

Planning and Implementation of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in Jammu and Kashmir

A Process Study

S N Alam

K Hanumantha Rao

G M Dar

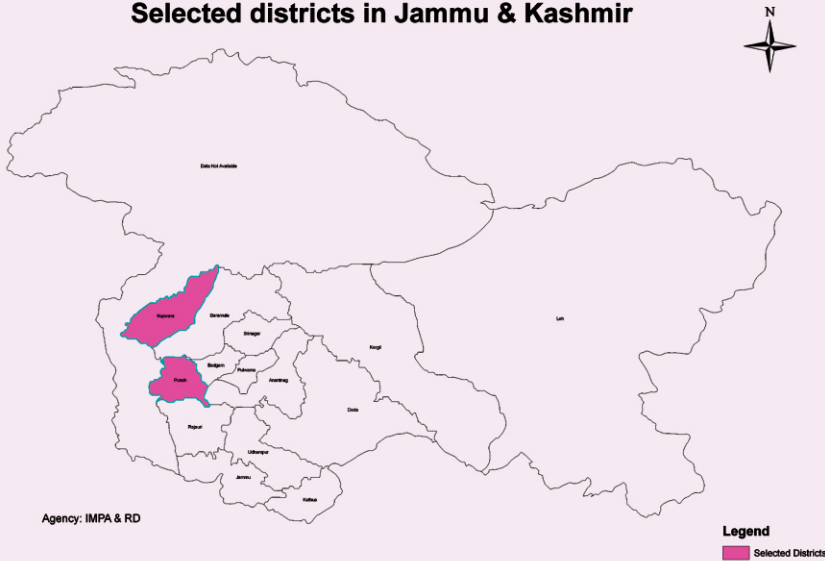
P Durgaprasad

Reva Sharma

P Sivaram



Selected districts in Jammu & Kashmir



National Institute of Rural Development
Hyderabad

&
Jammu & Kashmir Institute of Management,
Public Administration and Rural Development
Srinagar/ Regional Centre, Jammu

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Monograph Series - 6



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**S N Alam
G M Dar
Reva Sharma**

**K Hanumantha Rao
P Durgaprasad
P Sivaram**

**National institute of Rural Development, Hyderabad
&
J&K Institute of Management, Public Administration and
Rural Development, Srinagar/Regional Centre, Jammu**

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Preface

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), presently known as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, is an unprecedented intervention by the Government in reforming and reenergising the (rural) labour market both by way of correcting the prevailing anomalies and in providing livelihood security to millions of rural poor. Most of the rural poor are largely dependent on the prospects of agriculture sector which is facing the problems of productivity in absolute and relative terms. The promised 100 days of guaranteed wage employment per household per annum at the stipulated minimum wages would not only reduce the rampant under and unemployment in rural areas, but also impact the stagnant wage structure for the rural unskilled workers.

The rights based NREGS emphasises on community participation in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation (Social Audit) of the programme. It also aims at enabling the local bodies to move towards good governance through the transparency and accountability mechanisms. Elaborate institutional arrangements have to be made to realise not only the objectives of the NREGA but also to make the formal (PRIs) and informal institutions vibrant. Thus, the efficacy of the institutional performance and active participation of the community determine the overall effectiveness of NREGS.

The Centre for Wage Employment and Poverty Alleviation (CWEPA), created in the context of the NREGS in January 2008 has taken up a process study of NREGS to document the Planning and Implementation arrangements in 11 States (Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, J&K, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Sikkim and Uttarakhand) to understand the problems and factors influencing the differential performance across and within the regions. The CWEPA has involved the willing State Institutes of Rural Development and reputed Research Institutions to participate in this 11-State study with a view to building a network of institutional alliance to examine various thematic issues relating to NREGS on a regular basis.

NIRD has designed the study, data collection instruments, sampling design and data analysis plan. Besides the field study initiatives of CWEPA, the partner institutions have also taken the responsibility of conducting the field study in collaboration with NIRD and the associated with report writing. Pre and post-study workshops were conducted to validate the study design and instruments. A post-study working was also done to consolidate learning and agree upon the key areas of reporting and suggested action for improved implementation of the NREGS. We hope that the findings of the State-specific studies and suggested action points would benefit the delivery system to enhance the overall effectiveness of NREGS in the respective States.

K. Hanumantha Rao
Prof. & Head (CWEPA)

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We are thankful to our partner institution, i.e. 'J&K Institute of Management, Public Administration and Rural Development' for associating with the study. We express our heartfelt thanks to Shri Madhav Lal, IAS, former Director General, IMPA for constant guidance and facilitation in carrying out this study.

We also acknowledge the cooperation and support extended by Shri. M. S. Khan, IAS, Secretary, Rural Development Department, J&K Government and Shri. M. A. Bukhari, KAS, Director, Rural Development Department, Kashmir during the present study.

We shall be failing in our duty if we did not thank the District Administration, Kupwara including Shri Kachoo Isfandyar Khan, IAS, District Development Commissioner, Kupwara, Shri G. R. Kumar, Assistant Commissioner Development, Kupwara, Shri Farooq Ahmad Shah and Mr. M. S. Sheikh, Block Development Officers, Langate and Trehgam, respectively for their support.

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Study Team

Contents

	Page No.
<i>Preface</i>	
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	
Executive Summary	1
I Introduction	9
II Institutional Arrangements for Implementation of NREGS	24
III Capacity Building, Awareness and Community Participation	46
IV Planning, Implementation and Performance of REGS	53
V Performance of J&K REGS at State/District/Block/Halqa Level	59
VI Profile of NREGS Workers - Jammu and Kashmir	94
VII Summary of Findings	117
VIII Concluding Remarks and Suggestions	124
Annexures	128

Executive Summary

To provide livelihood security to the poor and strengthen the natural resource base for revival of stagnant agriculture, the government of India has launched the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) in 2006. During the first phase, the Scheme was introduced in 200 backward districts of 27 states. Another 130 districts were covered in 2007-08 and all the remaining districts would be under the NREGS in 2008-09. In the first phase, the Scheme was taken up in three districts viz., Doda, Kupwara and Poonch of the State of Jammu & Kashmir. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) was not fully applicable in the State in the sense that the 'employment guarantee' was not there initially. However, the NREGA became fully applicable in 2007.

The present study examined the direction and effectiveness of the process of planning and implementation of NREGS in the two study districts, namely, Kupwara (low NREG performance) and Poonch (high NREG performance) during 2006-07.

The State has witnessed a significant decline in poverty during the post-liberalisation period but the unemployment levels are high. A considerable proportion of the workforce is engaged in non-agriculture pursuits. Most of the poor are engaged in the agriculture sector and the productivity levels of the main crops are low and lower than the national average. Schemes like NREGS and Hariyali are highly relevant for the State because of the rising soil degradation and low levels of water conservation. However, the high market wages and preference for less arduous work by the local workers suggest that demand for employment at the minimum wage is likely to be low. There are wide variations in the geo-physical conditions across the State which implies that the performance of NREGS is likely to differ from region to region.

2 Planning and Implementation of National Rural Employment....

The major issues studied include:

- i) effectiveness of awareness building strategies;
- ii) procedure followed for registration, issue of job cards, provision of employment and mode of wage payment;
- iii) process adopted for preparation of plans including the choice of works;
- iv) institutional arrangements for implementation of the Scheme; and
- v) mechanisms in place for transparency and accountability (monitoring and Social Audit).

Based on the performance indicators such as utilisation of funds and employment per household, two low (Trehgam and Poonch) and two high (Surankot and Langate) performance blocks were randomly selected. Four Halqa Panchayats, viz., Gugloosa, Shanoo, Jhullas and Shiendra were chosen at random from these blocks.

A number of structured schedules were canvassed to different stakeholders at various levels to elicit their views and experiences to examine the issues and objectives of the process study.

The State has not constituted the State Employment Guarantee Council (SEGC) during 2006-07 and thereby lost an opportunity to get advice on the various implementation aspects from the members. The composition of SEGC constituted during August 2007 is not broad-based and the non-official representation is limited. This deserves the attention of Department of Rural Development which is the nodal agency for NREGS at the State level. The secretary, Department. of Rural Development functions as the overall programme coordinator. The Directors of Rural Development of Jammu and Kashmir regions act as nodal officers at the regional level.

The Asst. Commissioner of Development was designated as District Programme Coordinator (DPC) and the District Panchayat Officer as Additional DPC. At the block level the BDO is also acting as the Programme

Officer (PO). The elections for PRIs were yet to be conducted in the State and thus their involvement in Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (REGS) did not arise. In the absence of PRIs, a Deh Majlis (Village Committees) was constituted at the village level to plan and execute the REGS works. At the block level, the Block Development Council, headed by the programme officer and with members drawn from (REGS related) line departments was constituted to execute the tasks of the intermediate panchayat. The District Development Board has been authorised to approve the REGS plans. The staff such as Technical Assistants, Field Assistants / *Gram Rozgar Sahayaks* and Mates were either inadequate or non-existing in several places. This was also responsible for the delays in the planning and execution of works during 2006-07.

The State has deployed multiple publicity instruments such as films, posters, audio-cassettes, handbooks, *kalajatharas*, etc., to disseminate information regarding NREGS. These efforts have been found to be effective. Due to commonality of the works, convergence of Hariyali with REGS was found to be feasible but no efforts were made in this direction. The Deh (village) committee of three members at Halqa Panchayat level has taken initiative to mobilise the community and bring awareness about NREGS. No NGO was involved in awareness generation among the people. The IEC component has yet to make a visible impact as most of the workers lack awareness about REGS.

The overall awareness about NREGS provisions was hardly 20 per cent in Kupwara but it was 80 per cent in the high performing Poonch district. Of the selected six aspects of REGS, not more than 33 per cent in Kupwara have expressed their awareness. As far as knowledge about 'unemployment allowance' is concerned, less than 10 per cent of workers reported positively. The good efforts of officials on this front in Poonch can be gauged by the impressive awareness levels. It can thus be inferred that awareness at the cutting edge level and (overall) performance are positively correlated.

4 Planning and Implementation of National Rural Employment....

A set of key indicators of performance of REGS was developed and scores assigned. The scores on Right to Information (RTI) and Social Audit need to be taken cautiously. The focused group discussions revealed that the many workers have no idea about the same. All the workers in Poonch and Kupwara knew that 'possession of job card and submission of application for work' were necessary for getting employment. The picture is qualitatively different in Kupwara. All the workers have the 'knowledge about officials to be contacted', if job cards are not given and 'work is not provided within 15 days in Poonch'.

The Rural Development wing of the J&K Institute of Management and Public Administration had organised a series of training programmes on NREGS along with the Regional Extension Training Centres from May 2007 for the key functionaries at the State, district and block level officials. This has affected the quality of implementation during the initial year of REGS.

The State has not conducted any time and motion studies so far and has been following the existing district standard schedule of rates for NREGS works. The minimum wage for agriculture workers (Rs 70 per day) was adopted for the REGS which was almost half of the market wage. This acted as deterrent for many local workers to participate in the REGS, more so in places like Kupwara.

Not all the registered households were issued job cards. For instance, about 50 per cent of the workers did not possess the job cards in the sample villages of Kupwara. However, no such problem was reported in Poonch. The field report reveals that most of the REGS workers in Kupwara are migrant labour from outside the State. Malpractices were hardly reported for getting the job cards (about 3-5 per cent). There was irregularity in making entries in the job card about the employment days and wages also. There were instances where employment was provided without job card / application. About 98 per cent of the workers in Poonch reported making entries about employment and wages in job cards, whereas it was only 46 per cent in Kupwara. The workers (85 per cent) keep the job cards while going for work in Poonch while it was less than 4 per cent in Kupwara.

A full-fledged MIS was in place only by March 2007 and thus the monitoring suffered to some extent during the reference period. A schedule of inspections / visits by officials at different levels was drawn and was followed to a large extent. During the year 2006-07, no complaints were received but the State has yet to evolve a well defined grievance redress system.

The physical audits have been conducted by the departmental machinery while Chartered Accountants have been engaged for financial audits. However, no Social Audits were organised in 2006-07 and this concept has not been grounded well in the State. In some villages, Gram Sabhas were held to review the progress of NREGS works and these were reported as Social Audits. The planning process for preparation of development plans, identification of works and prioritisation were done in a not participatory mode.

Display of information at GP was almost universal in Poonch and such practices were noticed moderately (45 per cent) in Kupwara.

In the sample GPs, as sequel to REGS, the wages of unskilled workers in other works had gone up. The functioning of the Village Committee was rated favourably by the workers. The workers misunderstood Deh Majlis (Village Committee) for Vigilance and Monitoring Committee, though VMCs have yet to be constituted.

As far as utilisation of funds under REGS was concerned, the State could spend about 69 per cent of the available funds during 2006-07. The study districts in this regard were on the two extremes; while Poonch spent 96 per cent of the funds, Kupwara could hardly utilise 20 per cent of the finances. The employment days per household was 35, 22 and 44 respectively, in the State, Kupwara and Poonch. About 4.7 per cent of workers in Poonch district were provided with 100 days of employment and it was insignificant in Kupwara. As per our field data, the average number of employment days was 16 in sample GPs of Kupwara and 61 in Poonch. The Administrative expenditure was about two per cent. The

6 Planning and Implementation of National Rural Employment....

State can better utilise the funds by filling in all the recommended / suggested posts. The appointment of staff under NREGA was in progress in 2007-08.

The prescribed labour – material ratio of 60:40 was maintained at the district level. However, officials felt that flexibility in this ratio for some works / regions would ensure the creation of quality and durable assets.

The preference for rural connectivity was very evident despite the lowest priority assigned in the Scheme. Flood control and protection, land development, water conservation and water harvesting and micro-irrigation works are the other projects executed.

The participation of the socially disadvantaged (SCs and STs) in the Scheme was higher in Poonch (50.5 per cent) and lower in Kupwara (19.4 per cent). Due to socio-cultural factors, the women's involvement was insignificant.

The workers opined that REGS implementation was effective (71 per cent) in the study area. This rating was almost 96 per cent in Poonch and 48 per cent in Kupwara. The workers opined that the contribution of the Village Committee (97 per cent) and Officials (88 per cent) to this observed performance as very high. Nearly 69 per cent of the workers in Kupwara and 100 per cent of workers in Poonch felt that their knowledge of decision making at the village level had improved considerably.

The quality of assets created under REGS were rated as average (54-59 per cent) by the workers. However, quite a good proportion of workers were ignorant and were not able to judge the quality of assets.

REGS has benefited the workers in enhancing their confidence level in seeking services from the officials (66 per cent) and the Village Committee (45 per cent). The impact of REGS on reducing migration was reported to be significant (over 60 per cent) by the workers.

It is very clear from the profile of the workers, that most of them belong to 'other castes' and STs. The middle aged and youth took part mainly in REGS.

Executive Summary 7

The non-agriculture labour in Kupwara (86 per cent) and cultivators in Poonch (73 per cent) are the major occupation groups of the workers who participated in REGS. It is interesting to note that nearly three-fourths of the workers are marginal farmers in the two districts. Over 90 per cent of the workers are poor as per the poverty line of Planning Commission.

About 95-98 per cent of the workers were given employment within 15 days. The provision of employment was not demand-driven since workers were asked to work whenever the work was sanctioned.

The average wage income earned under REGS was Rs. 1,006 in Kupwara and Rs. 4272 in Poonch. Wages were paid on 'time-basis' and issue of wage slips was reported mainly in Poonch (85 per cent). The mode of payment was cash in Poonch and it was mix of cash and bank (ATM card) transaction in Kupwara. The problems in getting full wage was reported only in Kupwara (47 per cent).

Availability of muster rolls was endorsed by 98 per cent in Poonch and 80 per cent in Kupwara. In the latter district, the maintenance (including updating) of muster roll was found to be not proper. Among the worksite facilities, provision of drinking water was better (67 per cent) and other facilities were almost non-existent. This is a serious matter since these are the entitlements of the workers under REGS.

About one-fourth of the workers mentioned about the payment for sharpening of tools. No effort was made to provide improvised tools to workers for reducing drudgery.

Based on the study, the following action points are suggested:

- * SEGC should be broad-based by enlarging the membership of non-officials.
- * In the absence of credible NGOs, the State could consider having a pool of Social Animators / representatives of CBOs who can assist the GP in awareness creation and conduct of Social Audit.

8 Planning and Implementation of National Rural Employment....

- * Work-time-motion studies have to be undertaken for each homogeneous region for major works to fix the work norms in such a way that every worker should get the minimum wages for seven hours of work.
- * The revision of minimum wage should be linked to the cost of living index so that the workers' interest is protected.
- * The officials at GP and block level need to be trained on preparation of perspective plan in participatory mode for each GP under NREGS. The present approach is more an adhoc one. SIRD (J&K IMPA RD) should design training programmes in this regard. There is a need to develop para professionals for each district who can assist Village Committee / GP in preparation of plans.
- * The State should approach the National Informatics Centre (NIC) to develop a software for working out cost and technical estimates for the identified works. This will reduce the pressure on the engineering staff and minimise the delays in obtaining sanctions.
- * At minimum wage level, the demand for NREGS work would be low. Through convergence, the twin objectives of creating durable assets and supplementing minimum wage can be considered, scope for convergence exists.
- * State should take up immediate step of putting suggested staff and MIS in place so that implementation process becomes smooth.

CHAPTER I

Introduction

Jammu and Kashmir - An Overview

The State of Jammu and Kashmir is, strategically speaking, a prominent State in the Indian Union.

The State comprises three divisions namely, Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh, and for administrative purposes, it has been demarcated into two divisions, i.e., Kashmir and Jammu spread over twelve and ten districts, respectively including the eight districts which have recently been carved out from the existing districts. There are 121 Community Development Blocks, 2,661 Panchayats and 6652 villages.

According to the Census 2001, the population of Jammu and Kashmir State stands at one crore sharing 0.98 per cent of India's population. The population growth rate in the State has been consistently high and during 1991-2001 it was estimated at 2.99 per cent. One of the major causes of slow economic development in the State has been unplanned population growth.

The age structure of the population has serious economic consequences. Based on the 2001 Census, more than 34.56 per cent of the total population is in the age group of 0-14 years and 7.10 per cent in the age group of above sixty years. The remaining 58.34 per cent is in the productive age group indicating that the dependency rate is high in the State. The dependency is, however, marginally low in rural areas as only 37 per cent population is dependent on the 63 per cent.

The composition of the workforce also portrays a disturbing picture as 25.72 per cent of the total population is in the category of main workers leaving a large proportion, almost 63 per cent as non-workers. The proportion of workers amongst females is as low as 7.98 per cent. The proportion of non-workers outnumbers the proportion of total workers

10 *Planning and Implementation of National Rural Employment...*

(main workers + marginal workers) amongst both males and females with a high incidence of marginal workers amongst the females (Table 1). The occupational classification of the workers indicates that the share of total workers in the tertiary sector is even higher than the cultivators (Table 2). This trend portrays a shrinking primary sector and an expanding tertiary sector in the State.

Table 1 : Total workforce in Jammu and Kashmir – 2001

(in lakhs)

Description	Total	Male	Female
Total population	101.4	53.6	47.8
Main workers	26.09	22.27	3.82
	(25.72)	(41.54)	(7.98)
Marginal workers	11.45	4.53	6.92
	(11.29)	(8.45)	(14.47)
Non-workers	63.9	26.81	37.09
	(62.99)	(50.01)	(77.55)

Figures in parentheses are percentages to the total population.

Table 2 : Occupational classification of workers (2001) in J & K

Classification	Number (lakh)	Percentage
Cultivators	15.91	42.39
Agricultural labourers	2.46	6.58
Industrial workers	2.34	6.25
Other workers	16.81	44.78
Total workers (Main + Marginal)	37.54	100.00

The State basically represents an agrarian economy wherein agriculture absorbs 48.96 per cent of the total workforce. The average per capita availability of cultivable area is abysmally low at 0.51 hectares. This marginalises the opportunity of mechanisation of agriculture. As per the

Agriculture Census 2000-01, the average size of holding has reduced from 0.76 hectares to 0.66 hectares in the preceding five-year period. Most of the landholdings are small and productivity levels are low. The State on an average has 7.18 per cent of area under fruits/vegetables and 12.33 per cent under commercial crops. The estimates show a wide regional variance. On an average, 42.43 per cent of the gross area is irrigated in the State.

The Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) - (Table 3) is increasing over the years. The GSDP at constant (1993-94) prices for the year 2006-07 is estimated at Rs.11909.00 crore as against Rs. 11235.42 crore in 2005-06, registering an increase of six per cent over the previous year. It shows an average growth rate of 5.5 per cent during the Tenth Five Year Plan. The growth of inflation is 3.98 percentage points making an aggregate growth of 9.48 per cent at current prices during the same period.

Table 3 : Gross state domestic product in J & K

S.No.	Year	At Current Prices		At Constant (1993-94) Prices	
		GSDP(Rs in crore)	Growth Rate (%)*	GSDP(Rs. in crore)	Growth Rate %
1.	Base Year 1993-94	6342.68		6342.68	
2	1999-00	13614.3		8509.13	
3	2000-01	14749.59	5.64	8664.93	1.83
4	2001-02	15927.10	7.98	9114.86	5.19
Tenth Five Year Plan					
5	2002-03	17713.15	11.21	9567.88	4.97
6	2003-04(Q)	19175.68	8.26	10070.58	5.25
7	2004-05(A)	20877.04	8.87	10626.52	5.52
8	2005-06(A)	22772.68	9.08	11235.42	5.73
9	2006-07(A)	25050.00	10.00	11909.00	6.00
Average Annual			9.48		5.5
Growth Rate of Tenth Plan					

*: Over the previous year.

Source: Directorate of Economics and Statistics, J&K.

12 Planning and Implementation of National Rural Employment....

The per capita Gross State Income at the constant prices (1993) is worked out at Rs. 10,156 in 2006-07 with an average growth rate of 2.76 per cent during the Tenth Five Year Plan (Table 4). The per capita income at the current prices has grown at an average rate of 6.64 per cent during (the Tenth Five Year Plan) this period.

Table 4 : Per capita gross income in J&K State

S.No.	Year	At Current Prices		At Constant (1993-94) Prices	
		Gross Per Capita Income (Rs)	Annual Growth Rate (%)	Gross Per Capita Income (Rs)	Annual Growth Rate (%)
1.	Base Year 1993-94	7545		7545	
2	1999-00(P)	14180		8642	
3	2000-01(P)	14722	3.82	8648	0.07
4	2001-02(P)	15489	5.20	8864	2.50
Tenth Five Year Plan					
5	2002-03 (P)	16748	8.13	9047	2.06
6	2003-04(Q)	17698	5.67	9294	2.73
7	2004-05(A)	18768	6.05	9553	2.79
8	2005-06(A)	19939	6.23	9838	2.98
9	2006-07(A)	21,362	7.14	10,156	3.23
Total Tenth Five Year Plan			6.64		2.76

Source: Directorate of Economics and Statistics, J&K.

