

## Performance and Execution of MNREGS in Kangra District of H. P.

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### ABSTRACT

*The government of India has initiated a number of programmes for eradication of poverty of which Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is an influential stride towards the right to work. It was launched with the aim of providing livelihood security to the adult members of rural households through guaranteed wage employment for hundred days in a financial year. It provides equal wages to both male and female workers besides 33 per cent participation for women. The state of Himachal Pradesh has been praised for its implementation due to the fact that it tops in providing employment to women under the scheme. Therefore, the performance and execution as well as various processes in the effective execution of the scheme were examined through a study entitled "Performance and Execution of MNREGS in Kangra district of H.P." the study was carried out in the year 2013-14 in Kangra district of H.P. The results indicated that all the guidelines being mandated in the Act were found to be followed properly as against the provision of 100 days of employment and wage payment on weekly basis (i.e. a delay in wage payment was observed). The relevant problems were insufficient and untimely flow of funds by the higher authorities to the Panchayat as a result of which employment for complete 100 days and on weekly basis couldn't be met. Therefore, a need to strengthen sufficient and timely release of funds to Panchayat by the higher authorities as well as meeting 100 days of employment and timely payment of wages was suggested as a result of this study.*

**Keywords:** MNREGS; Panchayat; Execution; Wages.

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### 1.0 Introduction

In a developing country like India wages earned through unskilled and casual labour are the main source of livelihood for the poor residing in rural areas.

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A number of welfare programmes have been implemented by the government of India that are playing important role in alleviation of poverty and unemployment as such programmes are able to meet short term employment needs. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act has touched the lives of the poor by enhancing the employment opportunities for rural unemployed and under-employed besides striking the under-utilized labour of women in developing rural India. The Act was appraised on 7<sup>th</sup> September, 2005 and finally came into force on 2<sup>nd</sup> February, 2006. Besides providing 100 days wage employment, the other striking features of the Scheme includes providing basic facilities like drinking water, shade, first-aid box and crèche at the worksite. It also focuses on inclusive growth, rejuvenation of natural resources, generating productive assets, protecting the environment, empowering the rural women and reducing the rural-urban migration besides multiple objectives of providing employment and sustaining income and consumption through wage works. In Himachal Pradesh the scheme was introduced 2006-07 but it covered district Kangra in 2007-08. In the state about 4.85 lakh households have been provided employment while in the district 1.91 lakh households have been provided employment. In the district 14,848 works have been taken up out of which 7,689 works have been completed (www.nrega.nic.in, 2015). Based on this background the performance, execution and various processes for its effective execution were observed with the following objective(s):

(i) To examine the various processes for effective execution of the scheme.

## **2.0 Study Area and Methodology**

Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh was intentionally selected for the study and further Panchrukhi block was intentionally as it performed well with respect to education, infrastructure development and livelihood and health indicators. Again one panchayat, Chandropa was selected purposively. About 90 households (60 beneficiaries and 30 non-beneficiaries) were selected randomly for the study. The primary structured schedule. Various analytical techniques were used to analyze and interpret the data. The data collected were tabulated to work out averages, ratios and percentages.

## **3.0 Analysis and Discussion**

### **3.1 Implementation of MNREGS in Chandropa Panchayat**

The responses of the Panchayat Pradhan and beneficiaries regarding the implementation and execution of the scheme were sought separately and are presented in

the Table 1. It is evident from the table that the scheme was implemented in the Panchayat in the year 2007 during phase II of its implementation when it covered Kangra and Mandi districts of the state. The table clearly depicts that all the mandatory guidelines of the scheme like registration through written application to Pradhan, issuing job cards within 15 days of applying, providing work within 15 days of applying, 33 per cent quota for women, maintaining 60:40 wage: material ratio, worksite facilities, etc. were found to be followed properly. However, the beneficiaries reported that the provision of 100 days of employment and payment of wages on weekly basis was not adhered to in the Panchayat strictly. The Pradhan on the other hand reported that work was being provided for complete 100 days to the wage seekers and payment was made on fortnightly basis. Thus, it can be concluded that for the most part there was effective execution of the scheme in the Panchayat. But, there is a need to streamline the provisions of the scheme regarding the work days and timely payment of wages.

