons eligible for employment under NREGA (that is, population above 18 years of age)

	<i>Mahikehda</i>	<i>Nichlagarh</i>	Total
Male	76 (47.8) 46.6	87 (47.3) 53.4	163 (47.5)
Female	83 (52.2) 46.1	97 (52.7) 53.9	180 (52.5)
Total	159 46.3	184 53.6	343

Source: ISST survey (2001)

Out of the 115 households that were surveyed, a total of 343 persons (47.5% males and 52.5% females) are eligible for NREGA (Table 12) or 2.9 per household. Table 13 indicates that more than 45% of the households have 2 members, followed by another 23% of households that have 3 persons and 16% of households with 4 persons who could participate in NREGA.

Table 14 shows that in the sample around 33.4% of the households have more eligible than non-eligible members. In these households, 100 days of employment under NREGA may be inadequate to meet the employment needs of the members.

Table 13: Number of members within each household who are eligible for employment under NREGA

	<i>Mahikehda</i>	<i>Nichlagarh</i>	Total
One	1 (2.0) 20.0	4 (6.1) 80.0	5 (4.3)
Two	22 (43.1) 42.3	30 (46.1) 57.7	52 (44.8)
Three	12 (23.5) 44.4	15 (23.1) 55.5	27 (23.3)
Four	9 (17.6) 47.4	10 (15.4) 52.6	19 (16.4)
Five	3 (5.9) 50.0	3 (4.6) 50.0	6 (5.2)
Six to seven	3 (5.9) 60.0	2 (3.1) 40.0	5 (4.3)
8 and above	1 (2.0) 50.0	1 (1.5) 50.0	2 (1.7)
Total	51 44.0	65 56.0	116

Source: ISST survey (2006)

Table 14: Composition of households in terms of members eligible and not eligible for NREGA

	<i>Mahikehda</i>	<i>Nichlagarh</i>	Total
All household members are eligible for NREGA	1 (2.0) 10.0	9 (13.8) 90.0	10 (8.6)
Households with more eligible than non-eligible members	16 (31.4) 43.2	21 (32.3) 56.8	37 (31.9)
Households with equal number of eligible and non-eligible members	9 (17.6) 50.0	9 (13.8) 50.0	18 (15.5)
Households with more non-eligible than eligible members	25 (49.0) 49.0	26 (40.0) 51.0	51 (44.0)
Total	51 44.0	65 56.0	116

Source: ISST survey (2006)

Table 15: Eligible workers' educational background

	<i>Mahikehda</i>		<i>Nichlagarh</i>		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Illiterate	51 (67.1) 39.5	78 (94.0) 60.5	50 (57.5) 36.5	87 (89.7) 63.5	101 (62.0) 38.0	165 (91.7) 62.0
Literate	-	-	3 (3.4) 33.3	6 (6.2) 66.7	3 (1.8) 33.3	6 (3.3) 66.7
≤ 5	14 (18.4) 93.3	1 (1.2) 6.7	13 (14.9) 93.0	1 (1.0) 7.0	27 (16.6) 93.1	2 (1.1) 6.9
> 5 and ≤ 10	8 (10.5) 66.7	4 (4.8) 33.3	13 (14.9) 81.2	3 (3.1) 18.8	21 (12.9) 75.0	7 (3.9) 25.0
> 10 and ≤ 12	2 (2.6) 100.0	-	4 (4.6) 100.0	-	6 (3.7) 100.0	-
> 12	1 (1.3) 100.0	-	4 (4.6) 100.0	-	5 (3.1) 100.0	-
Total	76 47.8	83 52.2	87 47.3	97 52.7	163 47.5	180 52.5

Source: ISST (2006)

Of the total illiterate eligible workers, 62% are women. Of all eligible workers, 62% of the males are illiterate and 92 % of women. Any effort at skill and capacity building has therefore to be tailored to such high levels of illiteracy, especially among the women.

Table 16: Distribution of households by membership to local groups/ associations

	Frequency	Percent ¹⁴
None	88	73.3
SHG	22	18.3
Mahila Mandal/ Other women's group	6	5.0
Other	4	3.3

Source: ISST survey (2006)

Note: Other refers to associations as village *Bhakti Mandals*.

¹⁴ This is a multiple response question, 4 households have membership in more than one organisation.

Out of the total sample of households (18.3%) have membership with Self Help Group followed by (5.0%) who have affiliation with *Mahila Mandals*/other women's group. There are only (3.3%) households that are members of *Bhakti Mandalies* and other such local groups. SHG groups or any other group could play an important role in the implementation of NREGA, especially for women. For instance, SHG could help enhance the collective bargaining power in terms of ensuring that provisions of NREGA (such as crèche facilities, wage rates, etc) are met and could also help ensure implementation of micro- projects that are particularly beneficial for women.

Table 17: Sources of information about NREGA¹⁵

Sources	Frequency	Percent
<i>Sarpanch</i>	32	23.3
<i>Gram Sevak</i>	12	8.7
Other government official	8	5.8
Word of mouth	27	19.7
Other	58	42.3

Source: ISST survey (2006)

Around 22% of the respondents attended gram sabha held on 26th January/ 2nd February. Table 17 indicates that only 23.3% of the respondents came to know about the NREGA from the *sarpanch*, 53% of the respondents came to know about the scheme from "others" that includes current and ex-*panchayat* members as *ward panch* and *upsarpanch*, information from own family members/ relatives and local NGOs.

Table 18: Preferred mode of payment according to respondent¹⁶

Sources	Frequency	Percent
Only in cash	3	2.6
Only in kind	13	11.4
Part in cash and part in kind	98	86.0

Source: ISST survey (2006)

¹⁵ This is a multiple response question.

¹⁶ This is a multiple response question.

In response to the preference for mode of payment, 86% of the responses indicate that people would prefer to have the wage partly in cash and partly in kind (Table18).

Out of the 102 households surveyed only 29 (28.4%) have reported that one person in the household got work/wage labour under the new scheme NREGA. This is interesting to note that most of the respondents of the households (93.1%) have opined that this is a good scheme. It would provide economic activity to the household members, which will in turn reduce migration and insecurity. However, respondents (27.4%) have mentioned that wage paid for the labour under the act is less. This might become a negative aspect of the scheme. Because of the low wages, people may not be willing to come forth and work under this programme. There are households (6.9%) where respondents have mentioned that the scheme is no good since it pays very less.

It has been clearly articulated by the respondents that the activities under the NREGA scheme should be such that it will help resolve the problem of drought and would be sustainable in the long term. As mentioned elsewhere, these villages are facing severe droughts that have resulted in the death of animals, failure of crops and forced people to migrate out of the village in search of wage labour. For the past seven years, the district has been declared as drought prone and relief programme has been implemented. Of the total households surveyed, 79 (77.4%) are in favour of constructing water conservation structures as anicuts, *medbandi* and digging canals. There are other respondents 8 (7.8%) who not only talk about these water harvesting structures but also emphasized the need for raising nursery and plantation. This will serve many purposes- it would boost the water table, reduce soil erosion and help overcome the degeneration of forests in the area.

Table 19: Overall distribution of persons willing to come for work if any construction activity under NREGA is undertaken beyond 5kms according to sex¹⁷

	Frequency	Percent
Male	82	52.6
Female	68	43.6
None	6	3.8

Source: ISST survey (2006)

¹⁷ This is a multiple response question.

In response to the question that if work is available beyond five kilometer from the home who all from the family will go for wage labour, of the total responses 52.6% have been in favour of males as against 43.6% in favour of females (Table 12). It appears that in Rajasthan male members would go for the work outside the villages rather than women if given a chance.

Observations by *Doosra Dashak* and suggestions for the NREGA

In early June, almost 99% of households had received job cards (a much better achievement than in other parts of the district) and around 53 % of these households had received work under the EGA. About 55 % of the works are to do with gravel road construction. 17 works had to stop because people refused to work for the low wages being given. Around 25 % of workers have got between Rs 24-34; 60 % between Rs 35-45; and 15 % between Rs 46 – 70.

Doosra Dashak, based on its experience in the area suggested that

- Perspective Plans at block and district level to be revised
- Forest related activities are needed
- The task to be done for earning a minimum wage needs to be reduced
- Water conservation activities need to be emphasized so that people have enough for both domestic purposes and irrigation
- Monitoring committees to be strengthened, and external observers to be part of these to check corruption
- Inter linkages between government departments to be strengthened
- People need to know not just the details of the Act, but the spirit behind it, and to feel a part of this ideology of concern and change
- Payment in part cash and part food

To sum up,

This study emphasizes that there is critical need for more work within the village, however given the high rates of dependency and the fact that there are on average approx 3 eligible members per household, while the 100 days of work will reduce economic insecurity of the household, it may not lead to immediate impact on migration. The high levels of illiteracy pose a challenge for skill enhancement. Mobilisation of women into groups is an opportunity for better articulation of needs and influencing choice of works.

Chapter 3: Madhya Pradesh (Dhar district)

Dhar district is one of the 18 districts in Madhya Pradesh selected for the implementation of the EGA. The district is located in the south-west of the state. It is bounded by the districts of Ratlam to the north, Ujjain to the northeast, Indore to the east, Khargaoon to the southeast, Barwani to the south, and Jhabua to the west. It covers an area of 8153 sq. km, which is 2.6% of the total area of the state. Geographically, the Malwa plateau lies in the north of the district and the Narmada valley along its southern boundary. The Vindhya range runs from the south-east to north-west in the district and along the Narmada valley in the south western part. The northwestern portion of the district lies in the watershed of the Mahi river and its tributaries, while the northeastern part of the district lies in the watershed of the Chambal river. The river Narmada flows along the southern boundary of the district. Agriculture is an important mainstay of the local economy. The main crops of the district include soya, jowar, maize, *bajara*, cotton, wheat and gram¹.



¹ Sources: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dhar_District, <http://www.dhar.nic.in/admini.htm>, http://gyandoot.nic.in/dhar_district/agriculture.html

The district has 7 *tehsils* and 13 blocks, with 1479 villages and 669 *gram panchayats*.

The chapter is divided as follows: Section 3.1 discusses the secondary data pertaining to the district and the state, Section 3.2 and Section 3.3 describes the area and the implementation of NREGA based on field visits/ observations and Section 3.4 presents findings from the household survey.

Section 3.1: Secondary data related to Dhar district and Madhya Pradesh

Table 1: Basic Demographic and socio-economic indicators of Dhar district and Madhya Pradesh

Indicators	District	State
Population	1740329	60348023
Average annual exponential growth rate	2.02	2.18
Population density (per Sq Km)	213	196
Sex ratio (females per 1000 males)	954	919
Percent urban	16.6	26.7
Percent Scheduled caste	6.5	15.2
Percent Scheduled tribe	54.5	20.3
Percent of literate population age 7+ years:		
Person	52.7	63.7
Male	66.2	76.1
Female	38.6	50.3

Source: Census of India (2001)

The population of Dhar is 1740329, which is 2.9% is of the state's population. Population density at 213 persons per sq. km is higher than the state's figure of 196. The district has a sex ratio of 954 females per 1000 males that is better as compared to the state's sex ratio of 919. Around 60% of the population in the district consist of SC and ST communities. The individual percentages are 6.5% for SC and 54.5% for ST vis-à-vis 15.2% and 20.3% respectively at the state level. Literacy rate for the district is 52.7%, which is lower than the state level rate of 63.7%. The female literacy rate (38.6%) in the district is almost half of the male literacy rate (66.2%).

Table-2 (see below) indicates that the percentage of workers in Dhar district is 46.6% as against the state average of 42.0%. Percentage of women workers in the district stands at 40.5% compared to 33.5% at the state level. This shows that the concentration of workers in general and female workers in particular is higher in the district vis-à-vis the state. Rural women constitute 34.68% of the main workers in the district of Dhar. As far as marginal workers are concerned, 72.9% of the women are marginal workers as against 27 % of men.

Table 2: Distribution of main, marginal and non-workers in Madhya Pradesh

			Total population	Total workers	Main workers	Marginal workers	Non-workers
Madhya Pradesh	Total	Persons	60348023	25793519	19102572	6690947	34554504
		Males	31443652	16194368	14056279	2138089	15249284
		Females	28904371	9599151	5046293	4552858	19305220
	Rural	Persons	44380878	20900226	14776619	6123067	23480652
		Males	23031093	12205916	10387506	1818410	10825177
		Females	21349785	8694310	4389113	4305197	12655475
	Urban	Persons	15967145	4893293	4325953	567340	11073852
		Males	8412559	3988452	3668773	319679	4424107
		Females	7554586	904841	657180	247661	6649745
Dhar	Total	Persons	1740329	811415	595586	215829	928914
		Males	890416	467321	406372	60949	423095
		Females	849913	344094	189214	154880	505819
	Rural	Persons	1452145	713877	508852	205025	738268
		Males	736710	387734	332376	55358	348976
		Females	715435	326143	176476	149667	389292
	Urban	Persons	288184	97538	86734	10804	190646
		Males	153706	79587	73996	5591	74119
		Females	134478	17951	12738	5213	116527

Source: Census of India (2001).

Section 3.2: Observations about the area (Feb-March, 2006)

Six villages (in six different *panchayats*) were visited during the initial visit to the district. Four of these are in *Dhar tehsil* and hence near to the district collectorate and other government offices. The other two are in *Kukshi tehsil*, which borders Jhabua district and is far from the administrative centre of the district. Field visits, focus group discussions and household survey were carried out with the assistance of SEWA-Dhar and SEWA Indore.

Overview of the area

Most of the inhabitants of the district belong to tribal communities- *Bhil* and *Bhilala*. There is limited interaction between these two communities.

Villages are spread out and consist of several hamlets. There is an acute shortage of water, worse in the summer months.

The main occupation is agriculture. Crops grown include wheat, soybean and maize, gram (*chana*), sorghum (*jowar*). Some of the villagers have land leased in from the forest department. A large number are engaged in *tendu patta*² collection. Except for one village, in all the others it was reported that a large percentage of families need to migrate in search of work for some part of the year.

Among the amenities available in the village are *aaganwadi* and primary schools (including schools set up under the EGS scheme and private schools). Mid-day meal is served in the primary schools and *dalia* in *aaganwadi*. There are no health facilities available though the villages are visited by an ANM. In one village (*Shikarpura*) because of a government scheme run through a local NGO, every household in the hamlet where the focus group discussion (FGD) was held had access to sanitation facilities.

Section 3.3: Initial observations on EGA implementation (Feb-March, 2006)

This section briefly reports on the observations made regarding the implementation of the Employment Guarantee Act immediately after it was notified in **end February and early March (2006)**.

- ***Awareness***

In *Shikarpura*, most men were aware of the Act and the main provision that 100 days of work will be provided. They had heard about this in the *gram sabha*. It was reported that women do not attend the *gram sabha*, and men do not generally share the content of the discussions with women.

In *Kacchal*, participants in the group discussion showed little awareness, however one of the members of the *panchayat* who was present was well informed. The *sarpanch* is a woman and none of the participants had met her. In *Bori*, participants at the group discussion showed little awareness about EGA. The *sarpanch*, a woman, had little information; her son and husband knew more about it.

In *Parvatpura*, women who participated in the discussion were found to have no awareness. However the listing of households is being done by the *panchayat* and job cards being issued to all. Similar situation prevailed in *Chikapoti*. Participants had little knowledge of the EGA –

although job cards had been issued to all the households. In *Khelli*, participants did not know about the EGA and had not attended the *gram sabha*. But a household listing has been done and job cards are to be issued.

- ***Interpretation of the term “household”***

The term ‘household’ was being interpreted as per the Act. In *Shikarpura*, a household listing done a few years ago had shown 70-80 households, but now the number is 165, because new households formed out of the old ones have been separately identified.

- ***Effectiveness of the panchayat***

It was seen that elected women members of the *panchayat*, and even the *sarpanch*, were not even attending the *gram sabha*. The actual decision makers were the husband/ son or other male members of the family. In *Chikapoti*, the *sarpanch*, a woman, lives with her husband in a nearby town and a third person manages the affairs of the *panchayat*.

- ***Proposed works***

Works proposed under the new act generally pertain to construction of roads, water harvesting structures and afforestation.

- ***Expectations***

A water conservation project carried out near Shikarpura had given work to around 40-50 people, half of whom were women. However there seemed to be limited experience with such works.

The following section is based on a re-visit to *Shikarpura* in *Nalchha* block and meetings with some government officials during end March and beginning April.

- ***Procedure to apply for work***

In discussions with villagers in *Shikarpura* (6 participants- 4 men, 2 women), it emerged that although all had received job cards, none of them had submitted job application forms. This was for two different reasons, first that at the time of the visit, villagers were busy with harvesting wheat and therefore, there was little demand for wage employment. They would have to look for daily wage work once harvest is completed in the beginning of April. Second, the participants also seemed to have little idea as to how to apply for jobs. They had thought that the job card

² Leaves of *Diospyros melonoxylon*

automatically entitles them to wage employment. Indeed, one of the participants complained that he had not received the unemployment benefit due to him in the absence of work as promised under the act. (Subsequent discussions at the block level revealed that only 2 persons had submitted job application forms). Later the district collector informed us that he had asked the *gram sachiv* to mobilise and get a minimum of 50 job applications filled from each *panchayat*. He felt that in this way people would become more aware of the formalities that need to be completed to access their entitlements.

- ***Nature of works***

In *Nalchha* block at the time of the visit only 5 *panchayats* had taken up works under NREGA. All these works pertained to water conservation structures.

Section 3.4: Findings from household survey

For the survey two *panchayats* were selected from *Nalccha* and *Tirla* block. In *Nalccha* block, the sample *panchayat* is *Shikarpura* and in *Tirla* block the sample *panchayat* is *Satipura*. A total of 115 households were selected representing the two *panchayats*. A questionnaire was designed and canvassed to one senior member of the sample households. The list of questions dealt with information on social and demographic characteristics of the households, economic status, experiences with past public employment programmes. Also, a section has been dedicated to know the extent of awareness among the people regarding NREGA and their perceptions and expectations about the same.

Social and Demographic indicators

Table 1 to 3 describes the social and demographic characteristics of the sample population selected for the study.

Table 1: *Panchayat* wise distribution of households by total members

Family size	<i>Shikarpura</i>	<i>Satipura</i>	Total
Up to 5	34 (68.0) <i>48.6</i>	36 (55.4) <i>51.4</i>	70 (60.9)
6-10	14 (28.0) <i>32.6</i>	29 (44.6) <i>67.4</i>	43 (37.4)
Above 10 ³	2 (4.0) <i>100.0</i>	-	2 (1.7)
Total	50 <i>43.5</i>	65 <i>56.5</i>	115

Source: ISST survey (2006)

Note: * Figures in brackets indicate column percentage; ** Figures in italics indicate row percentage.

The *panchayat* wise distribution of family size of the sample households (Table 1) indicates that both in *Shikarpura* as well as in *Satipura* majority have a household size up to five members (68 % and 55 %). However, *Satipura* does show an inclination towards large family of six to ten members (44.6%) as compared to *Shikarpura* (28 %) while *Shikarpura* has two households with more than twelve members.

The gender-wise distribution of sample population (Table 2) shows that 42.7% of the males and 50.8% females are below 18 years of age. Around 40% of males and 35% of females belong to the age group 18-39. It can be argued that men and women in this category are more productive as compared to an older age group. The mobilisation of this group under NREGA is likely to generate positive effects in terms of reducing unemployment/underemployment and thereby, promoting economic growth.

Distribution of educational status of the population (Table 3) suggests that in 7-20 years age group among males 39.6% have studied till tenth standard followed by 35.4% up to fifth grade. In case of females, the order is reversed- many more girls 34.9% have studied up to fifth grade and 20.2% up to tenth grade. There is much higher illiteracy among women than men.

³ The maximum family size in *panchayat Shikarpura* is of 12 members.

Table 2: Distribution of total population by sex

	Male	Female	Total
Below 18 years	125 (42.7) 44.5	156 (50.8) 55.5	281 (46.8)
18-28	75 (25.6) 48.4	80 (26.1) 51.6	155 (25.8)
29-39	41 (13.9) 61.2	26 (8.5) 38.8	67 (11.2)
40-49	25 (8.5) 50.0	25 (8.1) 50.0	50 (8.3)
50-59	15 (5.1) 60.0	10 (3.2) 40.0	25 (4.2)
60 and above	12 (4.1) 54.5	10 (3.2) 45.4	22 (3.6)
Total	293 49.8	307 51.1	600

Source: ISST survey (2006)

Table 3: Distribution of population by education status

	7-20		21-59		60 and above		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Illiterate	18 (18.8) 20.7	47 (43.1) 31.5	60 (46.2) 68.9	92 (74.8) 61.7	9 (75.0) 10.3	10 (100.0) 6.7	87 (36.5)	149 (61.6)
Literate	1 (1.0) 100.0	-	-	-	-	-	1 (0.4)	-
≤ 5	34 (35.4) 61.8	38 (34.9) 74.5	18 (13.8) 32.7	13 (10.6) 25.5	3 (25.0) 5.5	-	55 (23.1)	51 (21.1)
> 5 and ≤ 10	38 (39.6) 51.4	22 (20.2) 61.1	36 (27.7) 48.6	14 (11.4) 38.9	-	-	74 (31.1)	36 (14.9)
> 10 and ≤ 12	4 (4.2) 40.0	-	6 (4.6) 60.0	1 (0.8) 100.0	-	-	10 (4.2)	1 (0.4)
> 12	1 (1.0) 9.1	2 (1.8) 40.0	10 (7.7) 90.9	3 (2.4) 60.0	-	-	11 (4.6)	5 (2.1)
Total	96 40.3	109 45.0	130 54.6	123 50.8	12 5.0	10 4.1	238	242

Source: ISST survey (2006)

This table brings out clearly that nearly 43% of the females even in the age group of 7-20 years are illiterate. It is important that educational opportunities are provided to this group because they

would form the potential workforce. Unless attention is given at this point of time, gender discrimination will remain in terms of basic education and skills.

Economic Indicators

Table 4 indicates that a high 30% of households in *Shikarpura* and 35% in *Satipura* are landless. In *Shikarpura*, 60% of households and in *Satipura*, 62% of households possess land between one and ten *bighas*.

Satipura has 92.7% households that have no irrigated land as against 45.7% households in *Shikarpura* (see Table 5). In other words, in *Satipura* only three out of the forty-one households have land either irrigated or partly irrigated. This reinforces the perception of higher level of poverty among households located in *Satipura panchayat*.

Table 4: Distribution of households by land owned

	<i>Shikarpura</i>	<i>Satipura</i>	Total
No land	15 (30.0) 39.5	23 (35.0) 60.5	38 (33.3)
< 1	1 (2.0) 50.0	1 (2.0) 50.0	2 (1.8)
≥1 and ≤ 5	20 (40.0) 39.2	31 (48.0) 60.8	51 (44.7)
>5 and ≤ 10	10 (20.0) 52.6	9 (14.0) 47.4	19 (16.7)
> 10	4 (8.0) 100.0	-	4 (3.5)
Total	50 43.8	64 56.1	114

Source: ISST survey (2006).

Note: One case is missing.

Table 5: *Panchayat* wise distribution of households by land owned and type of irrigation

Land size (<i>Bighas</i>)	Non-irrigated	Irrigated	Partially irrigated	Total
<i>Shikarpura</i>				
< 1	-	1 (11.1) 100.0	-	1 (2.9)
≥1 and ≤ 5	9 (56.3) 45.0	6 (66.7) 30.0	5 (50.0) 25.0	20 (57.1)
>5 and ≤ 10	5 (31.2) 50.0	2 (22.2) 20.0	3 (30.0) 30.0	10 (28.6)
> 10	2 (12.5) 50.0	-	2 (20.0) 50.0	4 (11.4)
Total	16 45.7	9 25.7	10 28.6	35
<i>Satipura</i>				
< 1	1 (2.6) 100.0	-	-	1 (2.4)
≥1 and ≤ 5	29 (76.3) 94.0	1 (100.0) 3.0	1 (50.0) 3.0	31 (75.6)
>5 and ≤ 10	8 (21.0) 89.0	-	1 (50.0) 11.0	9 (21.9)
> 10	-	-	-	-
Total	38 92.7	1 2.4	2 4.9	41

Source: ISST survey (2006)

Table 6: Types of livestock possessed by sample households

Livestock	<i>Shikarpura</i>	<i>Satipura</i>	Total
No animal	14	34	48
Cows	20	16	36
Buffaloes	12	8	20
Goats	18	6	24
Ox	30	26	56
Hen	-	3	3

Source: ISST survey (2006)

Note: This is a multiple response question.

Around 42% (48 out of 115 households) do not possess any animals. Of the different types of livestock possessed by the remaining households, ox is the most common followed by cows. This

indicates the place has potential for rearing such animals. Animal rearing could be strengthened so as to build on the existing household assets. This could perhaps be explored further while designing micro-projects under NREGA.

The percentage of reported male and female workers between the age group ranging from 18-59 years is 89.7% and 87.8% respectively. Within the age group 18-39 years, there is equal number of male and female workers. It is interesting to note that more number of female workers is found in the age group of 18-28 years and then there is a sharp decline in the next age group (29-39 years), perhaps reflecting enhanced household responsibilities. The trend is same for male workers too but not as sharp as females. In the sample about 5% workers are above 60 years of age.

Table 7: Distribution of reported working population by sex and age

	Male	Female	Total working population
Below 18 years	8 (5.1) 36.4	14 (10.1) 63.6	22 (7.4)
18-28	66 (42.0) 49.3	68 (48.9) 50.7	134 (45.3)
29-39	38 (24.2) 61.3	24 (17.3) 38.7	62 (20.9)
40-49	25 (15.9) 54.3	21 (15.1) 45.6	46 (15.5)
50-59	12 (7.6) 66.7	6 (4.3) 33.3	18 (6.1)
60+	8 (5.1) 57.1	6 (4.3) 42.9	14 (4.7)
Total	157 53.0	139 47.0	296

Source: ISST survey (2006)

The distribution of type of work done indicates that men do mostly non- agricultural work (68.8%) followed by collection of *tendu* leaves (68.2%), own agriculture (58.6%) and agriculture for others (20.4%). Similarly a large percentage of women are engaged in collection of *tendu* leaves (72.7%) followed by non-agriculture work (62.6%), own agriculture (61.2%) and agriculture for others (23%).

Table 8: Distribution of workers by sex and type of work done⁴

	Male	Female	Total
Own agriculture	92 (25.5) 52.0	85 (26.8) 48.0	177 (26.1)
Agriculture for others	32 (8.9) 50.0	32 (10.1) 50.0	64 (9.4)
Non-agriculture	108 (29.9) 55.4	87 (27.4) 44.6	195 (28.8)
Own grazing	1 (0.3) 100.0	-	1 (0.1)
Grazing for others	1 (0.3) 100.0	-	1 (0.1)
Student ⁵	9 (2.5) 47.4	10 (3.1) 52.6	19 (2.8)
Skilled (wage) worker	3 (0.8) 100.0	-	3 (0.4)
Salaried	4 (1.1) 66.7	2 (0.6) 33.3	6 (0.9)
Collection of <i>tendupatta</i> leaves	107 (29.6) 51.4	101 (31.8) 48.6	208 (30.7)
Petty trade	4 (1.1) 100.0	-	4 (0.6)
Total	361 53.2	317 46.8	678

Source: ISST survey (2006)

⁴This is a multiple response question since a household member may be engaged in more than one activity.

There are a few cases where households have reported of children below 15 years engaging in activities that directly or indirectly contribute to the subsistence of the household- in *panchayat Shikarpura*, 3 children (1 boy and 2 girls) and in *panchayat Sitapura* 5 children (3 boys and 2 girls). The activities that they engage in are subsistence agriculture, non-agricultural activities, collection of *tendupatta* leaves and grazing.

⁵ This category is only for household members 18 and above years of age.

Table 9: Distribution of workers engaged in non-agriculture (daily wage) labour by sex in the last year

	Male	Female	Total
5-15 days	18 (20.9) 54.5	15 (21.1) 45.5	33 (24.1)
16-30 days	11 (12.8) 61.1	7 (9.8) 38.9	18 (13.1)
31-60 days	24 (27.9) 52.2	22 (30.9) 47.8	46 (18.9)
61-90 days	10 (11.6) 58.8	7 (9.8) 41.2	17 (12.4)
Up to 6 months	15 (17.4) 53.6	13 (18.3) 46.4	28 (20.4)
More than 6 months	8 (9.3) 53.3	7 (9.8) 46.7	15 (10.9)
Total	86 62.8	71 51.8	137

Source: ISST survey (2006)

The maximum number days that males (28.6%) and females (43.5%) had worked in *Shikarpura* in the previous year were between thirty one to sixty days. The trend is same for *Satipura* too, 27.4% of males and 25.0% of females have been engaged in work for thirty one to sixty days. This makes it clear that very few people could get wage labor beyond thirty days, suggesting that an additional 100 days of work through the EGA will be valued.