The Gross District Domestic Product (GDDP), calculated to quantify the level of economic development and to display the disparities in the districts of the State, shows inter-district variation. The Gross District Domestic Product estimates for the year 2002-03 at current prices are presented in Table 5. It reveals that the estimated per capita income was the lowest for district Kupwara followed by districts Doda and Poonch.

The estimates of the percentage of rural population below poverty line in the State (Table 5) show a steep decline of rural poverty in J&K from 45.5 per cent in 1973-74 to 3.97 per cent in 1999-00 and to 4.66 in 2004-05. Consequently, poverty in the rural areas of the State has reduced by almost 41 percentage points over a period of 31 years. The poverty reduction at All-India level was 28 percentage points during this period indicating that the State has out-performed in the implementation of anti-poverty programmes and if this trend continues, it would have the proud privilege of being the first State to declare zero poverty in the country. However, we need to have an in-depth understanding of the factors responsible for the steep decline in the poverty levels and also the relative contributions of various Rural Development Programmes (RDPs) and the economic sectors to this rapid fall in poverty.

Table 5 : Per capita gross district income for the year 2002-03

S.No.	District	Current Prices		District	Constant Prices	
		Per Capita Income	Rank		Per Capita Income (Rs)	Rank
1	Srinagar	21034	1	Leh	11493	1
2	Leh	19948	2	Srinagar	11275	2
3	Jammu	19696	3	Jammu	10631	3
4	Kathua	18431	4	Kathua	10394	4
5	Pulwama	17509	5	Pulwama	9191	5
6	Kargil	16461	6	Anantnag	9191	6
7	Udhampur	15718	7	Rajouri	9117	7
8	Baramulla	15757	8	Udhampur	9085	8
9	Rajouri	15725	9	Kargil	8103	9
10	Anantnag	15706	10	Poonch	8068	10
11	Budgam	14640	11	Budgam	8035	11
12	Poonch	14613	12	Baramulla	7717	12
13	Doda	13201	13	Doda	7517	13
14	Kupwara	11338	14	Kupwara	6044	14

Source: Directorate of Economics and Statistics, J&K.

Table 6 : Percentage of population below the poverty line – rural

S.No.	State/All India	1973-74	1983-84	1993-94	1999-00	2004-05
1	J&K	40.83	24.24	30.34	3.97	4.6
2	All India	54.88	44.48	37.27	27.09	28.3

Source: Planning Commission, Govt. of India.

The employment and wages may provide some clue to this phenomenal progress. The consolidated information sheet on selected indicators pertaining to the State is placed at Table 7. It is evident from this Table that the average number of days of employment was high for males (186 days) and low for females (45 days). Most of the women workers are engaged in agriculture (as self-employed) and the wage rates were lower compared to male workers. The rural urban migration was also high (17 per cent) which implies that employment opportunities are limited in rural areas.

These indicators together suggest that intervention of NREGA type would facilitate strengthening of resource base of small holder agriculture, livelihood security to those dependent largely on labour market. It is to be noted that most of the heavy work in rural areas of J & K has been attended to by the migrant labour from UP, Bihar and Rajasthan.

Table 7 : Information sheet on selected indicators - J&K

S.No.	Indicators	
1	2	3
1.	GDP per capita (Constant Prices) (Rs.) 2004-05	9553
2.	GDP growth rate (1997-98 to 2004-05) % per annum	4.66
3.	Population growth (1991-2001) % per annum	2.81
4.	Workforce (Per thousand persons) (2004-05)	
	- Males	552
	- Females	267

(Contd...)

Table 7 : (Contd...)

1	2	3
	- Persons	416
5.	Workforce growth (1993-94 to 2004-05) % per annum	-0.88
6.	Distribution of workforce (2004-05) % (PS+SS)	
	a) Agriculture	
	- Males	53.8
	- Females	86.6
	b) Mining & Quarrying	
	- Males	0.40
	- Females	0.00
	c) Manufacturing	
	- Males	9.90
	- Females	9.70
	d) Electricity, Water etc.	
	- Males	1.60
	- Females	0.00
	e) Construction	
	- Males	10.2
	- Females	0.10
	f) Trade, Hotel & Restaurant	
	- Males	7.10
	- Females	0.30
	g) Transport, Storage & Communications	
	- Males	5.80
	- Females	0.00
	h) Other Services	
	- Males	12.2
	- Females	3.30
7.	Wage rate (Rs/day)-Males-Public works – 2004-05	86.50
	- Other works – 2004-05	100.24
8.	Wage rate (Rs/day)-Females-Public works-2004-05	50.00
	- Other works- 2004-05	53.39
9.	Casual Labour	
	1993-94 %	7.6
	2004-05 %	10.1
10.	Unemployment rate (CDS) 2004-05 - Males %	5.8
	- Females %	4.7
11.	Average No. of days of employment per worker 2004-05	
	- Males	186
	- Females	45

(Contd...)

Table 7 : (Contd...)

1	2	3
12.	Rural Poverty (%)	
	- 1993-94	—
	- 2004-05	4.6
13.	Infrastructure index (2000) (CMIE) (All-India = 100)	
	Jammu & Kashmir	92.03
	Kupwara	104.45
14.	Migration from rural to urban areas (2001) (%)	17.0

Salient Features of J&K REGS

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), 2005 envisages enhancing the livelihood security of the people in rural areas 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. While creating an environment of enhanced wage employment opportunities in rural areas, the Act provides for the generation of productive assets, protect environment, empower rural people, reduce rural-urban migration and foster social equity. The set of operational guidelines formulated for the purpose delineate a broad framework to facilitate the state governments in formulating the State Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (REGS). Implemented as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme, the whole country will be covered by 2008-09.

With the introduction of the NREGA in 2005, the REGS was launched in February 2006 in 200 backward districts in 27 states in the country. The Act initially was not directly applicable to Jammu and Kashmir, yet a request was made to Government of India for extending the jurisdiction of this Act to the State. Pending the notification, implementation of NREGA is being carried out through REGS in the State. In the first phase, three districts, viz. Poonch, Doda and Kupwara were brought within the ambit of this Scheme which has been extended to the districts of Anantnag and Jammu during phase - II. As envisaged in the Act, the Jammu and Kashmir Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme has been formulated on the basis of the Guidelines issued by the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India. The NREGA was extended to the State in 2007 and the guarantee component in terms of unemployment allowance has been made operational.

Table 8 : NREGA Districts in J&K

S.No.	Province	Name of the District	No. of Blocks	No. of Panchayats
1.	Kashmir	Kupwara*	11	224
2.	Kashmir	Anantnag	12	307
3.	Jammu	Poonch*	6	115
4.	Jammu	Doda*	19	262
5.	Jammu	Jammu	11	295

* included during 2006-07.

The Scheme envisages enhancement of the livelihood security of the people in rural areas by generating wage employment. The choice of works seeks to address the causes of chronic poverty like drought / moisture stress, deforestation and soil erosion. As such, the Scheme has the potential to transform the agriculture and rural poverty scenario.

The Scheme postulates the following objectives:

1. To provide livelihood security to the households in the rural areas of the notified districts by providing not less than one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in every financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.
2. To create durable assets and strengthen the livelihood resource base of rural poor.

It is implemented as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme on a cost sharing basis between the Centre and the State in the ratio of 90:10. The non-negotiable characteristics of the REGS are as under:

1. Every rural registered household is to be provided not less than one hundred days of wage employment on demand in a financial year.
2. Payment of wages to be made on weekly basis and not later than a fortnight from the time of application for wage employment.

18 Planning and Implementation of National Rural Employment....

3. Equal wages to be paid to men and women.
4. Contractors and labour displacing machinery are not to be engaged.

In the initial stage, implementation of the REGS has experienced some problems at the operational level for a number of reasons some of which are listed here:

- i) The State Government could not formulate the J&K Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme till March, 2007 whereas the REGS was launched in the country on 2 February, 2006. Understandably, the implementation process cannot be expected to match the performance elsewhere in the country. The officials as well as the community need some time to absorb the nuances of REGS and get sensitised and professionalised.

The present study aims at reviewing the REGS operational guidelines, its implementation process and the potential for serving the diverse socio-economic and geo-logical needs and conditions across the districts with a view to suggesting ways and means of improving the REGS delivery system in J&K.

Issues

Following are some of the issues examined in the study :

i) Awareness about NREGA

- Strategies adopted to build awareness about NREGA, 'Right to Information' Act and 'Social Audit' among people, elected representatives, officials and their effectiveness

ii) Registration, Issue of Job Cards and Applications for Wage Employment

- Roles played by the Gram Panchayats (GP), Officials and Civil Society Organisations in these activities and irregularities, if any.

iii) Planning

- Capacity building of Sarpanch and Secretary of GPs for preparing action plans / shelf of works / projects in a participatory manner
- Extent to which the causal factors of poverty and gender concerns and problems of the disabled have been taken care of in identification of works and provision of facilities
- Conduct of Gram Sabhas to finalise the activities / works
- Problems in working out the cost and technical estimates for selected works in time and preparing an inventory of approved works in the pipeline

iv) Implementation

- Arrangements made at various levels of administration to ensure smooth functioning of NREGS
- Mechanisms adopted for ensuring transparency in the execution of works
- Planning of works to match the magnitude of demand for employment
- (Undue) Delays in execution and measurement of works
- Providing the applicants with employment within 15 days and timely payment of wages
- Provision the recommended facilities at worksites, extent of participation of women and the physically challenged in the works
- Maintenance of job cards, foolproof institutional arrangement for payment of wages

v) Monitoring and Social Audit

- Monitoring of works by Gram Panchayat / Gram Sabha, adherence to the monitoring schedules prescribed by officials
- Effectiveness of the Vigilance and Monitoring Committees' functioning

20 Planning and Implementation of National Rural Employment...

- Practices followed for Social Audit and problems experienced; responsiveness of the agencies / authorities in making the Social Audit proceedings / documents accessible to the public. Display of information on works including current status, sanction and utilisation of funds, list of applications; Proper maintenance of records, registers and measurement books; and arrangements for disbursement of wages in the presence of GP members and VMC.

vi) Transparency and Accountability

- Preparation of the key documents* by the State Employment Guarantee Council (SEGC). Types of irregularities reported and corrective actions initiated. Effectiveness of the 'grievance redressal system', public perception about the (performed) role and responsibilities of elected representatives and government functionaries in different stages of the programme implementation.

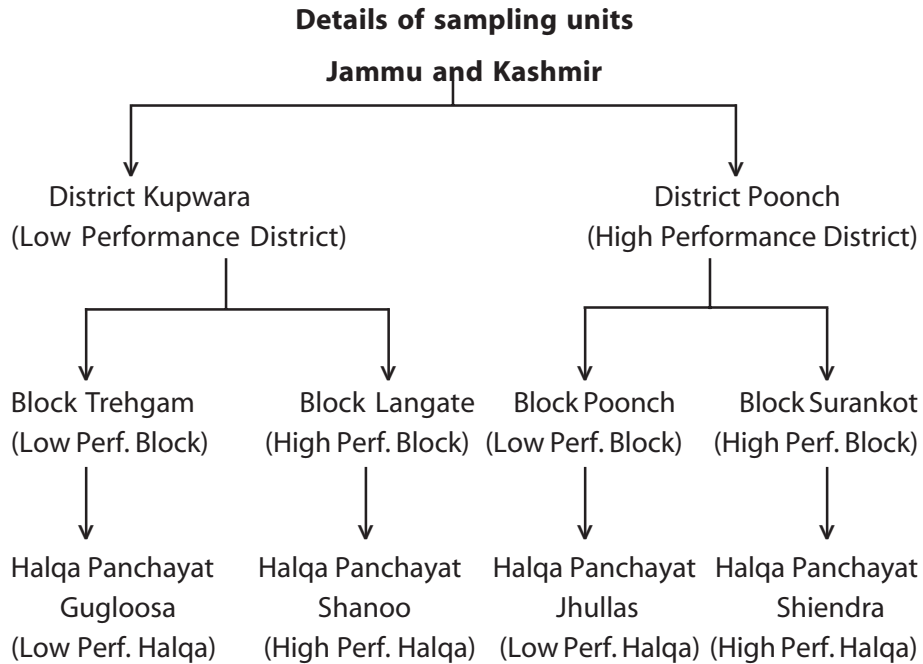
Objectives of the Study

- Study the effectiveness of the processes adopted for generating awareness about NREGA, RTI Act and Social Audit among stakeholders;
- Assess the usefulness of the institutions and mechanisms chosen for sensitising people in regard to registration, issue of job cards and employment;
- Ascertain the extent to which the mechanisms have facilitated participatory planning and selection of works ;
- Review the procedures for implementation of works including provision of employment, works measurement and payment of wages;

* Data relating to registration, job cards issued, list of people sought employment and provided, receipt and utilisation of funds, sanctioning and progress of works, cost estimates and expenditure on different works, employment generated, copies of muster rolls and reports of local committees.

- Examine the nature and quality of community participation and inter- institutional coordination in planning, implementation, monitoring and Social Audit of the works / projects;
- Analyse the problems in utilisation of Central and State funds – administrative and programme expenditure;
- Study the quality of assets created and their utility to the poor / weaker sections / others;
- Assess the tangible benefits of REGS to the people in terms of employment and (minimum) wages, 'right to work', 'right to minimum wages', 'right to information' and accountability of development functionaries to people; and
- Identify the major factors influencing the performance of NREGS with special focus on geographic, socio-economic and politico-cultural aspects that explain differential performance in the study areas.
- Outline the broad direction in which the NREGS is moving with specific reference to the national guidelines, state action plans, institutional arrangements, delivery systems / people's views, current achievements and future course of action.
- Out of the three REGS districts during 2006-07, two districts, namely, Kupwara in Kashmir Division and Poonch in Jammu Division, were identified as low and high performance districts, respectively.

From each study district, two blocks showing low (Trehgam and Poonch) and high performance (Surankot and Langate) blocks in the implementation of REGS have randomly been selected. And from each block one Halqa Panchayat (Gram Panchayat) has been selected randomly. The overall sampling design of the process study is as under:



The registered households which have participated in the REGS during 2006-07 have been taken as the sampling frame and thirty households have been randomly drawn from whom information was collected on various aspects of REGS using a structured schedule. The list of selected sampled households is shown in Annexure -1.

In order to launch the process study, a preliminary meeting was convened on 18 August, 2007 at the Institute (J&K IMPA) premises in Srinagar under the chairmanship of the Director General of the Institute. It was attended by the following officials and faculty members:

1. Secretary, Rural Development Department, J&K Government
2. Director, Rural Development Department, Kashmir
3. Principal, RETC, Budgam
4. Prof., Rural Development IMPA&RD
5. Associate Professor, Rural Development, IMPA&RD

For introducing the need, objectives, methodology and the scope of the study to the concerned officers at the district level, a subsequent meeting was convened on 21 August, 2007 at the district headquarters of Kupwara which was attended by district/block/Halqa level officials of the Rural Development Department directly associated with the implementation of the Scheme. The meeting was followed by yet another interaction session with the concerned officers at all levels on 27 August, 2007 along with the visiting team comprising Prof. Durgaprasad and Dr. Sivaram from NIRD, Hyderabad. The district, block and Halqa level structured schedules were thoroughly discussed in the interaction session. Subsequently, the visiting team from NIRD also had detailed deliberations on the subject with the Secretary, Rural Development Department, Government of J&K on 29 August, 2007.

In Poonch district the exercise for the process study started with a preliminary meeting with the concerned officials at the Regional Centre, Jammu. Subsequently, a meeting was conducted with the district, block and some line department functionaries at the district headquarters, Poonch along with Prof. Durgaprasad from NIRD. Detailed discussions were held with the field functionaries about the study and the fieldwork strategy. The household sample study was undertaken with the assistance of local field functionaries having adequate knowledge and experience in data collection and analysis.

In the absence of the Panchayati Raj System in the State, some of the schedules proposed to be administered to the Panchayati Raj officials and elected representatives of the district, intermediate and Halqa Panchayat levels could not be administered. Besides, the Structured Schedules proposed for NGOs remained un-administered for there was no direct or indirect association of any non-governmental organisation with the planning, implementation and monitoring of the REGS. However, the study team had interactions with the past incumbents of the Panchayats. Some of their views about the REGS were noted.

CHAPTER II

Institutional Arrangements for Implementation of NREGS - J&K

Works are taken up with the approval of the Halqa Panchayats as identified in the Gram Sabha at the village level, the Block Development Council (equivalent to Panchayat Samiti) at the block level and the District Planning and Development Board (equivalent to Zilla Parishad) at the district level. In case where the Panchayats are not in existence, as is the case now, a provision for Deh Majlis (Village Committee) is provided to carry out the entire exercise of (REGS) plan formulation and monitoring. The erstwhile Panchayat Secretary has been designated as the Nodal Officer for organising the meeting of the Deh Majlis.

At the block level, in the absence of the Block Development Councils, an Advisory Committee has been constituted. It is headed by the REGS Programme Officer with members drawn from all the line departments primarily concerning the activities covered by the Scheme. One representative from each Halqa Majlis is co-opted in the committee for discharging the duties of the Block Development Council.

In the absence of the Panchayati Raj System in the State as per the J&K Panchayati Raj Act, 1989, the District Development Boards (already constituted under the single line administration system) have been authorised to approve the (REGS) plans at the district level.

The State Scheme encompasses almost all the provisions specified under Schedule-I of NREGA which, *inter alia* include:

1. Constitution of the State Employment Guarantee Council
2. Laying down of appropriate arrangements
3. Fixation of the minimum wage
4. Ensuring transparency and accountability
5. Providing for the Social Audit

Institutional Arrangements for Implementation of NREGS - J&K 25

As per the Provisions of NREG Act, the State Government is under obligation to constitute a State Council to be known as the 'Jammu and Kashmir State Employment Guarantee Council'. The Council is constituted for the purpose of advising the State Government on the matters concerning the Scheme, determining the preferred works, reviewing and monitoring, promoting the widest possible dissemination of information and preparing the annual report to be laid before the State Legislature. In this regard, the State has constituted the State Employment Guarantee Council (SEGC), vide Govt. order No. 260 dated 24-8-2007 with the following composition:

Official Members

1	Hon'ble Minister for Rural Dev. and Panchayati Raj (PR)	Chairperson
2	Hon'ble Minister of State for Rural Development and PR	Vice-Chairperson
3	Chief Secretary of the State Government	Member
4	Financial Commissioner. Planning and Development Dept.	Member
5	Financial Commissioner, Agri. Production Dept.	Member
6	Principal Secretary, PHE/Irrigation and Flood Control	Member
7	Commissioner/Secretary Finance Department	Member
8	Director, Rural Development Department Jammu/Kashmir	Member
9	Secretary to Govt., Rural Development Department	Member-Secretary

Non-official Members

1. Vice-Chairman, Scheduled Caste Advisory Board
2. Vice-Chairman, Scheduled Tribe Advisory Board
3. Managing Director, Women's Development Corporation
4. Not less than one-third of the non-official members should be women and similarly one-third of the non-official members belonging to the SCs, STs, OBCs and minorities

The terms of reference of the SEGC include:

1. Advising the State Government on all the matters concerning the Scheme and its proper implementation in the State.
2. Determining the preferred works.
3. Reviewing the monitoring and redressal mechanisms from time to time to ensure optimum utilisation of funds.
4. Promoting the widest possible dissemination of information about this Act and the schemes under it.
5. Monitoring the implementation of the Act and the schemes in the State and coordinating such implementation with the Central Council.
6. Preparing the annual report to be laid before the State Legislature by the State Government.
7. Any other duty or function as may be assigned to it by Central Council or the State Government.

As can be observed, the constitution of SEGS was delayed by one and a half years and the Council has not, as yet, had its maiden meeting. The Council has, therefore, not assumed its duties and functions as proposed. Besides, no Employment Guarantee Fund has been created in the State for the purposes of the implementation of the Scheme. In effect, no conditions and processes, whatsoever, are in place to expend the State Fund for purposes of implementation of the Act or for meeting the administrative expenses thereof. This has adversely affected the implementation of the (REGS) Scheme in the State.

As envisaged in the Act, the principal authorities for planning and implementation of the Scheme are the Panchayats at the village, block and district levels. The functions of the Panchayats at all levels have been determined as per the provisions of the Act. However, in the absence of the Panchayati Raj System in the State, an alternate mechanism has been proposed. A committee of not less than three members nominated by the Deh Majlis (Gram Sabha) is responsible for the execution and

Institutional Arrangements for Implementation of NREGS - J&K 27

supervision of REGS works at the village level. The said Committee receives secretarial assistance from the erstwhile Panchayat Secretary (VLW). The Panchayat Secretary is responsible for receiving applications for registration and for issuance of job cards. Although the Scheme provides for Field Assistants to assist the Panchayat Secretary, yet at the operational level, there is a vacuum. As provided in the Scheme, a Committee, to be nominated by Deh Majlis (Gram Sabha), should be assigned the task of mobilisation and capacity building of the wage seekers through Village Organisations and Self-Help Groups (SHGs). Besides, the committee has to assist the Programme Officer in handling the IEC activities. The committee has powers to engage a Social Organiser. However, at the field level, no such arrangement is in place and whatever little has been done goes to the credit of the erstwhile Panchayat Secretary only.

At the block level too, absence of the Block Development Council (Block Samiti) has created a vacuum. The Scheme provides for a Programme Officer at each block level as per the provisions of the Act, yet at the operational level, the Block Development Officer has been designated as the Programme Officer. Consequently, the BDO-cum-Programme Officer is unable to dedicate full time to the planning and implementation of the REGS. The functions of REGS Programme Officer have been spelled out as follows:

1. Scrutinising village-wise REGS plans;
2. Ensuring that the works match the employment demand;
3. Coordinating the implementation process;
4. Ensuring that implementing agencies start work on time;
5. Ensuring that employment demand is met within time and workers receive wages and other entitlements;
6. Ensuring Social Audit, disposing complaints and redressing grievances.

28 Planning and Implementation of National Rural Employment...

The Programme officer is to function under the direction, control and superintendence of the District Programme Coordinator. For the purpose of implementation of REGS, the Assistant Commissioner Development has been designated as the District Project Coordinator and the District Panchayat Officer as the Additional District Project Coordinator. In addition, the Project Director of the District Rural Development Agencies (DRDAs) has been asked to assist the District Project Coordinators in the mobilisation of wage seeking families through SHGs and their Federations at village, block and district levels. However, this arrangement has created some administrative resistance as in most of the cases the Project Directors of DRDAs were senior in rank and status to the District Programme Coordinators. Besides, the new designations of District Project Coordinators and Additional District Programme Coordinators have created problems of dual control. This seems to have affected the actual implementation of the (REGS) Scheme.