**Table 1: Implementation of MNREGS in Chandropa Panchayat - Process Execution**

Sr. No.	Particulars of process execution	Response			
		Pradhan		Beneficiaries	
		F*	NF**	F*	NF**
<b>A.</b>	<b>Start</b>				
1.	Launching of MNREGS in panchayat	2007		2007	
<b>B.</b>	<b>Registration</b>				
2.	Preparation of a list by the Gram Panchayat of all the possible households that might seek registration	✓		✓	
3.	Registrations open in the Gram Panchayat	✓		✓	
4.	Registration through written applications to Pradhan	✓		✓	
5.	Issuing of dated receipt of written application	✓		✓	
<b>C.</b>	<b>Issuing of job cards</b>				
6.	Provision of job card within 15 days of application	✓		✓	
7.	Updating job card with days of work and payment made to the beneficiary as and when the work is undertaken	✓		✓	
<b>D.</b>	<b>Provision of work</b>				
8.	Provision of work within 15 days of applying	✓		✓	

9.	Provision of unemployment allowance in case work is not provided within 15 days	NA		NA	
10.	Provision of providing work within 5 km radius of village	✓		✓	
11.	Provision of extra wages of 10 per cent if work is provided beyond 5 km radius	NA		NA	
12.	33 per cent quota for women in the allotment of work	✓		✓	
<b>E. Employment</b>					
13.	Providing employment for 100 days	✓			✓
14.	Maintaining 60:40 wage material ratio	✓		✓	
<b>F. Wage payment</b>					
15.	Payment of wages on weekly basis/fortnightly or beyond that	Fortnightly			✓
16.	Payment made through account transfer	✓		✓	
<b>G. Worksite management</b>					
17.	Provision of facilities of drinking water, shade, , etc. at worksite	✓		✓	

Note: F<sup>\*</sup>=Followed; NF<sup>\*</sup>=Not-followed

Source: Authors own calculation/Field data

### 3.2 Performance of MNREGS in the panchayat

The details of performance of MNREGS in Chandropa Panchayat have been presented in the Table 2. The opinion of Pradhan was sought regarding registration, issuing of job cards, allotment of work, works undertaken, worksite management, payment of wages, evaluation and monitoring of work and benefits to the panchayat and the problems faced by them in the execution of MNREGS.

**Table 2: Performance of MNREGS in the Panchayat - Opinion of Panchayat Pradhan/Representatives**

Sr. No.	Particulars/Statement	Response	
		Yes	No
1.	Any mismatch between the demand and availability of work		✓
2.	Treating applications for work as per the norms	✓	
3.	All the households got registered under the scheme		✓
4.	Reason for no-registration of all households	Involved in other activities	
5.	All the registered households participated in the scheme		✓
6.	Factors hindering participation of registered households	Engaged in other jobs	

7.	Preparing, issuing and updating job cards in a transparent manner	✓	
8.	Generation of job cards (manually/computer based)	Manually	
9.	Issuing authority of job cards	Pradhan	
10.	Problem in registering and issuing job cards	✓	
11.	Proper record maintenance of job cards issued	✓	
12.	Issuing job cards free of cost	✓	
13.	Availability of a file containing photocopies of all job cards issued for inspection in the Gram Panchayat office	✓	
14.	Complaints about the receipt of work applications, the allotment of work and the payment of unemployment allowance		✓
15.	Delay in payment of wages		✓
16.	Payment of wages to MNREGA workers as per the notified wage rate	✓	
17.	Payment of wages consistent with the approved working hours under MNREGA	✓	
18.	Timely flow of funds from the Programme Officer to the Gram Panchayat	Yes, but sometimes get delayed	
19.	Gram Sabha meeting on MNREGS	✓	
20.	Benefits due to MNREGA activities.		
a)	Wage earners	Increased	
b)	Empowerment of women	Increased	
c)	Panchayat	Development	
d)	Poverty	Reduced	
21.	Activities/works undertaken in panchayat under MNREGS		
a)	Water conservation	✓	
b)	Drought proofing	✓	
c)	Flood control		✓
d)	Land development	✓	
e)	Minor irrigation	✓	
f)	Horticulture	✓	
g)	Rural connectivity	✓	
22.	Activities undertaken in conformity with the guidelines	✓	
23.	Expenditure incurred for the purposes intended for	✓	
24.	Expenditure incurred by the Gram Panchayat classified and admissible in accordance with operational guidelines and instructions	✓	
25.	Measurement of work	After every 15 days on completion of muster roll	
26.	Benefits of the scheme for the panchayat	i) Development of the panchayat/villages ii) Provides employment and empowerment to women (social, economical and political)	
27.	Problems in implementation/execution of MNREGS	Delay in the release of funds by higher authorities(sometimes)	