Table 10: Number of employment activities engaged in a year

	<i>Shikarpura</i>		<i>Satipura</i>		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Single	22 (28.9) 51.1	21 (30.9) 48.8	12 (15.6) 70.5	5 (7.0) 29.4	34 (22.1) 56.6	26 (18.7) 43.3
Two	22 (28.9) 44.8	27 (39.7) 55.1	30 (39.0) 48.4	32 (45.1) 51.6	52 (33.7) 46.8	59 (42.4) 53.1
Three	28 (36.8) 60.8	18 (26.5) 39.1	25 (32.5) 50.0	25 (35.2) 50.0	54 (35.1) 55.6	43 (30.9) 44.3
Four	4 (5.3) 66.7	2 (2.9) 33.3	10 (13.0) 52.6	9 (12.7) 47.3	14 (9.1) 56.0	11 (7.9) 44.0
Total	76 52.7	68 47.2	77 52.0	71 47.9	154 52.5	139 47.4

Source: ISST survey (2006)

Note: This is a multiple response question.

Majority of the men (77.9%) and women (81.2%) have been engaged in multiple activities in the preceding year. This is an indication of lack of opportunities of continuous employment in the area. Fewer women than men worked in a single activity and most reported either 2 or 3.

The percent of male and female migrants (taking into account population above 18 years) in the sample is 23.2% and 19.9%. In many cases, both males and females from the same household migrate to earn their livelihood, but the elderly and children may stay behind. The main places of migration are Pithampur (Dhar district) which is an industrial area and Indore which is the nearest town. A number of migrants also go to neighbouring Gujarat.

Table 11: Places and duration of migration by gender

Place	Duration	Male	Female
Not mentioned	1 month	1	-
Pithampur (Dhar district), Indore, Gujarat	3 months	10	7
Pithampur (Dhar district), Indore, Gujarat	4 months	8	6
Pithampur (Dhar district), Indore	6 months	13	11
Indore	10 months	2	2
Indore, Mhow (Indore district), Tapu (Dhar district)	1 year	5	4
	Total	39	30

Source: ISST survey (2006)

Experience with past employment programmes

In response to corruption in public employment programmes, 34.8% of respondents listed various forms of corruption including payment of wages less than expected, manipulation in wage distributions, discrimination and favouritism by the *sarpanch*, forging muster rolls. Respondents informed that often they would hear about the scheme but no work would be given to them. In one instance, a road construction project that went on for one full year workers were hired from outside instead of utilising local labour. However, 0.86% of respondents denied any forms of corruption that was experienced.

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Table 12: Persons eligible for employment under NREGA (that is, population above 18 years of age)

	<i>Shikarpura</i>	<i>Satipura</i>	Total
Male	91 (53.2) 54.2	77 (52.0) 45.8	168 (52.7)
Female	80 (46.7) 53.0	71 (48.0) 47.0	151 (47.3)
Total	171 53.6	148 46.4	319

Source: ISST survey (2006)

Table 13: Number of members within each household who are eligible for employment under NREGA

	<i>Shikarpura</i>	<i>Satipura</i>	Total
One	-	3 (4.6) 100.0	3 (2.6)
Two	22 (44.0) 31.4	48 (73.8) 68.6	70 (60.9)
Three	11 (22.0) 57.9	8 (12.3) 42.1	19 (16.5)
Four	5 (10.0) 50.0	5 (7.7) 50.0	10 (8.7)
Five	7 (14.0) 87.5	1 (1.5) 12.5	8 (6.9)
Six to seven	2 (4.0) 100.0	-	2 (1.7)
8 and above	3 (6.0) 100.0	-	3 (2.6)
Total	50 43.5	65 56.5	115

Source: ISST survey (2006)

Table 14: Composition of households in terms of members eligible and not eligible for NREGA

	<i>Shikarpura</i>	<i>Satipura</i>	Total
All household members are eligible for NREGA	11 (22.0) <i>61.1</i>	7 (10.8) <i>38.9</i>	18 (15.6)
Households with more eligible than non-eligible members	21 (42.0) <i>63.6</i>	12 (18.5) <i>36.4</i>	33 (28.7)
Households with equal number of eligible and non-eligible members	6 (12.0) <i>31.6</i>	13 (20.0) <i>68.4</i>	19 (16.5)
Households with more non-eligible than eligible members	12 (24.0) <i>26.7</i>	33 (50.8) <i>73.3</i>	45 (39.1)
Total	50 <i>43.5</i>	65 <i>56.5</i>	115

Source: ISST survey (2006)

Out of the 115 households that were surveyed, a total of 319 persons (52.7% males and 47.3% females) are eligible for NREGA (Table 12) making for an average of 2.8 per household. Table 13 indicates that more than 60% of the households have 2 eligible members, followed by another 17% of households that have 3 persons. Whether the 100 days of employment will be shared, or whether one person will be allocated to this, remains to be seen.

Table 14 shows that in the sample around 44% of the households have more eligible than non-eligible members. In these households, 100 days of employment under NREGA may be inadequate to meet the employment needs of the members and some form of migration may continue to be necessary.

Table 15: Distribution of households by membership to local groups/ associations

	Frequency	Percent ⁶
None	7	5.3
SHG	11	8.3

⁶ This is a multiple response question. 18 households have membership in more than one organization.

Mahila Mandal/ Other women's group	13	9.8
SEWA member	102	76.7

Source: ISST survey (2006)

Out of the total sample of households, 76.7% have membership with SEWA followed by 9.8% who have affiliation with *Mahila Mandals*/other women's group and 8.3% with Self Help Group. There are 5.3% households that have no membership/affiliation with any local groups/organisations. SHG groups or any other group like SEWA could play an important role in the implementation of NREGA, especially for women. For instance, SHG could help enhance the collective bargaining power in terms of ensuring that provisions of NREGA (such as crèche facilities, wage rates, etc) are met and could also help ensure implementation of micro- projects that are particularly beneficial for women.

Table 16: Eligible workers' educational background

	<i>Shikarpura</i>		<i>Satipura</i>		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Illiterate	22 (24.2) 31.4	48 (60.0) 68.6	49 (63.6) 43.0	65 (91.5) 57.0	71 (42.3) 38.6	113 (74.8) 61.4
Literate	-	-	-	-	-	-
≤ 5	14 (15.4) 51.9	13 (16.3) 48.1	14 (18.2) 82.3	3 (4.2) 17.6	28 (16.7) 63.6	16 (10.6) 36.4
> 5 and ≤ 10	35 (38.5) 71.4	14 (17.5) 28.6	14 (18.2) 87.5	2 (2.8) 12.5	49 (29.2) 75.4	16 (10.6) 24.6
> 10 and ≤ 12	9 (9.9) 100.0	-	-	1 (1.4) 100.0	9 (5.4) 90.0	1 (0.7) 10.0
> 12	11 (12.1) 68.8	5 (6.3) 31.2	-	-	11 (6.5) 68.8	5 (3.3) 31.2
Total	91 53.2	80 46.8	77 52.0	71 48.0	168 52.7	151 47.3

Source: ISST survey (2006)

Of the total illiterate eligible workers, 61% are women. This is quite alarming since any skill/ training/ capacity building would be facilitated by a literate group. The high level of illiteracy among NREGA women participants could act as a hindrance in acquiring certain types of skills. Unless there is an effort to tackle this issue, gender discrimination will prevail.

Around 22% of the respondents attended gram sabha held on 26th January/ 2nd February. Table 17 indicates that 50% of the respondents heard about NREGA from the *sarpanch*, Around a quarter of respondents came to know about NREGA from word-of-mouth. Another important source of information is the “other” category consisting of relatives and NGOs.

Table 17: Sources of information about NREGA⁷

Sources	Frequency	Percent
<i>Sarpanch</i>	74	50.3
<i>Gram Sevak</i>	6	4.1
Other government official	7	4.8
Word of mouth	38	25.9
Other	22	14.9

Source: ISST survey (2006)

Note: This is a multiple response question.

Table 18: Preferred mode of payment according to respondent⁸

Sources	Frequency	Percent
Only in cash	16	13.6
Only in kind	5	4.2

⁷ This is a multiple response question.

⁸ This is a multiple response question.

Part in cash and part in kind	97	82.2
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Source: ISST survey (2006)

In response to the preference for mode of payments 82% of the responses indicate that people would prefer to have the wage partly in cash and partly in kind. Only 14% of responses indicate that the preference is for only cash payment (Table 18).

Out of the 115 households surveyed none have reported of having work under NREGA. One of the *panchayats* has distributed the job cards and in the other *panchayat* cards are yet to be distributed.

It is interesting to note that of the total 57% responses, 53% have mentioned NREGA is a good scheme. It would provide work in the village itself and thereby, help reduce migration. However, 4.3% of respondents have mentioned that scheme has some lacunae; it may not be very successful since payment will be task based and not time rate based. There exists a uniform task rate for the entire district that does not take into account the differential texture of the soil. In order to make it successful, there is a need for different rates depending on the soil structure. In other words, revision of schedule of rates is required.

More than 60% of the respondents have mentioned the need for water conservation structures as ponds, stop-dams, etc. Also, hand pumps and taps have been identified as crucial needs in the villages. Of the total (65%) responses, 1.7% has mentioned nursery raising and plantation. A very few responses did mention macro level planning such as the need for constructing a 10 km road between *Lunera* and *Shikarpura* and construction of a check dam on *Mann* river that would benefit two-three villages.

Table 19: Overall distribution of persons willing to come for work if any construction activity under NREGA is undertaken beyond 5kms according to sex⁹

	Frequency	Percent
Male	59	38.6
Female	37	24.2
All/ anyone	48	31.4

⁹ This is a multiple response question.

None	9	5.9
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Source: ISST survey (2006)

In response to the question that if work is available beyond five kilometres from the home who all from the family will go for wage labour, 38.6% of responses have been in favour of males as against 24.2% in favour of females (Table 12). However, a substantial percent of responses (31.4%) preferred any one of the family members irrespective of sex to go for wage labour.

To sum up,

In this predominantly tribal district there is a heavy dependence on land/ forest, but with a lack of irrigation facilities and high level of landlessness, most households are engaged in multiple occupations and a significant percentage migrate out of the village for a few months in the year.

On average, there are around 2.8 eligible members per household for the EGA works.

Women have high work participation, although this falls as age increases, perhaps reflecting higher burdens of household responsibilities. Levels of illiteracy are very high among women.

The relatively high mobilisation into groups (SEWA, SHGs etc) could be a valuable resource in articulating women's priorities and ensuring that the works undertaken are able to address these.

Gulbarga district, Karnataka

The current project seeks to explore ways to facilitate the participation of women in the NREGS, and identify constraints to their participation, as well as identify women's current sources of livelihood vis-à-vis opportunities that may arise through the implementation of the NREGS. It has also been undertaken in Gulbarga district of Karnataka. During the project, a workshop was conducted to orient residents of the district on issues related to the NREGS and understand their concerns. This was followed by a survey in five villages of the district to understand patterns related to livelihood.

Secondary data related to Gulbarga district



Gulbarga District is situated in northern Karnataka between 76°.04' and 77°.42 east longitude, and 16°.12' and 17°.46' north latitude, covering an area of 16,224 square kilometres. Situated in the Deccan plateau, the general elevation of Gulbarga ranges from 300 to 750 meters above mean sea level. Temperatures range from 5°C in the winter to 45°C in the summer, and the district receives an annual rainfall of about 750 mm. Two major rivers, the Krishna and the Bhima, flow through the district, which is also irrigated by a large number of tanks which, in addition to the

rivers. The fertile black soil of the district is conducive to growing various crops like bajra, jowar, wheat, ragi, tur, black gram, Bengal gram, ground nut, sunflower, sesame, castor, linseed, sugarcane and cotton. Gulbarga is a comparatively backward district from the point of view of industry. Currently, some cement, textile, leather and chemical industries operate in the district.

Gulbarga district is divided into 10 taluks, and with a population of 31,24,858, accounts for 5.92 per cent of the state's population. Population density, at 193 persons per sq. km. is significantly lower than the state average of 275. Further, the district is predominantly rural, with only 27 per cent of its population living in urban areas. The sex ratio of the district matches the state average of 964 females per 1000 males. Scheduled castes (23.65 percent) and Scheduled tribes (4.14 percent) account 27.79 percent of the district's population. Literacy rates for the district are lower than the state averages, being 65.52 percent for males and 38.40 percent for females respectively, making up an average of 50.65 percent, accounting for barely half of the seven-years-plus population in the state.

Table 1: Showing Basic Demographic Indicators of Gulbarga district, Karnataka state

INDICATORS		DISTRICT	STATE
Population		3124858	52733958
Average annual exponential growth rate		0.01908	0.01591
Population density (per Sq Km)		193	275
Sex ratio (females per 1000 males)		964	964
Percent urban		27.13	33.98
Percent Scheduled caste		23.65	16.38
Percent Scheduled tribe		4.14	4.26
Percent of literate population age 7+ years			
	Person	50.65	67.04
	Male	65.52	76.29
	Female	38.40	57.45

(Source: Census, 1991 & 2001, As cited in <http://www.rchindia.org/rep/kar/gulbarga/chep1.pdf> , Retrieved May 3, 2006, 3 p.m.

The following tables provide some data with regard to the employment situation in Karnataka and in particular, Gulbarga district. Tables 2 and 3 show the total population, total workers, main workers, marginal workers and non-workers for Karnataka state and Gulbarga district respectively. The number of non-workers in Gulbarga (1774128) accounts for about 6 per cent of the total number of non-workers in Karnataka (29212425). About 11.7 lakhs of the people in rural Gulbarga are not workers, as compared to 6 lakhs in urban Gulbarga. Even given that a

greater percentage of Gulbarga's population lives in the rural than the urban areas, this difference may suggest that work may be more difficult to come by in rural Gulbarga. **More females than males are non-workers. However, when women do work, it appears that more of them are marginal workers as compared to men, and this especially true for workers in rural areas. For example, in rural Gulbarga, the numbers of female marginal workers (224196) is nearly three times as high as the number of male marginal workers (83107). This would suggest that the NREGS is especially significant to women workers in the rural areas of districts like Gulbarga, and that special measures must be taken to protect their entitlements under the scheme.**

Table 4 shows the total workers (main + marginal) and their categories in Gulbarga District: 2001. Here too, the special care that must be taken to protect women's entitlements becomes clear when one looks at certain pieces of data. **Only 83,086 women in rural Gulbarga list themselves as cultivators as compared to 275,207 men. In contrast, a remarkable 337,018 women in rural Gulbarga describe themselves as agricultural labourers as compared to 181,393 men. This seems to indicate that women have less access to resources for production, and tend to work more as agricultural wage labour, which also means that women's economic security in the rural areas is more compromised than that of men. This too underscores the significance of the NREGS to women in rural Gulbarga. Hence administrators must pay special attention in the administration of the scheme to ensure that women receive their entitlements under the scheme, not only in terms of work, but in terms of access to wages.**

Table 2: Showing total population, total workers, main workers, marginal workers and non-workers - Karnataka : 2001

Code No.	India/State/Union territory	Total	Persons	Total Population	Total Workers	Main Workers	Marginal Workers	Non - Workers
		Rural	Males					
		Urban	Females					
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
29.	Karnataka	Total	Persons	52733958	23521533	19357600	4163933	29212425
			Males	26856343	15272725	13944187	1328538	11583618
			Females	25877615	8248808	5413413	2835395	17628807
		Rural	Persons	34814100	17129318	13458918	3670400	17684782
			Males	17618593	10274566	9218896	1055670	7344027
			Females	17195507	6854752	4240022	2614730	10340755
		Urban	Persons	17919858	6392215	5898682	493533	11527643
			Males	9237750	4998159	4725291	272868	4239591
			Females	8682108	1394056	1173391	220665	7288052

(Source: http://www.censusindia.net/cgi-bin/census/census_report/completelist.cgi , Retrieved May 2, 2006, 3 p.m.)

Table 3: Total population, total workers, main workers, marginal workers and non-workers in Gulbarga district 2001

Code No.	India/State/Union territory	District	Total	Persons	Total Population	Total Workers	Main Workers	Marginal Workers	Non - Workers
			Rural	Males					
			Urban	Females					
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
29.	Karnataka	Gulbarga	Total	Persons	3124858	1350730	1011839	338891	1774128
				Males	1591379	815381	715869	99512	775998
				Females	1533479	535349	295970	239379	998130
			Rural	Persons	2276935	1102949	795646	307303	1173986
				Males	1152466	620684	537577	83107	531782
				Females	1124469	482265	258069	224196	620684
			Urban	Persons	847923	247781	216193	31588	600142
				Males	438913	194697	178292	16405	244216
				Females	409010	53084	37901	15183	355926

(Source: http://www.censusindia.net/cgi-bin/census/census_report/showstate.cgi , Retrieved May 2, 2006, 3 p.m.)

Table 4: Showing total workers (main + marginal) and their categories- Gulbarga District: 2001

Code No.	India/State/Union territory	District	Total	Persons	Total workers (Main + Marginal)	Cultivators	Agricultural Labourers	Household Industry Workers	Other Workers
			Rural	Males					
			Urban	Females					
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
29.	Karnataka	Gulbarga	Total	Persons	1350730	369608	539362	32902	408858
				Males	815381	284435	190381	18120	322445
				Females	535349	85173	348981	14782	86413
			Rural	Persons	1102949	358293	518411	22624	203621
				Males	620684	275207	181393	13640	150444
				Females	482265	83086	337018	8984	275207
			Urban	Persons	247781	11315	20951	10278	205237
				Males	194697	9228	8988	4480	172001
				Females	53084	2087	11963	5798	33236

(Source: http://www.censusindia.net/cgi-bin/census/census_report/marginalstate.cgi , Retrieved May 2, 2006, 3 p.m.)

Results of the survey

A survey to understand issues of livelihood and knowledge about the NREGS among was undertaken in five villages of Gulbarga district in Karnataka state. A questionnaire was developed by a team of researchers from the Delhi and Bangalore centers of ISST, which sought to gather data on the respondent, household details, employment details (nature, wages, migration, etc), levels of awareness about the NREGS, and respondents' ideas about eliminating corruption, and the kind of work that could be taken up under the scheme.

Five field researchers administered the questionnaire in the villages. The data collection process was supervised by an experienced field superintendent. The survey effort was managed and coordinated by an experienced field coordinator. The data was coded, entered and analysed at the Bangalore office of ISST.

The survey was carried out in the Farhatabad, Ferozabad, Nadisinoora, Thadathaganoora, and Saradigi B villages of Gulbarga district. A total of 250 women were surveyed, approximately 50 each from the five villages. The demographic make-up of the sample is given in the following series of tables.

Table 5: Showing the religious composition of the sample from Gulbarga

Religions	Number of respondents				
	Farhatabad	Ferozabad	Nadisinoora	Thadathaganoora	Saradigi B
Hindu	47	49	37	49	36
Muslim	4	1	14	0	12
Christian	0	0	0	0	1
Others	0	0	0	0	0
Total	51	50	51	49	49

As Table 5: shows, 218 (87%) of the 250 women sampled were Hindu. However, since stratified random sampling was not followed, rather, women who agreed to be interviewed shared their information, there is likely to a bias in the sample. About 12 % of the sample was Muslim, however, it is to be noted that all 49 members of the sample from Thadathaganoora village, and all but one in Ferozabad were Hindu.

Table 6: Showing the caste composition of the sample from Gulbarga

Castes	Number of respondents				
	Farhatabad	Ferozabad	Nadisinoora	Thadathaganoora	Saradigi B
Lingayat (General)	33	7	4	15	4
Talawar (ST)	3	23	23	4	9
Harijan (SC)	0	0	0	15	1
Kapilaka (ST)	0	1	2	1	5
Sheikh (Muslim)	3	1	4	0	4
Kuruba (General)	1	5	0	0	5
Viswakarma (Gen)	4	0	0	0	1
Madara (SC)	0	0	0	0	3
Holaya (SC)	4	0	0	5	0
Kumbara (Gen)	0	0	3	2	0
Koli (ST)	0	0	0	0	5
Mulla (Muslim)	0	0	3	0	1
Adapada (Gen)	0	1	0	1	0
Agasar (Gen)	0	0	0	1	0
Madika (Gen)	0	1	0	1	0
Samakara (SC)	0	0	1	0	0
Jangam	0	2	0	0	0
Bajanthi	0	3	0	0	0
Badiga	0	1	0	0	0
Pujari	0	5	0	0	0
Not mentioned	3	0	11	4	11
Total	51	50	51	49	49

As mentioned earlier, there was a measure of convenience sampling in the conduct of the survey, and hence the caste composition of the sample studied may not exactly match the composition of the larger population. However, respondents from about 20 different castes were surveyed, as shown in Table 6. 29 respondents declined to share their caste information. 63 (25%) of the respondents were Lingayat, and 62 (24.8%) were Talawars, a Scheduled Tribe. These constituted the major caste groups in the sample. Over 10% of the sample identified themselves as Scheduled Caste. There were variations from village to village in the caste composition. While almost 65% of the respondents from Farhatabad were Lingayat, the major caste group in Ferozabad and Nadisinoora was the Scheduled Tribe Talawars (about 46 %). About 30 % each of the sample from Thadathaganoora were Lingayats and Harijans respectively, while the sample from Saradigi B was very mixed.

Table 7: Showing the size of the households of the sample in Gulbarga

No. of members in household	Number of respondents				
	Farhatabad	Ferozabad	Nadisinoora	Thadathaganoora	Saradigi B
1 to 2	7	7	9	7	0
3 to 5	27	20	17	23	21
6 to 8	14	20	21	15	24
9 and above	3	3	4	4	4
Total	51	50	51	49	49

Table 7 shows the size of the households of the sample. It was interesting to note that the bulk of the families in the sample consisted of nuclear or families extended by the presence of one or two close relatives. 43% of the families had between 3 to 5 members, and 37% had between 6 to 8 family members. Only 7% of the families had nine members or more to the family, and 12% were small households of 1 to 2 members. **The interesting aspect here was that there were almost no joint families in the sample. Hence some of the administrative problems associated with the definition of the household using identification documents like the ration card, found in large families in states like Rajasthan seem less of an issue here.**

Table 8: Showing the land ownership patterns of the households of the sample in Gulbarga

Size of land holding	Number of respondents				
	Farhatabad	Ferozabad	Nadisinoora	Thadathaganoora	Saradigi B
Nil	31	35	19	27	20
Less than 1 acre	0	0	1	0	0
1 to 2 acres	15	13	13	11	12
3 to 5 acres	3	2	13	10	14
6 and above	2	0	5	1	3
Total	51	50	51	49	49

Table 8 shows the size of the land holdings of the households of the sample. **53 percent of the respondents did not own any land, and therefore constituted an appropriate sample to ask about the NREGS.** 25 % held landholdings which were between 1 and 2 acres. Only 4 % of those surveyed said that they had land holdings which were over 6 acres in size.

The major source of irrigation for the landholdings was rain, and given that Gulbarga is in the drought-prone Hyderabad-Karnataka region, this lack of access to other sources of irrigation compromises the economic and food security of the families.

Table 9: Showing the number of livestock owned by the households of the sample in Gulbarga

Number of livestock owned	Number of respondents				
	Farhatabad	Ferozabad	Nadisinoora	Thadathaganoora	Saradigi B
None	38	37	30	40	31
1	2	4	4	1	3
2	5	5	4	2	2
3 to 5	5	2	12	4	6
6 to 10	1	2	1	1	5
11 to 20	0	0	0	0	1
More than 20	0	0	0	1	1
Total	51	50	51	49	49

Table 10: Showing the kind of livestock owned by the households of the sample in Gulbarga

Kind of livestock	Number of respondents				
	Farhatabad	Ferozabad	Nadisinoora	Thadathaganoora	Saradigi B
Cows	6	6	15	5	13
Bullocks	5	4	10	4	6
Calves	5	2	7	1	7
Goats	0	2	0	1	0
Sheep	2	2	3	2	6
Chickens	1	1	1	2	0
Buffalo	3	0	3	0	1
Total	22	17	39	15	33

Tables 9 and 10 show the livestock ownership patterns of the households of the sample in Gulbarga. **Over 70 per cent of the respondents surveyed did not own any livestock whatever.** 5% of the sample had one, and 7 % had two animals, 11 % had between three to five animals. Only two respondents said they had more than 20 animals. 18 % said they owned cows, and 16% owned bullocks. Other animals owned were calves, sheep, goats, buffalos and chickens. However, it is to be noted that where there were more than one or two animals, the animals were usually small ones like sheep, goats or chickens. Almost no one had a dairy herd. Table 9 also shows the relative economic insecurity of the sample studied, which had hardly any supplementary income or food security.

Table 11: Showing the membership in collectives of respondents in the sample in Gulbarga

Membership in collectives	Number of respondents				
	Farhatabad	Ferozabad	Nadisinoora	Thadathaganoor	Saradigi B
Nil	31	32	40	30	44
SHGs	20	18	11	19	5
Mahila Mandals/ other women's groups	0	0	0	0	0
SEWA/Trade Unions	0	0	0	0	0
Others (Specify)	0	0	0	0	0
Total	51	50	51	49	49

Table 11, which looked at the membership in collectives by respondents, showed a surprising finding. Karnataka is generally regarded as one of the states in which the collectivization of women is very strong, with self-help groups being promoted by the government under the Stree Shakthi programme, as well as by NGOs. Given this background, it was noteworthy that **the bulk of the respondents in this sample, almost 71%, said that they were not members of any collective.** The other 29% were members of self-help groups. Other forms of collectivities of women were not known in the area. This is a significant finding in the light of the NREGS. **Given that the land and livestock ownership of the respondents is low, a source of power for the respondents could have come from collectivization. However, this is remarkably low. This suggests that expecting the women to undertake a significant part in the administration and monitoring and evaluation of the NREGS, as called for in the guidelines for the scheme, or even to advocate for the realization of their entitlements of 33 % is a little difficult. The guidelines of the scheme also allow space for groups of women to undertake the carrying out of works under the scheme. Given the low level of collectivization among the sample, these expectations too can only be very limited. There is a greater need for funds to be earmarked for capacity building of women alongside the NREGS, so that they can be empowered to access their due entitlements from the scheme.**

Potential participation in the NREGS

The survey asked several questions related to the eligibility of members in respondents' households to participate in the NREGS.

Table 12: Showing the number of persons eligible for employment under the NREGS from sample households

	Number of persons eligible for employment under the NREGS					
Sex	Farhatabad	Ferozabad	Nadisinoora	Thadathaganoora	Saradigi B	Total
Men	76	74	84	72	73	379
Women	71	76	86	77	78	388
Total	147	150	170	149	151	767

An interesting feature of the number of persons eligible for employment under the NREGS from sample households in Gulbarga, shown in Table 12 is that the number of men and women eligible for employment are roughly comparable, with the number of women showing a slight edge (388 women to 379 men). From the households of the 250 respondents surveyed, a total of 767 members were found eligible, or approximately three members per household surveyed.

Even when one looks at the relative gender composition of members eligible for employment under the NREGS in the sample in Gulbarga, shown in Table 13, we see that the majority of the households (129 or about 52 per cent) have an equal number of men and women eligible to work under the scheme. Besides this, a healthy number (48) of households have more women eligible for employment under the scheme than men. Fifteen households have *only* eligible women, while only one household has only eligible men. This is clear evidence that women contribute a significant part of the labour force eligible for employment in the NREGS, and their needs and entitlements should be a matter of significant concern in the implementation of the scheme.