At the State level, the Secretary to Rural Development Department functions as the State Programme Coordinator and the Directors of Rural Development both in Kashmir and Jammu Divisions have been designated as Nodal Officers at the Regional level who have been delegated with different duties to be specified by State Programme Coordinator for ensuring smooth implementation of the Scheme.

The status of the Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in Jammu and Kashmir State during 2006-07 is placed in Table 9.

Table 9 : Status of REGS in J&K – 2006-07

1	SEGC	
	a Formation of SEGC	The Jammu and Kashmir State was too late in the formation of SEGC as the same was constituted vide Govt. Order No. 260 dated 24-8-2007.
	b Size	The size of SEGC in J & State is spread over nine official members and three non- official members (twelve in all).
	c Composition	
	- Women	One-third of the non-official members (Minimum One)
	- Social Activists and NGOs	-nil-
	- Officials	Nine
	- SC & ST members	One-third of the non-official members (Minimum One)
	d No. of meetings in 2006-07	-nil-
	e SEGC Fund Allocation (Rs. C)	Rs. 51.562 crore (up to July, 2007)
	- SEGC Fund Utilisation (%)	Rs. 14.538 crore (up to July, 2007) =28.20%
2	Payment of unemployment allowance (Rs. lakh)	-nil- (Not applicable during 2006-07)
	- No. of workers paid unemployment allowance	-nil- (Not applicable during 2006-07)
3	Convergence with other schemes	In REGS districts there is some semblance of convergence particularly with works under Hariyali. However, there has been no convergence of the two schemes at the Plan formulation level.

(Contd...)

Table 9 : (Contd...)

4	Pooling of funds of PRIs with REGS	After the expiry of the full term of five years, no elections to PRIs have taken place in the State till date. By analogy, the PRIs do not exist and, as such, the question of pooling of REGS funds with PRIs does not arise.
5	Effective publicity efforts about NREGA	
	- Posters	Yes
	- Films	Yes
	- Audio cassettes	Nil
	- Charts	Yes
	- Handbooks	Yes
	- <i>Kalajataras</i>	Nil
	- Others	Electronic Media and Sign Boards
6	Coordination with State department	The Scheme is exclusively being run by the Department of Rural Development and no other line department has been involved in its execution.
	- Problem	Nil
	- Contentious issues, specify	Nil
7	Problems in monitoring	The State Scheme clearly spells out a strategy of monitoring of works executed under REGS and a proportionate distribution of monitoring has been entrusted at all levels. However, at the operational level the monitoring of REGS has been undertaken through touring, inspections and Management

(Contd...)

Table 9 : (Contd...)

	Information System. In absence of PRIs in the State no effective monitoring of REGS works can be thought of. Besides, the State has also been erring in the formulation and training of the Village Monitoring Committees (VMCs) for the purpose.
8 Any variations in performance of REGS across districts	The State has witnessed significant variations in the performance of REGS across different districts. The districts wherein the incidence of labour migration was high and the market wages were low have shown better performance in the implementation of the Scheme.
9 Rating of REGS performance	In terms of almost all the indicators, performance of REGS in the State has in no way been effective.
- Factors responsible for such performance	i) Low minimum wage (Rs. 70/) in comparison to the market wage rate (Rs. 100-150/) ii) Inadequate preparations for the implementation of the Scheme during the period under reference. iii) Alternate sources of employment opportunities iv) Unfavourable climatic conditions for a significant time during winter months (December-March) v) Low incidence of labour migration.

(Contd...)

Table 9 : (Contd...)

10 Suggestions for effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">i) District level allocation of fundsii) Taking up of works on private lands.iii) Nature of works to be decided at the State level.iv) Convergence of works under different schemes (Merger of Hariyali with REGS).v) Reducing the distance for work in hilly areas in the State and additional monetary compensation for the distance travelled.vi) Special concession for physically challenged persons (rationalisation of labour performance by the physically challenged persons).vii) States be allowed to make the wages under REGS compatible with the prevailing market wage rates.viii) Wage material ratio provided in the Scheme may be reconsidered for some specific works to be decided at the State level.
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The Department of Rural Development is the nodal agency at the State level. Structured schedule was canvassed to the State programme coordinator of the department and the responses on major issues are succinctly summarised and presented in Table 10.

Table 10 : Role of nodal department dealing with NREGA in the selected States – 2006-07

J&K	
Role of state Nodal Department	Planning, implementation and monitoring of all rural development schemes including REGS
1 Name of Nodal Department	Rural Development Department
2 Respondent	State Programme Coordinator
3 Issues relating to wages	Nil
- Status of work-motion studies	Nil
- Adoption of Standard Schedule of Rates	The Department does not have the specific Standard Schedule of Rates (SSR) for the works being undertaken by the Department. However, the Department has adopted PWD Standard Schedule of Rates (SSR) with mild modifications. The Department has initiated the process of preparing District SSR which has not as yet been confirmed. For not having the specific SSR for rural development works in general and REGS works in particular it is becoming difficult for the Department to formulate work related budgets.
- Minimum wage of agriculture labour in the State (Rs. / day)	Rs. 70/ day
- Wages under REGS (Rs. / day)	Rs. 70/ day
4 Establishment of MIS	The State has now in place a full-fledged MIS as per J&K REGS issued vide Govt. order No. 99 dated 13-3-2007.

(Contd...)

Table 10 : (Contd...)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effectiveness of MIS 	<p>The system has been working effectively since its inception i.e. March 2007.</p>
<p>5 Strategies adopted for the following and effectiveness</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Awareness about NREGA - People - Strategy 	<p>The strategy adopted for the awareness of people about NREGA included conferences, workshops, training programmes and electronic media.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effectiveness 	<p>The strategy has been found effective</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local institutions - strategy 	<p>In the absence of PRIs and other local institutions in the State no strategy was necessitated for the awareness amongst such institutions. However, some meetings and IEC activities were undertaken at the village level for mass awareness about REGS.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effectiveness 	<p>The strategy has been found effective.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Publicity of minimum wages - Strategy 	<p>In view of limited wages offered under REGS, the aforementioned strategy did not have much impact amongst the masses.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effectiveness 	<p>Although the strategy adopted was effective, yet the wages offered did not motivate the job seekers significantly.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitoring - strategy 	<p>The State Scheme has a well-defined monitoring strategy spread</p>

(Contd...)

Table 10 : (Contd...)

		over all the levels engaged in the implementation of REGS in the State. Besides, the works have been monitored through regular tours, inspections and MIS.
- Effectiveness		In view of the overall performance of the Scheme, the monitoring strategy cannot be considered effective.
- Redressal of Grievances		The department has not received any grievances/ complaints from the clientele group and as such no strategy could be adopted on this account
- Strategy		
- Effectiveness		Not applicable
- Physical Audit	- strategy	The physical audit has been conducted by the departmental machinery through the mechanism of regular inspections.
- Effectiveness		Not effective
- Financial Audit	- strategy	The financial audit has been conducted by Chartered Accountants and departmental audits and inspections of the books of accounts.
- Effectiveness		Effective
- Social Audit	- strategy	The State does not have any mechanism for undertaking Social Audit of the works under REGS. This is particularly true in the absence of PRIs in the State. However, the

(Contd...)

Table 10 : (Contd...)

		Department has carved out an alternative mechanism of <i>Deh</i> (Village) Committees of three members responsible for plan formulation, implementation and monitoring.
	- Effectiveness	Strictly speaking, no Social Audit of the works under REGS has taken place in the State and no report, whatsoever, is available with the department.
6	Capacity Building of functionaries on	
i	State officials - NREGA	All
	- RTI	Most of them
	- Social Audit	None
ii	Dist. officials - NREGA	All
	- RTI	Most of them
	- Social Audit	None
iii	Block officials - NREGA	All
	- RTI	Most of them
	- Social Audit	None
iv	Elected representatives of PRIs	Nil
	- ZP - NREGA	Nil
	- RTI	Nil
	- Social Audit	Nil
	- IP - NREGA	Nil
	- RTI	Nil
	- Social Audit	Nil
	- GP - NREGA	Nil
	- RTI	Nil
	- Social Audit	Nil

(Contd...)

Table 10 : (Contd...)

v	Other Stakeholders	
	- NGOs - NREGA	Nil
	- RTI	Nil
	- Social Audit	Nil
	- VMCs - NREGA	All
	- RTI	Most of them
	- Social Audit	None
	- SHGs - NREGA	Nil
	- RTI	Nil
	- Social Audit	Nil
7	Complaints and follow-up action in regard to	
i	Not getting minimum wages	
	a) received complaints	No complaint received
	b) Remedial action proposed	Not relevant
ii	Schedule of rates	
	a) received complaints	No complaint received
	b) Remedial action proposed	Not relevant
iii	Norms for work measurement	
	a) received complaints	No complaint received
	b) Remedial action proposed	Not relevant
iv	Wage rates	
	a) received complaints	No complaint received
	b) Remedial action proposed	Not relevant
v	Publicity on REGS	
	a) received complaints	No complaint received
	b) Remedial action proposed	Not relevant
vi	Release of funds to districts	
	a) received complaints	No complaint received
	b) Remedial action proposed	Not relevant
8	Major comments from internal auditor on REGS	The position generally has been viewed as satisfactory even though

(Contd...)

Table 10 : (Contd...)

	lot more has to be done by making books of accounts and their timely up-dation.
9 Key issue emerged out of Social Audits in the State	Since no Social Audit has taken place in the State, therefore, no key issues emerged.
10 Queries on REGS under RTI Act, if any	No queries have been made regarding REGS under J&K RTI Act.
11 Extent of achievement of -	
i Transparency in decision making	Large extent.
ii Transparency in implementation	Large extent
iii Accountability of Officials	Large extent
iv Accountability of Elected Representatives	Not relevant
12 Performance of REGS in the State - Rating	Low
i Factors responsible for the weak performance	<p>i) Low minimum wage (Rs. 70/) in above performance in comparison to the market wage rate (Rs.100-150/)</p> <p>ii) Inadequate preparations for the implementation of the Scheme during the period under reference.</p> <p>iii) Alternate sources of employment opportunities</p> <p>iv) Unfavourable climatic conditions for a significant time during winter months (December-March)</p> <p>v) Low incidence of labour migration.</p>

(Contd...)

Table 10 : (Contd...)

13 Reasons for inter-district variations	The State has witnessed significant variations in the performance of REGS across different REGS districts. The districts wherein the incidence of labour migration was high and the market wages were low, have shown better performance in the implementation of the Scheme.
14 Suggestions for improvement	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. District level allocation of funds2. Taking up of works on private lands.3. Nature of works to be decided at the State level.4. Convergence of works under different schemes (Merger of Hariyali with REGS).5. Reducing the distance for work in hilly areas in the State and additional monetary compensation for the distance travelled.6. Special concession for physically challenged persons (rationalisation of labour performance by the physically challenged persons).7. States be allowed to make the wages under REGS compatible with the prevailing market wage rates.8. Wage material ratio provided in the Scheme may be reconsidered for some specific works to be decided at the State level.9. Comprehensive training on all the relevant subjects across different levels particularly at the front line service providers level.10. Constitution of PRIs in the State.

Study Area- A Profile

This chapter profiles the sample districts based on the secondary data in order to understand their socio-economic conditions particularly with respect to the workforce and its engagements having a direct bearing on the study.

District Kupwara (Kashmir Division)

Kupwara district, located in the North-West of the State, was carved out as a separate district in July, 1979. In terms of the population growth (1981-2001), the district ranks number one with a growth rate of 94.68 percentage points during the reference period.

For administrative purposes, the district has been divided into three Tehsils, namely, *Kupwara*, *Handwara* and *Karnah* spread over 369 villages of which four villages are uninhabited. The literacy rate in the district stands at 40.80 per cent. There has been a marked decline in work participation rates of both males and females in 2001 as compared to the 1981 position. The main cause for decreased work participation rates during the last 20 years can be attributed to the present socio-political turmoil.

In rural areas, the male worker population has increased at the rate of 3.63 per cent per annum against an increase in population of 3.13 per cent during 1981 to 2001. The female workers grew at the rate of 6.78 per cent per annum against the female population growth of 3.47 per cent per annum (Table 11).

The agricultural dependent population (cultivators and agriculture labour) account for 65 per cent; this share was higher among female workers compared to male workers. But what is disturbing is the fact that the number of non-workers has gone up during 1981-2001 substantially (Table 12).

Table 11 : Percentage of workers in district Kupwara

Total/ Rural/ Urban	Persons/ Males/ Females	Total Workers		Main Workers		Marginal Workers		Non- workers	
		1981	2001	1981	2001	1981	2001	1981	2001
Rural	Persons	48.9	31.4	30.4	17.0	18.5	14.4	51.1	68.6
	Males	56.9	43.5	53.5	29.6	3.4	13.9	43.1	56.5
	Females	39.5	18.5	3.5	3.7	36.0	14.8	60.5	81.5

Table 12 : Category-wise participation of workers in rural district Kupwara

	Absolute ('000)	%age
1. Total Workers	192.9	100.0
i) Cultivators	85.1	44.1
ii) Agricultural Labourers	40.4	20.9
iii) Household Industry Workers	7.8	4.1
iv) Other Workers	59.6	30.9
2. Total Male Workers	138.0	100.0
i) Cultivators	57.2	41.4
ii) Agricultural Labourers	30.9	22.4
iii) Household Industry Workers	3.3	2.4
iv) Other Workers	46.6	33.8
3. Total Female Workers	55.0	100.0
i) Cultivators	28.0	50.9
ii) Agricultural Labourers	9.4	17.2
iii) Household Industry Workers	4.5	8.2
iv) Other Workers	13.0	23.7

District Poonch (Jammu)

District *Poonch* is situated at a distance of 246 kilometers North West of Jammu with an altitude of about 3287 ft. The district is surrounded by the Line of Control (LoC) from three sides and is separated from the Kashmir Valley by the mighty Peer Panchal Range in the North. Poonch has four Tehsils, namely, Mendhar, Surankote, Poonch and Mandi. The literacy rate in the district is 51.2 per cent.

Poonch is one of the districts which has shown improvement in work participation rates of both males and females. So far as male worker population is concerned, it has improved its position from 8th in 1981 to 3rd in 2001, whereas in respect of females it has gone up from 7th in 1981 Census to number one position according to Census-2001. In overall ranking, Poonch has risen from number seven to number one position. About 54.1 per cent of its population is participating in work. That's a 7.6 per cent increase since 1981.

About 50 per cent of its female population participate in economic activity as against 57.7 per cent of its male population. Poonch has registered an increase of 147,364 persons in its 1981 population inventory while it has added to its worker population 96,554 persons. About 65.5 per cent of the increased population participates in economic activities.

The rise in male population is 75,298 out of which 45,379 are participating in work. That means 60.3 per cent of the added male population do participate in economic activities. In respect of female population, it made an addition of 72,066 persons out of which, 51,175 (71.0 per cent) are participating in economic activities. It is encouraging to note that in spite of the fact that Poonch borders PoK, it has made a noticeable stride in its work participation rates on the whole.

In rural areas, the participation of people in economic activities is 55.6 per cent; 52.6 per cent of its rural women folk are engaged in some work. It has made an addition of 138,093 persons in its rural population since 1981 out of which 93,066 are participating in economic activities, i.e. 67.4

per cent of the increased population. Similarly, 73.9 per cent of the added female population is participating in economic activities in rural *Poonch* while as it has added 69,589 persons in its male population of rural areas out of which 60.9 per cent are participating in economic activities.

Table 13 : Percentage of workers in district Poonch

Total/ Rural/ Urban	Persons/ Males/ Females	Total Workers		Main Workers		Marginal Workers		Non-workers	
		1981	2001	1981	2001	1981	2001	1981	2001
Rural	Persons	47.8	55.6	27.8	22.5	20.0	33.1	52.2	44.4
	Males	56.8	58.4	50.8	36.6	6.0	21.8	43.2	41.6
	Females	37.8	52.6	2.1	7.4	35.7	45.2	62.2	47.4

Table 14 : Category-wise participation of workers in rural district Poonch - 2001

	Absolute	%age
1. Total Workers	193.5	100.0
i) Cultivators	133.1	68.8
ii) Agricultural Labourers	7.4	3.8
iii) Household Industry Workers	4.2	2.2
iv) Other Workers	48.8	25.2
2. Total Male Workers	105.5	100.0
i) Cultivators	72.8	68.9
ii) Agricultural Labourers	5.8	5.5
iii) Household Industry Workers	1.7	1.7
iv) Other Workers	25.2	23.9
3. Total Female Workers	88.0	100.0
i) Cultivators	60.3	1.8
ii) Agricultural Labourers	1.6	17.2
iii) Household Industry Workers	2.4	2.8
iv) Other Workers	23.6	26.8

Halqa Panchayat Shanoo/Gugloosa (District Kupwara): The two Halqa Panchayats sampled for a detailed study include Halqa Panchayat Shanoo in Langate block and Halqa Panchayat Gugloosa in Trehgam block of Kupwara district. It needs to be reiterated that in the absence of the Panchayats in the State, all the activities supposed to be undertaken by the Panchayats are being undertaken by the erstwhile Panchayat Secretary with the support of the Three-Member Committee of villagers.

Shanoo: The high performance Halqa Panchayat Shanoo falls in block Langate of Kupwara district. Based on the Rural Development Department records, the total population of Halqa is 1650 persons with no SCs/STs. The total number of households is 275 out of which 111 households are small farmers and 169 are marginal farmers. The net area sown stands at 200 hectares out of which 67 hectares is irrigated and the major source of irrigation is streams (khuls). The major crops sown in the area are paddy, maize, pulses, fruits and vegetables with the corresponding area of 67.5 hectares, 35 hectares, 20 hectares, 42.42 hectares and 15 hectares respectively. Fruits emerge as the most important crop followed by paddy. Both the crops are highly labour intensive particularly in the *Kandi* areas where mechanisation of agriculture is a distant reality.

The cropping pattern, therefore, presents a great challenge to the Scheme under reference particularly in a labour scarce environment. It is for this reason that there are only twenty workers out of the whole Halqa who migrate to other places for work. The period considered lean for employment ranges between July to October providing a space for NREGS. There are no children reported to have been working in the Halqa and the market wage rates for both male and female unskilled workers range between Rs. 150 and 200 in the peak agricultural season and between Rs. 100-125 in the non-agricultural season. In all, there are 275 households with Public Distribution System (PDS) Cards out of which 40 fall under *Antyodaya* PDS, 124 under BPL and 111 under APL categories.

Gugloosa: The low performance Halqa Panchayat- Gugloosa falls in block Trehgam of Kupwara district. Based on the Rural Development Department records, the total population of the Halqa is 1584 persons with no SCs/STs. The total number of households is 180 out of which 30 are small, 100 marginal farmers and 30 landless labourers. The net area sown in the Halqa stands at 30 acres out of which 25 acres are irrigated with natural 'streams' as a major source of irrigation. The major crop sown in the area is paddy, with 25 acres. Paddy is a labour intensive crop particularly in a kandi area where mechanisation of agriculture is difficult. In view of the paucity of the land in the area there is a significant incidence of migration reported to be to the tune of about 10 per cent of the population. Although such an environment should have been conducive for the Scheme under reference, Halqa Panchayat Gugloosa emerges as the least performing area in the district. There is no incidence of child labour in the area and the market daily wage rates for both male and female unskilled workers ranges between Rs. 150/200 in the peak agriculture season and Rs. 100 in the agricultural lean season. During non-agricultural season the wage rate ranges between Rs.120 and130. The Halqa has a rich mineral wealth as far as stone quarries are concerned and most of the unskilled workers of the village work in these establishments and the prevailing market daily wage rate is Rs.200 per day. The reason for low performance of REGS in the Halqa can probably be attributed to the alternative source of employment available in the area at high daily wages.

CHAPTER III

Capacity Building, Awareness and Community Participation

Capacity Building

The training activity during the period under reference has been negligible and no social (NGO / CBO) organisation has been involved in the implementation of the Scheme. Whatever little performance that has taken place in the implementation of the Scheme has been due to the interaction of the public functionaries and the monitoring supplemented by the inspection tours of the RD officers in their respective areas.

However, the Institute of Management and Public Administration (IMPA) has organised a series of training courses on REGS from May 2007 to retrieve the poor situation. It was for these reasons that the implementation of REGS in the first year in particular was and perhaps more than sub-optimal with respect to:

1. Awareness about NREGA
2. Registration, Issuance of Job Cards and Applications for Employment
3. Planning
4. Implementation
5. Monitoring
6. Transparency and accountability
7. Institutional adequacy
8. Realising the grassroots needs

The State has formulated a long-term Training Action Plan under the REGS and submitted it to the Government of India for funding. The MoRD, GoI has approved the Training Action Plan and has sanctioned an advance amount of Rs. 9.91 lakh in favour of J&K SIRD (J&K IMPA&RD) for the

organisation of training activities from the year 2007-08. The training activity has already been initiated at district and block levels by the Institute and the grassroots level functionaries are being trained through two Regional Extension Training Centres each in Kashmir and Jammu Divisions. However, no training activity has taken place with regard to Social Audit in the State.

Awareness

The Department of Rural Development has adopted the following methods/materials to educate the people about NREGA and their rights and entitlements:

1. Posters
2. Films
3. Charts
4. Handbooks
5. Electronic Media/Sign Boards

The officials claimed that the strategy adopted for building awareness about REGS included conferences, workshops, seminars, and training programmes, besides use of electronic media to make people aware of the strengths of REGS. The officials too have informed that the local institutions were involved in the implementation of the Scheme through meetings and different IEC activities. Contrary to field observations, the officials reported that people were made aware of the minimum/additional wages through awareness camps and village level meetings.

However, the effectiveness of these measures is not visible at the operational level as people still seem ignorant about the Scheme and the rights and entitlements of the workers. Consequently, it can be concluded that this component has not been properly addressed to. In the absence of the PRIs in the State and the non-inclusion of NGOs, it is becoming increasingly difficult for the administrative machinery to educate people on the merits of the REGS.

48 Planning and Implementation of National Rural Employment...

In spite of the underperformance of the Scheme in the State, the Member Secretary, SEGC believes the performance of REGS in the State during 2006-07 is satisfactory and attributes it to:

1. Massive IEC activities
2. Adequate training of personnel at different levels
3. Involvement of Social Organisations
4. Involvement of public representatives
5. Adequate monitoring mechanism

However, in the field, the indicators of performance portray a dismal picture. The IEC component is yet to make a visible impact as most of the respondents in the field study indicated lack of awareness about the REGS.