**Source:** Authors own calculation/Field data

The Pradhan reported that the major factor affecting the execution of the scheme was untimely flow of funds from Programme Officer to the Panchayat which was the main reason for non-participation of registered households because of which the provision of 100 days employment and timely payment of wages to the workers was not met. The table further reveals that the scheme had a positive impact on development of the panchayat/villages and on employment generation in the study area.

### 3.3 Opinion of beneficiaries on MNREGS in the panchayat

#### 3.3.1 Opinion of beneficiaries regarding registration

The beneficiaries of the scheme were asked about the registration under the scheme in the Panchayat and their response is presented in Table 3. The table clearly shows that 100 per cent of beneficiaries reported that they applied through written application to Pradhan against which they were issued a dated receipt for work and within 15 days of applying they got employment.

**Table 3: Opinion of Beneficiaries regarding Registration under MNREGS**

Sr. No.	Particulars/Statement	Response	
		Yes (%)	No (%)
1.	Applied through written application to Pradhan.	100.00	
2.	Receipt of written application was issued (for work).	100.00	
3.	Employment was provided within		
a)	<15 days	-	
b)	15-30 days	100.00	
c)	>30 days	-	

*Source: Authors own calculation/Field data*

#### 3.4 Opinion of beneficiaries regarding issuing of job cards

The opinion of beneficiaries regarding issuing of job cards by the Panchayat Pradhan is given in the Table 4. The table shows that 100 per cent of beneficiaries reported that they approached for job card to the Pradhan as he was the issuing authority for the job cards. They did not face any problem in getting the job card and job cards were provided to them free of cost. As far as the number of job cards in each family was concerned 90 per cent of beneficiaries were having one job card while 10 per cent families were having two job cards. The table further shows that the job cards of 67 per cent of beneficiaries were found to be updated with the number of days they worked and wages paid to them while 33 per cent beneficiaries reported that their job cards were not updated.

**Table 4: Opinion of Beneficiaries regarding Issuing of Job Cards**

Sr. No.	Particulars/Statement	Response	
		Yes (%)	No (%)
1.	Approached for job card	100.00	
2.	Reply of pradhan for issuing the job card	Will be issued within 15 days of application	
3.	Problem in getting the job card		100.00
4.	Job cards given freely	100.00	
5.	Mention the name of issuing authority		
a)	Pradhan	100.00	
b)	Up-Pradhan	-	
c)	Gram Panchayat secretary	-	
d)	Gram Panchayat ward member	-	
e)	Block Development Officer (BDO)	-	
6.	Number of job cards in your family		
a)	1 job card	90.00	
b)	2 job cards	10.00	
c)	3 job cards	-	
7.	Job card updated with wages and the number of days worked	67.00	33.00

*Source: Authors own calculation/Field data*

### 3.5 Opinion of beneficiaries regarding the employment

The detail of employment provided to beneficiaries under the scheme is presented in Table 5. The table shows that majority of beneficiaries (around 47 per cent) were provided work for more than 90 days. The average person days per household generated under the scheme in the Panchayat were found to be 84 days. All the activities/works permissible under the MNREGS like water conservation, drought proofing, land development, minor irrigation, horticulture and rural connectivity were found to be taken up in the Panchayat except any activity related to flood control.