Table 13: Showing the relative gender composition of members eligible for employment under the NREGS in the sample in Gulbarga

Relative gender composition of eligible* members	Number of Households					
	Farhatabad	Ferozabad	Nadisinoora	Thadatha ganoora	Saradigi B	Total
Households with equal number of eligible men and women	26	29	23	30	21	129
Households with more eligible women than men	4	11	10	9	14	48

Households with more eligible men than women	16	10	11	7	13	57
Only Women	5		7	2	1	15
Only Men	0	0	0	1	0	1
Total	51	50	51	49	49	250

*Note: The term “eligible” in this context implies eligible for employment in the NREGS

The majority of the households sampled could contribute two (41%) or three (20%) members to participate in the NREGS, as shown in Table 14. **Only 1.6% of the sample households could contribute over eight members for employment through the NREGS. This indicates that the division of wages across multiple family members per household is less of an issue in Gulbarga, as compared to some areas in North India where large joint families are more of the norm.**

Table 14: Showing the number of members per household eligible for employment under the NREGS in the sample in Gulbarga

Number of members of household eligible for employment	Number of Households					Total
	Farhatabad	Ferozabad	Nadisinoora	Thadathaga noora	Saradigi B	
One	5	1	5	3	1	15
Two	19	25	18	23	18	103
Three	8	7	10	8	18	51
Four	10	9	6	8	4	37
Five	6	6	4	3	5	24
6 to 7	3	1	7	2	3	16
8 and above	0	1	1	2	0	4
Total	51	50	51	49	49	250

Table 15: Showing the number of male and female headed households in the sample in Gulbarga

Headship of Households	Number of households					Total
	Farhatabad	Ferozabad	Nadisinoora	Thadathaganooora	Saradigi B	
Male-headed households	41	44	36	41	38	200
Female headed households	10	6	15	8	11	50
Total	51	50	51	49	49	250

Table 15 shows that the number of male headed households (80 %) far outweigh the number of female headed households (20%) in the sample. The discussion with the officials revealed that, to prevent leakage, the administration intended to open bank accounts in the names of the head of the household and transfer the wages of members of the household to the account. Given that only 20% of the households are female headed, this will mean that even though 50.58% of the members of the households eligible for work under the NREGS are women, only about 20% of them will have unrestricted access to their wages. The others would have to receive them mediated by the senior male members in the family. This creates a situation in which the women might work, but a good part of the control over their wages would be with the men. Also given the comparative patterns of spending on self as against spending on family shown by men and women in marginal rural households, less access to their wages on the part of women will probably mean less spending on the household and decreased food security for the family. This situation has to be faced and addressed for the sake of both gender equity as well as the purpose of the NREGS, social and food security for marginal rural households.

Tables 16 and 17 show the education levels of members eligible for employment under the NREGS in the sample in Gulbarga, with data arranged village-wise for both males and females in the latter, so that the relative position of the villages can be understood. **As Table 16 shows, at almost every level of education, women are worse off than men, with the most marked discrepancy evident at the level of no education at all (430 women to 290 men) and graduates (0 women to 12 men)**

Table 16: Showing the education levels of members eligible for employment under the NREGS in the sample in Gulbarga

Education levels of the persons eligible for employment under the NREGS	Number of Eligible Members											
	Females						Males					
	Farhat abad	Nadisi noora	Thada thagan oora	Saradi gi B	Feroza bad	Total	Farhat abad	Nadisi noora	Thadath aganoor a	Saradi gi B	Ferozab ad	Total
Nil	73	95	71	90	101	430	47	73	48	54	74	296
Not applicable =<4yrs	7	11	18	14	12	62	8	10	20	15	13	66
3-5th Standard	13	8	12	17	7	57	25	17	25	30	19	116
6-7th Standard	7	3	11	7	1	29	9	17	7	13	10	56
High School	6	3	8	1	2	20	9	12	6	4	6	37
10th Standard	8	8	3	4	2	25	18	11	11	13	8	61
12th Standard	0	2	4	0	0	6	4	0	6	2	0	12
Graduates	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	5	1	2	12
Total	114	130	127	133	125	629	123	141	128	132	132	656

Table 17: Showing the education levels of members eligible for employment under the NREGS in the sample in Gulbarga

Education levels of the persons eligible for employment under the NREGS	Number of Eligible Members														
	Farhatabad			Nadisinoora			Thadathaganoora			Saradigi B			Ferozabad		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Nil	47	73	120	73	95	168	48	71	119	54	90	144	74	101	175
Not applicable = <4 years	3	0	3	3	9	12	13	7	20	5	1	6	6	7	13
Below 2nd Standard	5	7	12	7	2	9	7	11	18	10	13	23	7	5	12
3-5th Standard	25	13	38	17	8	25	25	12	37	30	17	47	19	7	26
6-7th Standard	9	7	16	17	3	20	7	11	18	13	7	20	10	1	11
High School	9	6	15	12	3	15	6	8	14	4	1	5	6	2	8
10th Standard	18	8	26	11	8	19	11	3	14	13	4	17	8	2	10
12th Standard	4	0	4	0	2	2	6	4	10	2	0	2	0	0	0
Graduates	3	0	3	1	0	1	5	0	5	1	0	1	2	0	2
Total	123	114	237	141	130	271	128	127	255	132	133	265	132	125	257

It is therefore evident that from the point of view of education too, the women are more deprived and need support if they are to obtain their just entitlements from the NREGS.

Table 18: Showing payment received for agricultural activity last season by respondents

Income in rupees per day	Number of respondents				
	Farhatabad	Ferozabad	Nadisinoora	Thadathaganoora	Saradigi B
15	9	15	3	15	2
20	14	28	20	19	22
25	19	2	17	14	15
30	5	3	7	1	5
35	0	0	0	0	1
40	0	0	0	0	1
45	0	0	0	0	1
50	4	1	1	0	2
60	0	0	0	0	0
100	0	0	0	0	0
No Answer	0	1	3	0	0
Total	51	50	51	49	49

The bulk of the respondents (about 86 per cent) earned less than 25 rupees per day, as shown in Table 18. The maximum number (i.e., 104 respondents,) earned only Rs 20 per day. The meagre income earned by the women also contributes to their overall vulnerability. The provision of equal wages to men and women under the NREGS may help to increase women's wages generally in Gulbarga, and contribute to gender equity. Of the respondents who worked at non-agricultural activities, 72 earned less than Rs. 25 per day, as Table 19 shows. However, there were 49 respondents who earned Rs. 50 a day, still much lower than the minimum wage

Table 19: Showing payment received for non-agricultural activity last season by respondents

Income in rupees per day	Number of respondents				
	Farhatabad	Ferozabad	Nadisinoora	Thadathaganoora	Saradigi B
15	7	5	0	3	0
20	3	5	2	7	2
25	2	10	13	12	2
30	2	1	3	6	2
35	1	0	0	1	2
40	4	0	4	3	2
45	0	0	0	0	0
50	8	13	15	6	5
60	0	2	0	2	0
100	0	1	0	0	0
No Answer	24	13	14	9	34
Total	51	50	51	49	49

As the focus group discussion section will show, women also, predictably, earn much less than the men, further increasing their own, and the family's vulnerability.

Table 20 shows the different kinds of work activities undertaken by the households of the respondents in the survey. **351 members did agricultural work for others, while 354 worked on their own marginal holdings. These were by far the most important work categories. Only two members in all of the 250 households considered earned salaries, speaking of the marginal natures of the communities that will be served by the NREGS.** A negligible number of people earned a living through grazing. No one engaged in forest collection, a variation from the findings in the northern states.

The availability of work is shown in Table 21. A majority of the members of the households surveyed (a total of 384 people) said they had work only for 6 months, while 134 members said that they worked for five months in a year. Only 43 respondents said they worked throughout the year. **Thus there is considerable underemployment, which the NREGS will serve to reduce a little.** However, only three persons said they worked for a month or less.

Table 22 depicts the single/multiple employment status of the members of the respondents' households. An overwhelming 742 persons only did one type of work, which combined with the information from Table 21 which showed that most people worked only for 5 to 6 months in a year, shows that these communities, as indicated by the sample, are at serious economic risk, and would benefit from the scheme. Only a negligible 18 people did two jobs, and four people did three jobs. Alternative employment options are few for the rural poor of Gulbarga.

Table 20: Showing the details of work undertaken by members of the household.

Description of work	Number of persons														
	Farhatabad			Nadisinoora			Ferozabad			Saradigi B			Thadathaganoora		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Own agriculture	23	26	49	51	58	109	21	21	42	46	35	81	29	44	73
Non agri. Wage income	5	6	11	5	2	7	8	1	9	12	8	20	7	2	9
Grazing own land	0	0	0	1	0	1	3	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	1
Grazing others land	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	1	0	1	1	0	1
Household work	0	4	4	0	5	5	0	5	5	0	13	13	0	5	5
Student	30	22	52	26	12	38	10	9	19	31	26	57	32	23	55
Skilled wage worker	9	1	10	3	1	4	6	2	8	4	2	6	1	1	2
Salaried work	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Pensioner	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Agri work for others	44	46	90	27	24	51	47	57	104	17	24	41	27	38	65
Forest collection	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not working	7	5	12	3	6	9	9	14	13	11	8	19	13	6	19
Not studying	2	6	8	20	15	35	22	12	34	12	15	27	6	6	12
Not Applicable =<4 yrs	12	7	19	2	8	10	5	7	12	4	2	6	12	9	21
Total	132	123	255	139	131	270	133	128	251	138	133	271	130	134	264

Table 21: Showing the duration for which work was available for members of the households in the sample.

Duration	Number of persons														
	Ferozabad			Nadisinoora			Farhatabad			Thadathaganoora			Saradigi B		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1 month	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	0	0
2 months	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	2	0	2
3 months	1	0	1	1	0	1	14	18	32	2	4	6	4	12	16
4 months	2	1	3	0	0	0	5	9	14	0	0	0	3	2	5
5 months	13	10	23	6	5	11	7	10	17	11	15	26	32	25	57
6 months	38	43	81	62	67	129	27	28	55	34	56	90	15	14	29
7 months	0	0	0	2	3	5	3	4	7	1	0	1	0	0	0
8 months	7	11	18	0	0	0	13	9	22	3	2	5	4	3	7
9 months	2	4	6	8	6	14	2	0	2	4	4	8	3	4	7
10 months	7	7	14	2	2	4	0	0	0	3	3	6	4	2	6
11 months	2	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
12 months	14	3	17	7	2	0	10	1	11	6	0	0	10	5	15
Total	86	81	167	89	85	174	81	81	162	65	84	149	79	67	146

Table 22: Showing the single/multiple employment status for members of the households in the sample.

Number of jobs	Number of persons														
	Ferozabad			Nadisinoora			Farhatabad			Thadathaganoora			Saradigi B		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
One job	80	79	159	83	82	165	78	69	147	64	81	145	75	61	136
Two jobs	3	1	4	2	2	4	0	3	3	2	2	4	2	1	3
Three jobs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	2	2
Total	83	80	163	85	84	169	78	74	152	66	83	149	77	64	141

NREGS – Related Information

Awareness levels

Tables 23 to 26 indicate the awareness shown by the respondents about the NREGS. Over 60 per cent of the respondents had participated in the Gram Sabha in which the NREGS had been announced, as shown in Table 23. Again, as Table 24 shows, more than 60 per cent indicated that the scheme had been discussed in the Gram Sabha, as laid down by the guidelines. **An overwhelming 244 of the 250 respondents had heard of the NREGS, with only two saying that they had not heard of it, indicating that one of the basic guidelines, namely that the scheme be widely publicized, had been complied with. All but one respondent indicated that the information about the scheme had come from the sarpanch, suggesting that the gram panchayats were taking the scheme very seriously.**

Table 23: Showing the number of respondents who had participated in the Gram Sabha

Whether participated in the Gram Sabha or not	Number of respondents					
	Farhatabad	Ferozabad	Nadisinoora	Thadathaganoora	Saradigi B	Total
Yes	30	33	30	41	21	155
No	20	13	16	6	28	83
No Answer	1	4	5	2	0	12
Total	51	50	51	49	49	250

Table 24: showing the number of respondents who said the NREGS had been discussed at the Gram Sabha

Whether discussed about NREGS in the meeting	Number of respondents					
	Farhatabad	Ferozabad	Nadisinoora	Thadathaganoora	Saradigi B	Total
Yes	31	35	33	41	24	164
No	17	9	15	6	25	72
No answer	3	6	3	2	0	14
Total	51	50	51	49	49	250

Table 25: Showing the number of respondents who had heard of the NREGS and 100 days of work being offered by the government

Whether heard of the NREGS and the 100 days of employment?	Number of respondents					Total
	Farhatabad	Ferozabad	Nadisinoora	Thadathaganoor	Saradigi B	
Yes	50	50	49	48	47	244
No	0	0	1	0	1	2
No Answer	1	0	1	1	1	4
Total	51	50	51	49	49	250

Table 26: Showing the sources from whom respondents had heard of the NREGS and 100 days of work being offered by the government

Sources of NREGS related information	Number of respondents					Total
	Farhatabad	Ferozabad	Nadisinoora	Thadathaganoor	Saradigi B	
Sarpanch/Adyaksha	51	50	50	49	49	
Gram Sevak	0	0	0	0	0	
Teacher/ANM	0	0	0	0	0	
Word of mouth	0	0	0	0	0	
No Answer	0	0	1	0	0	
Others	0	0	0	0	0	
Total	51	50	51	49	49	

Registration and obtaining documents and work

Tables 27 to 29 give information with regard to registration of members of the household, obtaining relevant documents and obtaining work. More than 60 per cent of the respondents had not received job cards. Farhatabad had issued more job cards than any of the other villages, and Nadisinoora was most behind hand, having issued job cards to only two respondents in the sample of 51. In about 60 per cent of the respondents' families, husband and wife had registered under the scheme, and in a little less than 25 per cent of the families, husband, wife and children had registered under the scheme. 37 respondents had already received work under the scheme, while 151 respondents (60%) said that husband and wife had both received work under the scheme.

Table 27: Showing the number of respondents who had received a job card under the scheme

Whether received a job card under the NREGS?	Number of respondents					
	Farhatabad	Ferozabad	Nadisinoora	Thadathaganoora	Saradigi B	Total
Yes	36	15	2	13	16	82
No	15	35	46	36	32	164
No Answer	0	0	3	0	1	4
Total	51	50	51	49	49	250

Table 28: Showing who in the household had registered under the scheme

Who in the household registered under this scheme?	Number of respondents					
	Farhatabad	Ferozabad	Nadisinoora	Thadathaganoora	Saradigi B	Total
Self	19	4	7	3	4	37
Husband	0	1	1	0	0	2
Children	1	0	1	1	0	3
Husband and Wife	26	28	26	35	36	151
Husband Wife and Children	5	17	16	10	9	57
No Answer	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	51	50	51	49	49	250

Table 29: Showing who in the household was working under the scheme

Number of members working under NREGS	Number of respondents					
	Farhatabad	Ferozabad	Nadisinoora	Thadathaganoora	Saradigi B	Total
Self	20	4	8	3	2	37
Husband	0	1	0	0	1	2
Children	1	4	1	0	1	7
Husband and Wife	23	28	24	35	29	139
Husband Wife and Children	5	13	18	10	9	55
No Answer	2	0	0	1	7	10
Total	51	50	51	49	49	250

Tables 30 to 34 sum up the opinions of the respondents regarding various aspects of the administration of the scheme. **Almost 90 per cent of the respondents said that they wished to**

be paid for their work in cash. Nearly 52 per cent of the respondents chose not to answer the question about corruption in public employment schemes, while 85 and 36 respondents played safe saying “Don’t Know” or “Nothing”. The fact that not even one respondent was willing to speak about the corruption in employment schemes suggests, on the one hand, that there might be no corruption, but rather more likely, the respondents’ silence may point to the sense of helplessness and lack of control that marginalized women feel about the honest administration of schemes designed to benefit them. 21 respondents were willing to take up work even if it was over 5 km away, but women in general were reluctant about husbands working far away from home, unless they were accompanied by the wife, in which case it was acceptable to almost 56 per cent, or accompanied by the wife and children, in which case it was acceptable to another 34 per cent. **All but 6 respondents had positive opinions about the NREGS, saying it was a good scheme, the poor would get employment and wages, and that they were hopeful of getting work. Five respondents expressed no opinions, while one hoped for work close to home.** The traditional association of public employment schemes with road work, with 235 respondents suggesting that this work could be undertaken under the NREGS. Interestingly, 169 respondents suggested that nurseries could be established. Cleaning of tanks and wells, and horticulture or clearing farmland were other suggestions.

Table 30: Showing the preferred mode of payment under the scheme

Preferred mode of payment	Number of respondents					
	Farhatabad	Ferozabad	Nadisinoora	Thadathaganoora	Saradigi B	Total
All in cash	50	41	48	37	48	224
All in food grains	0	9	0	0	0	9
Part Cash/Part food	1	0	3	12	1	17
Total	51	50	51	49	49	250

Table 31: Showing awareness of corruption in public employment schemes

Kinds of corruption in public employment schemes	Number of respondents					
	Farhatabad	Ferozabad	Nadisinoora	Thadathaganoora	Saradigi B	Total
Don't know	7	15	10	2	2	36
Nothing	8	10	18	4	45	85
No response	36	25	23	43	2	129
Total	51	50	51	49	49	250

Table 32: Showing willingness to work under the NREGS if job site is over 5 km away

Whether willing to work under the NREGS if job site is over 5 km away?	Number of respondents					
	Farhatabad	Ferozabad	Nadisinoora	Thadathaganoor	Saradigi B	Total
Self	7	2	8	2	2	21
Husband	0	1	0	0	0	1
Children	1	0	1	0	0	2
Husband and Wife	29	23	22	33	32	139
Husband Wife and Children	13	24	20	14	15	86
No Answer	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total	51	50	51	49	49	250

Table 33: Showing respondents' opinions about the NREGS

Opinion about the scheme	Number of respondents					
	Farhatabad	Ferozabad	Nadisinoora	Thadathaganoor	Saradigi B	Total
Good Scheme	8	15	12	12	4	51
Very beneficial for poor	18	11	10	17	31	87
No job but happy to get job	7	12	11	3	3	36
Poor Unemployed get employment	0	1	0	0	4	5
Poor will get wages	16	10	16	16	3	61
Hope to get job	0	0	0	0	4	4
No Response	2	1	2	0	0	5
If given job here no need to travel outside		0	0	1		1
Total	51	50	51	49	49	250

Table 34. Showing respondents opinions about work that could be undertaken under the NREGS

Activities which can be undertaken under the NREGS scheme	Number of respondents (multiple responses)					
	Farhatabad	Ferozabad	Nadisinoora	Thadathaganoora	Saradigi B	Total
Nursery	34	31	40	36	28	169
Road work	45	50	48	47	45	235
Agriculture	1	7	3	0	3	14
Drainage	1	0	1	0	1	3
Tank/well cleaning	12	16	12	12	13	65
Horticulture/Farmland work	18	8	8	16	24	74
Stone work	0	1	0	0	0	1
Construction	0	0	1	2	1	4
Blacksmithy	0	1	0	0	0	1
Canal Work	1	0	0	0	0	1
House work	1	0	0	0	0	1
No response	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total	113	114	114	113	87	569

Tables 35 to 40 show the status of migration among the respondent households. For the sake of convenience, those commuting from the village have also been included in the data, since this could be a pointer to insufficient work in the village. In all, 68 people from within 250 households had migrated. Periods ranged from 6 months to 8 years. Migration had happened in-state, to cities like Bangalore and Mangalore, as well as to other states like Gujarat and Maharashtra.

Table 35, showing the migration status among respondent households in Ferozabad

Place	Duration	Male	Female
Gulbarga	Daily	1	0
Gujarat	4 years	1	0
Gujarat	8 years	2	2
Farhatabad	Daily	1	1
Chittapura	3 years	1	0
Gantikala	6 months	1	1
Gujarat	6 months	1	1
Bangalore	6 months	2	2
Hyderabad	1 year	1	0
Bangalore	10 months	1	0
Bangalore	3 years	1	0
Gulbarga	8 years	1	0
Gulbarga	1 year	1	0
Total		15	7

Table 36, showing the migration status among respondent households in Nadisinoora

Place	Duration	Male	Female
Ahmedabad	4 years	1	0
Mangalore	4 years	1	1
Gulbarga	6 months	1	1
Prani	3 months	1	1
Pune	1 month	1	0
Bangalore	3 years	1	2
Bangalore	5 months	1	0
Total		7	5

Table 37, showing the migration status among respondent households in Farhatabad

Place	Duration	Male	Female
Wadi	1 year	1	0
Mumbai	1 year	1	1
Bangalore	1 year	1	0
Pune	1 year	1	0
Gulbarga	Daily	1	0
Pune	1 year	1	0
Total		6	1

Table 38, showing the migration status among respondent households in Thadathaganoora

Place	Duration	Male	Female
Surat	6 months	1	1
Surat	6 months	1	0
Mumbai		1	0
Gulbarga	6 years	1	0
Hyderabad	10 months	1	1
Sangli	10 months	1	0
Pune	1 year	1	0
Gulbarga	Daily	1	0
Total		8	2

Table 39, showing the migration status among respondent households in Saradigi B

Place	Duration	Male	Female
Pune	2 months	1	0
Farhatabad	1 year	1	1
Mumbai	1 year	1	0
Gulbarga	2 years	1	0
Mumbai	2 years	2	1
Mumbai	8 months	1	0
Jawaki	4 years	1	1
Pune	1 year	2	0
Gujarat	4 years	1	1
Ferozabad		1	1
Total		12	5

Workshop and Focus Group Discussions on NREGS

A workshop was conducted to orient the residents of villages, both men and women, in the district to the NREGS. The content of the workshop focused on sensitizing the residents of the district about their rights and entitlements under the scheme, as well as the entitlements and responsibilities of the Gram Panchayat, the Taluk Panchayat, the Zilla Panchayat and the district administration with respect to the administration of the scheme. The contents of the workshop sessions are included as an Annex to this chapter.

A total of 57 residents from 7 gram panchayats participated in the workshop, which was held on February 20, at the Taluk Panchayat office, Gulbarga. The break-up of male and female participants from the different gram panchayats is given in Table 41 below.

Table 40: Showing the gram-panchayat wise and genderwise break up of participants in the sensitization workshop and FGDs on the NREGS, Gulbarga, February 2006.

Gram Panchayat	No of participants (Female)	No of participants (Male)	Total Number of Participants
Jeevanangi	10	5	15
Sontha	6	0	6
Melkunda	6	1	7
Saavalagi B	6	4	10
Aurad	4	1	5
Farhatabad	12	0	12
Kadani	2	0	2
Total	46	11	57

The participants were from several villages in these gram panchayats, including Jeevanangi, Goghi, Belur, Sontha, Kinnisarfos, Melkunda, Hunisehadigil, Malli, Machinar Thanda, Savalagi B, Sindagi, Babalada S, Aurad, Bannur, Alagud, Upalaon, Farhatabad, Saradagi, and Tegnoor. Since the focus of the workshop was on sensitizing women, more women than men participated in the workshop. However, male participants were also made welcome, both to understand their concerns as well as to gain their support for the concerns of the women. The general orientation was that if more citizens as well as people's representatives were aware of the guidelines for the scheme, they could function more effectively to monitor the implementation of the scheme and prevent leakages.

Also present at the workshop were Mr. Sampath Kumar Patil, EO, Taluk Panchayat Office, Gulbarga, Mr. Subash Chandra, Manager, TP, Mrs. Sonubai Koneen, Former ZP Member, Gulbarga, Mrs. Suman Kolhar, Former ZP Member, Bijapur and Mrs. Grace Fernandez, Administrator, ISST, Bangalore. The facilitation of the two workshop sessions was done by Mrs. Sonubai Koneen.

After the workshop sessions, participants had several questions regarding the allotment of work (whether it would only be in one's own village or neighbouring villages as well), the amount that

would be paid as daily wages under the scheme, etc. It was interesting to note that a number of questions came from the male participants, many of whom were Gram Panchayat members. Even in an atmosphere that was women-enabling, facilitated by a woman, with a stated agenda to improve women's participation, women tended to take a backseat. It was therefore clear from the workshop that there is a role for awareness raising about the scheme in general, and implementation and monitoring responsibilities in particular, among women's groups in rural areas. Collective action and participation by the women in the context of the scheme will have to be actively facilitated and enabled.

The Executive Officer of the Taluk Panchayat made it clear that currently, the decision was to pay Rs. 62.50 per day under the scheme, regardless of the nature of the work undertaken. Both men and women would be paid equal wages. Currently, the wages of women and men varied substantially in the district. In Melkunda, Sontha and Farhatabad, women earned half of what men earned for agricultural labour (Rs. 30 to men's Rs. 60 in Melkunda and Sontha, and Rs 25 to men's Rs. 50 in Farhatabad.) The situation was worse in Kalmood, with the women earning only a third of what the men did (Rs. 20 to men's Rs. 60). In fact, **the focus group discussion actually suggested that wages were even lower than those indicated by the state's Department of Statistics for Gulbarga district for the month of September 2005, as shown in Table 41.**

Thus, the NREGS could play a substantial role in empowering women economically, and increasing their self-esteem. There is an opportunity here to tie up this scheme with some funds for capacity building with regard to gender, to see whether strategic and structural changes can be facilitated to improve the economic value attached to women's work even outside the context of the scheme.

Table 41: Showing agricultural wages according to the Department of Statistics for September 2005

AGRICULTURAL WAGES FOR THE MONTH OF September 2005							
Class Type	Activity Description	Dry Land		Wet Land		Garden Land	
		Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Unskilled Labour:							
District Name: GULBARGA							
A	Ploughing	140.00	0.00	140.00	0.00	140.00	0.00
A	Digging	50.00	35.00	50.00	35.00	50.00	35.00
A	Harrowing	50.00	35.00	50.00	35.00	50.00	35.00
A	Sowing	50.00	35.00	50.00	35.00	50.00	35.00
A	Interculturing	50.00	25.00	50.00	25.00	50.00	25.00
A	Irrigation or Watering	60.00	35.00	60.00	35.00	60.00	35.00
A	Uprooting	50.00	35.00	50.00	35.00	50.00	35.00
B	Manuring	50.00	30.00	50.00	30.00	50.00	30.00
B	Transplanting	60.00	40.00	60.00	40.00	60.00	40.00
B	Weeding	50.00	30.00	50.00	30.00	50.00	30.00
B	Reaping Harvesting	50.00	35.00	50.00	35.00	50.00	35.00
B	Reaping Threshing	60.00	35.00	60.00	35.00	60.00	35.00
B	Reaping Winnowing	35.00	25.00	35.00	25.00	35.00	25.00
C	Cattle, Sheep & Goat grazing	40.00	30.00	40.00	30.00	40.00	30.00

(Source: <http://des.kar.nic.in/mainpage.asp?option=5> , Retrieved May 2, 2006, 3 p.m.)

To questions from the Gram Panchayat members about their responsibilities, their role in ensuring that funds went only to those who actually did the work was emphasized.

One interesting fact was that the Executive Officer mentioned that participants registered in the scheme would be paid only for the number of days worked. This goes against the guidelines of the scheme, which says that an unemployment allowance should be paid if work is not provided within 15 days of a participant with appropriate job cards applying for work. It appears that it is important that government officials understand this aspect of the scheme and be sensitized to implement it.

Secretaries of the gram panchayats which participated felt that keeping track of all the details related to the administration of the scheme using registers would be very difficult, especially if work was allotted elsewhere in the district. They felt gram panchayats needed computers and trained personnel to effectively track information related to the implementation of the scheme.

Perhaps the most important point that arose from the workshop was the drive by the district administration to open bank accounts for each household registered under the scheme, for the payment of wages by cheque directly into the bank accounts. Regardless of the number of family members who might be registered and work under the NREGS, the district administration was seeking to open bank accounts for each household. Typically, this tended to be done in the name of the male head of the household or other senior male family members. While this makes administration easier, and has perhaps been designed to cut down on the possibility of leakages and corruption, this is a matter of significant concern from the equity and participation perspectives. With the wages accruing collectively to one household account, operated most often by men, there are grave questions about whether women will have control of, or even access to, the wages for their labour. There is every possibility of the earnings of the household being used by the men in the family for alcohol or other personal expenses, and the amount available for food or health security for the family in crisis being compromised. Hence, there is need for this aspect to be reconsidered and rationalized by the district administration.

Several of the gram panchayats had undertaken work under the SGRY in the past and felt that their communities had benefited. One gram panchayat said it had also benefited from the NFFWP, while another said that this scheme had not worked out in their village.

Across the board, agricultural labour was the main source of employment in all the gram panchayats. Some amount of poultry farming, dairying and sheep rearing was also practiced. Among the trades practiced were carpentry, pottery, basket-making, goldsmithy, cobbling, tailoring and mat-making. Some people plied autorickshaws.

Participants in the workshop came out strongly against the practice of child labour and insisted that education up to Standard VII be made compulsory. They said that those households which tried to register children under the scheme should be fined Rs. 2,500.