It is interesting to note that district Poonch has out-performed district Kupwara in terms of the awareness levels about the Scheme and thus has occupied a prime position as a high performance district in the State (Table 15). This is yet again true of the awareness levels brought about in terms of the NREGA, RTI Act, Social Audit, officials to be contacted in case of the functional problems regarding job cards, non-provision of work and delayed payments. About 50 per cent of the workers did not possess the job cards in district Kupwara whereas in Poonch all the workers possess the job cards. The workers have been incurring higher amounts of expenditure in district Kupwara for getting job cards and a negligible proportion of the job cardholders have been keeping job cards with them while going to work in Kupwara. Besides, the practice of making entries of employment and wages paid in the job cards is less than 50 per cent in Kupwara and about 98 per cent in district Poonch. There is a high incidence of job cards being either left behind at home or keeping it with the departmental functionary. Again the awareness level of the requirements for getting work under REGS is significantly low in district Kupwara as compared to district Poonch, where the level of awareness is as high as 100 per cent. However, the knowledge about methods of seeking work is abysmal in both the districts (Tables 15 to 21). In fact, most of REGS workers in sample GPs of Kupwara district are migrant labour from other states.

Table 15 : Distribution of workers: awareness level-wise

District	Aware of entitlements	Max. No. of days of employment	Wages to be paid if work is given beyond 5 kms of GP	Unemployment allowance	Minimum wages to be paid	Time limit for providing employment	Time limit for payment of wages
Kupwara	19 32.2%	16 27.1%	16 27.1%	5 8.5%	17 28.8%	18 30.5%	—
Poonch	60 100.0%	60 100.0%	49 81.7%	58 96.7%	60 100.0%	60 100.0%	—
Total	79 66.4%	76 63.9%	65 54.6%	63 52.9%	77 64.7%	78 65.5%	—

— : Not aware / did not respond.

Table 16 : Distribution of workers by levels of awareness about NREG: responses against six questions on NREG

District	Nil (0)	Only 1 (1)	Only 2 (2)	Only 3 (3)	Only 4 (4)	Only 5 (5)	All six (6)	Average score (%)
Kupwara	41 69.5%	—	—	2 3.4%	14 23.7%	2 3.4%	—	20.3
Poonch	—	—	—	2 3.3%	9 15.0%	49 81.7%	—	79.7
Total	41 34.5%	—	—	4 3.4%	23 19.3%	51 42.9%	—	50.3

Table 17 : Distribution of workers: awareness level-wise (RTI Act and Social Audit)

District	RTI Act	Social Audit
Kupwara	7 11.9%	22 37.3%
Poonch	42 70.0%	40 66.7%
Total	49 41.2%	62 52.1%

Table 18 : Distribution of workers: GP as source of information for REGS, RTI and Social Audit

District	REGS		RTI		Social Audit	
	GP	Official	GP	Official	GP	Official
Kupwara	5 8.4%	37 62.7%	—	6 10.2%	—	19 32.2%
Poonch	60 100.0%	—	46 76.6%	—	41 68.3%	—
Total	65 54.6%	37 31.1%	46 38.6%	6 5.04%	41 34.5%	19 16.0%

Table 19 : Distribution of workers: awareness about officials to be contacted if

District	Job cards are not given	Work is not given within 15 days	Wages are not paid within 15 days
Kupwara	31 52.5%	21 35.6%	22 37.3%
Poonch	60 100.0%	60 100.0%	60 100.0%
Total	91 76.5%	81 68.1%	82 68.9%

Table 20 : Distribution of workers : job card registration and possession

District	Who was registered for the job card		Possession of job card by self	Expenditure incurred, if any, for getting job card	Keeping job card while going for work*	Making entries of employment and wages paid in the job card #
	Female	Male				
Kupwara	1 1.7%	58 98.3%	29 49.2%	3@ 5.1%	2 3.4%	27 45.8%
Poonch	—	60 100.0%	60 100.0%	2 3.3%	51 85.0%	59 98.3%
Total	1 0.8%	118 99.2%	89 74.8%	5 4.2%	53 44.5%	86 72.3%

* For others, the job card is left behind at home or it is with the Sevak / Programme Staff / Others.

#: Entries by Gram Sevak or other designated official.

@: Rs. 50/- on an average.

Table 21 : Distribution of workers: awareness level of requirements for getting work

District	Application to be given
Kupwara	39 66.1%
Poonch	60 100.0%
Total	99 83.2%

22 : Distribution of workers: knowledge of methods of seeking work

District	Can get employment without			
	Job Card		Application	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Kupwara	4 6.8%	45 93.2%	4 6.8%	55 93.2%
Poonch	3 5.0%	57 95.0%	2 3.3%	58 96.7%
Total	7 5.9%	112 94.1%	6 5.0%	113 95.0%

Community Participation

The community participation in Kupwara in REGS during REGS was not very satisfactory partly because of the substantial difference between the market wage and NREGS wage. In the other development schemes also the participation of outside labour for manual work is more a common event. In the absence of the Gram Sabha's and awareness building campaign, the local community has not been involved significantly in the identification of works and their execution. On the other hand, in Poonch district, the supply of labour is abundant and the employment opportunities are limited. These conditions and the active participation of village committees, resulted in community involvement in REGS related matters.

CHAPTER IV

Planning, Implementation and Performance of REGS

Fixation of Minimum Wages under NREGS

The REGS J&K provides for almost all the provisions contained in the NREGA on the subject of wages and provides for a separate Rural Standard Schedule of Rates (RSSR) prepared for the works taken up under the Scheme. Presently, there is no RSSR in operation. Instead, the rates prescribed by the Engineering Departments' Standard Schedule of Rates in the State have been adopted for REGS. The unit rates for different types of tasks have been so fixed that a worker is able to earn Rs. 70 a day through seven hours of work. An exercise has already been initiated to formulate the District/ Rural Standard Schedule of Rates for REGS in the State as stated in the foregoing analysis.

The low minimum wage of Rs. 70 per day in a labour-scarce State like J&K has been the key factor responsible for weak response from the local job seekers as the market wage for most of the time ranges between Rs. 100-150 per day for similar works. The REGS J&K during 2006-07 has no provision for the unemployment allowance to an applicant who is not provided employment within fifteen days of the receipt of application or from the date on which the employment has been sought.

No Time-Work-Motion Studies have been conducted for various works in different regions and seasons. However, during the lean agriculture periods particularly from November to February, most of the labour force remains presumably idle and a marginal proportion of agriculture labour migrate outside the State. No statistical estimate is however available on this account. They should at least adjust the minimum wage for agriculture workers fixed in 2004 for inflation and this moving wage can be used in REGS.

Issue of Job Cards

The State has a perfect mechanism of registration and issuance of job cards and, for this purpose, the formats are in place. On the basis of the field study, it has been observed that there have been instances where the employment has been provided even in favour of those who were not registered and in whose favour no job cards were issued.

Convergence

Regarding the convergence of other wage employment/infrastructure development programmes with REGS, it has been recorded that steps are being undertaken to integrate the IWDP (Hariyali) with REGS. However, at the operational level, no systematic/integrated planning mechanism is in place for convergence of different programmes. In the absence of the PR Institutions in the State, no pooling of funds has taken place.

Social Audit

Regarding Social Audit, the State has initiated the preparatory work. However, Social Audit is yet to take place in REGS activities in the State. Therefore, the workers' responses to benefits of 'Social Audits' have to be interpreted cautiously.

The REGS envisages provision of Social Audit and Right to Information. Social Audit is proposed at all the three stages of pre, during and post-implementation phase. Non-implementation of the provision of 'information wall' at Panchayat Headquarters with all the requisite information painted along with the names of the Programme Officer as Public Information Officer and the Panchayat Secretary as Public Information Officer at the village level shows the lack of commitment towards Social Audit and Right to Information. However, at the field level, no Social Audit has taken place and no report whatsoever, is available. Besides, the Field Study indicates the lack of information with the people regarding the legal provisions of the Act and the components of the REGS.

Regarding Social Audit, the State Coordinator (J&K REGS) confirms that the concept has not been grounded well in the State and feels the need for a national intervention of organising Training of Trainers (ToTs) on Social Audit who in turn shall prepare a sound ground for a genuine Social Audit of REGS. The National Institute of Rural Development (NIRD) has already started conducting the TOTs on Community Mobilisation, Social Audit and Vigilance and Monitoring. The mechanism that is being followed is that the list of works with the relevant details is being discussed in the Village Assembly (Gram Sabha). This is, however, a very fragile method with little initiative from the public to ensure effective implementation of the projects under REGS.

Monitoring Arrangements

A complete mechanism of inspection of works executed under REGS has been proposed compulsorily to be made by the officers to the extent mentioned below:

	% of works to be inspected (Quarterly)
i) Secretary, Rural Development Department or the officers designated by him	1%
ii) Director, Rural Development Department	2%
iii) Project Directors of DRDAs	10%
iv) District Project Coordinators	15%
v) Addl. Project Coordinators	20%
vi) Programme Officers	100%

Monitoring of REGS activities was undertaken, according to the officials, through frequent tours, inspections and MIS. Physical audit was undertaken, according to the officials, through regular inspections as per the provisions envisaged in the J&K REGS. Financial audits were undertaken through the Chartered Accountants and Auditors. The Internal Auditors have reported that the position is satisfactory although steps need to be taken in making the books of accounts updated and made available on time.

[For the period under reference, no audit of accounts has taken place at district, block and Panchayat level.]

Regarding transparency and accountability, the REGS clearly spells out the records to be maintained by the Halqa Panchayat and other implementing agencies in terms of the following:

Gram Panchayat Level

1. Application Registration Register
2. Job Card Register
3. Employment Register
4. Asset Register
5. Muster Roll Receipt Register
6. Complaint Register

Programme Officer's Level

1. Employment Register
2. Job Card Register
3. Muster Roll Issue Register
4. Asset Register
5. Complaint Register

District Level

1. Relevant data of the works falling within the jurisdiction of more than one Programme Officer
2. Preparation of Monthly & Annual Reports
3. Maintenance of Complaint Register

At each level, responsibilities are fixed for ensuring day-to-day completion of prescribed registers. Besides, Inspection Registers are to be maintained at all levels so that the visiting officers record their observations. However, at the operational level these instruments need improvement in order to ensure transparency and accountability.

As reported, the Department of Rural Development has established a full-fledged MIS for REGS and the system is working effectively at the field level. For this purpose, a uniform pattern is being adopted by way of information generation, records management, reporting and monitoring. However, the whole system of MIS is being handled manually which is time consuming and cumbersome. Therefore, it is proposed that the REGS software developed by National Informatic Centre (NIC) should be made use of. Alternately, a variant of the AP model can be considered.

Grievance Redressal Mechanism

As reported, there have been no complaints received in regard to the labourers not getting the wages, District Schedule of Rates/Rural Schedule of Rates, norms for measurement of works, publicity of REGS and release of funds to districts. However, it has been desired that wages have to be enhanced considerably under REGS. It is interesting to note that on the parameters mentioned above, there have been no complaints received or the problems encountered particularly in view of the weak performance of the Scheme in the State. Had the Scheme taken off in a real sense, the implementing agencies would have surely encountered problems on almost all the parameters reported above.

The Department has not as yet received any query or demand for information on REGS under RTI. It is hard to believe that people at large are well versed with different components of REGS particularly keeping in view the performance of the Scheme in the State. It can, therefore, be inferred that REGS has not been properly propagated and the people are still not aware of the strengths of NREGA / J&K REGS.

Regarding the achievement of the objectives it has been reported that the State has to a large extent achieved the objectives of transparency in decision-making, transparency in implementation and accountability of officials.

The performance of REGS in the State has been ranked as good during the period under reference by the State Coordinator and the factors

responsible for such performance match the responses given by the Member Secretary SEGC.

The suggestions proposed by the Member Secretary SEGC and the State Coordinator of REGS are as follows :

1. Reallocation of funds across districts for better utilisation of funds. It is believed that the arrangement shall give better leverage to the State for timely mobilisation of resources.
2. Taking up works on private lands. This will directly benefit the farmers and provide greater momentum to the Scheme.
3. It is believed that the choice of works, if entirely left to the State, can to a great extent help in addressing the local problems in the Natural Resource Management and help in the utilisation of resources to fulfill the twin objectives of enhancing wage employment on the one hand and conservation of natural resources on the other.
4. Follow-up works of Hariyali and other programmes to be taken up under REGS. Such an arrangement is viewed to enhance durability and sustainability of the assets created.
5. Reducing the distance of the work in hilly regions/more monetary compensation for the additional distance travelled. Such an arrangement is considered to benefit the backward areas and thereby reduce the gap in real income of the people in plain and hilly areas.
6. Special concession for physically challenged persons, women with infants and pregnant women. It is believed that special concessions in terms of the job facilities and the alteration in the schedule of works can to a considerable extent help the specified category of workers.
7. In addition to the above suggestions, uniformity of wages at the national level and construction of structures like pucca roads, buildings, etc., may be considered to be included in the list of works. Besides, the ratio between wages and material need to be considered with equal weightage.

CHAPTER V

Performance of J&K REGS at State/ District/ Block/ Halqa Level

The details of the financial allocation and utilisation, physical performance and the assets created under REGS in the State from its inception up to July, 2007 are given in Tables 23 to 26, respectively.

**Table 23 : Performance of REGS at State level and sample districts:
Jammu & Kashmir (2006-07)**

S.No. Performance Criteria	State	Selected Districts of NREGS from J & K	
	J & K	Kupwara	Poonch
1. % of households (HHs) demanding job cards work to households issued with	67.7	67.2	58.0
2. % of HHs provided employment to households demanding employment	100.0	100.0	100.0
3. % HHs provided with 100 days of employment	9.7	—	4.7
4. Utilisation of funds (%)	68.9	20.7	96.0
5. Employment days (Million)	3.23	0.13	0.80
6. Employment per household (days)	34.7	22	44
7. Share of SCs in employment (%)	5.4	—	—
8. Share of STs in employment (%)	23.2	19.4	50.5
9. Share of women in employment (%)	4.46	—	0.13
10. Cost of generating one day of employment (Rs.)	107	105	93

Source: MoRD website information as downloaded on 9/12/07.

Performance of J&K REGS at State/District/Block/Halqa Level 61

Table 26 : Assets created up to July, 2007 under REGS in J&K

S. No.	Activity/work	No. of works		Cost incurred (Rs. in lakh) Total
		Compl- eted	In pro- gress	
1	2	3	4	5
1	Water conservation and water harvesting (number of new tanks/ponds percolation tanks. Small check dams etc. to be indicated separately)	125	105	124.6
2	Drought proofing (in No. & hectares as well) (afforestation and free plantation and other activities to be indicated separately)	39	11	80.1
3	Micro-irrigation works (in No. and length in km) (minor irrigation canals and other activities to be indicated separately).	119	26	115.81
4	Provision of irrigation facility to land owned by (in No.) (SC/ST beneficiaries of land reforms & beneficiaries of land reforms and beneficiaries of IAY etc. to be indicated separately)	26	04	86.62
5	Renovation of traditional water bodies (in No. and cub mts) (desalting of tanks/ponds. Desalting of old canals, desalting of traditional open well etc. to be indicated separately)	46	15	93.15
6	Land development (in No. and hectare as well) (plantation land leveling other activities to be indicated separately)	260	145	196.89

(Contd...)

Table 26 : (Contd...)

1	2	3	4	5
7	Flood control & protection (in No. and length in km) (drainage in water lodged areas. Construction and repair of embankment to be indicated separately	313	284	319.63
8	Rural connectivity (in No. and length in kms)	281	300	344.56
9	Any other activity (approved by MRD)	28	58	74.45
	Total	1237	948	1447.39

Though the NREGA guidelines suggested eight categories of works to be taken up in that priority, the J&K in the first year of the REGS preferred the rural connectivity followed by flood control and protection, land development, water conservation and harvesting and micro-irrigation works. While village committees have been evincing interest in REGS works, more emphasis on awareness building of community might help in better assignment of work priorities.

Performance of Poonch District

If we look into the financial allocation and utilisation of NREGS in the year 2006-07, the total releases for the year were Rs. 704.22 lakh. Total funds available were Rs. 767.25 lakh out of which Rs. 737.03 lakh have been utilised (96 per cent) with the total expenditure including that of wages, material and contingencies to the tune of Rs.737.03 lakh (Table 28). The labour material ratio was around 71:29 and the administrative expenditure worked out to 2.1 per cent. The expenditure on semi-skilled and skilled wage was rather high (17.3 per cent). Going by the physical performance of the district for the year 2006-07, it can be inferred from Table 27 that total No. of job cards issued were 32,345 and employment was provided to 18,746 and a total of 7,90,145 days of employment was generated. Thus, on the average the participating household was provided with 42 days of employment. Nearly half of the total employment was availed of by STs. The share of women in total employment was negligible.

Table 27 : Physical performance of Poonch district under REGS J&K (2006-07)

Block/ Mandals	No. of HHs		Employment (Households)		No. of days of employment				Physically Challenged
	Total Job Cards Regis- tered	Issued	Appli- cations Received	Emp. Provided	Total	SC	ST	Women	
Poonch	4913	4913	2670	2670	134643	-	74701	10	-
Mandi	6451	6451	2294	2294	87280	-	25183	322	02
Surankote	7374	7374	4141	4141	205514	-	125007	-	-
Buffiaz	2604	2604	1491	1491	48723	-	31145	16	169
Mendhar	8299	8299	56086	5686	247818	-	12311	257	02
Balakote	2704	2704	1987	1987	66167	-	20139	112	04
Total	32345	32,345	18,746	18,746	7,90145	-	3,99,289	717	177

Performance of J&K REGS at State/District/Block/Halqa Level 65

If we look into the details of asset creation in Table 29, it is clearly evident that more works pertaining to water conservation, flood control and rural connectivity were taken. Total number of works taken up during 2006-07 were 941 out of which 727 stand completed and rest of 214 works are in progress. The estimated cost of all these works was Rs. 721.16 lakh.

**Table 29 : Asset creation in Poonch district under REGS
J&K (2006-07)**

S. No.	Activity/Work	Unit	No. of Works		Employment (mandays)	Cost Incurred (Rs. lakh)	
			Comp- leted	In Prog- ress		Total	Unskilled Wage
1.	Water Conservation	133	95	38			
2.	Draught Proofing	08	07	01			
3.	Micro Irri.	27	17	10			
4.	Land Dev.	14	11	03			
5.	Flood Control	555	425	130			
6.	Rural Connectivity	204	172	32			
	Total	941	727	214	7,90145	721.16	523.90

After going through the performance indicators of the district, certain observations made are as under:

- i) Only 58 per cent of households who were issued job cards were seeking work / employment and participating in REGS.
- ii) In the first year of implementation of the Scheme there was no State share available for the Scheme but in the second year the same was available.
- iii) Women's participation was very low and there is a need to evolve innovative approaches for promoting their participation.

66 *Planning and Implementation of National Rural Employment...*

- iv) The administrative expenditure was about two per cent and State can better utilise the funds by filling in all the posts recommended by the Gol.
- v) The appointment of supporting staff under NREGA is also under process which is affecting the implementation of the Scheme.
- v) Vigilance & Monitoring Committees at Panchayat level for supervision and monitoring of the works were not constituted and it should be given priority, more so in the context of people's empowerment.
- vi) Social Audit was done for the year 2005-06 and 2007 by organising Gram Sabhas at Panchayat level but it requires greater intensification for ensuring more transparency and accountability.

The above Tables vividly show low performance of district Kupwara on almost all the performance indicators. The analysis of the templates administered at district / block / Halqa levels was summarised and presented below:

District Kupwara in Kashmir Division- A Low Performance District

District Kupwara in Kashmir Division has been declared as a low performing district on the basis of the performance criteria including percentage of funds utilised, number of days of employment generated, number of amenities provided at worksite and timely payment of wages. The following Tables (Tables 30 to 32) present a holistic picture of the performance of REGS in the sample district of Kupwara in Kashmir Division.

District Kupwara: The total fund available to the district during 2006-07 (Table 31) was Rs. 931.318 lakh out of which Rs. 430.05 lakh was utilised giving a percentage expenditure of 46.07 only. There are wide inter-block variations in the allocation and utilisation of funds and in a significant number of blocks the percentage of funds utilised has been dismal as on July 07. The inter-block variations in the utilisation of funds can clearly be

Performance of J&K REGS at State/District/Block/Halqa Level 67

attributed to weak planning, implementation and monitoring mechanism followed in the district. Besides, the wage material ratio (60:40) has also not been adhered to as proposed in the Scheme. Block Langate has emerged as a high performance block in so far as the utilisation of funds under REGS is concerned which is estimated at 59.30 per cent and block Trehgam as the least performing Block with total utilisation of 14.65 per cent of the funds available. The figures indicate that even the high performance block has not been able to utilise more than 60 per cent of funds in the district.

The physical performance during 2006-07 (Table 30) indicates that only 72.12 per cent of registered households have been issued job cards. Out of 49,449 households in whose favour job cards have been issued, only 2.38 per cent households have applied for employment. There has been a lapse in the issuance of job cards and lack of motivation among households to apply for the employment. It can be inferred that there is a lack of awareness amongst the people about the Scheme as such and the legal entitlements thereof. In all, the district has provided 1.92 lakh mandays of employment during the period under reference (2006-07) and the share in employment of STs and women, was 22.1 and 0.15 per cent, respectively. The average number of days of employment per participating household was 18, 8.3 and 22 days, respectively in Langate block, Trehgam block and Kupwara district during 2006-07.

Table 30 : Physical performance under REGS in district Kupwara - (2006-07)

Blocks / Mandals	Employment (Households)		Applications received	No. of days of employment		SC	ST	Women	Others
	Registered	Job cards issued		Emp. provided	Total				
Trehgam	3665	3665 (100)	00	355 [9.69]	2952	00	73 {2.5}	00	2879 {97.5}
Langate	17504	6480 (37.0)	60 (0.92)	2421 [37.36]	43518	00	8880 {20.4}	78	34560
Total	68565	49449 (72.12)	1177 (2.38)	16934 [34.24]	192028	00	42520 {22.14}	281	149327 {77.86}

Note: Figures in [] are percentage of households provided employment among the households issued job cards
{ } are percentage in total employment against each category

Table 31 : Financial allocation and utilisation under REGS in district Kupwara - (2006-07)

Blocks / Mandal	Opening balance on 1 April	Allocation		Releases	Misc. Receipts	Funds Available	Expenditure on					
		GP	Blocks				GP	Blocks	Utilised (%)	Unskilled wage	Semi-skilled & skilled wage	Material
Trehgam	23.422	-	-	17.417	-	40.839	14.66	34.4	14.65	36.57	14.33	5.986
Langate	37.874	-	-	48.696	-	79.57	52.3	73.4	3.48	21.6	1.56	41.60
Total	61.29	-	-	66.12	-	120.37	33.48	107.8	18.13	58.17	15.89	47.58

Note: Rs. 27.46 lakh as printing charges included in the USB of Rs. 95.119 shown ACDs Column
Total availability of funds during 2007-08 up to 7/2007 was Rs. 525.949 lakh Exp. during 2007-08 up to 7/2007 was Rs. 107.909 lakh.