**Table 5: Opinion of Beneficiaries regarding Employment**

Sr. No.	Particulars/Statement	Response	
		Yes (%)	No (%)
1.	Got any employment under the scheme	100.00	
2.	Employment provided for		
a)	50-59 days	8.33	
b)	60-69 days	11.67	
c)	0-79 days	15.00	
d)	80-89 days	18.33	
e)	>90 days	46.67	

3.	Average person days generated per household	84	
4.	Number of members getting job from one family		
a)	One	73.00	
b)	Two	27.00	
c)	All		
5.	Worked more than 5 km away from your residence		100.00
6.	Awareness about the rules and regulations of MNREGS	60.00	40.00
7.	Got any unemployment allowance		100.00
8.	Reason for not providing unemployment allowance	Because the work was provided on time	
9.	Aware about the MNREGS activities/works taken up in your village/Panchayat	100.00	
10.	Activities/works taken up in the Panchayat under MNREGS		
a)	Water conservation	100.00	
b)	Drought proofing	100.00	
c)	Flood protection		100.00
d)	Land development	100.00	
e)	Minor irrigation	100.00	
f)	Horticulture	100.00	
g)	Rural connectivity	100.00	
11.	Hours per day you work under MNREGS	7 hours	

*Source: Authors own calculation/Field data*

### 3.6 Opinion of beneficiaries regarding worksite management and wage payment

The response of beneficiaries regarding the facilities at worksite and payment of wages is presented in the Table 6. All the beneficiaries reported that the worksite was having all the facilities like drinking water, shade, first aid, etc. As far as payment of wages to the workers was concerned, 100 per cent of beneficiaries reported that wages were paid to them after a month.

### 3.7 Opinion of non-beneficiaries on MNREGS

The opinion of non-beneficiaries was also sought regarding various aspects like awareness about MNREGS, registration under MNREGS, problems in MNREGS, etc and their responses are presented in Table 7. It is evident from the table that 100 per cent of non-beneficiaries were aware about MNREGS, of which 57 per cent got information from Panchayat office, 5 per cent from radio, 15 per cent from television and 8 per cent from friends. About 23 per cent of non-beneficiaries reported that they approached for registration under the scheme while 77 per cent reported that they did not approach for registration.



**Table 6: Opinion of Beneficiaries regarding Worksite Management and Wages**

Sr. No.	Particulars/Statement	Response	
		Yes (%)	No (%)
1.	Worksite having the following facilities		
a)	Drinking water	100.00	
b)	Shades	100.00	
c)	Period of rest	100.00	
d)	First-aid	100.00	
2.	Payment of wages on regular basis.		100.00
3.	Period after which get wages		
a)	After a week	-	
b)	After 1 month	100.00	
c)	After 2 months	-	
4.	Wage received per day	Rs. 154	
5.	Getting less/extra wages if compared with outside.	Getting less wages	
6.	Receive wages through		
a)	Cash	-	
b)	Cheque	-	
c)	Account transfer	100.00	
7.	Having bank account in bank relating to MNREGS	100.00	

*Source: Authors own calculation/Field data***Table 7: Opinion of Non-Beneficiaries on MNREGS**

Sr. No.	Particulars/Statement	Response		
		Yes(%)	No(%)	Not aware(%)
1.	Aware about MNREGS	100.00		
2.	Got the information from			
a)	Panchayat office	57.00		
b)	Radio	5.00		
c)	Television (TV)	15.00		
d)	Newspapers	15.00		
e)	Friends	8.00		
3.	Approached for registration.	23.00	77.00	
4.	Approached to			
a)	Pradhan	57.00		
b)	Up-pradhan			
c)	Panchayat secretary	43.00		
d)	Ward member	-		
5.	Received any work under the programme.	20.00	80.00	
6.	Improvement in the conditions of the poor in the village due to MNREGS	100.00		

*Source: Authors own calculation/Field data*

Of the non-beneficiaries who approached for registration, 57 per cent approached to Pradhan and 43 per cent to Panchayat secretary. Regarding the work done under the scheme, 20 per cent of non-beneficiaries reported that they had worked under the scheme while 80 per cent reported that they had not worked under the scheme. All the 100 per cent of non-beneficiaries reported that the scheme had improved the status of poor in the village.