A point to note is that Gulbarga district also represents a significant opportunity as far as pushing the agenda of women's participation in and increased benefit from the NREGS. This is because in five of the seven gram panchayats which were represented in the workshop, there were more women panchayat members than men. In one gram panchayat, Jeevanangi, the numbers of male and female gram panchayat members were equal, and only in one did the number of male gram panchayat members (9) exceed that of female panchayat members (8). This indicates clearly that in all the gram panchayats, there were women members who had been elected to the panchayat from the general category. This gives the hope that if the gram panchayats are sufficiently well-informed about the modalities of the scheme, more women are collectivized, and the women members are empowered, and in particular, receive technical guidance with regard to identifying works, framing budgets and so on, and are further encouraged to identify works under the scheme which address women's practical and strategic gender needs, Gulbarga could be a trend-setting district from among the first list of 200 districts identified for the implementation of the NREGS.

Chapter 5

Sundergarh District, Orissa

The study on “Women and the NREGP” also covered a sample population from Sundergarh District in Orissa State. A survey was conducted to study the current livelihood options of women in the district, and women’s expectations related to the National Rural Employment Generation Scheme (NREGS). It sought to understand awareness about and current levels of participation in the NREGS and explore ways to facilitate greater participation in the scheme. Five villages from Sundergarh were chosen for the survey.

The survey questionnaire developed by ISST was translated into Oriya and the survey conducted with the help of a partner organization, Team for Human Resource Education and Action for Development (THREAD), a community development organization with a specialized focus on training for transformation and development, with its head office in Jatni, Khurda District, Orissa, and an extensive field presence in the state. A field research coordinator supervised the exercise, which was conducted with the help of field researchers in the five villages. The raw data was coded and tabulated, and the results are presented in this chapter.



Fig.1 Location of Sundergarh District

(Source: <http://orissagov.nic.in/administrative/admn-dist.htm>)

Sundergarh district is situated in northern Orissa between 21°36' and 22°32' latitude, and 83°32' and 85°22'E longitude, covering an area of 9712 sq. km., which is 6.23% of the total area of Orissa.

Sundergarh has a 43% forest cover, which yields timber, kendu-leaf, and bamboo besides minor products like sabai grass, lac, tassar, myrabolan, mahua, kusuma seed, resin, tamarind, gum, and sal seed. It also has abundant mineral resources like iron ore, manganese, limestone, and lead. It is bordered by Ranchi District of Jharkhand on the North, Raigarh district of Chhatisgarh on the West and North-West, Jharsuguda, Sambalpur, and Angul District of Orissa on the South and South-East and Singhbhum District of Jharkhand and Kendujhar District of Orissa on the east.

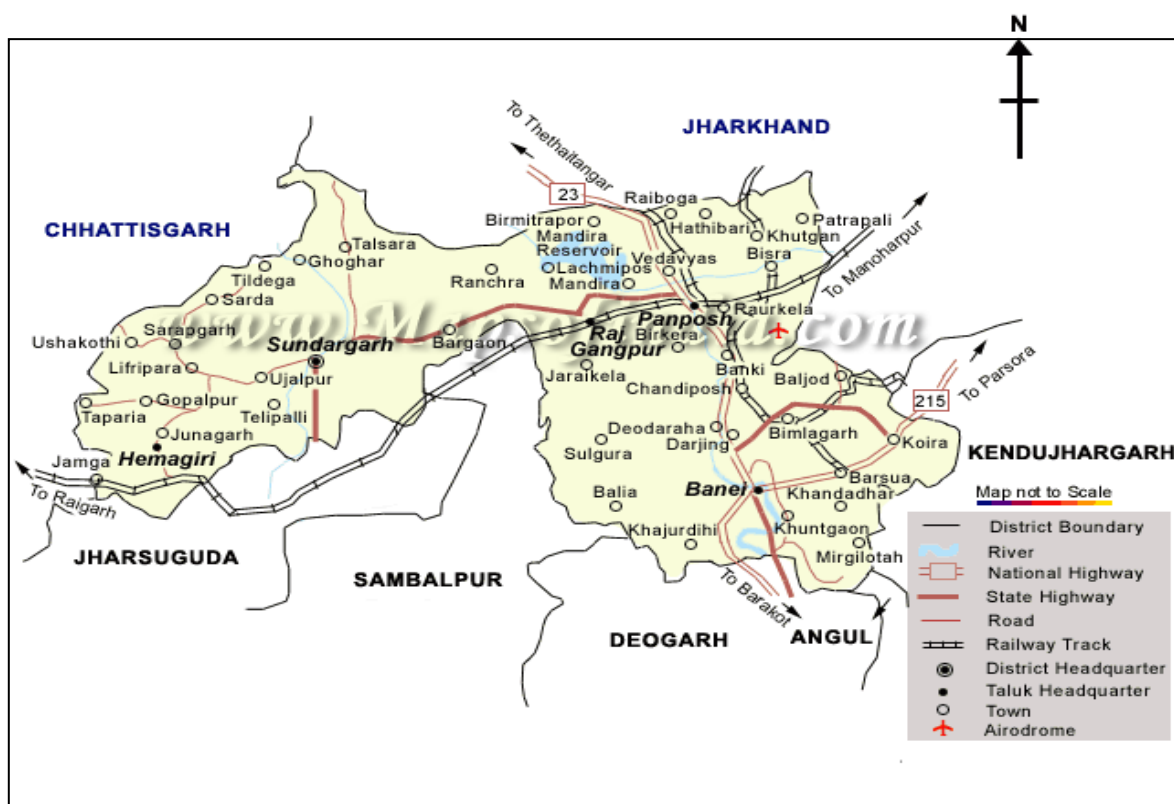


Fig. 2 Map of Sundergarh District

Geographically the district consists of tracts of open country dotted with tree-clad isolated peaks, vast inaccessible forests, extensive river valleys and mountainous terrain. Torrential hill streams and the rivers Ib and Brahmani run through the district. The general elevation ranges from 700 ft. to 3331 ft. The slope of the district is from North to South. Because of the undulating and sloping nature of the terrain, the area is subject to rapid runoff leading not only to soil erosion but also to scarcity of water both for drinking and agriculture.

The soil here is alluvial and lateritic. The annual rainfall is 1657.1 mm. Temperatures range from 20°C to 45°C in summer and 13°C to 32°C in winter (source: www.adb.org). The main agricultural products of the district are paddy, wheat, mustard and potato (source: <http://sundergarh.nic.in/ITDApanrti.doc>).

Secondary data related to Sundergarh district

Sundergarh is divided into 17 blocks and has a population of 18,29,412, accounting for 4.9% of the state's population. Population density at 188 persons per sq. km is considerably lower than the state average of 236. At 34 %, the urban population of Sundergarh is higher than the state average of 14.97%. The district has a sex ratio of 957 females per 1000 males which is significantly lower than the state average of 972, which itself is lower than the norm, and suggests the lack of gender equity that is prevalent even at birth. Traditionally marginalized sections of the population, scheduled castes (8.78%) and scheduled tribes (50.74%), make up about 60 % of the district's population. Literacy rates for the district are higher than the state average, at 75.69% for men and 54.25% for females respectively, thus accounting for 65.22% of the 7+ population in the district. Sundergarh District has an edge over the state average in percent of villages electrified. At 86.79% it is higher than the state average of 73.30%.

Table 1 Basic Demographic Indicators of Sundergarh district, Orissa State

Indicators		District	State
Population		18,29,412 (2001 Census - Provisional)	3,68,04,660
Population density (per sq.km.)		188	236
Population decadal growth rate		13.39	15.94
Sex ratio (females per 1000 males)		957	972
Percent Urban		34.38	14.97
Percent Scheduled caste		8.78	18.20
Percent Scheduled tribe		50.74	22.21
Percentage of village electrified as on 31/3/99		86.79	73.30
Percentage of total workers to total popln. (1991)		39.44	37.53
Percent of literate population age 7+ years			
	Person	65.22	63.08
	Male	75.69	75.35
	Female	54.25	50.51

(Source: Census1991)

The following tables provide information about the population and employment situation in Sundergarh.

Table 2 Population and total workers in Orissa State and Sundergarh District (2001).

Categories	Total Population (Orissa)	Total Population (Sundergarh)	Total Workers (Orissa)	Total Workers (Sundergarh)
Total Persons	3,68,04,660	18,29,412	1,42,76,488	7,40,291
Males	1,86,60,570	9,34,902	98,02,006	4,81,487
Females	1,81,44,090	8,94,510	44,74,482	2,58,804
Rural Persons	3,12,87,422	12,00,520	1,25,86,969	5,60,906
Males	1,57,48,970	6,02,043	83,73,695	3,25,549
Females	1,55,38,452	5,98,477	42,13,274	2,35,357
Urban Persons	55,17,238	6,28,892	16,89,519	1,79,385
Males	29,11,600	3,32,859	14,28,311	1,55,938
Females	26,05,638	2,96,033	2,61,208	23,447

(Source: Census 2001)

Table 2 reveals that the percentage of workers in Sundergarh district, at 40.46%, is higher than the state average of 38.78%. Female workers in the district (28.3%) are higher than the state average of 24.6%. However, Table 3 shows that rural women form only 22.72% of the task force of main workers in the rural areas of the district. Further, 66.96% of the marginal workers in the villages are women as against 33% men. This clearly indicates that there is significant underemployment of women. There is thus an opportunity for improving the employment situation by including women in the NREGS.

Table 3 Main workers, marginal workers, and non-workers - Orissa State and Sundergarh District 2001.

Categories	Main Workers (Orissa)	Main Workers (Sundergarh)	Marginal Workers (Orissa)	Marginal Workers (Sundergarh)	Non – Workers (Orissa)	Non – Workers (Sundergarh)
Total Persons	95,89,269	4,80,247	46,87,219	260,044	2,25,28,172	10,89,121
Males	80,04,740	3,90,093	17,97,266	91,394	88,58,564	4,53,415
Females	15,84,529	90,154	28,89,953	168,650	1,36,69,608	6,35,706
Rural Persons	80,71,999	3,17,047	45,14,970	2,43,859	1,87,00,453	6,39,614
Males	66,77,417	2,44,994	16,96,278	80,555	73,75,275	2,76,494
Females	13,94,582	72,053	28,18,692	1,63,304	1,13,25,178	3,25,549
Urban Persons	15,17,270	1,63,200	1,72,249	16,185	38,27,719	4,49,507
Males	13,27,323	1,45,099	1,00,988	10,839	1483289	176921
Females	189947	18101	71261	5346	2344430	272586

(Source: Census 2001)

Table 4 Population of Bargaon Block

Village name	Total			SC			ST			Others			ST %	SC %	Others %
	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F			
Raidihi	876	498	378	47	23	24	705	412	293	124	63	61	80.5	5.4	14.2
Lakhopara	628	329	299	14	4	10	531	280	251	83	45	38	84.6	2.2	13.2
Chamunda	999	527	472	46	27	19	778	402	376	175	98	77	77.9	4.6	17.5
Jhantalburh	536	261	275	6	3	3	506	249	257	24	9	15	94.4	1.1	4.5
Tudalaga	862	445	417	31	17	14	548	281	267	283	147	136	63.6	3.6	32.8
TOTAL	3901	2060	1841	144	74	70	3068	1624	1444	689	362	327	78.6	3.7	17.7

(Source: Census, 2001)

Five villages under the Bargaon block of Sundergarh District villages were chosen for the study. They are Chamunda and Lakhopara under Phulbari Gram Panchayat, Raidihi under Bhoipali Gram Panchayat, Jhantalburh under Sahajbahal Gram Panchayat and Tudalaga under Tudalaga Gram Panchayat. The predominantly tribal population ranges from 63.6% in Tudalaga to 94.4% in Jhantalburh. The female population is considerably lower than the male population except in the village of Jhantalburh, where it is comparable. (See Table 4 Population of Bargaon Block)

Literacy rates in the district are low, with the rates among the women being lower than those of men. This makes women more vulnerable with regard to jobs and food security, hence making the NREGS more relevant to a district like Sundergarh.

Table 5 Literacy Rate by Sex in Bargaon Block, Sundergarh (1999)

All Classes			Scheduled Caste			Scheduled Tribe		
Person	M	F	Person	M	F	Person	M	F
44.81	58.19	31.08	39.64	55.71	22.70	36.12	48.47	23.84

(Source: Integrated Child Development Scheme, Bargaon)

An effort was made to choose villages of different socio-economic backgrounds for the study. Raidihi and Jhantalburh are perceived as being villages that are comparatively less than average socio-economically, and Tudalaga and Chamunda are perceived as comparatively higher socio-economically. Lakhopara is perceived as an average village in the district. A total of 250 respondents, 50 from each village, were surveyed. The demographic profile of the sample is given in the tables below.

Table 6: Religious Composition of the sample in Sundergarh, Orissa

Religions	Number of Respondents				
	Chamunda	Jhantalburh	Raidihi	Lakhopara	Tudalaga
Hindu	50	7	50	50	50
Christian		43			
Total	50	50	50	50	50

As Table 6 shows, the sample population is predominantly Hindu except one village which is predominantly Christian. No other religion is represented in the sample. The composition of the sample, therefore, may not correspond to that of the larger population. However, this is not entirely a sampling error, as in this region, religious and caste groups tend to be concentrated geographically.

Table 7: Caste Composition of the sample in Sundergarh, Orissa

Castes	Number of Respondents				
	Chamunda	Jhantalburh	Raidihi	Lakhopara	Tudalaga
Bhuiya (ST)	10	7	6	0	0
Keunt (SC)	2	0	0	0	0
Sundhi (OBC)	2	0	0	0	0
Gauda (OBC)	2	0	4	8	0
Kissan (ST)	15	0	40	32	48
Teli (OBC)	2	0	0	0	0
Mali (OBC)	1	0	0	0	0
Gonda (ST)	14	0	0	0	1
Lohra (SC)	1	0	0	0	0
Patora (OBC)	1	0	0	0	0
Munda (ST)	0	43	0	0	0
Kharia (ST)	0	0	0	10	0
Kshatria (Gen)	0	0	0	0	1
Total	50	50	50	50	50

As in the case of religion the caste composition of the sample (Table 7) may not correspond to the caste composition of the larger population. However, people of particular castes tended to congregate in different geographical areas, and the sample reflects this. The sample consisted of 13 castes. One hundred and thirty five (54%) respondents belonged to the Adivasi or tribal Kisan caste. The other significant tribal group - the Mundas, had 43 (17.2%) members and was concentrated in the village of Jhantalburh. The Bhuinyas, a Scheduled Tribe, were represented in three villages with 23 members (9%).

Table 8: Size of households

Number of Members in the household	Number of Respondents				
	Chamunda	Jhantalburh	Raidihi	Lakhopara	Tudalaga
1 to 2	3	3	3	4	3
3 to 5	22	20	27	25	19
6 to 8	24	22	15	20	22
9 and above	1	5	0	1	6
Total	50	50	50	50	50

The sample revealed (Table 8) that the most households (45.2%) had 3 to 5 members, representing families extended by the presence of 1 or 2 close relatives. The next category (41.2 %) had 6 to 8 members. Thus, over 80 per cent of the households consisted of extended families which might make use of the NREGS.

The economic benefits of 100 days of guaranteed employment will thus have to be shared among more than the immediate nuclear family in the vast majority of families. The percentage of households with 1 to 2 eligible members was 6.4%, while the remaining 5.2% had 9 and more members.

Table 9: Pattern of land ownership

Size of Land Holding	Number of Respondents				
	Chamunda	Jhantalburh	Raidihi	Lakhopara	Tudalaga
Nil	11	4	5	8	2
Less than 1 Acre	12	2	2	4	9
1 to 2 Acres	14	24	15	21	27
2 to 3 Acres	3	4	6	4	2
3 to 5 Acres	7	10	20	22	9
6 and above	3	6	2	1	1
Total	50	50	50	50	50

Table 9 shows that about 12% of the sample surveyed do not own any land. About 11.6% had holdings of less than 1 acre. But a significant 30.4% had land holdings between 1 and 2 acres, constituting the largest category in the sample, followed by 27.2% who held land of 3 to 5 acres. 7.6% had between 2 and 3 acres of land. 5.6% held land of 6 acres and above. While most people did have some land resources, the high

dependence upon rainwater for irrigation (Table 10) and the lack of adequate alternatives mean that food and economic security are usually compromised. The respondents have to struggle to eke a living from the land, and work at non-agricultural wage labour to extend incomes. Thus, the NREGS was a significant scheme for this section of the population, even though they had land

Table 10: Source of Irrigation

Source of Irrigation	Number of Respondents				
	Chamunda	Jhantalburh	Raidihi	Lakhopara	Tudalaga
Rain Water	37	42	44	37	31
River	1	4	1	1	5
Canal	0	0	0	3	8
Pond	0	0	0	1	4
Well	1	0	0	0	0
Not applicable	11	4	5	8	2
Total	50	50	50	50	50

The ownership of livestock was surveyed to assess if that could be a useful asset to fall back on, as an alternative means of livelihood. Tables 11 and 12 give information on livestock owned.

Table 11: Livestock ownership

Number of live stock owned	Number of Respondents				
	Chamunda	Jhantalburh	Raidihi	Lakhopara	Tudalaga
None	10	2	5	12	3
1	4	1	2	0	2
2	5	0	5	8	4
3 to 5	10	5	8	9	10
6 to 10	13	9	10	10	12
11 to 20	5	25	17	7	12
More than 20	3	8	3	4	7
Total	50	50	50	50	50

12.8% of the respondents did not own any livestock. 3.6% had at least one animal, 8.8% had 2 animals, and 16.8% owned 3 to 5 animals. 25% of respondents owned 6 to 10 animals. About 26% said they owned 11 to 20 animals, while 10% owned more than 20 animals. However, these numbers include small livestock like

chickens, ducks, goats, and pigs apart from larger animals like cows, bullocks and buffalo. Despite large numbers of livestock, respondents did not consider them as a means of primary or secondary livelihood.

Table 12: Livestock owned

Livestock owned	Number of Respondents				
	Chamunda	Jhantalburh	Raidihi	Lakhopara	Tudalaga
Cows	36	84	47	86	113
Bullocks	70	133	52	75	95
Calves	4	23	7	6	8
Goats	53	150	118	115	20
Chickens	133	247	175	65	270
Ducks / Swans	2	11	16	9	26
Pigs	3	2	37	4	0
Buffalo	13	0	4	0	5
Sheep	0	0	0	0	17
TOTAL	314	650	442	360	554

Table 13: Membership in Collectives

Membership in collectives	Number of Respondents				
	Chamunda	Jhantalburh	Raidihi	Lakhopara	Tudalaga
NIL	28	5	14	21	15
SHGs	17	12	15	21	18
Mahila Mandal / Other Women's Groups	14	38	28	23	7
SEWA / Trade Unions	1	0	0	0	0
Others	0	0	0	0	0
Youth Group	1	0	2	3	10
Forest Protection Committee	0	2	0	3	1
Village Committee	0	1	1	0	0
Seva Shakti	0	0	0	0	2
Pani Panchayat	0	0	0	0	2
OSCART	0	0	0	0	9
TOTAL	61	58	60	71	64

Collectivization of women has significant implications in the context of the NREGS because of the possibilities it offers to women for participation, execution and evaluation of programs. Women's groups seem to have a strong presence in all villages, as do Self Help Groups and Youth Groups. Jhantalburh

showed least number of people who did not belong to collectives. More than 50% of respondents in Chamunda, and 42% in Lakhopara did not belong to any collectives. However, these villages are in the high and middle- income groups respectively and seem to follow the pattern of “higher income-less collectivization”.

The study showed that 407 women and 405 men are eligible for employment under the NREGS. The survey revealed that there were 812 eligible members from the 250 households surveyed, at an average of 3 members per household.

Table 14: Persons eligible for employment under the NREGS (Male and Female)

Sex	Chamunda	Jhantalburh	Raidihi	Lakhopara	Tudalaga
Men	79	88	72	75	91
Women	76	84	70	77	100
Total	155	172	142	152	191

93 households (37.2%) in the survey had 2 eligible members, 68 families (27.2%) had 3 eligible members. 39 families (15.6%) could contribute 4 eligible members. 26 families (10.4%) could contribute 5 members. Of the remaining, 17 families (6.8%) had 6 to 7 eligible members and only 2 families (0.8%) had more than 8. More than 30 per cent of the families surveyed would have to share the hundred days of employment between four or more eligible members within the family. **Another significant detail is that the number of eligible women was greater than the number of eligible men. Hence special efforts need to be put in to ensure that women benefit not only from the guaranteed entitlement of one-third of the employment opportunities under the NREGS, but a larger share, perhaps half of the employment opportunities, as suggested by the numbers of eligible women.**

Table 15: Number of eligible persons in each household

Number of eligible members per household	Number of Respondents				
	Chamunda	Jhantalburh	Raidihi	Lakhopara	Tudalaga
One	0	2	1	0	0
Two	19	13	23	26	12
Three	13	17	12	13	13
Four	11	5	9	5	9
Five	4	9	4	2	7
6 to 7	2	4	1	3	7
8 and above	0	0	0	0	2
TOTAL	49	50	50	49	50

				*1 household not eligible	
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The survey showed that 126 households (50.4%) had equal number of eligible men and women, 56 households (22.4%) had more eligible women than men. 62 families (24.8%) had more eligible men than women. 4 families had only eligible women as against 2 that had only men. **Clearly, women form a large part of the eligible work force and their participation needs to be taken into significant consideration when the NREGS is implemented.**

Table 16: Relative gender composition of eligible members per household

Relative Gender composition of Eligible men & women	Number of Households				
	Chamunda	Jhantalburh	Raidihi	Lakhopara	Tudalaga
Households with equal number of eligible men and women	23	17	31	31	24
Households with more eligible women than men	11	14	9	8	14
Households with more eligible men than women	15	16	9	10	12
Only women	1	2	1	0	0
Only men	0	2	0	0	0
TOTAL	50	51	50	49	50

Table 17: Number of male-headed and female-headed households in the sample

Headship of Households	Number of Households				
	Chamunda	Jhantalburh	Raidihi	Lakhopara	Tudalaga
Male- Headed Household	47	48	45	43	49
Female Head Household	3	2	5	6	1
TOTAL	50	50	50	49	50

As seen above, male-headed households (92%) far outnumber female-headed ones (6.8%). Though the task force of eligible workers consists of equal number of men and women, headship resting with men in the majority of the cases. Thus, the implementation of the scheme will have to pay particular attention to the way the wages are disbursed, especially since the employment guarantee is to the household as a whole. The scheme must be implemented in such a manner that the wages earned by women are paid to the women

directly, so that these can feed into the food and economic security of the family, and not be mediated through male family members, particularly heads of the families.

Two Gram Sabha Meetings were organized in the area to explain to the villagers the purpose and benefits of the NREGS.

Table 18: Participation in Gram Sabha Meeting

Participation in Gram Sabha Meeting	Number of Respondents				
	Chamunda	Jhantalburh	Raidihi	Lakhopara	Tudalaga
Yes	6	15	15	9	20
No	44	35	35	41	30
No Answer	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	50	50	50	50	50

Table 19 Discussion on NREGS at the Meeting

Discussion on NREGS at the meeting	Number of Respondents				
	Chamunda	Jhantalburh	Raidihi	Lakhopara	Tudalaga
Yes	6	15	15	9	20
No	-	-	-	-	-
No Answer	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	6	15	15	9	20

Tables 18 and 19 clearly show that the majority of respondents (75%) did not know about the Gram Sabha Meetings in their villages and did not participate. **Communication regarding the scheme needs to be disseminated more effectively, to build confidence in the people and ensure participation, especially among the women.**

Table 20: Awareness of NREGS and 100-days Employment scheme

Have you heard of NREGS and 100-days Employment scheme	Number of Respondents				
	Chamunda	Jhantalburh	Raidihi	Lakhopara	Tudalaga
Yes	41	32	35	36	24
No	-	3	-	5	6
No Answer	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	41	35	35	41	30

However, respondents did know of the NREGS and 100 days' employment. It is interesting that this information came largely by word of mouth and from people other than the Sarpanch or Gram Sevaks. Therefore there is a possibility that the information may be incomplete. **Efforts are therefore necessary to**

acquaint people with all relevant details, and take special measures to reach the women, in order to ensure maximum participation.

Table 21: Source of information about NREGS

Source of Information	Number of Respondents				
	Chamunda	Jhantalburh	Raidihi	Lakhopara	Tudalaga
Sarpanch / Adhyaksh	1	7	3	1	3
Gram Sevak	8	5	0	2	1
Word of mouth	19	9	9	18	10
Others	12	11	23	14	10
No Answer	1	0	0	1	0
TOTAL	41	32	35	36	24

Table 22: Panchayat Wise Registration For NREGS

Panchayat Name	Male	Female	Computerised
Bhoipali	1009	1160	551
Sahajbahal	932	710	604
Tudalaga	1023	968	781
Phulbari	1336	1087	1087

(Source: Integrated Child Development Scheme, Bargaon)

Table 22 shows the number of people registered under the scheme at the time of the survey. None of the respondents were currently working under the scheme or had received their job cards at the time of the survey. However, by the time the focus group discussions were conducted, some respondents had received job cards. The registration figures from the panchayats also show that far more men than women have registered under the scheme, except in Bhoipali Panchayat where women outnumber the men by about 150.

The mode of payment preferred by the respondents is given in Table 23.

Table 23: Preferred mode of payment

Preferred Mode of Payment	Number of Respondents				
	Chamunda	Jhantalburh	Raidihi	Lakhopara	Tudalaga
All in cash	3	2	3	1	9
All in food grain	0	0	1	2	0
Part cash and part food grain	42	44	43	39	30

No Answer	5	4	3	8	11
TOTAL	50	50	50	50	50

An overwhelming 79% of respondents chose the “part cash, part food grain” option as against 7.2% who chose the “all cash” option. Only 1.2% chose the “all food grain” option. 12.4% did not respond. This finding is similar to that in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, and suggests that food security is an important issue with the respondents from Orissa. There is also a tradition of making part or whole payments of wages for labour in kind in the area, and this may also account for this preference.

Table 24: Registration for the scheme

Who from the Household has registered under the scheme	Number of members					
	Chamunda	Jhantalburh	Raidihi	Lakhopara	Tudalaga	Total
None	18	14	6	30	13	81
Self	7	4	2	3	5	21
Husband	3	7	21	7	4	42
Children	8	6	10	2	4	30
Husband and Wife	38	30	24	38	30	160
Husband, Wife & Children	10	27	9	12	27	85
Parent and Child	12	6	6	2	2	28
Others	4	7	2	3	9	25
No Answer	0	0	0	3	1	4
Total	100	101	80	100	95	476

Of the 476 people who have registered, 160 (33.6%) are husband and wife. 64 couples (128 people) were willing to travel more than 5kms away for work. There are 85 people in the category that contributes at least 3 members from the household, of which 59 are willing to work more than 5 km away. The ‘Parent – Child’ category had 28 members of whom 18 were willing to travel beyond 5 km for work. Of the 21 respondents who answered only for themselves, 19 were willing to travel more than 5kms to work.

This data suggests that the NREGS can make a difference to the lives of a large number of people, there is a need for work, and people are also willing to travel more than five kilometers to seek it. But efforts have to be made to explain the benefits of the scheme and to get more people to register.

Table 25: Willingness to work more than 5 km from home

Willingness to work more than 5 km from home	Number of members					
	Chamunda	Jhantalburh	Raidihi	Lakhopara	Tudalaga	Total
None	8	10	0	0	20	38
Self	6	4	1	4	4	19
Husband	4	3	25	13	11	56
Children	8	5	10	3	6	32
Husband and Wife	38	26	24	28	12	128
Husband, Wife & Children	3	20	10	12	14	59
Parent and Child	8	8	0	2	0	18
Others	5	5	2	2	12	26
No answer	0	6	1	0	0	7
Total	80	87	73	64	79	383

An effort was made to elicit initial public response to the scheme. The questionnaire included a general question on government schemes offering public employment and another on the perceived merits of the NREGS itself. The responses are recorded in the tables below.

