



A

BRIEF NOTE

ON

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT

GUARANTEE SCHEME

IN

HIMACHAL PRADESH

NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act was notified by the Government of India on September, 2005 and was made effective w.e.f. 2nd February 2006. In the first phase, the National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme (NREGS) was introduced in District Chamba and Sirmour on 2nd February, 2006. In second phase NREGS was started in District Kangra and Mandi w.e.f. 1-4-2007. In the third phase all the remaining 8 districts of the State have been covered under the scheme w.e.f. 1.4.2008.

1. SALIENT FEATURE

The salient feature of the scheme is to provide for the enhancement of livelihood security of the households in rural areas of the State by providing 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in every financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.

2. ELIGIBILITY

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme is open to all rural households in the areas notified by the Government of India. The entitlement of 100 days of guaranteed employment in a financial year is in terms of a household. This entitlement of 100 days per year can be shared within the household.

All adult members of the household who registered can apply for work. To register, they have to:-

- a) Be local residents "local" implies residing within the gram panchayat.
- b) Be willing to do un-skilled manual work.
- c) Apply as a household at the local gram panchayat.

3. APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION AND ISSUANCE OF JOB

CARDS

The application for registration can be given on plain paper or on the prescribed application format available at gram panchayat level or an oral request for registration can be made. The application should contain the names of those adult members of the household who are willing to do un-skilled manual work, and particulars such as age, sex and SC/ST status etc. After verification all particulars are entered in the registration register by the concerned gram panchayat. Every household is assigned a registration number.

Job cards to every registered household are issued by the gram panchayat. The job cards are issued within a fortnight of the application for registration. Photographs of adult members who are applicants are attached to the job cards. The

cost of job card and photographs is borne as part of the programme funds. The job card is valid for a period of 5 years.

4. APPLICATION FOR WORK AND ALLOCATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Applications for work can be submitted to the Gram Panchayat as well as to the Programme Officer. Applications should be given in writing and a dated receipt for the application for work must be issued to the applicant. The applications for work must be for at least 14 days of continuous of work.

Applicants who are provided work are to be intimated by means of letter sent to them at the address given in the job card and also by a public notice displayed at the offices of the Gram Panchayat. The wage employment to the applicant is to be provided within 15 days of the date of receipt of application.

5. PERMISSIBLE WORKS

As per schedule 1 of the Act the focus of the scheme is on the following works in their order of priority:-

- (i) Water Conservation and Water Harvesting works;
- (ii) Drought proofing works (including afforestation and tree plantation)
- (iii) Irrigation canals including micro and minor irrigation works;
- (iv) Provision of irrigation facility, horticulture plantation and land development facilities on land owned by the households belonging to the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes or to below poverty line families or to Marginal Farmers or Small Farmers to beneficiaries of land reforms or to the beneficiaries under the Indira Awas Yojana of the Government of India;
- (v) Renovation of traditional water bodies including de-silting of tanks ;
- (vi) Land developments works;
- (vii) Flood control and protection works including drainage in water logged areas;
- (viii) Rural connectivity to provide all-weather access; and
- (ix) Any other work which may be notified by the Government of India in consultation with the State Government.

The Government of India has been requested to allow engaging “Crop protectors” as one of the Permissible works under NREGA for Himachal Pradesh.

6. FUNDING PATTERN

The following costs are borne by the Government of India:-

- (a) The entire cost of wages for unskilled manual workers.

- (b) 75 percent of the cost of material and wages for skilled and semi-skilled workers.
- (c) Administrative expenses.

The following costs are borne by the State Government:-

- (a) 25 percent of the cost of material and wages for skilled and semi-skilled workers.
- (b) Un-employment allowance.
- (c) Administrative expenses of State Employment Guarantee Council.

7. CRITERIA FOR ALLOCATION/RELEASE OF FUNDS

The District wise labour budget for the next Financial Year containing the details of anticipated demand for funds is submitted to Government of India for approval. An empowered committee under the Secretary Rural Development Government of India appraise and approve the district labour budgets in consultation with the State Secretaries (RD).