Performance of J&K REGS at State/District/Block/Halqa Level 69

The district has completed five works and 362 works are in progress (Table 31). A high priority was accorded to rural connectivity works followed by flood control and water conservation works. The number of (low) works completed as a proportion of works in progress also indicates the tardiness in implementation in the district.

The District Programme Coordinator has identified the following deficiencies in the implementation of the Scheme:

1. Lack of online connectivity between the State, districts and the blocks;
2. Lack of transport facility with the Programme Officers which is adversely affecting the reach of Programme Officers in their respective areas of operation;
3. Lack of training to field functionaries resulting in the ineffective implementation of the Scheme; and,
4. Lack of Rate Schedule of material. (This is because the Rural Development Department does not possess the approved District Standard Schedule of Rates).

Table 31 : Asset creation (2006-07) under REGS in Kupwara district

S. No.	Activity/work	Unit	No. of works		Cost incurred(Rs. in lakh)	
			Comp- leted	In pro- gress	Total	Unskilled wage
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(A) NREGS						
1	Water Conservation	No.	00	73	27.018	16.21
2	Renovation of Traditional water bodies		00	15	8.975	5.385
3	Land development		00	07	8.30	4.98

(Contd...)

Table 31 : (Contd...)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	Drought Proofing	No.	00	15	16.211	9.72
5	Flood Control	No.	02	78	32.229	19.33
6	Micro-irrigation		01	06	5.00	3.00
7	Rural Connectivity	No.	02	168	83.627	50.17
	Total NREGS		05	362	181.565	108.795
(B)	NFFWP Works	No.	215	14	158.565	95.14
(C)	SGRY Works	No.	332	30	112.088	65.449
	Grand Total		552	406	452.013	269.384

Suggestions proposed for improving the implementation mechanism of REGS in the district are listed as under:

1. Enhancement in the minimum wages
2. Reduction in the productivity norms
3. Provision of staff as per the provisions of NREGA/J&K REGS
4. Provision of vehicle to Programme Officers
5. Computerisation of records at the block level

The performance of REGS in Kupwara district has been considered sub-optimal. The performance, whatever achieved, has been due to the involvement of officials. Absence of the Panchayati Raj system in the State, lack of participation of NGOs and Social Activists have been the major reasons for sub-optimal performance. Mixed performance of the Scheme across different blocks in the district has also been attributed to varied availability of labour in different blocks and differentials in demand for work.

The suggestions proposed by the District Coordinator for improving the overall performance of REGS are as follows:

1. Reallocation of funds across blocks for better utilisation.
2. Decision to be taken up in the State on nature of works.

Performance of J&K REGS at State/District/Block/Halqa Level 71

3. Follow-up works of Hariyali and other programmes to be taken up under REGS.
4. Reducing the distance of work in hilly regions and additional monetary compensation for the additional distance travelled.
5. Special concessions for physically challenged people, women and infants and
6. Defining the role of engineers at different levels particularly with respect to the work measurements and payments to be made.

Block Level NREGS Performance

Block Poonch: The block Poonch in district Poonch is comparatively a low performance block. The financial, physical performance and rural infrastructure created in this block under the Scheme are depicted by the Tables 32, 33 & 34, respectively.

Table 32 : Financial Allocation and Utilisation (2006 -07) under REGS in Poonch block

GP	Unspent Balance of 2005-06	Allocation Releases	Releases (In lakhs)	Funds Available	Funds Utilised
1	2	3	4	5	6
Jhullas	40024	-	9.31		9.71
Dara Dullian	29849	-	1.91		2.21
Mangnar	37	-	2.06		2.00
Kunuyian	49601	-	3.01		3.96
Khanetar(L)	2558	-	4.71		4.71
Khanetar(U)	10100	-	4.91		5.11
Chandak	41500	-	5.01		5.43
Chactroo	380	-	13.26		19.30
Nangali	20460	-	14.00		14.20
Islamabad	136	-	0.50		0.51

(Contd...)

Table 32 : (Contd...)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Shahpur	97813	-	3.51		4.39
Dingla	41596	-	6.41		6.83
Banvat	66857	-	13.71		14.38
Mandhar	1143	-	4.70		5.11
Chasba	908	-	7.42		7.73
B. Chachian	89285	-	11.72		12.61
Dara Bagyal	10577	-	-		0.011
Degwar	193623	-	6.51		6.75
Gulpur	44521	-	2.76		3.21
Karmara	-	-	-		-
Others	-	-	-		1.10
Material	-	-	-	-	11.60
Block/Mandal	7,46,000	-	115.42	134.93	134.86

Going through the physical performance of the Scheme as shown in Table 33 in this block, the total number of job cards issued is 4,913 whereas employment was provided to only 2,670 (54.3 per cent). The employment per household was about 28 days.

Table 33 : Physical performance (2006 -07) under REGS in Poonch block

GP	No. of HHs		Employment (HHs)		No. of days of employment				Physically Challenged
	Registered	Job Issued	Applications received	Emp. Provided	Total	SC	ST	Women	
Jhullas	515	515	540	155	155	-	155	-	-
Dara Dullian	130	130	135	77	77	-	77	-	-
Mangnar	179	179	195	18	18	-	18	-	-
Kanuyian	135	135	160	45	45	-	45	-	-
Khanetar(L)	202	202	240	100	100	-	100	-	-
Khanetar(U)	227	227	250	64	64	-	64	-	-
Chandak	208	208	235	96	96	-	96	-	-
Chactroo	420	420	460	197	197	-	197	-	-
Nangali	282	282	305	113	113	-	113	-	-
Dingla	306	306	335	118	118	-	118	-	-
Islamabad	60	60	80	55	55	-	55	1	-
Shahpur	250	250	270	47	47	-	47	-	-
Banvat	396	396	420	186	186	-	186	-	-
Mandhar	270	270	302	48	48	-	48	-	-
Qasba	336	336	355	60	60	-	60	-	-
B.Chachian	443	443	475	90	90	-	90	-	-
Dara Bagyal	40	40	60	-	-	-	-	-	-
Degwar	355	355	375	120	120	-	120	-	-
Gulpur	159	159	170	82	82	-	82	-	-
Karmara	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Block/Mandal	4913	4913	2670	2670	74702	-	74701	1	-

Table 34 contains data pertaining to assets created under REGS in Poonch block and rural connectivity and flood control have been given high priority. All the 59 works taken up during 2006-07 were in progress and none of them has been completed. The estimated total cost of all these works was Rs. 23.31 lakh.

Table 34 : Asset creation (2006-07) in Poonch block

S. No.	Activity/work	Unit	No. of works		Empl- oyme- nt (Man- days)	Cost Incurred Total	No. Unskill- ed wage
			Comp- leted	In pro- gress			
1.	Micro-irrigation	-	1		470	32,900	
2.	Land development	-	3		4741	3,31,870	
3.	Flood control	-	17		8318	5,82,260	
4.	Rural connectivity	-	38		19775	13,84,250	
5	Total	-	59		33,304	23,31,280	

From our discussions with the block officials and perusal of the responses given in the block schedule, it is evident that

- i) the block was facing some problems in allotment of work to agencies and none of the line departments were involved in the execution of works and
- ii) supervision and monitoring the execution of works is another problem that the block was facing due to the lack of supporting staff.

Some of the pictures of NREGS works in village Jhullas of block Poonch can be viewed as under:

Block Surankote: Block Surankote is a comparatively high performance block among the six blocks of Poonch district. The data on financial, physical and the asset creation are furnished in Tables 35, 36 and 37, respectively.

Performance of J&K REGS at State/District/Block/Halqa Level 75

Data in Table 35 relating to Surankote block reveal that a total of Rs.1.61 lakh funds were available under REGS and entire amount was utilised.

Table 35 : Financial allocation and utilisation (2006-07) Surankote block under REGS

GP	Unspent balance of 2005-06	Allocation	Releases	Funds Available	Funds Utilised
Kalai	2730		350000	350000	350000
Shindhara	7070		550000	550000	550000
Bachianwali	22900		1434000	1434000	1434000
Lassana	55		1150000	1150000	1150000
Dhundak	37350		3029870	3029870	3029870
Sanai	80		1002110	1002110	1002110
Potha	62227	-	260000	260000	260000
Samote	74820		900000	900000	900000
Surankote	191530		2176650	2176650	2176650
Pamrote	58310		300000	300000	300000
Gunthal	1570		560520	560520	560520
Sangla Upper	-		508316	508316	508316
Sangla Lower	4990		1019990	1019990	1019990
Lathoung	100		1084230	1084230	1084230
Mohra Bachai	34910		535490	535490	535490
Hari	5390		900000	900000	900000
Dodi	-		575100	575100	575100
Mahrote Upper	6740		1125000	1125000	1125000
Mahrote Lower	100		876000	876000	876000
Phagla	11400		410000	410000	410000
Hari Budha	970		602900	602900	602900
Seri Khawaja	21190		51030	51030	51030
Seri Chowhana	19570		200000	200000	200000
Block/ Mandal			1,60,90,067	1,60,90,067	1,60,90,067

76 Planning and Implementation of National Rural Employment...

Table 36 depicts the physical performance of the Scheme in the year 2006-07 under REGS. Nearly 58 per cent of the rural households were registered and issued job cards. Of the households with job cards, nearly 56 per cent sought employment. The employment was provided to 4141 households creating a total of 1.94 lakh persondays of employment. Thus, on an average, 47 days of employment was generated per household in the block. The asset creation in Table 37 reveals that most of the works undertaken pertain to rural connectivity and soil conservation and a total of 7 works are completed out of 66 works and an employment of 74,242 days was created at a cost of Rs. 51.7 lakh.

The physical performance of the Surankote block reveals some shortfall in the employment provided with respect to the job cards issued. However, the asset creation shows only few of the soil conservation and rural connectivity works that have been accomplished and majority of works are in progress.

Table 36 : Physical performance (2006-07) under REGS –Surankote block

GP	No. of HHs		Employment (HHs)		No. of days of employment				Physically Challenged	
	Registered	Job Cards Issued	Applications received	Emp. Provided	Total	SC	ST	Wom-en		OT
Kalai	303	303	132	132	4236	-	3258	-	978	-
Sheindra	428	428	253	253	6757	-	4837	-	1920	-
BachianWali	446	446	651	651	19152	-	5145	-	14007	-
Lassana	562	562	513	513	14964	-	8801	-	6163	-
Dundak	123	123	79	79	2647	-	-	-	2647	-
Sanai	748	748	253	253	9848	-	7564	-	2284	-
Pooha	298	298	191	191	3235	-	485	-	2750	-
Samote	258	258	388	388	7464	-	2239	-	5225	-
Surankote	372	372	786	786	21792	-	13075	-	8717	-
Pamrote	73	73	85	85	3336	-	330	-	3006	-
Gunthal	730	730	722	722	6949	-	4968	-	1981	-
SanglaUpper	156	156	222	222	6605	-	4626	-	1979	-
SanglaLower	315	315	282	282	11436	-	6530	-	4906	-
Lathoung	341	341	425	425	13493	-	9596	-	3897	-
MohraBachai	328	328	178	178	6504	-	2926	-	3578	-
Hari	303	303	350	350	10068	-	5972	-	4096	-
MarhoteUpper	327	327	624	624	12436	-	12314	-	122	-
MahroteLower	214	214	203	203	8994	-	8994	-	-	-
Dodi	315	315	241	241	7000	-	3847	-	3153	-
Phagla	298	298	218	218	7240	-	4344	-	2896	-
HariBudha	373	373	597	597	7622	-	5335	-	2287	-
SeriKhawaja	156	156	17	17	585	-	84	-	501	-
SeriChowana	152	152	86	86	2166	-	1272	-	894	-
Block/Mandal	7374	7374	4141	4141	194529	-	116542	-	77987	-

Table 37 : Asset creation (2005-06) in Surankote block

S. No.	Activity/work	Unit	No. of works		Empl- oyme- nt (Man- days)	Cost Incurred	
			Comp- leted	In pro- gress		Total	Unskill- ed wage
1.	Rural Connectivity		05	54	60542	42,37940	
2.	Soil Conservation		02	05	13700	959000	
3.	Total		7	59	74242	51,96940	

NREGS works of Halqa Panchayat Shiendra, Block Surankote



Some of the observations regarding the implementation of the Scheme in Surankote block are as under:

- i) Although the Scheme has made some headway in this block as compared to other blocks, much more remains to be done.

Performance of J&K REGS at State/District/Block/Halqa Level 79

- ii) From the reports and the schedules, it is clear that in this block, the programme officer is facing problems like non-availability of technical/non- technical staff and it is essential that there should be a PO exclusively for NREGS.
- iii) There was problem relating to maintenance of records and filling of job cards also which needs further improvement.
- iv) It is suggested that beyond 5 km, the monetary compensation ratio be increased from 10 to 25 per cent.
- v) For overall monitoring and evaluation of the Scheme, it has been felt that there is shortage of staff to carry out multifarious activities.

Block Langate/Trehgam (District Kupwara): The Programme Officers in the two blocks have been working as Block Development Officers before their identification as Programme Officers. Consequently, the Programme Officers are looking after all the assignments of a regular Block Development Officer in addition to planning and implementation of REGS. The other additional jobs being looked after by them are the execution of all the schemes and programmes of the Department of Rural Development, MoRD, Gol.

The description of the training programmes organised by the Programme Officer, Langate shows that three Block Level Camps have been organised. The Programme Officers have not received any training in the preparation of the Perspective Plan although they have been personally involved in its preparation. It has been reported that the Gram Panchayats have submitted the Perspective Plans. It should be remembered that the Gram Panchayats referred to here are not the Gram Panchayats under the Panchayati Raj system but only a three-member Village Committees constituted as alternative agencies in REGS. The Programme Officers have reported to have approved the plans of Gram Panchayat annually and the blocks have formulated a shelf of projects for the entire year both for the block as well as for the Village Panchayats. There have been instances when the Village Committees have forwarded applications to the Programme Officers for allotment of work as per the requirements of the

village. The executing agency in the blocks is this three-member Committee and no other village institutions including SHGs and NGOs have been involved. As reported, no work has been done by Block Panchayat or any line department. At the block level there was some attempt in bringing convergence of other rural development programmes and schemes by way of taking up IAY and SGSY activities in the Panchayats where REGS is in progress. However, consolidated Annual Plans have not been formulated for this purpose.

The complaint registers are in place and during the period under reference only three complaints have been registered in Langate block pertaining to non-provision of employment within specified time, non-availability of facilities at worksite and mode of payment. The corrective action was initiated and the grievances were addressed to within a maximum period of fifteen days only. However, in no case the unemployment allowance has been provided.

In Langate block it was reported that the tasks were performed effectively including the publicity of minimum wages, ensuring payment of wages, scrutiny of plans, matching employment with demand, safeguarding workers' rights, ensuring functioning of Village Monitoring Committees, deposits into post offices, functioning of beneficiary committees and Social Audit. However, in case of Social Audit no report whatsoever is available with the concerned office. The activities that were not performed effectively included preparation of work estimates which has been attributed to the dearth of technical staff, lack of proper supervision and guidance. The non-availability of staff and transport facility with the Programme Officer are some of the major constraints.

To improve the performance of the Scheme in future, need for provision of adequate staff and vehicle along with adequate training arrangement for REGS staff with special reference to planning of REGS works has been observed. The Programme Officers in the absence of the Intermediate Panchayats in the State have created awareness amongst the Village Committee Members for the formulation of plans and implementation of

Performance of J&K REGS at State/District/Block/Halqa Level 81

projects / works. Besides, the Programme Officers have scrutinised the proposals and got them implemented as per the standing guidelines. In the absence of the involvement of NGOs in the implementation of the Scheme in the State, the Programme Officers (BDOs) emerge as the key persons in awareness building and community mobilisation for the Scheme at the block level. The schedule of monitoring has already been prescribed in J&K REGS with hundred per cent involvement of the Programme Officers in the monitoring and, as reported, the Programme Officers have not been able to adhere to this schedule.

The muster rolls designed for the works under REGS are being kept with the three-member committee at the village level for public scrutiny and the Programme Officers have been verifying the muster rolls where the works were in progress. The Programme Officers have not found, during the period under reference, any discrepancy between muster rolls information and the number of workers at site. The registers maintained in Programme Officer's Office include (a) Employment Register, (b) Job Card Register (c) Muster Rolls Issue Register and (d) Asset Register/ Complaint Register.

The blocks have not witnessed any problem with regard to the release of funds. However, there has been some problem with utilisation. Although the given employment demand has been met, yet the under-utilisation of funds has been due to the inadequate demand for employment (at wage rate of Rs. 70 per day). The block authorities have not been provided with the required support staff as proposed in the Scheme.

The Programme Officers report that they are aware of the Social Audit and the Social Audit exercises have been undertaken through a three-member committee constituted for the purpose and designated as Village Monitoring Committee. The feedback received from the Social Audit Reports shows the implementation of REGS as satisfactory. However, on enquiry no Social Audit report whatsoever was available with the concerned functionary.

82 *Planning and Implementation of National Rural Employment...*

Although no application has been received under RTI Act, yet it is believed that REGS has resulted in improved functional relationship amongst officers and a greater transparency in decision making and implementation. Significant variations in the performance of REGS across different Gram Panchayats is attributed to variations in the demand for work as the Scheme is fundamentally demand-driven in nature. The performance of REGS in Langate block has been reported good although, the present block is the highest performance block in the district and this performance has been attributed to the involvement of the officials and the awareness levels of the community. The performance could have been effective if PRIs were in place and NGOs/social activists were involved in the implementation of the Scheme. It is interesting to note that REGS has no impact on the wages of unskilled wages on other works in the study areas.

The financial allocation and utilisation during the period under reference, the physical performance and the assets created in Langate block are given at Tables 38 to 40 and the corresponding figures for Trehgam block are given in Tables 41 to 42, respectively.

Table 38 : Financial allocation and utilisation (2006-07) under REGS block : Langate (J&K)

GP	Unspent balance of 2005-06	Allocation	Releases	Funds Available	Funds Utilised
Shanoo			456635	456635	456635
GP Total			4093403	4093403	4093403
Block (Rs. lakh)	29.56		35.27	64.83	41.60

Performance of J&K REGS at State/District/Block/Halqa Level 83

**Table 39 : Physical performance (2006-07) under REGS block:
Langate (J&K)**

GP	No. of Households			Employment (Households)		No. of days of employment				
	Total	Regis- tered	Job cards issued	App. Rece- ived	Emp. Prov- ided	Total	SC	ST	Wom- en	Phy. Chall- enged
Shanoo	275	212	212	182	182	4705	1900			
GP -Total	13952	5136	5136	1881	1881	43600	73			
Other GP's	3552	1344	1344	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil			
GrandTotal	17504	6480	6480	1881	1881	43600	73			

**Table 40 : Assets creation (2006-07) under REGS block:
Langate (J&K)**

S. No.	Activity/work	Unit	No. of works		Empl- oyme- nt (Man- days)	Cost Incurred	
			Comp- leted	In pro- gress		Total	Unskill- ed wage
1	Road connectivity	4	-	4	2645	209750	185150
2	Micro-irrigation	2	-	2	876	80000	61320
3	Land development	1	-	1	714	49980	49980
	Total				4235	339730	296450

**Table 41 : Physical performance (2006-07) under REGS block:
Trehgam (J&K)**

GP	No. of Households			Employment (Households)		No. of days of employment				
	Total	Regis- tered	Job cards issued	App. Rece- ived	Emp. Prov- ided	Total	SC	ST	Wom- en	Phy. Chall- enged
Gugloosa Bala164	80	29	29	15	134	134	-	-	-	-
Laderwon	568	150	150	152	324	324	-	-	-	-

**Table 42 : Assets creation (2006-07) under REGS block:
Trehgam (J&K)**

S. No.	Activity/work	Unit	No. of works		Empl- oyme- nt (Man- days)	Cost Incurred	
			Comp- leted	In pro- gress		Total	Unskill- ed wage
1	Land Dev.	2	-	2	2876	3.451	2.013
2	Road connectivity	2	-	2	1875	1.311	1.311
3	Road connectivity	1	-	1	1033	0.723	0.723
4	Irrigation works	1	-	1	134	0.094	0.094
5	Connectivity	1	-	1	224	0.156	0.156
6	Connectivity	1	1	-	324	0.249	0.249

NREGS Performance at Panchayat Level

The approach followed by the Panchayat Secretary (VLW) in high performance Halqa Panchayat (Shanoo) for registration of households for employment was the door-to-door survey. The job cards were issued in the Gram Sabha especially convened for the purpose and the applications were received by the Panchayat Secretary individually from the people. The allocation of work was made by the Programme Officer and payment of wages by the Panchayat Secretary. The aforesaid tasks in the low performance Gram Panchayat (Gugloosa) have again been undertaken by the Panchayat Secretary but without any specified approach. This variance in the approach adopted can be inferred as the basic cause for high performance in Halqa Panchayat Shanoo and weak performance in Halqa Panchayat Gugloosa.

In the high performance Gram Panchayat, some problems were encountered in terms of limited people applying for the work and in the maintenance of the wage material ratios. However, in the low performance Gram Panchayat, no problems were reported indicating thereby lack of

Performance of J&K REGS at State/District/Block/Halqa Level 85

understanding of the Scheme and its implementation. The low performance is yet again attributed to the lack of personal commitment and basic understanding of the functionaries responsible for the tasks. It needs to be mentioned that the Panchayat Secretaries both in high and low performance Halqa Panchayats have received training with regard to NREGA, RTI Act, Social Audit and Planning.

It is interesting to note that the high performance Panchayat Secretary reporting not having very clear understanding of the provisions of REGS, RTI Act, Social Audit, plan preparation and role of Village Monitoring Committee (VMC). Conversely in the low performance Gram Panchayat the Secretary believes he has very clear understanding of the above mentioned parameters. The statements indicate that the low performance Panchayat Secretary is not very serious about his role and that he has little knowledge about the different provisions of the Scheme.