Table 26: Forms of Corruption known in various Public Employment Programmes

Forms of corruption known in various public employment programmes	Number of Respondents					
	Chamunda	Jhantalburh	Raidihi	Lakhopara	Tudalaga	Total
Don't get proper wages at proper time	19	14	22	15	12	82
Long hours of work for poor wages	1	2	2	10	17	32
Quality of work done is poor	7	16	3	1	0	27
Don't Know	0	2	6	8	10	26
Wages are low	5	8	8	0	0	21
Don't get paid	1	9	0	0	0	10
No corruption	0	0	0	6	0	6
Doesn't benefit all people	4	0	0	0	0	4
Non-utilisation of allocated funds	0	2	0	0	0	2
No information about the	0	0	0	1	0	1

rightful wages						
No Response	0	8	9	11	6	34

Multiple responses have been included in the table above. The biggest allegation against Government schemes is that wages are poor and are not made on time. Another major complaint is that wages are not sufficient for the hours of work. Many people also felt that the quality of the work done under such schemes is very poor. **Since the NREGS is supposed to undertake works that contribute to the development of rural communities, and since it also clearly earmarks spaces and opportunities for community monitoring and evaluation, there is an opportunity to undertake quality development work, which can be monitored by the people. Clearly, confidence-building measures are required to show that the NREGS will be well implemented and will prove beneficial to all.** 34 respondents did not comment and only 6 out of 250 said there was no corruption in government employment schemes.

Table 27: Opinion of NREGS

Opinion of NREGS	Number of Respondents					TOTAL
	Chamunda	Jhantalburh	Raidihi	Lakhopara	Tudalaga	
Poor Unemployed will get employment	32	23	16	13	17	101
If given job here, no need to go out	7	9	22	20	4	62
Poor will get wages	7	6	9	8	4	34
Poor will get Govt. job	4	2	2	4	5	17
Beneficial for the poor and their village	0	9	1	1	6	17
Good Scheme	2	0	1	4	6	13
No Response	0	0	2	2	4	8
Food for all (security)	2	3	0	0	3	8
Can make a living through this scheme	0	0	2	0	3	5
Unsure of the future of the scheme	0	0	0	1	0	1
Will get unemployment allowance	0	1	0	0	0	1
Implementation is getting delayed	1	1	0	0	0	2
Will be able to educate children	1	0	0	0	0	1
All will get same wage	1	0	0	0	0	1
	57	54	55	53	52	271

42% of people felt that the scheme would help the poor get employment and 26% felt that this scheme would do away with the need to go out of the village or migrate in search of work.

The most pressing needs of rural Sundergarh are given in Table 28. The building of roads (40%), digging and cleaning of ponds, wells and tanks(36%), and irrigation (12%) were perceived the three activities that respondents were most keen on being taken up under the NREGS.

Table 28: Activities that can be undertaken under NREGS

(multiple responses)

Activities that can be undertaken	Number of Respondents					
	Chamunda	Jhantalburh	Raidihi	Lakhopara	Tudalaga	Total
Road work	29	28	45	36	26	164
Pond/Well/Tank (Digging & cleaning)	20	23	32	36	40	151
Irrigation	15	22	8	5	1	51
Nursery/Planting Trees	3	5	4	9	0	21
No Answer	4	1	1	3	3	12
House Construction	0	2	5	1	1	9
Agriculture	0	0	0	2	0	2
Land leveling	0	1	0	0	0	1
Drinking water facility	0	1	0	0	1	2
Dairy	0	0	0	0	1	1
School Building	1	0	0	0	1	2
Total	72	83	95	92	74	416

The people of rural Sundergarh engage in two major activities either singly or variously. These are agriculture and daily wage work. Since most families had some land of their own, 447 responses were recorded for agricultural work on owned land while 40 people said they did agricultural work for others. 330 people working on daily wages constitute the next largest category. 185 people said they did not work, while 45 were salaried. The large areas under forest cover in the district make collection of forest produce a significant occupation – 50 people made a living collecting timber, kendu leaves, and other products. **The number of people who had marketable skills, or could work as artisans, was limited. In a larger response to improve livelihoods in the area, beyond the limited and basic food and income security offered through the NREGS, vocational training in the area clearly seems to be a need, both for men and for women.**

Table 29: Work details of members of household eligible under NREGS

Kinds of work	Number of Respondents										Total
	Chamunda		Jhantalburh		Raidihi		Lakhopara		Tudalaga		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Own Agriculture	30	20	60	44	54	41	54	46	52	46	447
Daily Wage	29	29	45	15	45	24	43	37	32	31	330
Does not work	13	23	8	29	4	21	12	20	9	46	185
Collecting Forest Produce	3	13	6	14	5	9	0	0	0	0	50
Salaried work	8	1	5	4	0	0	4	3	20	0	45
Agriculture work for others	15	13	0	0	0	4	3	3	1	1	40
Skilled Wage Work	5	0	9	0	3	0	3	0	9	0	29
Brick making	9	5	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	18
Road Laying	3	1	5	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	13
Shop	1	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	5
Tailoring	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	5
Carpenter	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Grazing Cattle	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
Making leaf utensils	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Self Employed	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
No Response	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2

Table 30: Duration of work availability for eligible persons

Duration of work availability for eligible persons	Number of Respondents										Total
	Chamunda		Jhantalburh		Raidihi		Lakhopara		Tudalaga		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
1 Month	0	3	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	6
2 Months	0	2	0	2	2	0	0	3	1	1	11
3 Months	1	4	1	3	2	4	2	5	1	2	25
4 Months	0	7	0	0	0	1	1	5	0	0	14
5 Months	3	5	0	1	0	1	2	0	0	1	13
6 Months	18	7	12	12	4	4	8	8	2	1	76
7 Months	6	6	5	5	6	10	6	7	12	17	80
8 Months	3	4	8	3	2	7	12	9	4	5	57
9 Months	5	4	4	7	18	7	13	4	8	7	77
10 Months	4	2	17	6	12	4	5	1	6	3	61
11 Months	1	0	2	3	1	0	1	0	2	0	9
12 Months	24	9	29	11	20	9	23	13	45	15	198

The disparity in duration of work available to men and women is clearly revealed in Table 30. Large numbers of women work for 1 to 7 months whereas most men work for 5 to 12 months. A majority have work for 6 to 12 months and here again the numbers favour men at 358 to 210. While 198 people work for 12 months, this is mainly because they do multiple jobs. Even here, the number of men exceeds that of women, at 141 to 57. The next largest group of 80 has work for 7 months, followed by 77 who are able to find work for 9 months and 76 who work for 6 months. **Thus it appears that there will certainly be takers for the 100 days of guaranteed work, and women are more likely to need to seek work under the NREGS.** This finding has important implications for the implementation of the NREGS and its efforts to reach out to marginalized groups in rural India.

Table 31: Single / multiple employment status

Single / multiple employment status	Number of Respondents									
	Chamunda		Jhantalburh		Raidihi		Lakhopara		Tudalaga	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Single	27	23	32	29	17	20	28	20	31	29
Two	33	26	34	21	46	26	39	34	49	24
Three	6	4	12	3	5	4	1	0	0	0

Employment status data reveal that 135 men do single jobs as compared to 121 women. Most men in the sample have two jobs and this number (201) is far larger than that of women in the same category (112). The same trend is seen in the category of three jobs (24 men to 11 women). **It is clear that a large number of workers, both men and women, need to work at multiple jobs in order to be able to survive. Further, rural women find it harder to get employment than their male counterparts. This gender disparity, both in work availability and duration of work, needs to be addressed, by increasing the extent of participation of women in the NREGS.**

The education levels of men and women as shown in Table 32 also reveal a sharp disparity. The number of men who have received no education is 92. The number of women in the same category, at 228, is almost two and a half times greater. The disparity is most marked in the categories for primary and middle school education, but numbers are comparable in the categories for High School and higher education. **Considering that larger number of women belong to categories with no or little education, greater effort will have to be made to protect their interests under NREGS. In all aspects of reaching information to women about the NREGS, assistance with registration and the issue of job cards, the allocation of work and disbursement of wages, special efforts will have to be taken to increase the participation of women and**

to protect their entitlements, given that the lack of education may make it difficult for them to claim these entitlements themselves.

Table 32: Education level of eligible members

Education level of eligible members	Number of Respondents									
	Chamunda		Jhantalburh		Raidihi		Lakhopara		Tudalaga	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Nil	23	49	19	43	20	46	18	37	22	53
Std. 2 & Below	6	0	2	3	9	8	1	1	4	1
Std. 3 to 5	14	6	16	10	17	5	17	10	9	11
Std. 6 to 7	15	4	23	8	10	4	12	5	9	11
High School	6	1	10	10	6	4	6	2	18	3
Std. 10	9	7	12	12	7	2	10	11	16	14
Std. 12	4	3	5	5	3	1	5	1	9	4
Graduate	3	5	2	1	1	1	3	0	7	3
Not applicable = < 4 years	12	4	16	3	12	7	11	8	10	8

Data regarding population below 4 years of age reveals an imbalance in the numbers of girl and boy children. This can have serious implications in the future for the status and position of rural women.

Significant efforts have to be taken to take note of and address this gender imbalance. While this is not directly connected with the NREGS, by giving special attention to women in the implementation of the NREGS, it is possible to use the implementation of the scheme to send out messages regarding the importance attached by the government to women's status and entitlements. Gender mainstreaming is important in every aspect of socio-economic effort, as the most significant factor that counters poverty, and in this sense, these findings are significant in their relation to the NREGS and what it sets out to do, philosophically and practically.

In an effort to understand patterns of earnings in the district and keeping in mind the two major categories of work engaged in by people of rural Sundergarh, responses were solicited on payments received in the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors. 80 people (32%) said they receive Rs. 25 per day for agricultural work, followed by 59 (23.6%) who receive Rs.20. 18 (7.2%) said they got Rs.30 and 7 said they got Rs.35. These are the predominant categories. **It is significant that a large number of people (70) refused to answer the question on payment.** The range of payments reported reveal significant imbalances in the wage earnings of individuals. **The fact that the NREGS promises equal, standardised wages could help remove this discrepancy, and also push up wage levels in general.**

Table 33 Payment received for agricultural activity per day last season

Income in Rupees	Chamunda	Jhantalburh	Raidihi	Lakhopara	Tudalaga
15	0	0	2	0	0
20	12	15	30	2	0
25	23	7	5	30	15
30	2	0	2	4	10
35	0	2	0	0	5
40	0	2	0	0	0
45	0	0	0	0	1
50	0	3	0	0	0
60	0	1	0	0	0
80	1	0	0		0
100	1	0	0	0	0
No answer	11	20	12	14	13
Food grains	20	25	25	24	27

121 people reported food grain as an alternative mode of payment, making it the largest category of responses. The amount of food grain given varied from 4 to 8 kg. It is to be noted that the preferred mode of payment within the NREGS too was the ‘part cash, part food grain’ option as opposed to preferences expressed elsewhere in India.

80 people (32%) refused to answer the question on payment for non-agricultural activity. 82 (32.8%) said they got Rs. 50, while 40 (16%) said they got Rs. 40. 7 people said they got Rs 80, 6 got Rs. 70, 5 reported getting Rs. 100, and 2 reported getting food grain as payment.

Table 34 Payment received for non-agricultural activity per day during last season

Income in Rupees	Chamunda	Jhantalburh	Raidihi	Lakhopara	Tudalaga
15	0	1	0	0	0
20	0	0	0	0	1
25	0	0	0	0	0
30	0	0	6	0	0
35	1	4	0	1	5
40	7	4	5	15	9
45	0	5	0	1	0
50	24	10	23	14	11
60	0	3	2	1	0
80	1	2	1	1	2
100	1	1	0	1	2
No answer	16	20	12	16	16
Food Grain	0	1	0	0	1

A question in the survey related to migration from the villages, to understand the extent of unemployment or underemployment in the village that led people to seek work elsewhere, which in turn would be an indicator of the relevance of a scheme like the NREGS.

Table 35 Migration status for Chamunda

Place	Duration	Male	Female	Total
Chabir	15 days	1	0	1
Kuchinda	1 month	1	0	1
Jharsuguda	3 months	1	0	1
Tudalaga	4 months	2	0	2
Bilaigarh	5 months	1	1	9
	6 months	2	1	
	9 months	1	3	
Rajgangpur	3 months	1		3
	6 months	1	1	
Kutra	6 months	2	2	4
Mumbai	6 months	1	0	1
Gopalpur	6 months	1	0	1
Bisra	12 months	1	0	1
Total		16	8	24

The total number of people who migrated out of Chamunda was 24. Of these 8 were women. However, only one person left the village for 12 months. Most migrations were to places nearby, the only exception being the one person who went to Mumbai. The duration varied from as few as 15 days to the entire year.

Table 36: Migration status for Jhantalburh

Place	Duration	Male	Female	Total
Sambalpur / Jharsuguda	2 months	1	0	1
Raigarh	3 months	1	0	1
Rourkela / Jharsuguda	4 months	1	0	1
Sambalpur	6 months	1	0	5
	3 months	1		
	2 months	1		
	15 days	2		
Jharsuguda	6 months	1	0	1
Chennai / Rourkela / Jharsuguda	7 months	1	0	1
Chennai/ Rourkela	7 months	1	0	1
Rajgangpur / Rourkela / Monoharpur	7 months	1	0	1
Chennai	12 months	4	0	7
	6 months	2		
	2 months	1		

Rourkela	12 months 8 months 3 months	2 1 2	0	5
Rajgangpur	12 months 1 month	3 1	0	4
Delhi	12 months	1	0	1
Total		29	0	29

Twenty nine people migrated from Jhantalburh in the past year. While 1 person migrated to nearby Rajgangpur for a month and another to Sambalpur for 2 months, the rest migrated for longer periods ranging from 3 months to one year. Most people went to nearby towns for work. Two distant places mentioned were Delhi and Chennai.

Table 37: Migration status for Raidihi

Place	Duration	Male	Female	Total
Belpahar	15 days	1	0	1
Bausalaga	15 days	1	0	1
Rengali / Sasan	2 months	1	0	1
Sambalpur	2 months	1	0	1
Sambalpur / Jharsuguda	2 months	1	0	1
Jharsuguda	3 months 1 month	2 2	0	4
Jharsuguda / Khurda	4 months	1	0	1
Jharsuguda / Bhubaneswar	4 months	1	0	1
Rourkela / Rajgangpur	5 months	2	0	2
Rourkela	12 months	1	0	1
Bonai	12 months	1	0	1
Raiekachhar	12 months	1	0	1
		16	0	16

Migration figures of Raidihi are lower than Chamunda and Jhantalburh. The duration of migration ranged from 15 days to 12 months. 3 people stayed out of Raidihi the entire year to do work. The places mentioned were all nearby towns. Only 16 people found it necessary to leave the village.

Table 38: Migration status for Lakhopara

Place	Duration	Male	Female	Total
Bilaigarh	15 days	1	0	1
Hutang	1 month	1	0	1
Rourkela / Rajgangpur	1 month	1	1	2
Sambalpur / Brajarajnagar	2 months	1	0	1
Belpahar / Rajgangpur / Kansbahal	3 months		1	1

Jharsuguda	3 months	1	0	1
Tudalaga	6 months	1	1	2
Cuttack	12 months	1	0	2
	10 months	1		
Sundergarh	12 months	2	0	
	6 months	2		
Gopalpur	12 months	2	0	2
Rajgangpur	12 months	1	0	
	6 months	1		2
Sundergarh / Bilaigarh	12 months	1	1	2
		17	4	21

Migration from Lakhopara is within the state, largely to nearby towns. Cuttack and Gopalpur are the two distant towns mentioned. 21 people found it necessary to leave the village in search of work, 12 for periods of 10 to 12 months. Like their counterparts in Chamunda, women from Lakhopara went out of the village from time to time, but the number, at 4, was much less.

Table 39: Migration status for Tudalaga

Place	Duration	Male	Female	Total
Jharsuguda / Rajgangpur	15 days	1	0	1
Sambalpur/ Jharsuguda	2 months	1	0	
	1 month	1		2
Sundergarh/ Jharsuguda	3 months	1	0	1
Jagadapur	12 months	1	0	1
Gopalpur	12 months	1	0	1
Rourkela	12 months	1	0	1
		7	0	7

Tudalaga displayed least migration. Yet, of the 7 who migrated, 3 stayed away for all 12 months of the year. Others migrated for periods between 15 days to 3 months. There were no women migrants from the village. One distant town mentioned was Jagdalpur. Others were towns within the state.

As the tables on multiple jobs and duration of employment showed earlier, there is significant unemployment and underemployment in the district. However, most families own land. Most families also belonged to tribes, and had a strong connection with their land and communities that tended to cut down out migration. Hence, a scheme like the NREGS, which has the ability to provide some

degree of income security to families, as well as undertake community development works in the village, is of significance in a district like Sundergarh.

Data from the survey in the villages of Sundergarh reveals that —

- Women are under represented in the work force of the district.
- Women have lower literacy levels and fewer job opportunities.
- Special efforts must be made to inform women of their rightful entitlements under the NREGS and to encourage them to participate in the scheme.
- Collectivisation can help to make them participants and evaluators of programs under the NREGS.
- ‘Part cash, part food grain’ is the preferred payment for work.
- The NREGS if well implemented can significantly enhance the economic security of a large number of women.

Information from focus group discussions with women:

As part of the study, a focus group discussion was conducted with women from Sundergarh district, as well as with officials in the targeted area. Information from these interactions are recorded below.

The focus group discussion was conducted with about twenty women, representing the villages of Jhantalburh, Birsu, Jarangloi, Raidihi, Sahajbahal, Demupara and Chamunda in Sundergarh district. The discussion was held at the well-appointed Training and Production centre attached to the Panchayat Samiti Office in Badgaon.

Livelihood issues:

Regarding their work lives, women said that they tended to work from 4:30 in the morning till 9 at night, with the early morning, the middle of the day and late evening typically being devoted to family and household-related labour. Given the hot climate, wage labour tended to take place in the forenoon and the later afternoon and in the early evening. Work also tended to be seasonal, with agricultural labour taking place in the monsoon, or for the winter *rabi* crop. Women sought non-agricultural wage labour, like collecting clay to make bricks, road work, house construction work, etc. in the summer season. Migration might happen during the summer, to engage in jobs like brick making, or at harvest time. It was common to seek work within a six kilometer radius of the village. Sometimes, women would travel to Sambhalpur, about 100 km away, for harvesting work, or in the opposite direction near Rourkela, also about 100 km

away, to make bricks. Wages ranged from Rs. 20 to 30 in cash, or 6 to 8 kgs of paddy in kind. There was a system of exchanging agricultural labour between villages during peak times in the season like harvest time, with villages competing with one another to pay higher wages. This could push up wages to Rs. 35. When women collected clay to make bricks, they could earn about Rs. 25 per day. They were expected to collect 7 kgs of clay a day. Brickmaking was undertaken in groups of three. It took two days of work to produce 1000 bricks, for which the group earned Rs. 140. For house construction work, women earned Rs. 20 a day, and loading bricks fetched them Rs. 25. If they took up road work as part of government schemes, they could earn anywhere between Rs. 40 to 50 a day, depending on the contractor. Increasingly, women were beginning to insist that they be paid Rs. 50, when they knew that the work was being taken up for the government. In some villages, men earned almost twice what women earned as agricultural labourers; in others, they earned Rs. 5 more than the women.

One group of women had recently undertaken to supervise the preparation of the mid-day meal in their anganwadi center for the Block authorities. Two staff members were paid Rs. 200 and 100 each per month for the actual preparation of the food, and for the cleaning of the utensils respectively. Rice and dal for the meal were supplied by the block office. The group was responsible for getting fresh vegetables for the meal and supervise the preparation for quality, hygiene, etc. For their labours, they would be provided with Rs. 400 per month per 100 children served, in addition to the reimbursement of the costs of the vegetables.

NREGS Issues:

Most women were aware about the NREGS, however, many of them were under the impression that the government would give 100 days of work **to any person above the age of 18**. The concept of the employment being guaranteed to the household, and issues of how these 100 days would be claimed from within members of the household had not been clarified. About 50 percent of the participants in the discussion had filled up the registration form. All but one had not received the job card.

With regard to the nature of the works to be undertaken under the scheme, the women were unequivocal that by far the highest priority needed to be given to desilting and cleaning old ponds and tanks, or digging new ones. Water harvesting was key, since the women said that many of their villages had traditionally faced a problem with water scarcity. Even villages that had had access to water easily ten years earlier were now faced with the issue of their ponds and wells drying up. Forest protection work was also of importance to these communities.

Women felt confident that they could play a significant role in the monitoring and evaluation of the NREGS. The works to be undertaken should be decided in the Grama Sabha. Once that is done, the monitoring of the implementation, as well as disbursement of payments could be done under the supervision of the women's sanghas to ensure efficiency and prevent corruption, they felt.

Information from interview with officials:

Interviews were conducted with the block level officials in charge of administering the NREGS in Badgaon block in Sundergarh district, where the survey was carried out. The officials, who were interviewed at their offices in the Panchayat Samiti office, were very cooperative.

Officials stated that registration under the scheme was taking place in earnest, and already about 5000 cards had been issued. Job cards were even being delivered to the houses of potential beneficiaries. Beneficiaries had begun claiming work. Possible job works had been identified and lists kept in gram panchayat offices so that applicants could immediately be allotted work. Officials said that works like building roads, tanks, check dams, water harvesting systems and undertaking afforestation was envisaged under the scheme. Currently, road and tank building works were being allotted. The daily wage being offered was Rs. 55. The “outturn” based method of payment, whereby a person who was able to dig out 100 cubic feet of earth earned Rs. 68, or part or multiples thereof, was also current. However, this was under review, and the movement was towards dropping this method and opting for a straight daily wage system. Officials said that they had observed that women preferred the daily wage option to the outturn payment option, and participated in greater numbers with the former option. Payment was disbursed through the panchayat executive officer to the workers directly. **The officials maintained that the one-third entitlement of women as beneficiaries of the NREGS was not mandatory. However, attempts were being made to sensitize women to participate in the scheme.** The question of paying out unemployment allowances did not arise as there was enough job works to be allotted to applicants. Even a few years down the road, officials did not believe that finding work to allocate under the scheme would be an issue. “Even after 55 years of independence, we have not finished developmental works in the village, what is the fear that there will not be work to allocate in a few years time?” said one official. The remarks made by the women about the indifferent quality of developmental works undertaken by the government, appears relevant in this context. Women had been informed about the scheme during the gram sabha; however, **officials were not hopeful about their active participation in the monitoring of the scheme.**

Officials were generally positive about scheme, and in particular, about the fact that corruption was less likely under the scheme. Officials could be booked under criminal cases for administrative lapses, and

corruption in particular, and this they felt, was an aspect that boded well for the implementation of the NREGS.

Some general observations

It was observed that in Sundargarh district, development directions strongly favour industrialization. The implications for efforts to regenerate rural areas need to be examined carefully. It was also noted that in tribal villages there are strong tribal panchayats, which are held in high esteem by people, and their preferences for EGA works again need to be carefully assessed.

Chapter 6: Emerging issues and directions for further research

The study conducted by ISST and partners has been able to highlight a number of issues, which are briefly summarised below.

1. The EGA is based on an understanding that there is an acute shortage of work in rural areas reflecting the dependence of people on agriculture and the seasonal nature of agricultural activities. The works started under the EGA are intended as a supplement to normal agricultural work and to stop distress migration in off peak seasons.
The survey conducted by ISST confirms the finding of heavy dependence on land/ forests and lack of other sources of income. Most households get by on a combination of manual labour, agricultural and non-agricultural. From the survey, it is seen that there are differences in the percentage of the landless in the sample (5 % in Sirohi, Rajasthan, 12 % in Sundargarh, Orissa, 33 % in Dhar, Madhya Pradesh and 53 % in Gulbarga, Karnataka); and ownership of animals (8 % without animals in Sirohi, 13 % in Sundargarh, 41 % in Dhar, and over 70 % in Gulbarga).
All the areas are characterised by lack of irrigation facilities and hence water conservation and harvesting emerges as a priority in all the four places.
2. The size of the household and the dependency ratios vary. The number of men eligible for EGA and the women eligible (i.e. over 18 and able and willing to work) is roughly equal in all the places sampled. The number of eligible persons per household averages 3. In this situation, what strategies the households use to claim the 100 days of work promised through the EGA – whether it is shared among all the eligible members or whether one person stays on this work – will not make a difference to the net addition to household income but may have important implications for intra household distribution of work and responsibilities.
The proportion of eligible men and women are roughly the same, but in Rajasthan it is seen that 70-80 % of workers on the EGA sites are women. Crèche facilities were not observed.¹
In order to ensure that such participation by women does not have adverse effects on children and elderly members of the family, there is a **need to ensure adequate child care facilities** – whether on or off site, depending on the age of the child and the preferences of mothers - and flexibility of work timings at a minimum. Currently it

seems that many children are out of school, which could be a result of having to migrate out of the village. If women stay behind to work on the EGA sites, and child care facilities are available for very young children this may stimulate schooling of older children.

3. Levels of illiteracy were found to be high in the sample. In Sirohi, 47 % of men and 82 % of women were illiterate. Even in the 7-20 age group, 28 % of males and 67 % of females were found to be illiterate. In Dhar, 36 % of men and 61 % of women were illiterate. For the 7-20 age group, the illiteracy was 19 % for males and 43 % for females. 21% of men had no education in Sundargarh, and 52 % of women. In Gulbarga, 45 % of males and 68 % of women reported no education. This high level of illiteracy will need to be factored in, while designing programmes and attempting also to impart skills. If the EGA works are to be able to also build up skills, some arrangement for imparting at least basic and functional literacy will need to be made. This is a point for convergence with literacy programmes, or alternatively a point to be considered for the future framework of the operational guidelines.
4. The operational guidelines for the EGA offer scope for activities to be undertaken by NGOs and other organised groups. The present level of mobilisation among the villagers in the sample is indicated by membership of groups. In Sirohi, 23 % of women were members of self help groups or mahila mandals and other women's groups. In Dhar, 18 % were members of self help groups or other women's groups, and 77 % were members of SEWA. In Gulbarga, 29 % were members of self help groups. In Sundargarh 62 % were members of self help groups or other women's groups. The level of such community mobilisation appears to be higher among women, however, more probing will be needed to see how far these groups offer the possibility of leading community action.
5. On the NREGA:
 - a. **Awareness about the NREGA**
 In Sirohi, over 50 % of the sample had come to know about the scheme through word of mouth and from other villagers. In Dhar over 30 % had learnt about it in this way. In Sundargarh 80 % said they had come to know from others. In contrast in Gulbarga all but one respondent said that this information had come from the sarpanch.
 (Women's awareness appears to be a function of intra household relations (where men get this information, do they communicate it to the women in the family?); the general level of awareness; and whether any effort has been made to disseminate

¹ The reason given for this is that most women preferred not to bring their children to the work sites.

specifically to women (for example through NGOs, women's groups, where these exist).

b. Desired form of payment

86 % of the respondents in Sirohi, 82 % in Dhar and 79 % in Sundargarh said they would prefer the payment to be partly in food and partly in cash. (All these are forested and predominantly tribal areas, and the finding could reflect food insecurity present in these areas). However in Gulbarga, almost 90 % said they would like the payment in cash.

c. Method of Payment

In Gulbarga, the administration intends to make payments through direct transfer to bank accounts in the name of the head of the household. This means that in all households with a male head, women will not have direct access to their earnings, and this is a matter of concern.

d. Need for clarity on piece/ time rates

In Rajasthan, wages being paid are much lower than minimum wages (in fact even lower than under previous programmes such as drought relief works. In Abu Road, wages were reported to be around Rs 38-40/- for a day's work; whereas they had been reported as being Rs 50-60/- in the last year under the drought relief programmes). The reason for this seems to be that the payment reflects a 'piece rate' and not a time rate, and the assessment of work done is made at the end of the stated duration of the works. Unfortunately people working on the site are unaware of how much work needs to be done in order to receive the minimum wage, and there needs to be clarity on this at the start of the work.

It has been suggested that there are two aspects to the wage question. One, the productivity norms that have been used in establishing rates; and second whether these are being implemented properly. However what a survey or visit can establish is what is actually being received.

It has also been suggested that the number of days for which work is received is as important as the wage: over the course of a year, it will be possible to assess what *net* addition is made to household income.

e. Choice of works

Road construction at present seems to dominate, and this may partly reflect allocations already made by the administration. However this is where the challenge of the programme lies, in the ability to be creative about choosing works that will

contribute effectively to local development and that will be sensitive to actual perceived needs. This will call for considerable capacity building at village and Panchayat level.

Given acute shortage of water, works aimed at water harvesting and conservation were given high priority everywhere, but in Abu Road only road construction has so far started. Need to ensure that systems are in place for giving quick approval to works identified as a priority by the villagers, and for whatever technical assistance is required and not available locally.