### 3.8 Opinion of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries on MNREGS

The beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries were asked about the problems in the execution and performance of MNREGS and their suggestions to remedy the situation. The opinion of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries on MNREGS is presented in Table 8. It can be observed from the table that 100 per cent of beneficiaries reported that gender discrimination, caste discrimination and delay in the allotment of work were not the problem under MNREGS in their Panchayat. The operational problems perceived by the beneficiaries included non-provision of 100 days employment (100 per cent), delay in the payment of wages (100 per cent) and low wages (97 per cent). As far the opinion of non-beneficiaries was concerned the operational problems perceived by them included delay in payment of wages (36 per cent), low wages (25 per cent), problems with wages in time (36 per cent), work not done sincerely by workers (50 per cent) and no proper supervision and monitoring (100 per cent). The beneficiaries suggested that operational problems under MNREGS can be solved by timely payment of wages, increase in the wages and increase in number of days employment is being provided besides providing it for complete 100 days as mandated in the scheme.

**Table 8: Opinion of Beneficiaries and Non-Beneficiaries on MNREGS**

Sr. No.	Particulars/Statement	Response				
		Beneficiaries		Non-beneficiaries		
		Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)	Not Aware (%)
1.	State the problems in MNREGS					
a)	Gender discrimination		100.00		100.00	
b)	Caste discrimination		100.00		100.00	
c)	Provision of work for 100 days		100.00			100.00
d)	Problems with the work allotting authorities		100.00	17.00		83.00
e)	Problems with the working timing	2.00	98.00			100.00

f)	Less wages	97.00	3.00	25.00		75.00
g)	Work not provided on time		100.00	7.00		93.00
h)	Delay in payment of wages	100.00		36.00		64.00
i)	Unemployment allowance not provided	NA		NA		
j)	Work not done sincerely by workers	27	73	50.00		50.00
k)	No proper supervision	NA		100.00		
2)	Opinion for problem solving regarding MNREGS	i) Timely payment of wages ii) Increase in wages ii) Increase in number of days for which employment is being provided		i) Proper supervision ii) Time bound work iii) Increase in wages		
3.	Opinion/suggestion on MNREGS	i) Proper supervision should be there ii) More needy should be given priority while providing work		i) Proper supervision should be there ii) Wage-material ratio should be reversed from 60:40 to 40:60iii) An age limit should be there for providing work iv) Workers should work sincerely v) More needy should be given priority while providing work.		

*Source:* Authors own calculation/Field data

However, the non-beneficiaries suggested that operational problems under MNREGS can be solved by time bound work, increase in wages, proper supervision, reversing wage-material ratio from 60:40 to 40:60, putting an age limit for applying under MNREGS, workers should work sincerely and more needy should be given priority while providing work under the scheme. Similar results for operational problems under MNREGS like non-provision of 100 days employment and delay in the payment of wages were also reported by Deshmukh (2014).

#### 4.0 Conclusion and Policy Suggestions

The findings of the study revealed that all the guidelines mandated under the scheme were being followed properly apart from payment of wages once in a week and workdays for complete 100 days. A gap between work demand and work availability was observed due to insufficient and untimely flow of funds from the Programme Officer to the Panchayat for meeting the wage payment of MNREGS workers. The study further revealed that women participation rate was 100 per cent which was much higher

as mandated for employment of women (33 per cent). On an average the scheme generated 84 person days under the scheme in the Panchayat which was much higher than the national average i.e. 35 days and also the person days generated in the state i.e. 41 days (Anonymous, 2013). Keeping the findings of the study in view, following policy implications were suggested:

1. Emphasis should be given on adequate and sustained regular flow of funds as the work was not provided for complete 100 days due to insufficient and untimely flow of funds by the higher authorities to the Panchayat.
2. Efforts should be made for timely payment of wages to the workers as a delay in the payment of wages was also observed in the Panchayat.
3. It was also observed that for better implementation and execution of the programme, there is a need to increase the wages and workdays from the current stipulated levels.
4. There is need to strengthen Gram Panchayat bodies for proper identification, execution and monitoring of works under MNREGS.
5. Grievances redressal mechanisms should be strengthened.

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