In both the Halqa Panchayats only VMCs were formed for ensuring community participation. One of the reasons for low performance in the district as a whole could be attributed to the non-constitution of Beneficiary Committees, Workers' Associations, User Groups and SHGs. Besides, the development plans for both the Halqas have been formulated with the so called community participation. However, as observed in the field, community participation has been limited and restricted only to a few members of community. *Gram Rozgar Sevaks* have not been appointed in either of the Panchayat Halqas.

Although in high performance Gram Panchayat, no problems have been reported in the functional relationship between the Secretary and the Programme Officer, yet a vacuum in the implementation of the Scheme has been observed. In the low performance Halqa Panchayat, a lot many problems have been faced by the Panchayat Secretary with the Programme Officer particularly with reference to the approval of plans, technical and administrative sanction of works and measurement of works. The statements seem anomalous but the fact remains that it is for the low

technical skills of the Panchayat Secretary in the low performance Halqa Panchayat that these problems have cropped up. This throws up scope for extensive training of Panchayat Secretaries who are responsible for planning, implementation and monitoring of the projects under REGS at the grassroots level.

In both the Halqa Panchayats the information on works and wages has been displayed properly though very ineffectively in the low performance Halqa Panchayat. Although Gram Panchayats have not been involved in the payment of wages, yet the mechanism that has been introduced for making the payments through banks/post offices on experimental basis is emerging as an effective alternative. No discrepancies have been found in the Muster Roll information and the actual number of workers at the site and the department has been able to provide employment to all those who demanded it. The reason for many households not seeking 100 days of employment is that the wage rates provided under REGS are considerably lower (Rs. 70) than the prevalent market wage rates (Rs. 100-150).

The Secretary Village Panchayat works in unison with the VMCs in the formulation of plans, implementation and monitoring. Social Audit is being carried out by the Village Level Committee only and the reports of the Social Audit undertaken have been satisfactory particularly in the High Performance Gram Panchayat. REGS in the sampled Halqa Panchayats, in no way, has had an impact on the out-migration of unskilled workers as the labour continued to receive much higher wages nearer their living areas.

Training of the functionaries at all levels particularly at the cutting edge level is emerging as a grey area which, if addressed, can considerably enhance the performance of REGS with respect to its plan formulation, monitoring and implementation. Besides, the VMCs, already constituted, deserve to have a regular training about different schemes of the Department of Rural Development, Ministry of Rural Development, Govt.

Performance of J&K REGS at State/District/Block/Halqa Level 87

of India in general and REGS in particular. Above all, constitution of Halqa Panchayats can considerably enhance the implementation of the Scheme in the State.

Gram Panchayat Jhullas: After analysing the Gram Panchayat schedules i.e. Table 43 on financial allocation and utilisation, the total funds available to the Panchayat Halqa were to the tune of Rs.9,45,690 out of which Rs. 9,26,961 stand utilised (98 per cent) during the year 2005-06.

Table 44 on physical performance reveals that total number of households registered was 725 and out of which 550 were provided job cards. However, application for works came from only 294 households who were subsequently provided employment. The average number of days of employment per household was 43 days (Table 45). It is evident from Table 45 that rural connectivity and flood control works constitute the bulk of works executed / under execution.

Table 43: Financial allocation and utilisation (2006 –07) under REGS in Jhullas GP

GP	Unspent balance of 2005-06	Allocation	Releases	Funds Available	Funds Utilised
Jhullas	985	12,00,000	9,31,000	9,45,690	9,26,961

Table 44 : Physical performance (2006 –07) under REGS in Jhullas

GP	No. of HHs			Employment (HHs)	
	Total	Registered	Job Cards issued	Applications received	Emp. provided
Jhullas	856	725	550	294	294

Table 45 : Asset creation (2006-07) in Jhullas GP

S. No.	Activity/work	Unit	No. of works		Empl- oyme- nt (Man- days)	Cost Incurred	
			Comp- leted	In pro- gress		Total	Unskill- ed wage
1.	Soil conservation	2	2	-	3892	277330	251020
2.	Flood control	7	7	-	4580	373860	292480
3.	Rural connectivity	9	8	1	4192	477300	269640
4.	Total	18	17	1	12,664	10,28,490	8,13,140

Gram Panchayat Shiendra: As per the Gram Panchayat schedule of Shiendra, block Surankote, the financial allocation and utilisation, physical performance and asset creation Tables are as under:

Financial allocation and utilisation (Table 46) of Gram Panchayat Shiendra reveals that total funds available in the year 2006-07 were to the tune of Rs 5,50,000 and 97 per cent of the funds have been utilised.

Physical performance (Table 47) shows that job cards were issued to 330 registered households while application for works received were only 173 (appox. 50 per cent) and the same were provided employment of 4,236 mandays.

The asset creation (Table 48) shows that about four works related to water conservation, one related to rural connectivity and seven related to soil conservation were carried out at a total cost of Rs. 3,97,810.

Table 46 : Financial allocation and utilisation Shiendra GP under REGS – (2006 –07)

(Rs.)

GP	Unspent balance of 2005-06	Allocation Releases	Releases	Funds Available	Funds Utilised
Shiendra	7070	-	5,50,000	5,50,000	5,33,520 (96.9%)

Table 47 : Physical performance (2006 –07) under REGS in GP:Shiendra

GP	No. of HHs			Employment (HHs)		No. of days of employment					
	Total	Regis-tered	Job cards issued	App. rece-ived	Emp. prov-ided	Total	SC	ST	OT	Wom-en	Phy. chal-lenged
Shiendra	901	330	330	173	173	4,236	-	3,258	978	-	-

Table 48 : Asset creation (2006-07) GP: Shiendra

S. No.	Activity/Work	Unit	No. of Works		Cost Incurred Total
			Complete	In Progress	
1.	Water conservation	4	4	-	87990
2.	Rural connectivity	1	1	-	5180
3.	Soil conservation	7	7	-	304640
4.	Total	12	12	-	3,97,810

Shanoo Halqa Panchayat: The financial and physical progress of REGS in Shanoo Panchayat can be seen from Tables 49 to 51. The entire fund available (Rs. 4.56 lakh) was made use of (Table 49). Of the total households in the Halqa Panchayat, 77 per cent have registered and all them have been provided with job cards. It is evident from Table 50 that only 182 demanded work and all were provided employment of 26 days. For the four works, the labour-material ratio was about 72:28.

Table 49 : Financial allocation and utilisation (2006-07) under REGS in Halqa Panchayat Shanoo

(Rs.)

GP	Unspent balance of 2005-06	Allocation	Releases	Funds Available	Funds Utilised
Shanoo	-	-	4,56,635	4,56,635	4,56,635

Table 50 : Physical performance (2006-07) under REGS in Halqa Panchayat Shanoo

No. of Households		Employment (Households)			No. of days of employment					
Total	Registered	Job cards issued	App. received	Emp. provided	Total	SC	ST	Wom-en	Others	Ave. No. of days of employment per household
275	212 (77.1)	212 (100)	182 (85.8)	182 (100)	4705	-	-	-	4705	25.8

Table 51 : Asset creation (2006-07) under REGS in Halqa Panchayat Shanoo

S. No.	Activity/work	Unit	No. of works		Empl- oyme- nt (Man- days)	Cost Incurred (Rs.)	
			Comp- leted	In pro- gress		Total	Unskill- ed wage
1	Roads	3	-	3	2684	280165	187880
2	Bunds	1	-	1	2021	176470	141470
	Total	4	-	4	4705	456635	329350

Gugloosa Halqa Panchayat: Tables 52 to 54 contain information pertaining to the physical and financial achievements of REGS in Halqa Panchayat Gugloosa. Out of the available amount of Rs. 1.17 lakh, about 77 per cent was utilised. Hardly 15 households out of 80 registered sought work and were provided nearly 9 days (per household) of employment. Canal desilting work was taken up during 2006-07.

Table 52: Financial allocation and utilisation (2006-07) under REGS in Halqa Panchayat Gugloosa

(Rs. in lakh)

GP	Unspent balance of 2005-06	Allocation	Releases	Funds Available	Funds Utilised
Gugloosa	0.54	0.63	0.63	1.17	0.9 (76.9)

Table 53 : Physical performance (2006-07) under REGS in Halqa Panchayat Gugloosa

No. of Households			Employment (Households)		No. of days of employment					
Total	Regis-tered	Job cards issued	App. rece-ived	Emp. prov-ided	Total	SC	ST	Wom-en	Others	Ave.No. of days
180	80 (44.4)	80 (100)	15 (18.75)	15	134	-	-	-	134	8.93

Table 54 : Asset creation (2006-07) under REGS in Halqa Panchayat Gugloosa

S. No.	Activity/work	Unit	No. of works		Employment (Mandays)
			Completed	In pro-gress	
1	Desilting of Canals				134
	Total				134

Performance of J&K REGS at State/District/Block/Halqa Level 93



Drains constructed under NREGS



CHAPTER VI

Profile of NREGS Workers - Jammu and Kashmir

Keeping in view the objectives of the Process Study, the planning and implementation of the Scheme was critically analysed at the State, district, block and Halqa levels. In addition, out of each Halqa Panchayat identified in the sample blocks as low and high performing Halqas, a sample of thirty households each was randomly drawn from the households registered with the Department of Rural Development under REGS. The study was undertaken with the assistance of local school teachers who were engaged as Research Associates exclusively for the purpose. After thorough training of the incumbents, pre-determined schedules were administered amongst the sampled households. The data thus collected are analysed and presented in the Tables to follow.

The analysis of the data presented in Tables 55 to 88 gives a comparative assessment of the sampled population both in district Kupwara and Poonch. All the workers are males in both the districts except two females (Table 55). Socio-cultural practices explain this low participation phenomenon.

Table 55 : Distribution of workers: sex-wise

District	Male	Female	Total
Kupwara	58	1	59
	98.3%	1.7%	100.0%
Poonch	60	-	60
	100%	-	100.0%
Total	118	1	119
	99.2%	0.8%	100.0%

The total number of sampled households in district Kupwara was 59 and 60 in district Poonch with the caste distribution of 1.7 per cent as SCs and

Profile of NREGS Workers - Jammu and Kashmir 95

98.3 per cent as general category. However, in district Poonch 56.7 per cent of the sampled households were STs, 6.7 per cent OBCs and 36.7 per cent as general category (Table 56). In both the districts majority of the respondents fall in the age group of 36-60 years (45.8 per cent in Kupwara and 58.3 per cent in Poonch). It is interesting to note that the percentage of households below age 20 years and above age 60 years is comparatively significant in Kupwara (Table 57).

Table 56 : Distribution of workers: caste-wise

District	SC	ST	OBC	OC	Total
Kupwara	1 1.7%	—	—	58 98.3%	59 100.0%
Poonch	—	34 56.7%	4 6.7%	2 36.7%	60 100.0 %
Total	1 0.8%	34 28.6%	4 3.4%	80 67.2%	119 100.0%

Table 57 : Distribution of workers: age group-wise

District	< 20 years	21-35 years	36-60 years	60 and above	Total
Kupwara	6 10.2%	22 37.3%	27 45.8%	4 6.8%	59 100.0%
Poonch	1 1.7%	21 35.0%	35 58.3%	3 5.0%	60 100.0%
Total	7 5.9%	43 36.1%	62 52.1%	7 5.9%	119 100.0%

Table 58 contains data on size of the household and number of workers. The household size and the number of average workers is significantly high in Kupwara while the dependency ratio is higher in Poonch marginally.

Table 58 : Workers' HH size and dependency ratio

District	HH Size	No. of Average Workers	Dependency ratio
Kupwara	8.5	1.91	1:2.2
Poonch	6.0	1.43	1:2.3
Total	7.2	1.67	1: 2.3

The occupation-wise distribution of workers shown in Table 59 presents an interesting picture of 86.4 per cent workers belonging to non-agricultural labour category in Kupwara and 73.3 per cent belonging to the category of cultivators in Poonch. By deduction, REGS in Kupwara is expected to be a sustenance occupation whereas in Poonch it is a supplementary occupation. This could be one of the reasons for the district Poonch to emerge as a high performance district in comparison to Kupwara where the non-agricultural labourers have more remunerative alternative employment avenues available.

Table 59 : Distribution of workers: occupation-wise

District	Cultivator	Ag. Labour	Non-Ag. Labour	Artisans	Business	Total
Kupwara	—	2	51	2	4	59
		3.4%	86.4%	3.4%	6.8%	100.0%
Poonch	44	7	9	—	—	60
	73.3%	11.7%	15.0%			100.0%
Total	44	9	6	2	4	119
	37.3 %	7.6%	50.4%	1.7%	3.4%	100.0%

Data on landholding status are presented in Table 60. It can be gleaned that REGS is more popular amongst the tiny landholders (less than one acre) in both the districts followed by landless and small/marginal farmers.

Table 60 : Distribution of workers by landholding status

District	Landless	Less than one acre	1.01-2.5 acres	Total
Kupwara	11 18.6%	43 72.9%	5 8.6%	59 100.0%
Poonch	15 25.0%	44 73.3%	1 1.7%	60 100.0%
Total	26 18.6%	87 73.1%	6 5.0%	119 100.0%

A perusal of distribution of workers on the basis of economic status reveals an inverse correlation between annual income and REGS participation (Table 61). The correlation seems logical in terms of the basic objectives of the Scheme. Most of the workers of REGS were poor even if one considers an average household size of 5 and poverty line of Rs. 23, 460 per annum.

Table 61 : Distribution of workers: economic status-wise

(Annual Income)

District	<Rs. 5000	Rs.5001- 10,000	Rs. 10,001- 15,000	Rs. 15,001- 20,000	Rs.20,001- 25,000	Rs. 25,001- 40,000	Total
Kupwara	25 43.1%	26 44.1%	2 3.4%	3 5.2%	1 1.7%	2 3.4%	59 100.0%
Poonch	9 15.0%	30 50.0%	17 28.3%	1 1.7%	1 1.7%	2 3.3%	60 100.0%
Total	34 28.6%	56 47.1%	19 16.0%	4 3.4%	2 1.7%	4 3.4%	119 100.0%

Poverty line 2004-05 for rural Jammu & Kashmir is Rs. 391 per capita per month. If we consider household size of 7.2, the poverty line would be Rs. 33782 per household per annum for 2004-05.

Table 62 contains information about the status and problems in procuring job card, since almost all the workers were males, the job cards were registered in the name of males. In Kupwara half of the workers were not possessing the job cards with them. In fact most of the workers in the selected GPs of Kupwara were migrants from outside the State. Only a few stray cases of expenditure incurred for getting job cards were reported. It is heartening that in Poonch 85 per cent of workers keep job cards while going for work so that entries can be made regularly in the cards.

All the workers in Poonch and a good proportion in Kupwara knew that application has to be given for work and informed that to get employment one has to possess job card and submit application (Table 64).

Table 62 : Distribution of workers: job card registration and possession

District	Who was registered for the job card		Possession of job card by self	Expenditure incurred, if any, for getting job card	Keeping job card while going for work*	Making entries of employment and wages paid in the job card #
	Female	Male				
Kupwara	1 1.7%	58 98.3%	29 49.2%	3@ 5.1%	2 3.4%	27 45.8%
Poonch	—	60 100.0%	60 100.0%	2 3.3%	51 85.0%	59 98.3%
Total	1 0.8%	118 99.2%	89 74.8%	5 4.2%	53 44.5%	86 72.3%

* For others, the job card is left behind at home or it is with the Sevak / Programme Staff / Others.

#: Entries by Gram Sevak or other designated official.

@: Rs. 50 on an average.

Table 63 : Distribution of workers: awareness level of requirements for getting work

District	Application to be given
Kupwara	39 66.1%
Poonch	60 100.0%
Total	99 83.2%

Table 64 : Distribution of workers: knowledge of methods of seeking work

District	Can get employment without			
	Job Card		Application	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Kupwara	4 6.8%	45 93.2%	4 6.8%	55 93.2%
Poonch	3 5.0%	57 95.0%	2 3.3%	58 96.7%
Total	7 5.9%	112 94.1%	6 5.0%	113 95.0%

It is encouraging to note from Table 65 that a very high percentage of workers have obtained employment within 15 days.

Table 65 : Distribution of workers by extent of time taken for giving employment

District	Time taken for giving employment			
	Given application for work	7-10 days	11-15 days	16 days +
Kupwara	41 69.5%	14 35.9%	25 64.1%	2 4.9%
Poonch	58 96.7%	22 39.3%	33 58.9%	1 1.8%
Total	99 83.2%	36 37.9%	58 61.1%	1 1.1%

However, no unemployment allowance whatsoever has been paid to any worker contrary to an estimate of 4.9 per cent due for the benefit in district Kupwara. The employment provided under the Scheme both at the household level and the worker level is significantly low in district Kupwara having a corresponding impact on the average wage income per household per annum. At the worker level the maximum number of days of employment provided in Kupwara per worker is not more than 16 days in comparison to 61 days in Poonch (Table 66). The worker in Poonch could get wage income four times than that in Kupwara under REGS is solely on account of better implementation. It is to be noted that during 2007-08, Kupwara made significant progress and such achievement has been made due to commitment of officials; a welcome sign.

Table 66 : Distribution of workers by employment opportunities sought / provided under NREGS

District	Average No. of workers per hh	No. of days of Employment provided per		Average wage income per household p.a (Rs.)
		HH	Worker	
Kupwara	2.25	18	16.0	1006
Poonch	2.63	52	61.0	4272
Total	2.23	37	39.0	2653

Note: Market wage the workers would have received is Rs. 141 per day.

Details regarding wages and wage payments are shown in Table 67. Obtaining wage slips can be construed as a right of the workers under REGS. In district Kupwara only 1.7 per cent of the workers have been issued wage slips while wage slips have been issued in favour of 85 per cent of workers in district Poonch. The cash payment has been made only to 69.5 per cent workers in Kupwara while cash payments have been made to as many as 95 per cent of workers in Poonch. This may be so due to the fact that the system of payment of wages through banks/post offices has been introduced in district Kupwara. However, only 64.4 per cent of workers have received the minimum wages in Kupwara while more than 93 per cent workers have received minimum wages in district Poonch. There is, therefore, a high incidence of workers who have not received even the minimum wages under REGS in district Kupwara (Table 67). The piece-rate wage payment without carrying out the work-time-motion studies (more so in hard terrains) could be responsible for this anomaly. It is surprising that several workers in Kupwara did not get the minimum wage of Rs. 70.

Table 67 : Distribution of workers by type of wages and receipt of wages

District	Time-based work	Wages paid equally for men and women*	Issue of wage slips	Mode of payment cash	Problems in getting full wage #	Receipt of Min. wage
Kupwara	48 81.3%	40 67.8%	1 1.7%	41 69.5%	28 47.5%	38 64.4%
Poonch	60 100.0%	60 95.0%	51 85.0%	57 95.0%	59 98.3%	56 93.3%
Total	108 90.7%	97 81.5%	52 43.7%	98 82.4%	97 81.5%	94 79.0%

*: Others are not aware;

#: Please mention the problems

The distribution of workers by the likely wage that they could get in the open market (in the range of Rs. 130-150 per day per person) is as high as 87.6 per cent in Kupwara while the corresponding estimate for district Poonch is 65.5 per cent only. The reason for REGS not getting popular in district Kupwara is the low minimum wage offered under the Scheme. Therefore, there is need for a review of the minimum wage (Rs. 70/ per capita per day) offered under REGS (Table 68).

Table 68 : Distribution of workers by likely wage (Rs. day / person) they could get in the market

District	Rs.100	Rs.120	Rs.130	Rs.140	Rs.150	Rs.160	Rs.170	
Kupwara	5 10.4%	—	2 4.2%	7 14.6%	33 68.8%	—	1 2.1%	48 100.0%
Poonch	—	15 27.3%	—	3 5.5%	33 60.0%	4 7.3%	—	55 100.0%
Total	5 4.9%	15 14.6%	2 1.9%	10 9.7%	66 64.1%	4 3.9%	1 1.0%	103 100.0%

In both the districts majority of the workers perceive the piece-rate system of wages as not disadvantageous to women but prefer work on time-rate basis (Table 69).

Table 69 : Distribution of workers by perceptions on type of wage and their preference

District	Piece-rate work disadvantageous to females-No	Preference for time-based work
Kupwara	59 100.0%	42 84.0%
Poonch	59 98.3 %	59 98.3%
Total	118 99.2%	101 91.8%

Again in both the districts, majority of the workers confirm the availability of Muster Roll at the worksite. However, mandatory facilities such as First Aid, Crèche and Shade are conspicuously missing in both the districts (Table 70) and this is a serious lapse. The scenario in regard to drinking water is better.

Table 70 : Distribution of workers by availability of muster roll and mandatory facilities at worksite

District	Muster roll	First Aid	Drinking water	Creche	Shade
Kupwara	47 79.7%	2 3.4%	22 37.3%	—	1 1.7 %
Poonch	59 98.3%	4 6.7%	58 96.7%	1 1.7%	3 5.0%
Total	106 89.1%	6 5.0%	80 67.2%	1 0.8%	4 3.4%

From Table 71, one can infer that about 88 per cent of workers were provided employment within the GP itself. No improvised tools were supplied to the workers for reducing the drudgery. In a few cases small amounts were paid for sharpening the tools.

Table 71 : Distribution of workers by working conditions and facilities

District	Work within the GP	No provision of improvised tools for reducing drudgery \$		Payment of money for sharpening tools-No
		Males	Females	
Kupwara	48 81.4%	—	—	51 86.4%
Poonch	57 95.0%	—	—	40 66.7%
Total	105 88.2%	—	—	91 76.5%

\$ No such provision anywhere.

Under REGS, people's participation in selection of works and Social Audits are envisaged. The status on this parameter can be seen from Table 72. In district Kupwara majority of workers are not aware about the works selected under REGS where as in Poonch 98.3 per cent are aware of the works. Besides, the practice of display of information is considerably low in case of Kupwara. It can, therefore, be safely concluded that the people's participation and information thereof in Poonch regarding REGS is responsible for high performance. However, the people have not taken active part in Gram Sabha meetings which is essential for making the delivery system responsive as well as responsible.

Table 72 : Distribution of workers by awareness about type of works and participants in Social Audit

District	Aware of works selected under REGS	Who participated in Social Audit / GS			Display of information on works at GP
		Sarpanch	GP Secretary	People in general	
Kupwara	19 32.2%	5 12.5%	34 85.0%	1 2.5%	27 45.8%
Poonch	59 98.3%	47 100.0%	—	—	60 100.0%
Total	78 65.5%	52 59.8%	34 39.1%	1 1.1%	87 73.1%

GS: Gram Sabha GP: Gram Panchayat.