Ensuring that women's needs are addressed is a special challenge. Women are represented in *panchayats* – ensured by the 33 % reservation – but in many places this does not translate into effective participation and therefore is not a way of ensuring that women's perspectives find a place in the decision making and planning by the *panchayat*. Thus, in Dhar, Madhya Pradesh, women *sarpanches* were found to be entirely ignorant of *panchayat* matters and effective power was being wielded by sons or husbands, or even contracted out in one case. However in Karnataka a number of women have been elected to Panchayats against the general quota and there is considerable optimism that with a little bit of guidance and information, these elected women could play a leadership role in defining appropriate projects for the EGA. There is need to also support other community level groups for better articulation of women's needs and priorities.

Directions for further action research

From the pilot study conducted in 4 locations in different parts of the country, it seems clear that the participation of women on the EGA works, where they have begun, is high. This is so even though (as seen in Rajasthan) the wages paid have been much below the minimum wage, at least in the initial stages. In fact in some places in Rajasthan women are reported as being 80% of the participants on EGA sites.

To understand the reasons behind high participation of women, it is useful to look at the current patterns of migration. In Abu Road, Sirohi, Rajasthan it was seen that in the sample surveyed, 10 % of adult men and 4.5 % of adult women migrated out of the village for varying durations in search of work. However among the men who did not migrate, most were able to get work only outside the village but at a distance that enabled them to stay at home: usually over 5 kms, and in hilly geographical terrain. With the opening up of EGA works in the village, most men have apparently continued their previous work and more women are to be seen on the EGA work site.

In Dhar district, Madhya Pradesh, 23 % of adult men and 20 % of adult women migrate for work (usually couples or families). As the works had not started at the time of survey, the impact on this type of migration is not yet known.

In Gulbarga, Karnataka, 12.7 % of adult men and 5 % of adult women in the sample households reported migration (for varying periods).

In Badgaon block of Sundergarh district, Orissa, in the villages surveyed, 93 % of adult men and 12 % of adult women in the sample households migrated in search of work (for varying periods).

Depending on the area and location therefore the pattern –duration, distance, whether individuals or groups – of migration out of the village varies considerably; it seems that women generally stay behind, or else accompany husbands, but in these areas independent female migration was negligible.

The impact of the EGA works on patterns of migration, and the implications for women's 'triple burden' of work, household maintenance and child care, will depend a lot on the conditions at work and the pattern of development that is stimulated through the assets and skills generated through the EGA works.

Proposed action research

It is proposed, therefore, that we track the progress of the EGA in a few selected sites with a view to understanding the interaction between EGA, local development and migration, with special focus on gender concerns.

The impact on women can be broadly divided into *technical* and *strategic* aspects.

The technical aspects include such issues as wages paid, equality with wages given to men, ensuring reasonable conditions on the work site – crèche, first aid facilities, shade, drinking water, etc, ensuring that women receive their wages themselves, that the timings are suitable and so on. These concerns have to do with how well the programme is being implemented and how appropriate the systems set up for monitoring and social audit are, and would be mainly based on observation and interviews at the work site.

- The first tangible outcome of the proposed research will be to flag observations relating to these aspects and bring them to the notice of officials and others who are directly responsible for implementation.

The strategic aspects of the EGA include the impact of the increased participation in paid work by women upon their reproductive and home maintenance responsibilities, which is primarily a

function of intra-household relations, and which will be mediated by the supportive structures or institutions within which the household is itself embedded; the extent to which participation in the EGA is able to enhance the levels of literacy, skills and leadership; the extent to which assets created through the EGA are such as to better meet women's needs.

The ISST study found that in all areas, there were different types of community organizations in existence, although only a percentage of the sample were members of these. However given the nature of the EGA programmes, which call for local initiative and community mobilization to achieve the goals that have been set, this is an important finding. These aspects require collecting information at household level to understand intra household and migration aspects, as well as community to get information on mobilization and its impact.

- The second outcome of the proposed research is capacity building through discussions and workshops, organized in partnership with local organizations, that are aimed at helping to build capacity for local level decision making, especially by women and to strengthen community organizations.

Over a period of time, the observed impact of the EGA on local development and migration will become evident, as well as the processes through which changes have been facilitated (or stalled).

- The third outcome of the proposed research is an analysis of the development and migration related impact of the EGA. An attempt will be made to document the nature of migration as it exists at present (who migrates, to which places, for how long, on what terms, individually or in groups, etc); what is the observed immediate impact of EGA works on migration (women, men, families) as well as the expected/ likely longer run impact; if successful in reducing/ stopping migration, what are the factors/ process enabling this (with special attention to the role that community organizations might have played) and if not successful in stopping distress migration, what are the likely reasons.

The study is proposed to be conducted through field observations from the selected sites over a period of one year.

Questionnaire for a survey of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act

Name of the investigator	Place of visit	Day of visit	Investigator's signature	Supervisor's signature

In the act, a household is defined as a nuclear family comprising of mother, father, their children and may include any person wholly or substantially dependent on the head of the family. Household will also mean a single member family. Investigators please be careful as not to follow the listing as given in the ration card since it may not correspond to this definition.

Institute of Social Studies Trust, Delhi

Section 1: Household summary

1.	Name of the respondent		
2.	Religion		
3.	Caste (Please note sub castes also)		
4.	Total members in this household		
5.	Land owned		
6.	How do you irrigate your fields?		
7.	Livestock possessed		
8.	Are you or any member of the family member of any of the following groups?		Tick as appropriate
		SHG	
		Mahila Mandal/ Other women's group	
		Union (e.g. SEWA)	
		Other (please specify)	

Section 2: Household details

S. No.	Name of household members	Age (in years)	Sex	Marital status	Relationship with respondent	Education level
1.					Respondent	
2.						
3.						
4.						

Section 3: Work details of all members of the household

S. No.	Name of household members	What were the different activities that each of the household members engaged in during the different seasons? <i>Investigator: List up to 4 activities for each member of the household.</i>								<i>Investigator should note if any of the activities engaged in by the member requires any special skill</i>
		Activity I	Duration	Activity II	Duration	Activity III	Duration	Activity IV	Duration	
1.										
2.										
3.										
4.										

Section 4: Migration

S. No.	Name of household members	Did any of the activities undertaken during the last season going out of the village?					
		No	Yes, travelled daily from the village	Place travelled	Yes, migrated out of the village	Name of the place	Duration stayed out of the village
1.							
2.							
3.							
4.							

Section 5: Payment and other benefits received by the **respondent** during his/ her employment in the last season of the previous year

	Wage in kind (Food grain)	Wage in cash	Wages partly in kind and part in cash	Meals (Breakfast/ Lunch)	Clothing	Housing	Transport allowance	Crèche facilities
Government								
Non-agricultural activity								
Other activity (like plantation, etc)								
Private								
Agricultural activity								
Non-agricultural activity								

Section 6: Details about NREGA

1.	Did you attend the Gram Sabha meeting on Jan 26 th / Feb 2 nd , 2006?		
2.	Was the new scheme of the government guaranteeing 100 days of employment discussed in this meeting?		
3.	If no, have you heard of the new scheme of the government guaranteeing 100 days of employment?		
4.	If yes, how did you get to know about the scheme?		Tick as appropriate
		Sarpanch	
		Gram sevak	
		Other government functionary (such as school teacher, ANM)	
		Word of mouth	
		Other (please specify)	

5.	Have you received your job cards?		
6.	Who all in your family are registered under this scheme? <i>Investigator: Note if any member(s) above 18 years have been left out or any person(s) below 18 years have been registered under the act.</i>		
7.	If offered employment for more than 5km under this scheme, who all in your family will go for this work?		
8.	What is your preferred mode of payment?		Tick as appropriate
		All in cash	
		All in food grains	
		Part in cash/ Part in food grains	

9.	Is any member from your household working under NREGA?	
10.	What do you think about this scheme?	
11.	In your experience, what have been the different forms of corruption in various public employment programmes?	
12.	In your opinion what activities can be undertaken under the NREGA scheme?	

Notes on Discussions and Case Studies

I. Abu Road, Sirohi District, Rajasthan

The villages selected are:

- a) *Upla Khejra, (Uplakhejra panchayat)*
- b) *Nichla Khejra, (Uplakhejra panchayat)*
- c) *Mahi khera (Bahadurpura panchayat)*
- d) *Rervakalan (Kairia panchayat)*
- e) *Jayadra (Jayadra panchayat)*
- f) *Meen (Jambori panchayat)*

Tools used for data collection: individual interviews at the household level, focus group discussions and interviews with a few key informants such as *Siksha Karmi*, Ex-Sarpanch, and *Aaganwadi* worker.

Table 1: Village-wise Distribution of Individual Interviews & FGDs (February 2006)

Name of the village	No. of individuals interviewed	No. of FGDs conducted	Hamlet wise no. of participants
<i>Upla Khejra</i>	1 (F), 1 (M)	2	<i>Bhamti phalli</i> - 5F, 8M <i>Gameri phalli</i> - 5F
<i>Nichla Khejra</i>	3 (F), 3 (M)	2	<i>Mathara phalli</i> - 4F, 8M <i>Kamra phalli</i> - 2F, 2 M
<i>Mahi khera</i>	1 (F), 3 (M)	2	<i>Mahadev phalli</i> - 4F, 5M <i>Tora phalli</i> - 5F, 2M
<i>Rervakalan</i>	3 (F), 0 (M)	2	<i>Dangia phalli</i> - 7F, 1M <i>Damor phalli</i> - 3F, 2M
<i>Jayadra</i>	2 (F), 2 (M)	1	<i>Middle school phalli</i> - 3F, 2M
<i>Meen</i>	None	2	<i>Gaon phalli</i> - 5F, 5M <i>Uplakhetra phalli</i> - 6F, 1M

Case studies and focus group discussions

I

Uplakhejra village falls under *Uplakhejra panchayat* which is the largest *panchayat* in Abu Road Block in terms of area and is spread over 35km. *Uplakhejra* village is located within a radius of 8 km. It has an *Aaganwadi* center but the children from all *phallis* do not have access to it because of difficult terrain and distance. Food is served to the children attending the *aaganwadi* centre, however it is of substandard quality consisting either of sweetened or salted *murmure* (puffed rice), which the children ultimately throw away. There is no veterinary doctor or hospital nearby. In case of emergency, villagers have to go to Abu Road where there is a government hospital or to *Deldar* for private treatment. ANM keeps visiting the village regularly for immunization purposes and also offers treatment for minor ailments. All primary schools in the village (*Rajiv Gandhi Pathshala/ Rajkiya Prathamik Vidyalaya*) provide mid day meal- children are served hot cooked food every day and the menu is different for each of the six days.

Case study 1

Devu Bai lives with her husband and youngest son and daughter-in-law. All members of this household have registered for job ID cards. At present, *Devu Bai*'s son and daughter-in-law have migrated to *Palanpur* working as daily wage labourers. Her husband is too old and cannot engage in physical activity. Therefore, only she will go for employment provided under the new act. She also worked in the food-for-work programme last year. She got employment for around 15 days in a year and had to travel approximately 2-3 km to reach her work site. The reason for such limited period of employment according to her is that the supply of jobs is less than its demand. Whatever work comes to the village is divided in such a way that at least one member from each family gets employed though priority is given to households below the poverty line.

Case study 2

We met the former *Sarpanch* of *Uplakhejra*. He said that roughly 80% of households in this village have registered for the identity cards.

He expressed concern that given the large household size in this district, 100 days of employment is not enough to alleviate poverty. He also said that no government team/NGO have come to assess peoples' needs and the nature of projects that should be undertaken in these villages. Apart from measures to conserve water, small scale industries for women could also be helpful. He also supported the idea of promoting livestock as an industry. Another ex-member of the *panchayat* that we spoke to prioritised the need for construction of roads, water harvesting structures as well as small industries for women.

He also pointed out that though the government wage rate is Rs.73/ per day, workers often receive considerably less than this minimum wage rate. He says that workers shirk and do not complete the task allocated to them. At the time when final measurements are taken, deduction equivalent to the amount of work that the labourer did not complete is made from total wages.

Focus Group Discussion 1

A Focus Group Discussion of 5 women and 8 men was conducted in *Bhamti phalli*. All the participants were between 20-40 years. One of the participants was the *upsarpanch*.

All women have applied for their job cards. But they did not have much information about the scheme except that 100 days of wage work would be given by the government if they registered for the job card. Last year most of these women worked under drought relief/ food-for-work programme. They were given a wage of Rs.50/- per day that was paid in cash and kind (wheat). Most of them informed that they had worked for two weeks (roughly 12 days). No one from the same household got a chance to work for more than 12 days since the demand for work exceeded its supply and it was thought that in order to make the distribution of work equitable every household will have a chance to work for not more than two weeks and no household will get more than one chance. Many of the participants said that they were paid less than what was promised to them. The reason behind this seems to be that the work was not completed as per the measurement given/ stipulated target. Women informed that they were not given any crèche facilities at the sites.

Both men and women said they have no knowledge of the projects to be taken under EGA and have not been involved in micro planning done by the *panchayats*. Nevertheless, the men listed a few activities which they thought would sustain the long term development of the village. Keeping in view the acute water crisis, they prioritized the need for building water harvesting structures. Most of them reported that they have some live stocks- cows, goat, hen and cock. Animal husbandry is difficult because of lack of fodder and water.

All of them including *Aaganvadi* worker showed displeasure at the type of food distributed to the children, they complained that it is neither nutritious nor tasty. This was taken up at the supervisors meeting but nothing happened.

There is a self help group of 14 women in this hamlet. The monthly contribution is Rs.20/-. The group has been formed in the last four years and was initiated by *Janchetna* – a local NGO. Some members have taken loans for illness or repairing of their houses.

Focus Group Discussion 2

A second focus group discussion of five women was conducted in another cluster of *Uplakhejra*. Of these, three have got their cards for EGA made. One of the women said that her card was not made because she is old. However, she seemed capable to work and had participated in the last drought relief work. Another woman, who is a widow, mentioned that she did not know about NREGA and therefore, she has not registered for the job ID. Local NGOs *Janchetna* and *Doora Dashak* are working to provide information about the EGA to villagers. Sources of livelihood here are primarily wage labour, rearing of animals and seasonal agriculture. Even in this cluster people criticized the substandard food given to *aaganvadi* children. This cluster does not have any hand pumps.

II

Nichla Khejra is 35 km from Abu Road and the village is spread across 8 km. It also falls under *Uplakhejra panchayat*. One of the hamlets in this village, *Mathara phalli* has had hardly any government intervention. It still does not have a *pucca* road connecting it to the main hamlet. A *kuccha* road (built in 2003 under the *Akal Rahat* programme) is incomplete. There is no electricity or hand pump in this hamlet. There is only one primary school in *Mathara phalli* with one teacher. The *phalli* has 22-25 wells but only 5 are in working condition. No health centre or veterinary doctor is available. Young kids are not able to attend the *aaganwadi* centre (located on the *kuccha* road leading to *Mathara phalli*) because of difficult terrain and distance.

Case study 1

Pandri Bai stays in *Upli phalli* of *Nichlakheda*. She seems to have little information about NREGP but she has registered for the job ID along with one of her eligible daughter and husband. It was the village schoolteacher who asked them to get themselves registered. He told them that otherwise they would not be able to avail the benefits of NREGP. They own some land that ekes them subsistence output. They also own 3 goats and 2 cows; the milk that they produce is used for self-consumption. They live in a *pucca* house built under the *Indira Awas Yojna*. It seems that one of the reasons this family was selected is that their previous house was burned down because of some internal family disputes.

Case study 2

Jona Ram lives in *Mathara phalli* of village *Nichlakheda* along with his wife and two kids. He grows maize and mustard and also owns few hens/ cocks and goats. Last year he worked on the government food-for-work program; he was paid Rs. 50/- per day. The market wage rate is higher around Rs. 60-70 per day but

travelling costs has to be deducted. *Jona Ram* travelled around 4-5 km last year for wage labour. He has registered for the photo identity card along with his wife.

Jona Ram does not have the *patta* for his fields since the entire area of *Mathara phalli* is claimed by the forest department. The forest department considers the residents of this hamlet to be illegal occupants of forestland and therefore, must be evicted. This is in spite of the fact that they have been staying in this hamlet for around 50 years.

Case study 3

While *Atri Bai* of *Holi phalli* had little idea of the NREGP, her husband was better informed. He said that he and his wife have already registered for identity cards. His parents, however, could not get registered as he was informed that old people were not eligible for identity cards. He came to know about the NREGP through *Gram Panchayat* meeting. He owns some land and few animals and feels that the biggest problem in his hamlet is the lack of water.

Case study 4

Amri Bai of *Nichli phalli* is too old to work. Of her four sons, three are married and living separately and she stays with her youngest son. However, only one of her sons could apply for the identity card. The reason is a common ration card among the four brothers. One of the brothers used it to register himself and his family for job identity card. Now, the other three brothers cannot use the same ration card to register themselves for the NREGA.

Case study 5

Kapura Ram's family registered for the job identity card because they were told to do so by the *Gram Sevak*. In all 7 adult members from this household have registered for the job card. The household seems to be economically better off compared to others in this village. Apart from land and livestock, they also own a *chakki* used to grind wheat to flour and charge 90p per kg for this service. Nevertheless, members of this household also engage in wage labour; last year they participated in drought relief work for which they were paid @ of Rs.50/- per day.

Case study 6

Babu Ram of *Parda phalli* is a former *Ward Panch* as well as a member of a national political party. Along with land and some animals, he owns a *pucca* house. He has registered for the NREGP along with his 3 sons and wife. A married son has a separate ration card so he has applied for a separate photo ID. There is no *aaganwadi* or primary healthcare center in this hamlet, yet for *Babu Ram* the projects that should be given priority under this programme are water conservation projects. He contends that steps to conserve

water of river *Battisa* which flows through the *Bhakad* (hilly) region of this district would help avert frequent droughts.

Focus Group Discussion 1

A FGD was held at *aaganwadi* center which marks the starting point of the *kutchra* road leading to *Mathara phalli*. 8 men and 4 women between the ages of 25- 45 participated in this discussion. All of them had gone earlier in the morning to check if they could find some wage employment in a public work programme that had started in the *panchayat*. But they were unsuccessful as priority was given to persons belonging to the hamlet where the work will be carried on.

Most of the participants have got themselves registered; a few will get it done soon. They seemed to have little knowledge about NREGA. They were informed that without the job card they would lose the opportunity to get any wage work. However, the ward *panch* had good knowledge of NREGA. Apart from the wage rate and 100 days of assured employment, he also knew that the government would have to pay unemployment allowance to any person with a valid ID if s/he is not given employment within 15 days of requesting for wage work and that travel reimbursements must be paid if employment is provided at a distance of more than 5 km.

Most of the participants regularly engage in wage labour and they had worked in the *Akal Rahat* programme carried out last year. Selling animals is a common coping mechanism to earn some cash during difficult drought condition.

This cluster has also two SHGs consisting of 14 members; both of them have been functioning for the past five years. One of the participants had borrowed from this SHG to purchase goats.

Focus Group Discussion 2

Another focus group discussion of two men and two women took place in *Kamra phalli*. One of the woman reported that she has not yet registered for her ID because she was waiting for her son to come back from Abu Road where he had gone for daily wage employment. The second woman has already applied for her photo identity but does not know much about the scheme. She came to know about the act from the *sarpanch*.

Maize and mustard are the main crops produced here. Mustard can be sold in the market at the rate of Rs12 per kg. Also, goats are sold for Rs.1000-1200/-. One of the women worked in the *Akal Rahat* programme last year and was paid Rs. 60/- per day. The other lady's son also worked in this programme and was paid the same wage.

Both women complained of the water crisis in their hamlet and informed that they have to go very far to fetch water. Men did not speak much in this discussion except to corroborate the same information.

III

Mahikheda falls in *Bahadurpura panchayat*. It is spread across 10 km. There are 3 primary schools and 1 middle school in this village. There is also an *aaganwadi*, again children from all the different hamlets of the village are unable to attend it. Since this area falls in the *Bhittrot* (plain) region, a greater variety of crops can be grown such as wheat, *chana*, mustard, fennel seeds, *arundee* (castor plant).

Case study 1

Tapu Bai lives in *Middle School phalli* in village *Mahikheda*. She has 3 daughters and 2 sons; all of whom are married. She stays with her youngest son as is the custom in this part of the world. In terms of economic status, the household seemed to be certainly above the poverty line. Since they own a well, they grow a number of crops which they then sell in the market as mustard, castor (*arundee*) and *saunf* or fennel seeds. In addition, they also own livestock.

Tapu Bai has no idea of the NREGP possibly on account of her old age but she is aware that her youngest son and daughter-in-law have registered for the job ID cards. Her second son along with his wife and son too registered for the ID; though none of them have received it as yet. The second son (*Shankarji*) informed that he and his wife worked under various drought relief work carried out by the government in this village in 2003. They were paid @ Rs. 60/- per day. No crèche facilities were provided for children accompanying women on these work sites.

Case study 2

Kala Ram lives in *Eklimagri* of village *Mahikheda*. In his household, he, his wife and son have got registered for the job ID. He does not know what kind of employment he is going to get under NREGA. They own some land and livestock but they are not enough to sustain his family of 7 members. It is, therefore, not a surprise that he had migrated along with his family to neighbouring Gujarat during the past four years. There he and his family engaged in share cropping and were entitled to 1/4th of the total output. At present, one of his daughters is engaged in wage labour outside the village for Rs.50/- per day and will return home only after 10-15 days.

Case study 3

Lala Bhai had also migrated along with his wife and three children for 3 years so as to escape the drought in his village. He owns some land on which he grows wheat, *arundee* and gram (*chana*); he would sell *arundee* (castor plant) and earn some cash. He also owns some livestock but their yield is not high enough

for marketing purposes. He and his wife have registered for job ID. He came to know about NREGP through word-of-mouth. In his opinion, the drought in the village compels many to migrate. He owns a well and would have liked to deepen it as it would have helped mitigate the adverse impacts of the drought; but he has never put forth such a proposal to the *panchayat*.

Case study 4

Soma Ram of *Mahadev phalli* has also applied for the job ID along with his children in the eligible age group. He attended *gram sabha* meeting where the NREGP was discussed. His wife has not applied for the job card as she holds a government job as an *aaganwadi* worker and therefore, she thinks that she is not eligible to work under the scheme. (However, there is no such provision under the act. As per the operational guidelines, any one is eligible to work in NREGA scheme as long as s/he is residing in the village and willing to undertake physical labour). In addition, they own land (which is irrigated using an electric pump, a rarity in this region) and livestock. But they do also engage in daily wage labour; his daughters worked in the drought relief programs undertaken in the village in 2003.

The family seems to understand the importance of schooling. Both his sons are in school- Class VIII and Class XI respectively. Though not all girls have been sent to school, one of the daughters has passed Senior Secondary and is now teaching in a government school and another has passed Class VIII.

Because the *aaganwadi* worker is illiterate, all records pertaining to it are kept by *Soma Ram*. While they claimed that the *aaganwadi* runs smoothly and that food items are disbursed regularly, a subsequent focus group discussion suggests that this might not be the case.

Focus Group Discussion 1

A focus group discussion was conducted in *Mahadev phalli*. In all five men and four women including the *ex-sarpanch* participated in the discussion. All the participants have applied for their job cards. Two of the men have never gone for daily wage labour, but have nevertheless got their name registered for ID cards. One is appearing for tenth grade exam through open school and another works as a tailor. The *sarpanch* asked them to get themselves registered.

There is no health centre nearby; in case of emergency they have to go to Abu Road. ANM visits this hamlet regularly. The *sarpanch* says that if the ANM stays/belongs to the same village, it would be much more beneficial. The present ANM stays in Abu road and travels everyday to the village. A veterinary doctor is available in *Girwar*, around 5 km from this place.

People participated in the drought relief programme carried out in 2003. Most of them were employed for approximately 12 days. Employment under this programme was distributed in such a manner that at least

one member from every household got a chance to work. Participants informed that wage rate varied between Rs.50-60/-. Some complained that they got less than the expected/ promised wage. Ex- *sarpanch* made it clear that payments are made as per measurement of the work done. On the last day if it is found that work completed is less than the given target, payment is deducted for the amount of work that was not completed. Ex-*sarpanch* opines that people are often not physically able enough to complete stipulated target. It seems that more realistic targets should be set.

Only persons up to 60 years have been registered under the scheme as those who are older than 60 years are eligible for old age pension. Some of the men attended the *gram sabha* meeting where proposals of the work that would be undertaken under this scheme were discussed. Some of these pertain to water harvesting structures such as *anicuts*, small check dams, etc. Other proposals are road construction, hospitals, *patwari* office, a ration shop (presently, the ration shop owner is the *sarpanch*'s son and the shop operates from his house).

Focus Group Discussion 2

Another focus group discussion of five women and two men was conducted in *Tora phalli*. Except for two old women participants, all have registered for employment under the new act. The schoolteacher informed that if they do not register themselves, they would not be able to access the wage work generated under NREGA.

One of the participants belongs to an extended family and 6 members from his family have registered themselves. He is concerned that 100 days of employment will not be enough to sustain such a big family. There are other joint households as well where 6-10 members have registered themselves in the same job card. The real concern is that single households with two eligible members in the ration card will be at advantage vis-à-vis joint families with more members in a single card.

At the same time, it was clear that this participant belonged to a reasonably well-off household. They produce crops as *arundee* (castor plant), wheat, *saunf* (fennel seeds) and mustard. They have a well and electric motor pump. During the busy season, they hire local labour as well for activities such as sorting out *saunf*/ fennel seeds (paid @ of Rs.30/- per day). One of their cousins is an *upsarpanch*.

Last year, many of the male participants went for wage employment (wage rate is Rs.70/- per day) while women stayed at home. Apart from land, all the participants own some livestock. The milk is used for home consumption. The participants complained about the water crisis. Water level is low especially in the summer and they face a lot of problems.

This hamlet is near *Mahadev phalli* where there is an *aganwadi*. The *aganwadi* worker informed us (see case study 4 of village *Mahikheda*) that the centre is functional and attendance varies between 40-60

children. But this group was not happy with the functioning of the centre, they said that children go there but are not given any food items.

In this hamlet two self- help groups were formed; one for men and another for women with twelve members in each group. The groups have been functional for the last five years. Each member contributes Rs.20/- per month. The women self help group took a group loan of around Rs.30,000/-. The amount was distributed among the members and the loan has been used for agricultural purposes.

IV

Rervakalan is in *Kairia panchayat* and falls in *Bhittrot* region. The village is spread across 5 km.

Case study 1

There are 12 members in this joint family in *Parmar phalli*- two brothers and their family, one unmarried brother and their parents. The economic condition of this household seems to be average. They own some land whose output is mostly used for own-consumption and only one cow. The house is *pucca* and among their few possessions is a tape-recorder.

They were informed about the new act by the schoolteacher. One of the brothers has registered for NREGP along with his wife. The wife *Sharda Bai* said that no public work was carried out in this village last year; therefore they were dependent on wage labour in Abu Road that paid them @ of Rs.50/- per day. Usually, men go for wage labour outside the village while women prefer to work inside the village. *Sharda Bai* worked in public works programme that was carried out in this village two years ago but she can no longer work now as she has to look after her young kids.

Case study 2

Pankhu Bai lives *Parmar phalli*. In this household, five members have registered for employment under the new act. This is a poor household. Though they own land, it does not yield much as agriculture is rain-dependent. They do own much livestock either. While *Pankhu Bai* does not engage in wage labour as she has to look after young kids, both her husband and daughter work as agricultural labour. Wage rates vary according to sex of the worker- while men are paid Rs.50/- per day, women earn a lower wage rate of Rs.40/- per day.

Case study 3

Sharda Bai of *Dangiya phalli* is associated with a local NGO *Jan Chetna Sansthan*. As a result of this association she is very well informed about NREGP. She has registered along with her husband for job ID and also informed other members of her hamlet to get their ID made.

She possesses little land on which this year she has cultivated only mustard. The quality of the output is not good as it is rain-fed cultivation and will suffice only for own consumption. She does not have any livestock and lives in a *kutchra* house. Both she and her husband engage in physical labour. Her husband has been unwell for the past 10-11 days and could not undertake any physical work and on the day we met her she was working as an agricultural labour within the village for Rs.50/- per day.

In comparison to other households in this hamlet, it is heartening to note that all children (2 boys and 1 girl) of *Sharda Bai* are enrolled. One of her boys also attended the *Doosra Dashak* camp for adolescents.

Focus Group Discussion 1

A focus group discussion with 7 women and 1 man of age group between 30-45 years was conducted in *Dangia phalli*. Out of the 6 women, 3 did not know about NREGA. But all the women have done their registration except one who was refused by the officials because of her age. She is a widow and roughly around 60 years of age. She does not get any pension. Her grandson and daughter in law are looking after her. They have registered for the job ID cards. Another woman was trying to get herself registered but was refused since she cooks in *Rajiv Gandhi Pathshala* and earns a salary of Rs.500/- per month.

The participants informed us that local NGO (*Doosra Dashak* and *JanChetna Sansthan*) organized a meeting and a campaign on the employment guarantee act. This was organised by the adolescent boys and girls from different villages. The participants have not attended the *gram sabha* meeting hence do not know about the proposals discussed at the meeting.

Most of the participants have marginal land holdings. Crops produced are *arundee* (castor plant), *saunf*, wheat and mustard. Only a few people in the village have livestock such as cows, goats, hen and cocks. There is a shortage of fodder for animals, especially during summer months. Animal traders do not come to this hamlet because of lack of roads and also, since the number of animals found in the hamlet is not large enough to make trading in animals/ animal products profitable.

In the entire hamlet there are 4-5 hand pumps. Like other villages in the area, there is severe shortage of water and even deepening of wells did not yield positive results. During the summer months, when all the wells/hand pumps get dried up, then people go to *Mahadev* temple which has a well, the popular belief is that the well never gets dried up because it is located in the temple. The other version is that this well was deepened five years ago. Last year a tank was built in *Parmar phalli* nearly 2 km away from this hamlet and another was supposed to be built in this hamlet too. But it never materialised.

There is no facility for a doctor but ANM comes regularly for immunising the children. They have not raised their demand for a hospital. A *Rajiv Gandhi Pathshala* is located right in this *phalli* but enrolment particularly of girls is low.

Focus Group Discussion 2

Another focus group was held in *Damor phalli* with 3 women and 2 men. One woman is handicapped and therefore, did not get registered for EGA. Another woman has not got the registration done since her husband was not in the hamlet the day it was done but she did not know much about the scheme either. Only her husband goes for wage employment. He goes to Abu Road and earns a wage of Rs.60-70/-. To save on the transportation costs, he walks to Abu Road. She needs to stay at home to look after her young children. This time though she would go for work provided it is in the village/ somewhere nearby. She does not send her children to the *aaganwadi* since it is far from this hamlet. Mostly maize is produced on the plot of land they own but that is not sufficient to meet the household's yearly consumption.

Both the men had completed their registration but did not know the kind of jobs that will be offered and other details of NREGA. Both have worked as wage labourers in the drought-relief programme. One of them was involved in construction of the anicut in the village and was also the mate (the custodian of the muster roll, the official attendance register of workers employed at the work site). *Sarpanch* gave them instructions to carry out the job and it was stipulated to be completed in two weeks. On the last day, the JEN came and found the work done to be inadequate. He wanted additional 2 feet to be built. Accordingly wages were recalculated based on the extent of work that was not done. Thus, labourers were paid less than the promised wage though additional employment for 3 days was also generated for a fewer number of people. The payment of less than the promised wage rate has emerged as a frequent problem in the discussions that we had with the villagers and seems to be the result of communication gap or lack of proper supervision/close monitoring.

He feels that if water from a nearby dam is diverted to the village, it would help resolve the current water crisis. A *pucca* road is needed for better connectivity. A few wells are there in the village which are not working any more, these need to be recharged. Also, electric lines are required.

V

Jayadra falls in *Jayadra panchayat*. It is at a distance of 30 km from Abu Road and is spread over 10 km. The village falls in *Bhakar* region. This village has 3 primary and 1 middle schools. There is 1 *aaganwadi* in this village. Though there is a *pucca* road connecting this village with Abu Road, connectivity within the village is poor with some of the hamlets or *phallis* being particularly badly affected. The village is not electrified. A sub-centre is being recently built and an ANM is posted in the village. One local NGO is fairly active and there is a women SHG in this village.

Case study 1

The head of this household is a *Shiksha Karmi*, therefore he could not register for the job card but his wife and daughter have registered for the job ID card. He came to know about the new act from the *Gram Sevak* but because he did not attend the *panchayat* meeting, he does not have any idea of the kind of work that will be undertaken. All his children including his daughters are enrolled in school. His eldest daughter, who is in Class VI, went for *akal rahat* work that was undertaken in the village last year. Both men and women were paid the same wage rate @ approximately Rs.60/- per day; with part of the wages being paid in kind and part in cash.

The schoolteacher informed us that almost 100% registration has been done in this village including of those persons whose name has not yet entered the ration card such as a new bride.

Case study 2

Jali Bai is an *Aaganwadi* worker. She lives with her husband and four children. All her children except the oldest one go to school. Her eldest son is working in Jalore district as a craftsman (*moorti banana ka kaam* or making idols) for which he is paid Rs.100/- per day. Her husband also goes for wage labour. Last year he got around 20 days employment under the *akal rahat* programme of the state government. At present, he is working as a share cropper within the village. He is unable to cultivate his own plot of land because of lack of irrigation facilities

The job identity card has three members from this household- *Jali Bai* herself, her husband and the eldest son. She and her husband came to know about NREGA from village level government functionaries as well as from *Gram Sabha* meeting.

Case study 3

Phooli Bai from *Bhoomiya phalli* works as an *aaganwadi sahayika*. Her husband goes for daily wage labour to Abu Road for which he is paid Rs.60/- per day. One of her sons is a skilled craftsman working in Jalore. Five members from this household have registered for the NREGA.

Access to potable water is a real problem in *Bhoomiya phalli*. There are no wells and only one hand pump serves 50-60 households and even that is not working now. One has to travel 2-2.5 km for fetching water. Adding to the problem is the lack of a proper road. Agriculture is totally dependent on rains. Further, the forest department claims the land falling under this hamlet; as a result residents of this *phalli* do not have the *pattas* (a legal document testifying land ownership) to their land.

Case study 4

Bhura Ram (around 55 years) lives with his wife in *Mata phalli* of village *Jayadra*. Neither his wife nor does he have the job ID card. The *panchayat* informed him that only young people can apply for work. At present, he is not engaged in any earning activity; his sons take care of him and his wife. He does not receive any old age pension from the government. His only job is to keep an eye on the plot of land near to his house that is cultivated by his sons. He has divided his plot of land between his two sons. Apart from farming, the sons are also engaged in wage labour. Both of them have also got their identity cards made.

Focus Group Discussion 1

A FGD was held in *Middle School phalli*. 2 men and 3 women participated in the discussion.

Of the 3, 2 women have completed their registration. The third woman works as a cook at the school, therefore she has not got herself registered. Another woman is involved with a local organisation (*Brahma Kumari*) that distributes milk to primary school going children while another one worked last year as a daily labourer. On the whole, women did not display much knowledge about the act.

Both the men have applied for their photo ID and work as wage labourers. One of them along with his daughter worked last year in the drought relief programme. On the whole, they found for around 3 weeks under this programme.

None of the participants had attended the *gram sabha* meeting. Therefore, they had little idea of the proposals discussed in the meeting. In the discussion, they felt that projects as road construction, construction of water harvesting structures as anicuts, *medbandi* should be given priority.

Many persons from this hamlet often migrate with their entire families to other areas in search of wage labour. Farming is mostly subsistence. In addition, people also own livestock though again the animal products are mostly self-consumed.

VI

Meen village is divided into eleven phallis (hamlet). It has 297 households. The village is spread over 10-12 km. It falls under *Meen panchayat* and is in the *Bithrot* region of the block. It is around 35 km from Abu Road and is near the Gujarat border. The village has 5 primary schools – 4 *Rajiv Gandhi Pathshala* and 1 *Rajkiya Prathamik Pathshala*. The village does not have electricity and there is one *aaganwadi* serving the entire village. *Mahua* trees are found in plenty here. Between March-June the trees flower and people are busy collecting *mahua* which are then sold in the market or consumed at home in various forms. There is no health centre. ANM visits regularly and stays in a nearby village. She distributes medicines to the pregnant

ladies. In this hamlet there are men who help in delivering the child. In case of emergency men are called for help in delivering the child.

Focus Group Discussion 1

A focus group discussion of 5 women including the *aaganwadi sahayika* and 5 men including ex-sarpanch of *Meen* village was organized. Both men and women have some knowledge about the NREGA. All of them have registered for the job cards. Some of the men had attended the *gram sabha* meetings, so are well informed. Others said that they do not go for *gram sabha* meeting because are out of the village on wage employment. They came to know about the act through 'word of mouth'. The *sarpanch* has been instrumental in getting people registered.

But there are problems as well. Some of the ration cards have a long list of eligible workers. Many of the households are joint families and a customary practice of men having more than one wife add to the number of members in the household. On the other hand, in one household there is no adult member except a widow and her four small children. Faced with this crisis, the mother has registered herself along with her 12-13 years old daughter.

In another discussion we learnt from a member of *panchayat samiti* that for this village proposals made were building anicuts, *medbandi* and recharging of wells.

The main crops in the village are maize and wheat. Some of the households have their own wells and such households can grow a number of crops. One such household had planted in their small patch of land a number of vegetables as garlic (*lasan*), coriander (*dhania*), egg plant, tomato, chillies and banana. However, very few households have their not own wells.

Mostly people have marginal landholdings. Households have animals like cows, goats, hens and cocks. Whatever quantity of milk is produced is kept for home consumption. Some households are able to produce *ghee* and sell it in the market for Rs.140-160/- per kg depending on whether the *ghee* is from buffalo or cow milk. Goats are sold to the merchants who are usually from Gujarat.

Most men and women worked last year in the *akal rahat* program. In fact, the *sahayika's* son was the mate. Mostly people have worked for 1-2 weeks. Payment, however, remains to be made to some of the labourers. Work was distributed in such a way as to ensure that one member from every household gets a chance to participate in the *akal rahat* program. At present, some persons are working on a nursery plantation of the forest department. Many men in this village go for wage labour in the mines, which are not very far from the village.

Focus Group Discussion 2

A focus group discussion was conducted in *Uplakhetra* hamlet with 6 women and 1 man in the age group 30-55 years. This village is located near the Gujarat border, so most men go there for wage labor. Most of them work in the mines. They are paid Rs.50/- per day, but if they work double shift they are paid Rs.100/-.

The work given by the *panchayats* are mostly done by the women because men go out of the village for work.

Part of the village is located in the forestland. Forest official inform the villagers when they carry out some work. At present, the department is carrying out nursery plantation. Usually, girls go for this kind of work and are paid Rs.70/- per day.

In this hamlet, women seem to have no idea about the EGA but have nevertheless got their names registered. Women and even men do not go the *gram sabha* meetings. They got the information for registration under EGA through word of mouth. Women would work if the activities start in the village or nearby villages.

This hamlet does have hand pumps but none are working any more. The village does not have electricity. There are very few wells working. All the households take turn to supervise the bulls that are being used to draw water from the well. The water is used to take water to the field and to give water to the animals.

Most children do not go to school because they take the animals for grazing that is essential for the livelihood. The milk produced is consumed at home and goats are often sold to the merchant to make some money.

II. Dhar District, Madhya Pradesh

Two *tehsils*- *Dhar* and *Kukshi* were selected for this study; the rationale behind this choice is that we wanted a comparative study of locations; one which is close to district collectorate and other government offices (*Dhar*) and another which is far from the administrative set-up of the government (*Kukshi*). *Kukshi* is at a distance of 80-100 kms from the district headquarter town, *Dhar* and borders *Jhabua* district. We visited 6 villages which are:

- a) *Shikarpura* (*Shikarpura panchayat*)
- b) *Kacchal* (*Kacchal panchayat*)
- c) *Bori* (*Bori panchayat*)
- d) *Parvatpura* (*Parvatpura panchayat*)
- e) *Chikapoti* (*Chikapoti panchayat*)
- f) *Khelli* (*Khelli panchayat*)

The first 4 of these villages are in *Dhar* tehsil and the last 2 in *Kukshi* tehsil.

Tools used for data collection included group discussions in each of these villages, and informal discussions with key government functionaries at the district and block level.

Table 1: Village-wise distribution of FGDs

Name of the village	Block	No. of participants
<i>Shikarpura</i>	<i>Nalccha</i>	2 (F), 18 (M)
<i>Kacchal</i>	<i>Nalccha</i>	4 (F), 5 (M)
<i>Bori</i>	<i>Tirla</i>	6 (F), 4 (M)
<i>Parvatpura</i>	<i>Tirla</i>	2 (F), 1 (M)
<i>Chikapoti</i>	<i>Bagh</i>	3 (F), 5 (M)
<i>Khelli</i>	<i>Kukshi</i>	5 (M)

Focus group discussions

Focus Group Discussion 1

Shikarpura village falls under *Shikarpura panchayat* in *Nalccha* block. It is at a distance of 30-35 km from *Dhar*. The village is divided into 3 hamlets. People in this village belong to both *Bhil* and *Bhilala* community. Main occupation in this village is agriculture. Wheat is one of the crops; soybean and maize are grown during the rainy season. Many (in some cases entire families) migrate out of the village for wage labour. The village is facing a shortage of water which is likely to get worse with the onset of summer. Among the amenities available in the village are *aaganwadi* and primary schools (including one set up under EGS scheme and a private school). Mid-day meal is served in the primary schools and *dalia* in *aaganwadi*. There are no health facilities available though the village is visited by an ANM. Because of a government scheme run through a local NGO, every household in the hamlet where the FGD was held had access to sanitation facilities.

A focus group discussion was conducted in the *Shikarpura* hamlet of this village. There are about 30 households in this hamlet and is inhabited by persons from the *Bhilala* community. There were 18 male and 2 female participants. Among the participants was the female *sarpanch*, however she seemed to have little idea about the functioning of the *panchayat* and all questions pertaining to the implementation of NREGA was answered by her husband. Indeed, the *sarpanch* said that she does not attend *gram sabha* meeting.

The NREGA was discussed in the recent *gram sabha* meeting and the morning of the day we visited this village, photographs of the head of the household along with his wife were taken for NREGA job card. As a consequence, most men knew about 100 days of guaranteed employment albeit vaguely. The husband of the *sarpanch* informed us that instead of issuing job cards on the basis of a household listing done a few years ago, the same list was used as a baseline to identify new households that formed from a single one. While the baseline list had around 70-80 households, in the second listing there were 165 households (nearly double the original list of households). He expected cards to be distributed in the *panchayat* within 2-3 days. Among the proposals that have been put forth under this act are construction of roads, water harvesting structures (such as deepening/ repairing of *talab*) and afforestation.

Some participants worked in a water conservation project carried out in a nearby hamlet in the preceding year. There were around 40-50 persons involved with roughly equal number of men and women and work carried on for around 2½ months. Payment is by cash and when asked as to whether they prefer payment in

cash or kind, the participants opined in favour of cash. The reason is that wheat is disbursed when payment is in kind. However, people in this region prefer maize to wheat, the quality of wheat distributed is often not good and the market price of maize is less than wheat. Interestingly, the participants said (and the husband of the *Sarpanch* confirmed) that no work has been sanctioned by the *panchayat* in the recent past.

Focus group discussion 2

Kacchal village is around 40 km from the district headquarters. It falls under *Nalccha* block and *Kacchal panchayat*. The village is inhabited by *Bhils*. The hamlet we visited seemed quite poor, most of the houses we saw were *kutcha* and fields were lying barren. The major crops grown are gram (*chana*), wheat, sorghum (*jowar*), maize and soybean. Soybean is sold in the market for around Rs 10/- per kg or Rs 100 per quintal. The hamlet that we visited seemed to have little access to basic services.

There were 4 women and 5 men in the focus group discussion held at *Gawaripura* hamlet of *Kacchal* village. One of the male participants was a member of the village *panchayat*.

The participants had little clue about NREGA even though it was less than a week since photographs were taken of persons eligible to work under the act. Only the *panch* who later joined us knew about the employment guarantee act. He informed us that the NREGA was discussed in the *gram sabha* and that construction of water conservation structures were among the proposals put forth by the *panchayat*. The village faces a severe shortage of water and people often have to travel as far as *Nalccha* (roughly 8 km) and bring back water in bullock carts. According to one of the participant, one person from each household is engaged 'full-time' to ensure an adequate provision of water.

None of the participants have met the *sarpanch* of this village, who incidentally is a woman. Further, none of the female participants attend *gram sabha* meetings. Only men attend these meetings and they do not share the discussions of these meetings with the female members back home.

The participants said that most adult members had left the village in search of wage employment. The market wage rate varies a great deal from Rs.50/- to Rs.70/- per day. For skilled work, the wage rate could be Rs.100/- per day. Both men and women go for wage employment. In the past year, some of the participants worked in a food for work programme while others were employed by the forest department in plantation of nursery.

There is an *aaganwadi* in this village but in a different hamlet, so young children from this hamlet are not able to attend it. There is a primary school in this hamlet, but it does not have a building of its own and at present it runs from the *panchayat* building. A new school building is going to be constructed soon. The participants complained that the school has only one teacher who often keeps it closed. Again, there are no health facilities though an ANM visits at regular intervals.

Focus group discussion 3

Bori in *Tirla* block falls under *Bori panchayat*. Most inhabitants in this village are *Bhils*. The village is divided into 2 hamlets. There are 2 primary schools in the village. On the day of our visit, we found one of the schools to be closed. The official reason was that one of the teachers had to attend a block meeting, but it is not clear as to why the other teacher did not take the initiative to open the school.

6 women and 4 men participated in this focus group discussion. Among the discussants was the *sarpanch* herself, but she had little idea of NREGA and though her husband was not around it was clear that it was he who managed the affairs of the *panchayat*. The participants except for the *sarpanch*'s son did not have an idea about NREGA. He said that listing of all household members eligible to participate in the programme has been completed. Among the participants, he was the only one who attended the *gram sabha* meeting, but said that he did not remember much about the discussions held.

Migration for agricultural and non-agricultural labour is a common feature in this village. Some of the villagers have land leased in from the forest department; on which they sow *jowar* and maize during the rainy season. On the other hand, those with irrigation facilities are able to reap a good harvest. At the time of our visit, many such fields were ready with the season's wheat harvest. These households have to employ additional labour during the harvest season. The current wage for such workers is 5 kg of wheat or Rs 50/- per day. In addition, most people in the village are involved in *tendu patta* collection.

Some of the participants worked in a water conservation project carried out last year. Payment was partly in cash and partly in kind. One of the female participants said that she prefers payment in kind because then she does not have to carry wheat from the market and "*paise yun hi urr jate hain*" (cash gets spend easily). *Sarpanch*'s son, however, opined that those who do not have grains prefer payment in kind and those who are better-off prefer cash.

Focus Group Discussion 4

Parvatpura village in *Parvatpur panchayat* and *Tirla* block is a reasonably large village with 5 hamlets. It was until recently part of another *panchayat* and only last year a separate *panchayat* of *Parvatpura* was created comprising of villages *Parvatpura* and *Sitapura*.

2 females and 1 male (also the *sarpanch*) participated in the discussions here. It was difficult to find more persons to join the discussion as many were employed as casual labourers in the construction of a check dam near by. The work has been going on for the past 15 days and the wage rate offered is Rs 50/- per day. Apart from it, many were busy harvesting wheat. Maize and soybean are grown during the rainy season. People migrate sometimes with entire families for wage labour; usually to Indore and often to Gujarat as well. The market wage rate is at Rs 50-60 per day.

There is a secondary school in the village along with an EGS school but all of them function irregularly. The *aaganwadi* was closed on the day of our visit because the centre had run out of *dalia* to serve the children. And the *aaganwadi* worker was busy harvesting wheat.

Villagers have to travel 1½ km to fetch water from a near by river. The village needs more wells and hand pumps, one of the tube wells has been sealed because fluoride content was found to be high.

The women participants were clueless about NREGA. The *sarpanch* informed us that the listing of households for the purpose of NREGA is complete though job cards are yet to be distributed. Roads, wells and check dams are important priorities for the *panchayat*.

Focus Group Discussion 5

Chikapoti of *Bagh* block falls in *Chikapoti panchayat*. The village is at the distance of around 100-130 km from district headquarters. There were 3 female and 5 male participants in the focus group discussion. All the participants were from *Bhilala* community.

The participants had not attended *gram sabha* and did not have any knowledge about NREGA. This is in spite of the fact that job cards (without the photographs) had already been distributed to all the households in the village. The *sarpanch* of this village is a woman, but she stays in a nearby town where her husband is posted. The affairs of the *panchayat* are run by a third person.

Like all other villages in this region, this also faces an acute water shortage. Agriculture is mostly rain-fed; maize, *jowar* and *bajra* are the main crops. As a result, many migrate out for wage labour. One of the participants had just returned from neighbouring Gujarat where he was working along with his adolescent daughter as a wage labour for Rs 100/- per day for a month. Indeed, being out on wage labour is one of the reasons as to why many participants could not attend the *gram sabha*.

There are 4 schools in the village (3 up till the primary level and 1 till the upper primary level). Mid-day meal is served in the school. Many of the participants in the FGD, even though they had attended school, were barely literate. There are 2 *aanganwadis* in this village where children are served *daliya*; but not all the kids in the village are able to attend it as it is spread over 4 distant hamlets. There are no health or veterinary services available and people have to go far to avail these services. The participants informed that the ANM visits regularly. There are 2 SHGs in the village which has been formed by SEWA in the last 4-6 months but not all the members are active.

Focus Group Discussion 6

Khelli village falls under the *panchayat* of the same name and is in *Kukshi* block. There are 6 hamlets in this village.

The FGD was in *Gawalpura* hamlet which has about 10 households. There were 5 male and no female participants. Here too people did not have much idea about the NREGP. None of them had attended the *gram sabha* meeting; the reason being that the meeting takes place in a different hamlet that is very far. They were not even sure if the household listing has been carried out. Subsequent discussions with the *sarpanch* (see below) did reveal that a household listing has already been done and job cards are to be distributed soon.

The major crops here are *jowar*, maize, cotton, *bajra* and soybean. Cotton gets sold in the market at the price of Rs 20/- kg. Again, villagers complained of water scarcity and people have to go far to fetch water. In contrast to the other FGD, participants here said that they usually do not migrate out of the village for wage employment. They undertake daily labour in nearby villages and the other option that they resort to is borrowing. Usually they borrow during the rainy season; when they sow their rain-fed crops and use the harvest to repay the loan. The interest rate is 5% per month and lower at 3% per month with mortgages.

Among the amenities available, there are 5 primary schools, all of which serve MDM. There is one *aaganwadi* centre; but it is not functioning properly. There is little in terms of health services.

A meeting with the *sarpanch* (not part of the FGD) revealed that household listing had already been completed in the village and job cards would be distributed soon. But even people from the same hamlet as the *sarpanch* were ignorant about the employment guarantee act. On his part, even though a five- year proposal has been prepared (includes projects as construction of roads and construction/maintenance of water conservation structures), the *sarpanch* did not display much interest in informing the villagers about the need to fill up the appropriate form requesting for employment once the card is distributed.

A group of women in a dry, rocky landscape are carrying large metal bowls on their heads. They are wearing colorful traditional clothing, including blue and purple headscarves and aprons. The women are smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a dry, rocky hillside.

स्वागतम्

दूसरा दशक परियोजना अबूरोड, सिरौही (राज.)

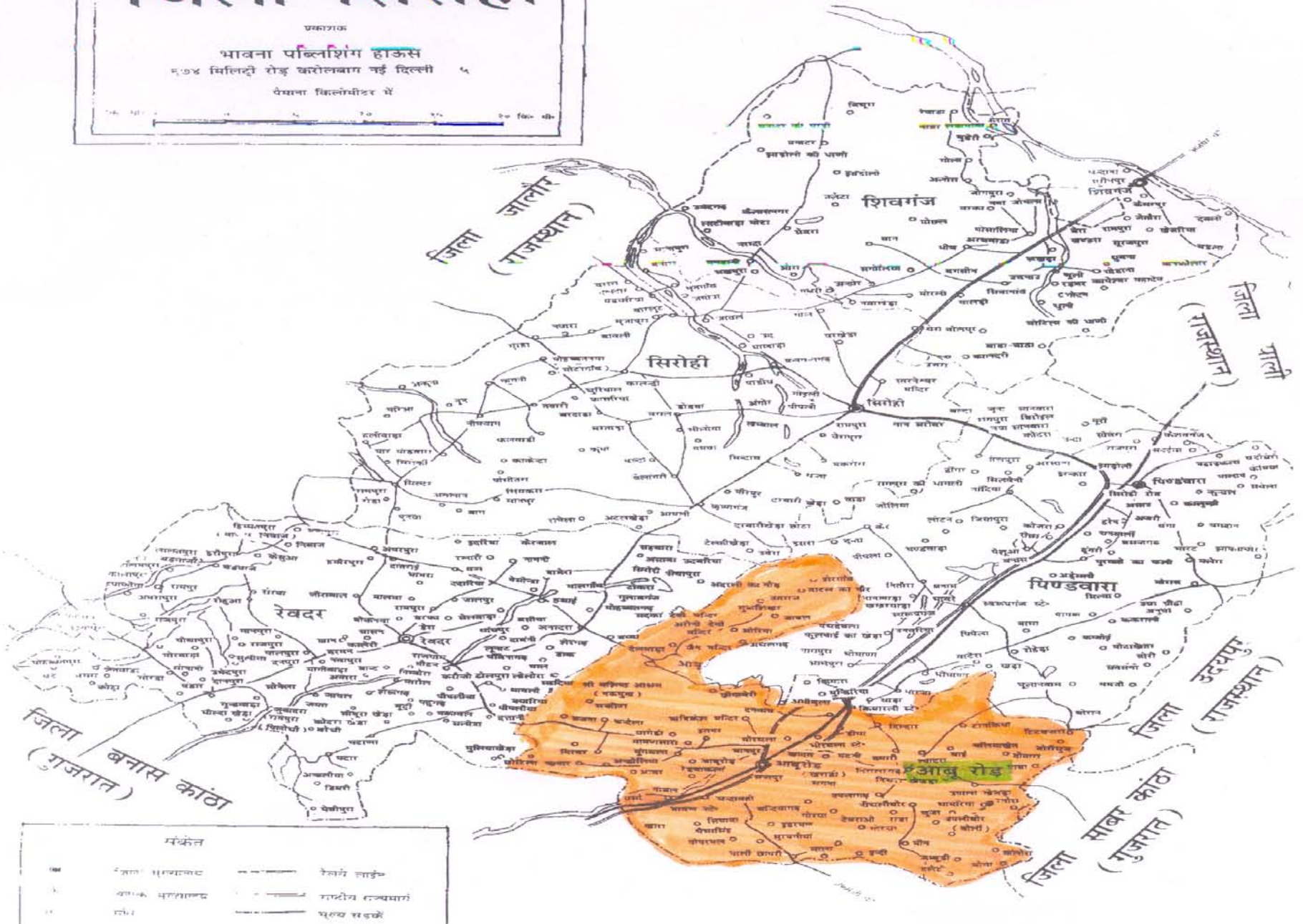
जिला सिरोही

प्रकाशित

भावना पब्लिशिंग हाऊस

६.७४ मिलिट्री रोड करोलबाग नई दिल्ली

વૈષાખા કિલોમીટર મેં



सामान्य जानकारी

	क्षेत्रफल हैक्.	जनसंख्या xzkeh.k	जनजाति	कुल गाँव	कुल ग्राम पंचायत
आबूरोड	88404	114819	67.90 प्रतिशत	78	25
सिरोही	518000	700014	27-13 प्रतिशत	446	151

	कृषि योग्य भूमि	रिक्त भूमि	वनक्षेत्र	ी.पी.एलब
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➤ आबूरोड क्षेत्र की आर्थिक स्थिति



क्षेत्र

19 3 2005



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घरों की बनावट





सूखी वत्रिया (बत्तीसा) नदी

19 3 2005

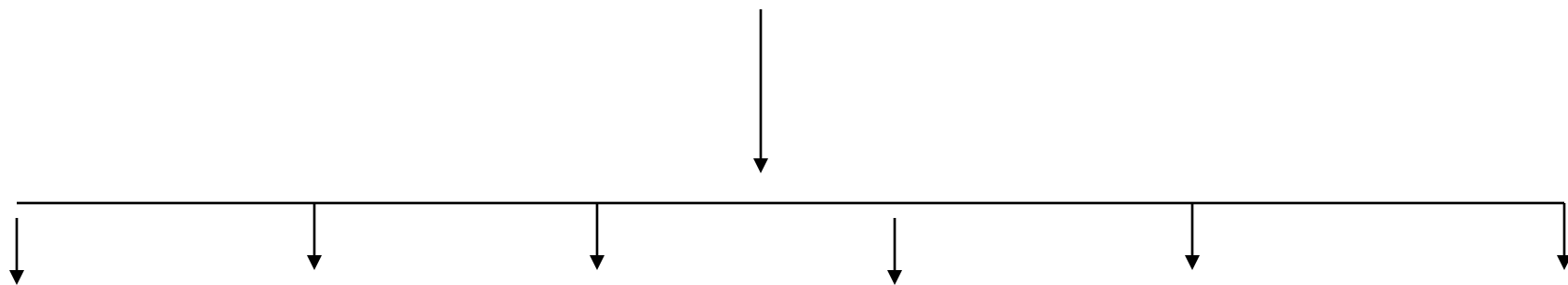
जॉब कार्ड

कुल परिवार	जॉब कार्ड बन	जॉबकार्ड जनहीं बने
21150	20939	211
100%	99%	1 %

रोजगार मिला मई 06 तक

कुल परिवार	बाकी
11158	9781
52.75 %	46.24 %

मई 06 तक कुल स्वीकृत कार्य 234
वर्तमान में कार्य चल रहे हैं — 209



नाडी	ग्रेवल सडक	पूर्ण कार्य	निरस्त	बन्द	षुरु नही
67	92	23	4	17	6

दैनिक मजदूरी

34 रूपये 24 से	35 से 45 रूपये	46 से 70 रूपये
25 : लगभग	60 : लगभग	15 : लगभग

- केवल एक गाँव में प्रतिदिन 73 रूपये मजदूरी मिली

5 सौ दिन मजदूरी के 3000 से 3500 रूपये ही मिले ।

5 माप / नपाई समय पर नहीं हो पा रही है ।

सुविधाओं की स्थिति

- § छाया
- § स्वास्थ्य किट
- § बालवाडी
- पीने का पानी
- भुगतान समय पर नहीं





न छाया ना बालवाडी

कम मजदूरी काम अधिक



uikbZ dk nLrwj

काम पर 75 से 80 प्रतिषत महिलाएं क्यों?