If REGS has been implemented effectively, then a number of qualitative and quantitative changes are expected in the labour market which include rise in wages of unskilled workers in other activities. Data pertaining to this aspect are given in Table 73. The REGS did not have any positive impact on the wages of unskilled workers in district Kupwara. The reason was that REGS wage was well below the market wage. Opinions of the workers on the utility of Social Audits were sought and their responses were included in Table 73.

Table 73 : Distribution of workers by perceptions on benefits of Social Audit and impact of REGS on wages

District	Social Audits are beneficial	Positive impact on wages of unskilled workers in other activities	Nature of effect on wages in agriculture-Increased
Kupwara	24 40.7%	13 22.0%	13 100.0%
Poonch	37 61.7%	57 95.0%	23 40.4%
Total	61 51.3%	70 58.8%	36 51.4%

About 40.7 per cent workers believe that the Social Audit has been beneficial for the implementation of the Scheme whereas the corresponding figure for district Poonch is 61.7 per cent. In the focused group discussions, it is revealed that their understanding of Social Audit has been inadequate. The constitution of Vigilance and Monitoring Committees and their engagement at the worksites has been very low in Kupwara as compared to Poonch and their participation in Gram Sabha also presents a similar trend (Table 74); the situation in Poonch is an encouraging one.

Table 74 : Distribution of workers by views on performance of Vigilance and Monitoring Committees (VMCs)

District	Knowledge about formation of VMC	VMCs visiting worksites	VMCs participating in GS
Kupwara	24 40.7%	24 40.7%	24 40.7%
Poonch	60 100.0%	59 98.3%	31 51.7%
Total	84	83	55

70.6% 69.7% 46.2%

Regarding the perception of workers on the quality of three major assets created, only 1.7 per cent believe that the assets created have been very good in quality in Kupwara while majority (59.3 per cent) believe that the quality has been good (Tables 75 to 77).

Table 75 : Distribution of workers by opinions on quality of assets created – asset –1 *

District (weights)	Very Good (3)	Good (2)	Average (1)	Not Good(0)	Don't know **	Ave. Score %
Kupwara	1 1.7%	35 59.3%	8 13.6%	2 3.4%	13 22.0%	58.7
Poonch	—	—	—	—	60	—
					100.0%	

* : Name of the asset is recorded.

** : These are individual opinions. We can ignore the ' Don't Know ' responses as they do not help us in qualitative assessment. So the scores must change everywhere.

Table 76 : Distribution of workers by opinions on quality of assets created - asset –2 *

District (weights)	Very Good (3)	Good (2)	Average (1)	Not Good(0)	Don't know	Ave. Score %
Kupwara	—	22 37.3%	5 8.5%	3 5.1%	- 60	54.4
Poonch	—	—	—	—	100.0%	—

* : Name of the asset is recorded.

Table 77: Distribution of workers by opinions on quality of assets created - asset –3 *

District (weights)	Very Good (3)	Good (2)	Average (1)	Not Good(0)	Don't know	Ave. Score %
Kupwara	-	22 37.3%	5 8.5%	3 5.1%	29 49.2%	54.4
Poonch	—	—	—	—	60	—
					100.0%	

* : Name of the asset is recorded.

The realisation of Right to Work and Right to Information as perceived by the workers has been significantly low in Kupwara (Table 78). However, most of them have no clear understanding of the concept of 'Right to Information'.

Table 78 : Distribution of workers by perceptions on REGS benefits to the Community and Development Agencies

District	Demanding services from		Bringing together GP / CBOs, NGOs, Officials as partners	Realisation by workers about		Creation # of useful assets in GP
	Officials	GP/Village committee		Right to work	Right to information	
Kupwara	29 49.2%	—	26 44.1%	28 47.5%	28 47.5%	36 61.0%
Poonch	43 71.7%	53 88.3%	35 58.3%	59 98.3%	49 81.7%	59 98.3%
Total	72 60.5%	53 44.5%	61 51.3%	87 73.1%	77 64.7%	95 79.8%

#: We can value their views on usefulness though they do not know the quality part.

The majority of the households in Kupwara believe that effective implementation of REGS can reduce the incidence of migration of unskilled adults both at household and village levels (Table 79).

Table 79 : Distribution of workers by perceptions on REGS and reduction of migration of unskilled adults

District (weights)	At household level				At village level			
	Considerably (2)	Mod-erately (1)	No effect (0)	Score (%)	Considerably (2)	Mod-erately (1)	No effect (0)	Score (%)
Kupwara	30 50.8%	2 3.4%	16 27.1%	64.6	30 50.8%	2 3.4%	16 27.1%	64.6
Poonch	24 40.0%	32 53.3%	1 1.7%	70.2	14 23.3%	43 71.7%	—	62.3

The average score for the perception of workers about the effectiveness of REGS implementation is significantly low in Kupwara as compared to district Poonch where the average score is more than 95 per cent (Table 80).

Table 80 : Distribution of workers by views on effectiveness of REGS implementation

District (weights)	Very effective (3)	Effective (2)	Less effective (1)	Not effective (0)	Cannot say \$	Total	Score (%)
Kupwara	6 10.2%	18 30.5%	20 33.9%	7 11.9%	8 13.6%	59 100.0%	48.4
Poonch	42 70.0%	6 10.0%	—	—	12 20.0%	60 100.0%	95.8
Total	48 40.3%	24 20.2%	20 16.8%	7 5.9%	20 16.8%	119 100.0%	71.4

\$: Same logic as in previous Tables.

Table 81 : Distribution of workers by opinions on contribution of Village Committee members to effective implementation of REGS

District (weights)	Large extent (2)	To some extent (1)	Not at all (0)	Cannot say \$	Total	Score %
Kupwara	—	—	1 1.7%	58 98.3%	59 100.0%	—
Poonch	54 90.0%	1 1.7%	—	5 8.3%	60 100.0%	99.1
Total	54 45.4%	1 0.8%	1 0.8%	63 52.9%	119 100.0%	97.3

\$: Same logic as in previous Tables.

The contribution of officials in the implementation of REGS has been significant in both the districts (Table 82). The observations are well taken particularly in view of the non-availability of PRIs in the State.

Table 82 : Distribution of workers by opinions on contribution of officials to effective implementation of REGS

District (weights)	Large extent (2)	To some extent (1)	Not at all (0)	Cannot say \$	Total	Score %
Kupwara	47 79.7%	4 6.8%	—	8 13.6%	59 100.0%	96.1
Poonch	33 55.0%	21 35.0%	—	6 10.0%	60 100.0%	80.5
Total	80 67.2%	25 21.0%	—	14 11.8%	119 100.0%	88.1

The contribution of awareness of community to effective implementation of REGS is again believed strongly in district Poonch in comparison to district Kupwara as the former is already reaping the benefits of high incidence of awareness level of community regarding different components of REGS (Table 83).

Table 83 : Distribution of workers by opinions on contribution of awareness levels of community to effective implementation of REGS

District (weights)	Large extent (2)	To some extent (1)	Not at all (0)	Cannot say \$	Total	Score %
Kupwara	7 11.9%	42 71.2%	2 3.4%	8 13.6%	59 100.0%	54.9
Poonch	35 58.3%	2 3.3%	—	23 38.3%	60 100.0%	97.3
Total	42 35.3%	44 37.0%	2 1.7%	31 26.1%	119 100.0%	72.7

The contribution of local institutions (e.g. Village Committee) to a considerable extent is believed to be responsible for the effective implementation of REGS in Poonch (Table 84). In both the districts, however, almost all the workers believe that Village Committee Members and GP Secretary have contributed considerably to the effective implementation of REGS (Table 84).

Table 84 : Distribution of workers by opinions on contribution of local institutions to effective implementation of REGS

District (weights)	Large extent (2)	To some extent (1)	Not at all (0)	Cannot say \$	Total	Score %
Kupwara	9 15.3%	41 69.5%	1 1.7%	- 13.6%	59 100.0%	59.5
Poonch	27 45.0%	—	1 1.7%	32 53.3%	60 100.0%	96.4
Total	36 30.3%	41 34.5%	2 1.7%	40 33.6%	119 100.0%	71.5

Although at present there are no Panchayats in place, yet the workers believe that the dispensation provided under REGS can to a considerable extent improve the knowledge of Panchayats in decision making particularly at the cutting edge level. However, as a point of departure it can be safely concluded that with the implementation of REGS in the State, the total number of days of employment across all groups has increased considerably and consequently the household wages received annually also went up.

Table 85 : Distribution of workers by opinions on perceptions on improved knowledge of Village Committee on decision-making

District (weights)	Large extent (2)	To some extent (1)	Not at all (0)	Cannot say \$	Total	Score %
Kupwara	—	3 5.1%	5 8.5%	44 86.4%	59 100.0%	68.8
Poonch	53 88.3%	—	—	7 11.7%	60 100.0%	100.0
Total	53 44.5%	3 2.5%	5 4.2%	58 48.7%	119 100.0%	89.3

The key indicator of REGS effectiveness is employment offered to the workers and consequential monetary benefits to the workers / households. Tables 86 and 87 contain relevant information on this dimension. Among the caste groups, more workers participated among ST households. On an average, 39 days employment was provided per household under REGS in J&K and household earnings were of the order of Rs. 2653.

Table 86 : Caste-group-wise number of workers

Caste Group	No. of hhs.	Total number of REGS workers
SC	1	1
ST	34	44
OBC	4	4
OC	80	82
Total	119	131

Table 87 : Employment and wages under REGS

(Per household)

Caste Group	Total number of days of employment (in the absence of REGS)	Market wage rate (Rs. / day)	Employment through REGS	Total wage received from REGS (Rs. / per annum)*
SC	—	120	5	—
ST	37	137	59	4020
OBC	23	150	54	3797
OC	43	143	30	2047
Total	41	141	39	2653

* No. of days of employment x wage paid under REGS per annum.

Overall Effectiveness of REGS: To construct an overall effectiveness index for REGS, a number of indicators have been identified taking into account the various non-negotiable features and aspects of NREGA. These indicators are grouped into nine areas. The set of indicators area-wise are presented to a panel of judges to assign scores. After eliminating the outliers, for each area / indicator the maximum score has been worked out and sum of these scores is equated to 100.

Based on the data from the workers' schedule and also secondary data (on a few indicators), the scores on overall effectiveness were worked out for the study districts. The relevant data are presented in Table 88. The overall effectiveness score for Kupwara and Poonch are 45 and 64, respectively. On a number of indicators, Poonch has taken lead over Kupwara and in particular the areas of awareness, display of information and benefits to workers under REGS. The actual scores obtained vis-à-vis the maximum

score for each district help us to identify the areas of concern and these need to be given attention for improving the overall effectiveness of planning and implementation under REGS in J&K. Accordingly, the Rural Development Department has to pay special attention to convergence of NREGS with other RD programmes, worksite facilities, participation of workers in Gram Sabha and Social Audits, issue of wage slips, ensuring payment of full wages, generation of more employment in tune with actual demand, flow of benefits to SC & ST workers and creation of quality and durable assets.

The major causes for low performance in Kupwara district are low levels of awareness about key components of the Scheme including:

1. Awareness about entitlements
2. Awareness about maximum number of days of employment
3. Awareness about the wages to be paid, if work is given beyond five kilometers
4. Awareness about unemployment allowance
5. Awareness about minimum wages to be paid
6. Awareness about time limit for providing employment
7. Awareness about time limit for payment of wages

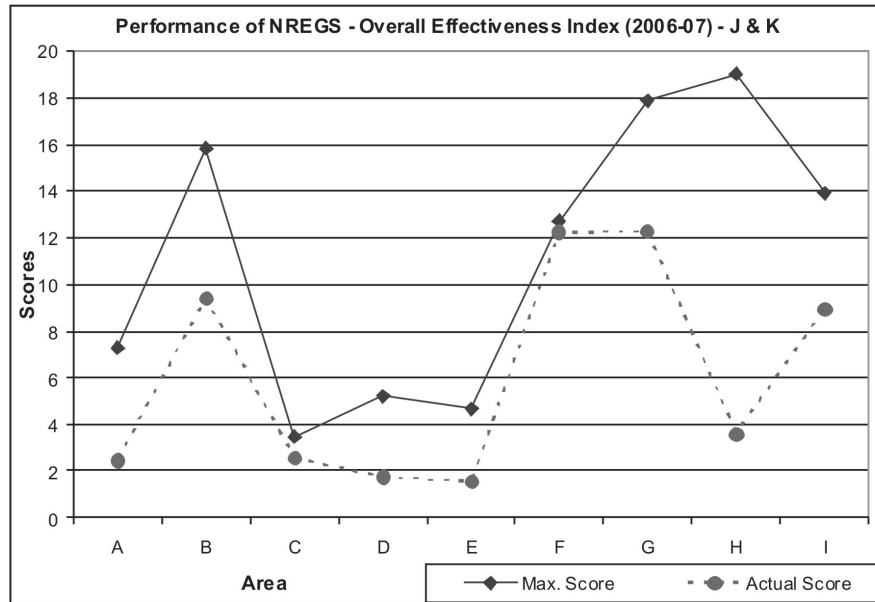
Table 88 : Performance of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) - Overall Effectiveness Index (2006-07) – J&K

Areas (Indicators)		Maximum score	Kupwara	Poonch	J&K
1	2	3	4	5	6
A.	General	7.3	1.68	3.17	2.42
	- Convergence of NREGS with other rural development programmes	2.0	-	-	-
	- Innovations	2.0	1.0	-	-
	- Utilisation of funds	3.3	0.68	3.17	1.93
B.	Awareness of workers	15.8	5.55	13.28	9.41
	- About NREGA provisions (days of employment, unemployment allowance, wages to be paid, time limit for payment of wages etc.)	4.8	0.97	3.83	0.49
	- About RTI	1.5	0.18	1.05	0.62
	- About Social Audit	2.2	0.82	1.47	1.15
	- About Official to be contacted and procedure for seeking work	3.1	2.09	3.04	2.57
	- About VMC and <i>Rozgar Sevak</i>	1.6	0.65	1.33	0.99
	- About works under REGS	2.6	0.84	2.56	1.70
C.	Display of information on works and wages at Gram Panchayat (GP)	3.5	1.60	3.50	2.55
D.	Worksite facilities (shade, creche, first aid, drinking water, muster roll)	5.2	1.27	2.17	1.72
E.	Participation of workers in Gram Sabha and Social Audits	4.7	1.57	1.57	1.57
F.	Issue of job card and time taken for provision of employment	12.7	12.42	12.06	12.24
	- Provision of work within 15 days	9.0	8.56	8.84	8.70

(Contd...)

Table 88 : (Contd...)

1	2	3	4	5	6
	- % of households which obtained the job cards free of cost	3.7	3.50	3.58	3.54
G.	Payment of wages (within 15 days and full payment)	17.9	11.07	13.45	12.26
	- Receipt of minimum and equal wages	4.8	3.17	4.51	3.84
	- Timely payment	5.9	5.90	5.90	5.90
	- Issue of wage slips	3.5	0.06	2.98	1.52
	- No problems in receipt of full wages	3.7	1.94	0.06	1.00
H.	Gains / Benefits	19.0	1.81	5.31	3.56
	- Average number of days of employment	6.3	1.13	3.28	2.21
	- % share of SCs and STs in employment	3.5	0.68	1.77	1.23
	- % share of women in employment	3.6	0	0	0
	- % hhs with 100 days of employment	5.6	0	0.26	0.13
I.	Perceptions of workers	13.9	7.99	9.82	8.91
	- Realisation about 'Right to work'	1.9	0.90	1.87	1.39
	- Realisation about 'Right to information'	1.2	0.57	0.98	0.78
	- Quality of assets created	1.7	0.94	0	0.47
	- Usefulness of assets to community	1.7	1.04	1.67	1.36
	- Realisation that people can demand work from officials & GP	2.0	0.49	1.60	1.05
	- Effect of REGS - Increase of wages of unskilled workers in other works	1.9	1.90	0.77	1.34
	- Reduction in the migration due to NREGS	1.4	0.90	0.87	0.89
	- More informed about decision making at GP	1.1	0.76	1.10	0.93
	- Effectiveness of planning and implementation of REGS	1.0	0.48	0.96	0.72
J.	Overall Effectiveness of REGS	100.0	44.96	64.33	54.64



A: General; B: Awareness of workers; C: Display of information on works and wages at GP; D: Worksite facilities; E: Participation of workers in GS and Social Audits; F: Issue of job card and time taken for provision of employment; G: Payment of wages (within 15 days and full payment); H: Gains / Benefits; I : Perceptions of workers

CHAPTER VII

Summary of Findings

- * In Jammu and Kashmir State, the Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (JKREGS) came into force from early 2006 initially in the rural areas of three districts, i.e. Poonch, Doda and Kupwara.
- * Although the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA)-2005 was not applicable to J&K in toto, yet the State Government has been implementing the Act in the form of a Scheme, of course without the component of the Employ Guarantee related 'unemployment allowance'.
- * The obligation of formulating a scheme along with the required provisions has been fulfilled with the issuance of the Govt. Order No. 99-RD dated 13-3-2007. (in 2007, the NREG Act was made applicable to the State).
- * The Government of Jammu and Kashmir has formulated a full-fledged scheme called the 'Jammu and Kashmir Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme' (REGS).
- * The Scheme is being implemented on a cost sharing basis between the Centre and the State in the ratio of 90:10.
- * Expected to be within six months from the date of commencement of NREGA, the Notification was delayed by more than a year. This has created some problems in the planning and implementation of the Scheme at the operational level. Thus, weak performance in the initial years of implementation can, to a considerable extent, be attributed to this delay.
- * Given the geo-physical setting of the State, no alteration was proposed in the list of REGS works / activities as there was, till recently, no forum available for concerted action in the form of State Employment Guarantee Council (SEGC).

118 *Planning and Implementation of National Rural Employment....*

- * The State constituted the SEGC vide Govt. Order No. 206 dated 24-8-2007 comprising nine officials and three non-official members. The delayed constitution of SEGC by about one and half years has adversely affected the implementation of the Scheme in the State. It is disheartening to note that the Council was yet to meet and assume its duties and functions as envisaged.
- * The State Government has not as yet created the State Employment Guarantee Fund for the purposes of implementation of the Scheme. Therefore, no systems and procedures are in place to expend the State Fund for the designated purposes – not even for meeting the administrative expenses.
- * In the absence of Panchayati Raj Institutions in the State pending the (PR) elections, an adhoc arrangement is in place for the planning and implementation of the Scheme. The alternative mechanism of a three-member committee nominated by the Gram Sabha at the Panchayat level with secretarial assistance of the former Panchayat Secretary, seems inherently inconsistent with the basic spirit of the Scheme.
- * The process and instruments of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) and mobilisation of wage seekers through Village Organisations, Self-help Groups and Social Organisers have not been systematically followed leaving a vacuum in the general perception of the people about the Scheme.
- * As provided in the Act, there should be a full-time Programme Officer responsible for the administration of the Scheme in the State. Instead, the Block Development Officer has been designated as the Programme Officer, who, is unable to dedicate full time to the Scheme.
- * At the district level too, despite the appointment of Asst. Development Commissioner as the District Project Coordinator (DPC), the District Panchayat Officer as Additional District Project

Coordinator and the Project Director, DRDA, the Scheme has not been able to fully achieve its objectives.

- * The State Scheme envisages very strongly provision of instruments like, Social Audit and Right to Information. However, at the field level, no Social Audit has taken place and people at large lack information about the legal provisions of the Act and the components of the Scheme.
- * The State has formulated a long-term Training Action Plan under REGS and submitted it to Government of India for funding. It is encouraging to state that the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India has approved the Training Action Plan and the J&K SIRD (J&K IMPA&RD) is executing the action plan in consultation with the concerned department from 2007-08.
- * Although the State Scheme spells out a specific mechanism of inspection of works across different levels of administrative machinery, yet inadequate fund utilisation can, inter alia, be attributed to weak monitoring as well at the operational level.
- * As envisaged in the Act and the State Scheme, there is provision for having a separate Rural Standard Schedule of Rates. However, the State is yet to fulfill this obligation. An exercise has already been initiated to formulate the District Rural Standard Schedule of Rates.
- * The (low) minimum daily wage of Rs. 70 that was last revised in the early nineties, has been the key factor responsible for the low performance of the Scheme in the State. The Scheme does not attract local wage seekers as the average market wage rate remains double this amount even in the lean agricultural season.
- * During the reference period there has not been a single case in whose favour Unemployment Allowance has been granted. To avoid such a perplexing situation, in most cases no receipt is being provided to the applicants and no date indicated in the application on which the employment is sought.

120 Planning and Implementation of National Rural Employment....

- * The State has a useful mechanism of registration and issuance of job cards. However, it has been observed that there is a significant incidence of cases where employment has been provided even to those who were not registered and in whose favour no job cards were issued.
- * Convergence of the Rural Development schemes with REGS has been emphasised in the State Scheme. And yet at the operational level, no systematic/integrated planning mechanism is in place particularly with respect to Integrated Watershed Development Programme (IWDP) and the REGS Projects.
- * In the absence of the Panchayati Raj Institutions in the State, pooling of funds as envisioned in the Act and the State Scheme, has not taken place.
- * The Department of Rural Development has reportedly taken a number of measures to educate people about the NREGA and the associated rights and entitlements. However, a majority of the sampled population seem to be ignorant about different components of the Scheme. As between Kupwara and Poonch, the latter is doing better on IEC front and consequent generation of a higher number of days (44 days) of employment. The institutional mechanism proposed for awareness generation has not been properly established, especially in Kupwara, and as a consequence, the administrative machinery finds it difficult to educate people about the merits of the Scheme.
- * It has been reported that wherever the labour migration has been high and the market wage low, the performance of REGS has been effective. However, field evidence is contrary to this belief. Therefore, it appears that labour abundant districts with little alternative employment opportunities can perform better and effectively in the implementation of the REGS.
- * No Work-Time and Motion Studies have been conducted for different works in different regions and seasons. As a consequence, time

scheduling and wage fixation of REGS projects is becoming increasingly difficult.

- * The Department of Rural Development has reportedly established a full-fledged MIS for REGS and the system is believed to be working effectively at the operational level. For this purpose, a uniform pattern is said to be adopted across all districts in terms of information generation, records management, reporting and monitoring as in Poonch.
- * The Department has not yet reportedly received any query or demand for information on REGS under the Right to Information Act-2004.
- * The Department of Rural Development has to a considerable extent achieved the objective of transparency in decision making, implementation and the accountability of officials in Poonch. But the Kupwara experience is contrasting.
- * There has been a consensus across different levels of Rural Development Administration regarding the suggestions for improvement of planning and implementation of REGS in the State which include:
 - i. Reallocation of funds across districts.
 - ii. Taking up of works on private lands.
 - iii. Decision on nature of works to be taken up in the State.
 - iv. Follow-up works of other Rural Development Programmes to be taken up under REGS.
 - v. Reducing the distance of the work in hilly regions/increased monetary compensation for the additional distance travelled.
 - vi. Special concession for the physically challenged persons.
- * In the low performance district (Kupwara), REGS is least preferred by most young and productive workers.