यह रोड दूसरी बार बन रहा है।



नपाई यूं होती है



इसलिए मजदूरी कम मिलती है

कुछ सुझाव

- Perspective Plan जिला एवं ब्लॉक स्तर के बनाये जायें
- जंगलात संबंधि कार्य
- टास्क को कम करें
- गाँव का पानी गाँव में खेत का पानी खेत में
- देखभाल समितियों का गठन किया जाना चाहिए
- EGA की मूल भावना को प्रषिक्षण एवं अन्य गतिविधियों के द्वारा ग्रामीणों तथा प्रषासन में प्रचारित किया जावे
- आधा अनाज एवं आधा पैसा की व्यवस्था की जाये



Thanks

NREGA & Women: Findings from Rajasthan

Institute of Social Studies Trust

5th June, 2006

Sirohi, Rajasthan



Methodology

Location:

Abu Road Block, Sirohi district

Village *Mahikheda* (non-hilly
area)

Village *Nichlagarh* (hilly area)

Tools:

Household questionnaire (survey of 115
households)

Focus group discussions

Case studies

Interviews

Key findings I

- Landless households: 5% of the sample households
- Ownership of animals: 8% do not own any livestock.
- Illiteracy level: 47% of men, 82% of women in the entire sample. In 7-20 years age group, 28% of males and 67% of females were illiterate.

Key findings II

Size and Dependency ratio

- Eligible members: 50% of households with 1-2 adult members.

46% with 3-4 members

Average eligible members- 2.9

- Over 50% of sample population below 18 years.

Key findings III

Employment

44% men reported wage work for 30 days

- 46% reported working beyond 30 days and less than 6 months.
- Only 10% reported for more than 6 months.

- 73% women reported wage work for 30 days
- 27% reported working beyond 30 days and less than 6 months.
- None reported working for more than 6 months

Key findings IV

- 31% males and 23% females were engaged in more than one earning activity (not simultaneously but with some time gap).
- 10% men and 4.5% women reported migrating out of the village.

Experiences with past employment programs

- 37% reported corruption-
non-payment of stipulated minimum wages, manipulation in wage distribution, poor quality of construction materials, false muster rolls.

NREGA I

- Sources of information: Over 50% came to know through “word of mouth”.
- Preferred mode of payment: 86% prefer payment to be part in cash, part in food.
- Affiliation to local groups: 23% members of SHGs or *Mahila mandals*

NREGA II

- 28.4% of households reported one adult member from the household has already got work under NREGA.
- 77.4% favor water conservation projects, 7.8% nursery raising and plantation.

Emerging issues

- Lack of awareness about details of NREGA
- Low wages: need for clarity on piece or time rate.
- Choice of projects to be undertaken.
- Lack of women's participation in decision making.
- Lack of facilities as crèche, medical aid and shed at the work site.

NREGA & Women: Findings from Karnataka

Institute of Social Studies Trust

5th June, 2006

Gulbarga, Karnataka



Methodology

Location: Gulbarga district

Villages *Farhatabad, Ferozabad, Nadisinoora,
Thadathaganoora, Saradigi B*

Sample: 250 households

Tools: Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used.

Household questionnaires and workshops.

Key findings I

- Landless households: 53% of the sample households
- Ownership of animals: Over 70% do not own any livestock.
- Illiteracy level: 45% of men, 68% of women in the entire sample.

Key findings II

Size and Dependency ratio

- Eligible members: 47% of households with 1-2 adult members.

35% with 3-4 members.

Average eligible members-

3.07

Key findings III

Employment

- 26.8% men reported wage work beyond 30 days and less than 6 months.
- 73.2 % men reported for more than 6 months.
- 28.0% women reported working beyond 30 days and less than 6 months.
- 72.0% women reported working for more than 6 months

Key findings IV

- 97.8% men and 98.5% women were engaged in single income earning activity throughout the year.
- 2.2% males and 1.5% females were engaged in more than one earning activity (not simultaneously but with some time gap).
- 11.2% men and 5.0% women reported migrating out of the village.

Experiences with past employment programs

- None reported corruption-

NREGA I

- Sources of information: 100% came to know from the *Sarpanch*.
- Preferred mode of payment: 90% preferred cash payment.
- Affiliation to local groups: 29% members of SHGs.

NREGA II

- None of households reported that they are working under NREGA.
- 41.3% of the respondents favor road construction projects, 42.7% nursery raising, horticulture and farm land work.

Emerging issues

- Method of payment- Whether to individual or through the bank.

NREGA & Women: Findings from Madhya Pradesh

Institute of Social Studies Trust

5th June, 2006

Dhar, Madhya Pradesh



Methodology

Location: Dhar district

Villages *Shikarpura, Lobhanpura*

Villages *Satipura, Parvatpura*

Sample: 115 households

Tools: Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used.

Household questionnaires, focus group discussions, case studies

Key findings I

- Landless households: 12% of the sample households
- Ownership of animals: 41% do not own any livestock.
- Illiteracy level: 36% of men, 61% of women in the entire sample. In 7-20 years age group, 19% of males and 43% of females were illiterate.

Key findings II

Size and Dependency ratio

- Eligible members: 63% of households with 1-2 adult members.
29% with 3-4 members.
Average eligible members- 2.8
- Over 47% of sample population below 18 years.

Key findings III

Employment

33.7% men reported wage work for 30 days

- 56.9% reported wage work beyond 30 days and less than 6 months.
- 9.3% reported for more than 6 months.
- 30.9% women reported wage work for 30 days
- 59.0% reported working beyond 30 days and less than 6 months.
- 9.8% reported working for more than 6 months

Key findings IV

- 77.9% males and 81.2% females were engaged in more than one earning activity (not simultaneously but with some time gap).
- 23.2% men and 19.9% women reported migrating out of the village.

Experiences with past employment programs

- 34.8% reported corruption-
non-payment of stipulated minimum wages, manipulation in wage distribution, poor quality of construction materials, false muster rolls.

NREGA I

- Sources of information: Over 30% came to know through “word of mouth”.
- Preferred mode of payment: 82% prefer payment to be part in cash, part in food.
- Affiliation to local groups: 18% members of SHGs and 77% were members of SEWA.

NREGA II

- None of households reported that they have started working under NREGA.
- More than 60% of the respondents favor water conservation projects, 1.7% nursery raising and plantation.

Emerging issues

- Lack of awareness about NREGA.
- Lack of women's participation in decision making (despite EWRs).

NREGA & Women: Findings from Orissa

Institute of Social Studies Trust

5th June, 2006

Sundargarh, Orissa



Methodology

Location: Sundergarh district

Villages *Chamunda, Jhantalburh,*
Raidihi, Lakhopara, Tudalaga

Sample: 250 households

Tools: Both quantitative and qualitative methods
were used.

Household questionnaires and
workshops.

Key findings I

- Landless households: 12% of the sample households
- Ownership of animals: 13% do not own any livestock.
- Illiteracy level: 21% of men, 52% of women in the entire sample.

Key findings II

Size and Dependency ratio

- Eligible members: 39% of households with 1-2 adult members.
43% with 3-4 members.
Average eligible members- 3.2

Key findings III

Employment

- 4.4% reported wage work beyond 30 days and less than 6 months.
- 95.6% reported for more than 6 months.
- 20.2% reported working beyond 30 days and less than 6 months.
- 79.8% reported working for more than 6 months

Key findings IV

- 37.0% men and 46.0% women were engaged in single income earning activity throughout the year.
- 63.0% males and 54.0% females were engaged in more than one earning activity (not simultaneously but with some time gap).
- 21.4% men and 4.6% women reported migrating out of the village.

Experiences with past employment programs

- 70.3% reported corruption-
wages not paid on time, long hours of
work for poor wages, poor quality of
work, low wages, non-payment of
wages

NREGA I

- Sources of information: 80% came to know from “others”.
- Preferred mode of payment: 79% preferred payment part in cash and part in food.
- Affiliation to local groups: 62% members of SHGs.

NREGA II

- None of households reported that they are working under NREGA.
- 39.4% of the respondents favor road construction projects, 36.3% digging and cleaning ponds, wells or tanks.

Emerging issues

- Lack of awareness.
- Lack of women's participation in decision making.

NREGA & Women: Findings from Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Orissa



Institute of Social Studies Trust
5th June, 2006

Sirohi, Rajasthan



Methodology

Location:

Abu Road Block, Sirohi district

Village *Mahikheda* (non-hilly
area)

Village *Nichlagarh* (hilly area)

Tools:

Household questionnaire (survey of 115
households)

Focus group discussions

Case studies

Interviews

Key findings I

- Landless households: 5% of the sample households
- Ownership of animals: 8% do not own any livestock.
- Illiteracy level: 47% of men, 82% of women in the entire sample. In 7-20 years age group, 28% of males and 67% of females were illiterate.

Key findings II

Size and Dependency ratio

- Eligible members: 50% of households with 1-2 adult members.

46% with 3-4

members

Average eligible members- 2.9

- Over 50% of sample population below 18 years.

Key findings III

Employment

44% men reported wage work for 30 days

- ▣ 46% reported working beyond 30 days and less than 6 months.
- ▣ Only 10% reported for more than 6 months.

▣ 73% women reported wage work for 30 days

- ▣ 27% reported working beyond 30 days and less than 6 months.
- ▣ None reported working for more than 6 months

Key findings IV

- 31% males and 23% females were engaged in more than one earning activity (not simultaneously but with some time gap).
- 10% men and 4.5% women reported migrating out of the village.

Experiences with past employment programs

- 37% reported corruption-
non-payment of stipulated minimum
wages, manipulation in wage
distribution, poor quality of construction
materials, false muster rolls.

NREGA I

- Sources of information: Over 50% came to know through “word of mouth”.
- Preferred mode of payment: 86% prefer payment to be part in cash, part in food.
- Affiliation to local groups: 23% members of SHGs or *Mahila mandals*

NREGA II

- ▣ 28.4% of households reported one adult member from the household has already got work under NREGA.
- ▣ 77.4% favor water conservation projects, 7.8% nursery raising and plantation.

Emerging issues

- ❑ Lack of awareness about details of NREGA
- ❑ Low wages: need for clarity on piece or time rate.
- ❑ Choice of projects to be undertaken.
- ❑ Lack of women's participation in decision making.
- ❑ Lack of facilities as crèche, medical aid and shed at the work site.

Dhar, Madhya Pradesh



Methodology

Location: Dhar district

Villages *Shikarpura, Lobhanpura*

Villages *Satipura, Parvatpura*

Sample: 115 households

Tools: Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used.

Household questionnaires, focus group discussions, case studies

Key findings I

- Landless households: 12% of the sample households
- Ownership of animals: 41% do not own any livestock.
- Illiteracy level: 36% of men, 61% of women in the entire sample. In 7-20 years age group, 19% of males and 43% of females were illiterate.

Key findings II

Size and Dependency ratio

- Eligible members: 63% of households with 1-2 adult members.
29% with 3-4 members.
Average eligible members- 2.8
- Over 47% of sample population below 18 years.

Key findings III

Employment

33.7% men reported wage work for 30 days

- ▣ 56.9% reported wage work beyond 30 days and less than 6 months.

- ▣ 9.3% reported for more than 6 months.

- ▣ 30.9% women reported wage work for 30 days

- ▣ 59.0% reported working beyond 30 days and less than 6 months.

- ▣ 9.8% reported working for more than 6 months

Key findings IV

- ▣ 77.9% males and 81.2% females were engaged in more than one earning activity (not simultaneously but with some time gap).
- ▣ 23.2% men and 19.9% women reported migrating out of the village.

Experiences with past employment programs

- 34.8% reported corruption-
non-payment of stipulated minimum
wages, manipulation in wage
distribution, poor quality of construction
materials, false muster rolls.

NREGA I

- Sources of information: Over 30% came to know through “word of mouth”.
- Preferred mode of payment: 82% prefer payment to be part in cash, part in food.
- Affiliation to local groups: 18% members of SHGs and 77% were members of SEWA.

NREGA II

- ❑ None of households reported that they have started working under NREGA.
- ❑ More than 60% of the respondents favor water conservation projects, 1.7% nursery raising and plantation.

Emerging issues

- ❑ Lack of awareness about NREGA.
- ❑ Lack of women's participation in decision making (despite EWRs).

Gulbarga, Karnataka



Methodology

Location: Gulbarga district

Villages *Farhatabad, Ferozabad, Nadisinoora, Thadathaganoora, Saradigi B*

Sample: 250 households

Tools: Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used.

Household questionnaires and workshops.

Key findings I

- Landless households: 53% of the sample households
- Ownership of animals: Over 70% do not own any livestock.
- Illiteracy level: 45% of men, 68% of women in the entire sample.

Key findings II

Size and Dependency ratio

- ▣ Eligible members: 47% of households with 1-2 adult members.
35% with 3-4 members.
Average eligible members- 3.07

Key findings III

Employment

- ▣ 26.8% reported wage work beyond 30 days and less than 6 months.
- ▣ 73.2 % reported for more than 6 months.
- ▣ 28.0% reported working beyond 30 days and less than 6 months.
- ▣ 72.0% reported working for more than 6 months

Key findings IV

- ▣ 97.8% men and 98.5% women were engaged in single income earning activity throughout the year.
- ▣ 2.2% males and 1.5% females were engaged in more than one earning activity (not simultaneously but with some time gap).
- ▣ 11.2% men and 5.0% women reported migrating out of the village.

Experiences with past employment programs

- None reported corruption-

NREGA I

- ▣ Sources of information: 100% came to know from the *Sarpanch*.
- ▣ Preferred mode of payment: 90% preferred cash payment.
- ▣ Affiliation to local groups: 29% members of SHGs.

NREGA II

- ❑ None of households reported that they are working under NREGA.
- ❑ 41.3% of the respondents favor road construction projects, 42.7% nursery raising, horticulture and farm land work.

Emerging issues

- ❑ Method of payment- Whether to individual or through the bank.

Sundargarh, Orissa



Methodology

Location: Sundergarh district

Villages *Chamunda, Jhantalburh,*
Raidihi, Lakhopara, Tudalaga

Sample: 250 households

Tools: Both quantitative and qualitative methods
were used.

Household questionnaires and workshops.

Key findings I

- Landless households: 12% of the sample households
- Ownership of animals: 13% do not own any livestock.
- Illiteracy level: 21% of men, 52% of women in the entire sample.

Key findings II

Size and Dependency ratio

- ▣ Eligible members: 39% of households with 1-2 adult members.
43% with 3-4 members.
Average eligible members- 3.2

Key findings III

Employment

- ▣ 4.4% reported wage work beyond 30 days and less than 6 months.
- ▣ 95.6% reported for more than 6 months.
- ▣ 20.2% reported working beyond 30 days and less than 6 months.
- ▣ 79.8% reported working for more than 6 months

Key findings IV

- ❑ 37.0% men and 46.0% women were engaged in single income earning activity throughout the year.
- ❑ 63.0% males and 54.0% females were engaged in more than one earning activity (not simultaneously but with some time gap).
- ❑ 21.4% men and 4.6% women reported migrating out of the village.

Experiences with past employment programs

- 70.3% reported corruption-
wages not paid on time, long hours of
work for poor wages, poor quality of
work, low wages, non-payment of
wages

NREGA I

- ▣ Sources of information: 80% came to know from “others”.
- ▣ Preferred mode of payment: 79% preferred payment part in cash and part in food.
- ▣ Affiliation to local groups: 62% members of SHGs.

NREGA II

- ❑ None of households reported that they are working under NREGA.
- ❑ 39.4% of the respondents favor road construction projects, 36.3% digging and cleaning ponds, wells or tanks.

Emerging issues

- ❑ Lack of awareness.
- ❑ Lack of women's participation in decision making.

Women and the NREGS



A study in Sundergarh District,
Orissa



A collaborative exercise between

- ILO
- Institute of Social Studies Trust
- Team for Human Resource Education and Action for Development (THREAD), Jatni, Orissa

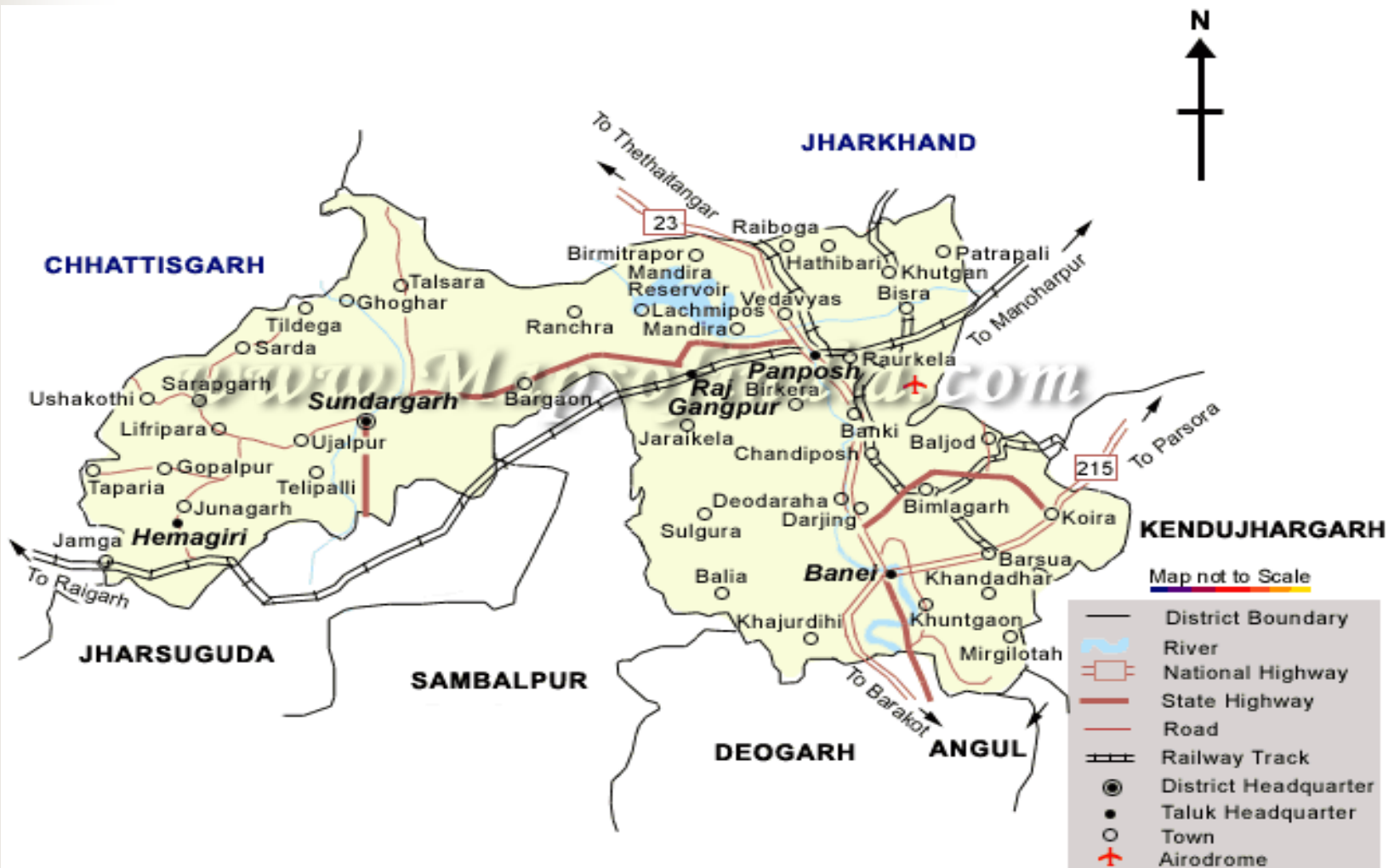


Process

- Translation of questionnaire
- Field survey in five villages
- Coding and tabulation of data
- Focus group discussion with potential beneficiaries
- Interaction with district officials

Location of Study - Sundergarh







Geographical features

- Mixture of open country and hilly terrain
- Valleys drained by the Ib and the Brahmani rivers
- District slopes from north to south causing rapid water runoff. Consequently
 - Soil erosion
 - Water scarcity



Background Data

- 17 administrative blocks
- Population – 18,29,412
- Sex ratio – 957 (State average: 972)
- Almost sixty percent of the population consists of Scheduled Castes and Tribes
- 67 per cent of rural women are marginal workers



Villages selected for study

- **Raidihi** (Total population: 876; Percentage of ST population: 80)
- **Lakhopara** (Total population: 628; Percentage of ST population: 85)
- **Chamunda** (Total population: 999; Percentage of ST population: 78)
- **Jhantalburh** (Total population: 536; Percentage of ST population: 95)
- **Tudalaga** (Total population: 862; Percentage of ST population: 64)



Sample largely consisted of tribal women

- Main tribes represented in sample: Kisan tribe, Munda tribe, smaller proportions of Bhuiyans, Gondas, Gaudas and Kharias
- Literacy rate among tribal women in Badgaon block – 23%
- In households surveyed, men with nil education - 92, women – 228 (two and a half times more)



Socio-economic information

- Only 12 per cent of the sample owned no land
- However, heavily dependent on rainwater for irrigation
- Only 13 per cent of the sample owned no livestock
- Over 80 per cent lived in extended families
(=> NREGS incomes will have to be stretched to provide for larger families)



Membership in collectives

- A large number of the women (varying from 44 to 90 per cent) were members of collectives
- Membership in SHGs, other women's groups (samajas), village committees and forest protection committees
- Implications for NREGS: There may be women's groups with the potential
 - to undertake and execute work from the gram panchayat,
 - To help with monitoring and evaluation



In 250 households surveyed...

- Total population eligible for employment – 812
- Number of women – 407
- Number of men – 405
- => Women could constitute up to 50 per cent of the beneficiaries under the scheme



Women form a significant part of the eligible workforce

- In over 50% of the households, equal number of eligible women and men
- In 22.4% of the households, more eligible women than men
- Women typically found employment for 1-7 months, and men for 5-12 months
- Most needed to work at multiple jobs to survive
- Men find it easier to find work than women
- Significant wage disparity
- However, migration fairly low, short in duration (15 days to 12 months, and to local towns)



However,

- No. of male headed households – 93%
- No. of female headed households – 7%

- Questions:
 - What does this imply for women's participation in the NREGS?
 - How will government administration of the programme take this into account?



Among the women surveyed

- 75 per cent did not participate in the Gram Sabhas which discussed the NREGS
- Information about the NREGS came primarily through word of mouth
- So far, in most panchayats in Badgaon block, more men than women have registered



Payment preferences

- Almost 80 per cent wanted payment partly in cash, and partly in kind
- If work was available for both husband and wife, many were willing to travel over 5 km for work under the scheme



Nature of work preferred

- Women were most keen for water security related schemes to be taken up on a priority basis



Expectations and apprehensions

- Overall positive opinion and optimistic expectations of the scheme
- But:
 - High degree of awareness about corruption in other employment schemes undertaken by the government

Women and the NREGA



Institute of Social Studies Trust

June 5, 2006

Objective of study

- How can the NREGP be designed so as to allow women to participate in a productive manner and be empowered by this participation?

- Productive participation:
 - Participation itself, i.e. equal wages, equal awareness of men and women
 - Conditions of work - child care, water and toilet facilities, suitable timings
 - Enhance skills
 - Corruption free implementation
 - Participation in planning, projects that address women's needs

Study locations and project partners

- ▣ Abu Road, Sirohi, Rajasthan with Doosra Dashak
- ▣ Dhar, Madhya Pradesh, with SEWA
- ▣ Gulbarga, Karnataka with local women's groups
- ▣ Sundergarh, Orissa, THREAD

Methodology

- ▣ Background: Census, other secondary sources
- ▣ Discussions with district officials in charge of implementing the Act; sharing findings of study
- ▣ Discussions/ workshops with villagers; sharing of information on the operational guidelines
- ▣ Group discussions and interviews in the selected villages
- ▣ Household survey

Methodology

- ❑ Common list of issues/ questions and survey questions
- ❑ However differences in mix of methods used and size of sample for the survey

Key findings

- ❑ In the sample studied, eligible men and women roughly equal
- ❑ In Rajasthan 70-80 % of workers on EGA works are women
- ❑ Likely that men are working outside village
- ❑ What implications?
 - work burdens
 - Child care
 - Care of elderly
 - Livestock
 - Fetching water

Recommendation: crèche

flexibility of timings

Works (water, local development)

Payment

- ❑ Wages Rs 38-40 per day as against minimum wage of Rs 73 in Rajasthan
 - basis of payment not clear to workers; schedule of rates needs revision, wide publicity.
- ❑ Majority of sample (Rajasthan, MP, Orissa) expressed preference for payment partly in cash and partly in food.
- ❑ Payment through bank accounts in the name of the head of household as proposed in Karnataka (80% heads in sample male) may mean that women have no direct access to their earnings.

Works

- ❑ Road works (Sirohi) vs water conservation/ harvesting structures
 - Need to ensure quick approval and technical support
- ❑ Enhancing women's capacity for planning
 - Mobilisation, funds, information, technical support
- ❑ Panchayats – Gulbarga – much potential
- ❑ Elsewhere other women's groups/ trade unions

Literacy/ skills

- High illiteracy among adult women + large proportion of children out of school.
 - Methods of verbal communication need to be emphasized
- Approx 50 % population < 18: children out of school implies illiterate future work force
 - Can EGA address this directly? Convergence across programmes?

Key actions

- ❑ Information – verbally
- ❑ Mobilisation of women
- ❑ Child care
- ❑ Payment must reach women
- ❑ Food + cash
- ❑ Clarity re schedule of rates
- ❑ Simultaneous effort re work, literacy...

EGA, local development, migration and gender

- ❑ Distress migration exists
- ❑ In the short run women's migration may slow down more than men's
- ❑ Implications for women's 'triple burden': work, household maintenance and child care, will depend on the conditions at work
- ❑ Longer run impact on migration will depend on what pattern of development is stimulated through the EGA works

Proposed to track progress at a few sites:

- ❑ Flag observations relating to technical aspects
 - Wages paid
 - Equal payment to men and women
 - Conditions on the work site – crèche, first aid facilities, shade, drinking water, etc
 - Women receiving their wages themselves
 - Timings

and so on and bring them to the notice of officials and others who are directly responsible for implementation.

Strategic goals

- Building capacity for mobilisation and collective action
 - discussions and workshops in partnership with local organizations

Analysis of migration related impact of the EGA

- Document the nature of migration as it exists at present (who migrates, to which places, for how long, on what terms, individually or in groups, etc);
- What is the observed immediate impact of EGA works on migration (women, men, families)
- What is impact after a few months:
 - if successful in reducing/ stopping migration, what are the factors/ process enabling this (with special attention to the role that community organizations might have played)
 - if not successful in stopping distress migration, what are the likely reasons