122 Planning and Implementation of National Rural Employment....

- * REGS in the low performance (Kupwara) district has been found to be of a subsistence employment opportunity whereas it seems to be seen as a supplementary employment opportunity in the high performance (Poonch) district. This could be one of the reasons for district Poonch to emerge as a high performance district in comparison to Kupwara where the non-agricultural labourers have greater remunerative alternative employment avenues available to them.
- * There is an inverse correlation between the annual household income and REGS participation. The correlation seems logical in terms of the basic objectives of the Scheme, especially in Poonch.
- * The high performing district (Poonch) has out-performed the low performing (Kupwara) district in terms of the awareness levels of all the components of the Scheme. By analogy, awareness levels of the people in general have a positive correlation with the performance of REGS.
- * Awareness levels about NREGA, RTI Act, Social Audit, official to be contacted in case of the functional problems regarding job cards, non-provision of work and delayed payments have had a positive impact on the performance of the Scheme. It is for this reason that in the low performing district, majority of the workers did not possess the job cards and the wage seekers have been incurring expenditure on getting job cards.
- * The employment provided under the Scheme was lower in Kupwara (22 days) than in Poonch. Moreover, minimum wages have not been provided to majority of the cases in Kupwara, which is unacceptable.
- * High market wage has adversely affected the performance of REGS in Kupwara warranting, therefore, a review of the minimum wages offered under the Scheme.
- * State can consider planning and execution of works exclusively for women workers. If such arrangements are acceptable to the local

communities then (poor) women can take full advantage of the REGS.

- * The preference for 'time-rate' or 'piece-rate' is mixed. In the case of the latter, the State should conduct systematically work-time-motion studies in different locations and types of works.
- * People's participation and access to information regarding important components of REGS are the key determinants of Scheme's performance. The other determinants include the positive role of the Vigilance and Monitoring Committees.
- * In Kupwara, realisation of 'Right to work' and 'Right to information' was also low. This in conjunction with perceived contribution of community awareness to the Scheme performance, suggests that the State should opt for innovative approaches for social mobilisation and awareness building.

CHAPTER VIII

Concluding Remarks and Suggestions

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme has been implemented in three districts namely, Doda, Kupwara and Poonch during 2006-07. The present assessment study covering Kupwara and Poonch suggest that the desired objectives of NREGA have not been fully realised. The overall effectiveness is found to be high in Poonch (64 per cent) and low in Kupwara (45 per cent). There are several reasons for this shortfall in achievement and some action points are suggested for rectifying the same.

- * Despite various initiatives taken by the State, the general awareness levels about the provisions of NREGS, RTI and Social Audit and the process of implementation envisaged etc., are found to be inadequate. The State should pay special attention to social mobilisation and development of IEC material in simple local language and ensure its dissemination widely. The reputed NGOs (wherever available), promotion of social animators (e.g. ICDS workers) are some of the ways and means of mobilising the rural communities.
- * Community participation is a vital feature of the Scheme which will help bringing greater transparency in the entire planning and implementation process and making the delivery system accountable to the community. The local organisations (workers' groups, beneficiary committees, CBOs,...) and Gram Sabhas have to play a key role in the planning, selection of works, monitoring and Social Audit. There is a need to institutionalise the role of the community. In this context, the Vigilance and Monitoring Committees can play a significant role. For active involvement of these facilitating systems, capacity building of the facilitators is a pre-requisite.

Concluding Remarks and Suggestions 125

- * The planning process is not very participatory despite the efforts of the Village Committee. Once the social mobilisation and community participation are effective, the participatory planning process has to be initiated for preparation of perspective plans and annual action plans under NREGS. It is to be noted that the yield levels of several crops in J&K are well below the national average and there is a degradation of soil and underutilisation of available water resources. The NREGA offers ample opportunities by identifying appropriate works to rejuvenate the agriculture sector in J&K. An integrated natural resource planning under NREGS would help even the Hariyali projects in planning its activities. The SIRDs (J&K IMPARD) need to organise training programmes to the concerned functionaries on the preparation of comprehensive participatory development plans under NREGS. In this context, it can on a pilot basis, prepare such plans for one or two GPs in plain and hilly regions.
- * While NREGA guidelines insist on convergence of other development programmes with NREGA, no effort has been made by the State so far in this direction. The pilot studies referred to above should take this issue as well while preparing the development plans.
- * Though under NREGA, the State is empowered to recruit a number of functionaries such as field assistants and mates, the existing staff are inadequate to meet the demands of the Scheme both at the planning stage and in its implementation. Action should be taken to recruit staff proposed under the Scheme at the earliest.
- * The role of information technology (IT) in minimising the burden of the functionaries, more so the engineering staff for preparation of cost and technical estimates for the identified works hardly be emphasised. The State may approach NIC in developing software to meet these requirements.
- * People's participation in Gram Sabhas for identification of works and also reviewing the progress of NREGS works has been found to

be low. As mentioned above, the Gram Panchayat / Village Committee should make special efforts in this direction so that the community ownership of the assets will be ensured.

- * Due to lack of awareness, the workers were not provided with the mandatory facilities at worksite. There is a need to educate the Village Committees about these entitlements of the workers under the Act and provide funds to meet the same.
- * Maintenance and updation of job cards is another area which merits special mention. The posting of *Gram Rozgar Sahayaks* and mates would help updating the entries in the job cards., regularly.
- * Participation of local workers was found to be minimal in districts like Kupwara because of the significant difference between the market wage and minimum wage. There is a need to re-examine the minimum wage issue (recently Government of J&K has enhanced the minimum wage of agriculture labourers to Rs. 70. But this was also well below the market wage of Rs. 150.
- * The piece-rate system based on comprehensive work-time-motion studies may offer some incentives for the local workers to participate in the programme, otherwise, the demand for NREGS would be moderate in the prosperous regions of the State. The State should immediately reexamine the entire issue.
- * While no irregularities have been reported in regard to payment of wages, it is desirable to evolve systems whereby the wages are paid to the workers through the bank or post office. This will ensure transparency and minimise possible corruption practices.
- * Though the VMCs have been constituted, their functioning has not been found to be very effective. There is a need to build their capacities in organising inspections to the worksites and preparing monitoring reports to PO.
- * The assets created under REGS during 2006-07 have been rated satisfactory. The State should ensure creation of quality, durable and

Concluding Remarks and Suggestions 127

useful assets to the community, if necessary by dovetailing the funds from other sources and programmes. The convergence approach would meet these requirements effectively.

- * During 2007-08, the State Employment Guarantee Council was constituted, but the representation of non-officials was meagre. There is a need to have a wider representation of non-officials on SEGC so that these members can monitor the implementation of SEGC independent of the state machinery.
- * At present BDO is acting as PO (additional charge) and it was found that BDO was not able to provide full-time dedicated service to NREGS. The need for creating a separate programme officer for NREGS has to be examined.

Annexure A-1

Description of Halqa-wise Sampled Households under REGS In J&K**A) Halqa Panchayat Gugloosa in Block Trehgam (District Kupwara)**

S.No.	Name of the worker	Parentage	House- hold No.	Job Card No
1	Mr.Yaseen Bhat	Mr.Samad Bhat	001	86
2	Mr.Sajeed Shah	Mr.Habibullah	002	80
3	Mr.Mumtaz Ahmad Mir	Mr.Mohammad Afzal	003	81
4	Mr.Sayeed Ahmad Mir	Mr.Khazir	004	87
5	Mr.Khalid Ahmad Mir	Mr.Ab.Khaliq	005	52
6	Mr.Ali Mohammad Ahanger	Mr.Rehman	006	-
7	Mr.Abdul Aziz Hajam	Mr.Satar Hajam	007	-
8	Mr.Slam Din Shah	Mr.Alam	008	-
9	Mr.Mashool Ahmad Pir		009	73
10	Mr.Sonaullah Shah		010	60
11	Mr.Habib Ganie	Mr.Subhan	011	-
12	Mr.Nazir Ahmad Shah	Mr.Ziuaral	012	-
13	Mr.Mohammad Younis Shah	Mr.Syed Shah	013	-
14	Mr.Gh.Mohiuddin Ahanger	Mr.Rehman	014	-
15	Mr.Yaseen Payer		015	78
16	Mr.Gh.Mohammad Shah	Gh.Ahmad Shah	016	-
17	Mr.Gh.Hassan War	Mr.Aziz War	017	-
18	Mr.Mohammad Ashraf Bhat	Mr.Ab.Gani	018	-
19	Mr.Wali Mohammad Dar	Mr.Akbar Dar	019	-
20	Mr.Jamal Lone	Mr.Jabar Payer	020	-
21	Mr.Mohammad Gulzar Shah		021	17
22	Mr.Arshad Ahmad Bhat	Mr.Bashir Ahmad	022	-
23	Mr.Asif Gulzar Bhar	Mr.Mohammad Gulzar	023	-
24	Mr.Ali Mohammad War	Mr.Ahmad War	0240	79
25	Mr.Abdul Khaliq Ganie	Mr.Samandar	025	-
26	Mr.Lassi Ganie	Mr.Subhan	026	-
27	Mr.Mohammad Akram Shah	Mr.Jamal Shah	027	-
28	Mr.Tariq Ahmad War		028	53
29	Mr.Gh.Mohi-ud-din Ganie	Mr.Subhan	029	-

B) Halqa Panchayat Shanoo in Block Langate (District Kupwara)

S. No.	Name of the worker	Parentage	House- hold No.	Job Card No
1	Mr.Mohammad Ramzan Sheikh	Mr.Khaliq Sheikh	001	231
2	Mr.Mohammad Iqbal Dar	Mr.Mohammad Sultan	002	91
3	Mr.Tariq Ahmad Dar	Mr.Shabir Dar	003	157
4	Mr.Gh.Mohammad Dar	Mr.Mohammad Sultan	004	293
5	Mr.Habibullah Shah	Mr.Khazir Shah	005	284
6	Mr.Mohammad Akbar Sheikh	Mr.Ahmad Sheikh	006	197
7	Mr.Tariq Ahmad Dar	Mr.Khalil Dar	007	220
8	Mr.Abdul Majid Khan	Mr.Gh.Ahmad Khan	008	140
9	Ms. Naseema	W/O Late Manzoor Ahmad	009	106
10	Mr.Maqbool Ahmad Dar	Mr.Mohammad Sidiq Dar	010	114
11	Mr.Shabir Ahmad Lone	Mr.Ahad Lone	011	248
12	Mr.Reyaz Ahmad Dar	Mr.Maqbool Dar	012	162
13	Mr.M.Yousuf Sheikh	Mr.Mohammad Asam	013	103
14	Mr.Mohammad Lone	Mr.Akbar Lone	014	155
15	Mr.Perveez Ahmad Wani	Sonuallah Wani	015	93
16	Mr.Bilal Ahmad Dar	Ab. Rashid Dar	016	171
17	Mr.Mohammad Iqbal Dar	Mr.Ab.Raziq Dar	017	83
18	Mr.Ab.Aziz Dar	Mr.Abdullah	018	209
19	Mr.Javeed Ahmad Dar	Mr.Sultan Dar	019	98
20	Mr.Ab.Kabir Ganie	Mr.Jamal Ganie	020	255
21	Mr.Mohammad Abdullah Ganie	Mr.Mukhta Ganie	021	226
22	Mr.Mohammad Akbar Ganie	Mr.Mukhta Ganie	022	145
23	Mr.Mohammad Khalil Lone	Mr.Ahmad Lone	023	313
24	Mr.Gh.Nabi Dar	Mr.Lassi Lone	024	280
25	Mr.Bashir Ahmad Khan	Mr.Sil Ahmad Sheikh	025	215
26	Mr.Mohammad Ajmal Khan	Mr.Wali Khan	026	232
27	Mr.Feroz Ahmad Khan	Mr.Ahad Khan	027	305
28	Mr.Zahoor Ahmad Shah	Mr.Jamal Shah	028	179
29	Mr.Mohammad Abdullah Bhat	Mr.Gulam Bhat	029	135
30	Mr.Mohammad Sultan Khan	Mr.Mohammad Khan	030	266

Field Observations

1. In Kupwara, the market rates are Rs.140 plus while the minimum wage rate is Rs.70 which was last revised in early nineties. Therefore, there are not many takers of NREGS works in Kupwara district and the little employment of an average of 10-days under NREGS was largely said to be made use of by the immigrant labourers from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. In fact, the entire road work is exclusively done by the immigrant labourers in the study block of Kupwara that borders the LOC. Thus, it appears that demand for wage employment was less for the native J & K workers at the prevailing minimum wage rate. However, wage employment means quite a bit to immigrant labour as cushion employment in the non-winter season. In fact, no NREGS work was taken up in the last winter season as all the immigrant labourers returned to their hometown, as is the usual practice.
2. Discussions with the Deputy Commissioner and NREGS officials of Kupwara district revealed that the road connectivity works under NREGS were undertaken with great difficulty for two concrete reasons viz., irregular availability of wage workers and harsh terrain with rocks in the pathways. When these rocks had to be removed for making usable roads under NREGS, use of machinery for removal of rocks etc., became inevitable as reported by the NREGS functionaries. However, the NREGS committee found fault with the block officials for using machinery as this was not to be entertained in the wage employment works. The D.C. and other officials were of the view that districts like Kupwara should be given special permission for use of machinery for laying roads in its terrain and near impossibility of cutting the rocks through wage workers by hand. The D.C. also mentioned that he had himself permitted use of machinery so long as the block level functionaries maintained the

overall 60-40 ratio of labour and materials at the aggregate level i.e., district level.

3. Over 50,000 job cards were issued in Kupwara district alone within a short period in the early part of 2007. However, only a fraction of the job cardholders had actually made their applications for work. Of the few applicants, even smaller fractions of workers had sought employment in the J&K REGS. As mentioned earlier, bulk of these workers were immigrant labourers who have turned in an average of 10-days of employment in the first block. While wage payments are paid once a week, the job cards do not show the details of number of days of employment, wages paid, etc. One often finds that the original muster roll hardly contained the actual names of wage workers who were interviewed by the study team in the second block of Kupwara. The entire REGS cycle of work payments etc., is handled by the VLWs under the supervision of the block level / district level REGS programme officer.
4. The Poonch district is quite a contrast to that of Kupwara in that the REGS works appear to be making greater sense to the local wage seekers alongside the immigrant labour. The terrain in Poonch is less harsh than that of Kupwara. Therefore, it is relatively easy to undertake watershed related works and road connectivity works. In a place like J & K, it appears that decentralised watershed / water bodies and other natural resources provide greater room for concentrated wage employment as has been reported by a development functionary. The study team's observations too, are similar. A large part of REGS works comprised works such as rejuvenation of surface water bodies, stone embankment for protection against flash floods, minor irrigation tanks etc. The expenditure incurred on these REGS works in the Jammu region is said to be about 300 per cent more than that of Kupwara district.
5. There is need for working out specific guidelines for states like J & K for the institutional systems as well, as the physical conditions are so very different from the rest of the country.

6. Piece-rate wages are preferred to daily wages in much of Kupwara. Going by the physical terrain and the hardship involved, it appears to make sense in following the piece-rate wage system. This would enable the workers to stagger their timings within a day and complete the project over a period of time that is convenient to them. A related point in this context is the emergence of contractors / middlemen who often bring groups of workers for executing the works in a given cluster at a specified time. This practice too, does not appear to meet the spirit of NREGS though its framework is very different in J & K for the reasons mentioned in the foregoing text. Absence of perspective plans, action plans, Work-Time and Motion Studies, District Schedule of Rates and REGS work timetables provides part explanation for this phenomenon. Inability on the part of the REGS functionaries to prepare a shelf of projects further aggravates the problem of micro-planning and action.
7. The local MLA lamented that the history of 'Halshari', meaning *shramdan*, has almost disappeared in Kupwara and elsewhere. Neither there is interest in the local population to engage in wage labour. However, the immigrant labour have contributed to the partial success of REGS in Kayran block of Kupwara. About 19 kms of roads have been laid in the first year of REGS connecting 5 villages under the supervision of the village level REGS (Three-man Village Implementation Committee) Committee. The REGS in the absence of the 'unemployment allowance component' in J & K, is very similar to the SGRY & PMGSY. In fact, under the PMGSY, 16,900 families have benefited through wage employment and related works. Over 1.92 lakh mandays of employment was generated. The break-up roughly works out to 60 per cent road works; 20 per cent water conservation and 20% minor-irrigation. As a negligible fraction of women in the J & K society engage in wage labour owing to a taboo, the employment days work out to a mere 10 days on average during 2006-07. In contrast, women work in large numbers in states like Rajasthan, UP, Bihar and A.P. This explains higher mandays of employment of up to

30 days in these States. The VMCs are conspicuous by their absence. However, the village level committees are said to be playing this role in Kupwara.

8. The Assistant Commissioner of Development is the REGS Programme Officer with the BDO as Assistant Programme Officer. They plan, implement and supervise REGS works alongside other works like the Boarder Area Scheme Works, RSGY, MPLADs, CDS etc. No additional staff has been deputed to work in the REGS. Neither contract staff have been appointed though there is need and budget for the same. The district schedule of rates that was submitted months ago is yet to be approved. In places like Kupwara, the block, not the district, should be the unit of planning. In villages of Karan block, a significant number of stone-based retention walls were constructed in the ghat roads sectors, for example, owing to comprehensive Block Plans. Reliable data in this regard are available from July, 07 onwards. Data on the number of job cards issued have been updated. All works are done through a three-member village level committee under a single window clearance system.
9. The REGS functionaries and Committee Members have been trained at IMPA and RETC, Badgam. Two district level REGS courses were organised at IMPA / RETC at a cost of Rs.10 lakh. The Badgam and Jammu RETC have received in 4.5 lakh and 3.5 lakh, respectively.
10. Many durable assets worth over one crore rupees have been created under the SGRY. However, the REGS progress has not been satisfactory, as reported. The system of appointing a 'mate' has been dispensed away in the REGS. Hence, slow progress at village level. Work plans, measurements and Panchayat level monitoring too suffered as a result of poor planning and inadequate (trained) manpower. Moreover, conflicts have emerged between VLWs / Committee Members and Engineers. The bone of contention was the procedure adopted for work measurement in the REGS. 'Work applications' are received by REGS functionaries. Receipts are not

issued. VLW is the custodian of the muster roll. Large chunks of people had applied for 100 days of employment but ended up with only 10 days of employment. Wages are usually paid once a fortnight/ month.

11. REGS intends to stop distress migration of labour. But J & K meets over 80 per cent of all labour needs through migrant workers. While there may not be any dire need for J&K labour to migrate, nevertheless it provides work opportunities to outsiders. But one of the major objectives of NREGA is thus defeated in the hometowns of migrant labour. The welfare aspect of NREGA too, takes a backseat. No facilities like shelter, water, crèches, first aid etc. are provided. Awareness, training and compassion components need to be built into the work culture of REGS functionaries. Almost all migrant labourers return to their hometowns in winter due to sheer shelterlessness. Whereas in Jammu, the situation is marginally better in that the migrant labour finds consistent employment opportunities in schemes like soil conservation, flood control, orchards, roads, etc. Wage workers are paid through cheques in Poonch in contrast to the cash system in Kupwara. Cheque system provides controls. Muster rolls can be verified.

The point that the institutional delivery systems need to be reoriented does not merit repetition. It appears that too many works have been assigned to the block level staff so much so that the REGS works may seriously get affected. Ideally, district should be the planning unit, and where feasible, the block can also be viewed as a unit of planning. One also needs to consider tenurial postings for development officers for a period of at least 3 to 5 years. In fact, a good HRD plan should envisage adequacy of tenure even while providing incentives for improved performance. Teamwork and effective leadership should be seen as the pillars of development and a basis for identification of the staff with the project. Then alone aspects of accountability and pride will come to the forefront. Convergence of development programmes and services should be ensured at block/district level. The (REGS) development staff should

be enabled to plan in a manner that they would be able to complete a project in all its dimensions. For example, water augmentation and conservation. A time should come for the district planning team when it would be able to say it has saturated the project benefits and that it would like to go to another priority project within a block/district. The planning team should also be in a position to formulate new and appropriate projects that broadly fall under the framework of REGS works and funds.

Where minimum wage rates are low and the market wage rates are very high, the NREG programme seemingly attracts little or no attention. In places like Kupwara, one needs to review this phenomenon and introduce appropriate remedial measures, in the absence of such measures, distortion becomes inevitable. For example, the muster rolls are manipulated to show double the number of mandays of work generated so as to pay market rates to wage workers in some blocks of Kupwara.

Greater intersectoral coordination and institutional collaboration is required for securing comprehensive benefits of REGS works. The quality of assets leaves a lot to be desired. Some system of evaluation of the quality of assets is therefore, crucial for sustainability of infrastructure oriented assets.

A few observations on NREGS in Poonch

- * NRM works are predominant, especially watershed
- * Decentralised watershed works in dispersed habitations augur well for NREG
- * Social Audit semblance is there – RTI not quite there
- * People’s participation in selection of works and Social Audit is good
- * Piece-rate work made a beginning but is slow in implementation
- * No correlation between job cards issued and employment provided

136 *Planning and Implementation of National Rural Employment....*

- * Job card works are not clearly documented. Job card entries do not match muster rolls and pay-slips
- * Applications are many, less number of job seekers
- * Receipt of applications is rarely acknowledged. Where acknowledged, the dates are not mentioned
- * REGS continues to be allocation-oriented and supply-driven. Rights-based approach is not there
- * Poonch should be given more money as it is a low wage district with high BPL members
- * NRM works have largely reduced migration to neighbouring districts/states like HP & Punjab. The poor are eating better and are with their families
- * Dry and water scarce regions tend to benefit. Many Poonch blocks are backward
- * SGRY experience is evidently not used in REGS. Kupwara and other districts except Poonch in J & K, do not require REGS
- * Good assets cannot be easily created in Poonch like districts. But important purpose of wage employment is served significantly
- * Exchange labour is popular. So, some assets have been developed through *Shramdan* (Kashmiri Road)
- * For community assets like minor-irrigation tasks, part work was through REGS plus *Shramdan*. Check dams, canal lining, flash flood control systems have emerged as a result.

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- Develop training modules and course material in a partnership mode
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National Institute of Rural Development

Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India
Rajendranagar, Hyderabad - 500 030

www.nird.org.in