For the year 2009-10, labour budget to the tune of **Rs. 627.63 crore** has been approved by the Government of India for our State. The Central funds are being released by the Government of India to the State Employment Guarantee Fund. The State matching share is also being credited to this fund and further releases to the district are made from this fund as per the utilization and requirement of funds. So far, an amount of **Rs. 331.78 crore** has been released by the Government of India during current Financial Year under the Scheme.

8. PAYMENT OF WAGES

- (a) Every person working under the scheme is entitled to wages at the minimum wage fixed by the State Government.
- (b) Equal wages are to be paid to both man and woman workers.
- (c) Workers are entitled to being paid on weekly basis and in any case within a fortnight of the date on which work was done (NREGA section -3 (3))
- (d) The wages to the NREGA worker are being paid on the basis of the work done by them based on schedule of rates.

9. PAYMENT OF UNEMPLOYMENT ALLOWANCE

- (i) If an applicant for employment under the scheme is not provided such employment within 15 days of receipt of his application seeking employment or from the date on which the employment has been sought in the case of advance application, whichever is latter, he shall

be entitled to a daily unemployment allowance which will be one fourth of the wage rate for the first thirty days during the financial year and one half of the wage rate for the remaining period of the financial year.

- (ii) The payment of unemployment allowance is the liability of the State Government.
- (iii) The liability of the State Government to pay unemployment allowance to a household during any financial year will cease as soon as:-
 - (a) The applicant is directed by the Gram Panchayat or the Programme Officer to report for work ; or
 - (b) The period for which employment is sought comes to an end and no member of the household of the applicant had turned up for employment ; or
 - (c) The adult members of the household of the applicant have received in total at least 100 days of work within the financial year ; or
 - (d) The household of the applicant has earned as much from the wages and unemployment allowance taken together which is equal to the wages for 100 days of work during the financial year.

10. PREPARATION OF SHELF OF PROJECTS

The Gram Sabha recommends the permissible works to be taken up under the scheme and these works are compiled at the Gram Panchayat level and submitted to the Block Programme Officer (NREGA). The Block Development Officers have been designated as Block Programme Officers (NREGA). The Block Programme Officer (NREGA) consolidate the Gram Panchayat proposals and works recommended by the Panchayat Samiti into a Block Plan and after the approval of the Panchayat Samiti, forward it to the District Programme Coordinator (NREGA). The Deputy Commissioners have been designated as District Programme Coordinator (NREGA). The District Programme Coordinator (NREGA) consolidates the Block Plans and proposals from other implementing agencies and the Zila Parishad and get these approved from the Zila Parishad. After the approval of the Zila Parishad, the administrative and financial approvals are accorded by the District Programme Coordinator (NREGA). Minimum 50 percent of the works in terms of cost are to be executed by the Gram Panchayats.

Major Achievements made during the year 2008-09 and 2009-10 (upto February, 2010)

Achievements during 2008-09

- a) During the year 2008-09, wage employment to 4,45,713 households has been provided by generating 205.28 lacs mandays.
- b) During 2008-09, 22,281 works have been completed under the scheme.
- c) During 2008-09, funds to tune of Rs. 500.90 crore were available with the districts out of which Rs. 332.28 crore have been spent under the scheme.
- d) For smooth implementation of the scheme, 1081 Gram Rozgar Sewaks, 92 Computer Operators and 42 Jr. Engineers have been engaged under the scheme in various Districts/Blocks and Gram Panchayats.
- e) In order to ensure Transparency in the disbursement of wages to the workers, 4,08,964 saving accounts of NREGA workers have been opened in banks and post offices and wages are being disbursed through these accounts.
- f) Schemes for Horticulture plantation, Land development and Minor irrigation works under NREGS on the private land of SCs/STs and BPL families have been prepared by the Department and circulated to all the Blocks for implementation.
- g) Other line departments like Forests, Agriculture, Horticulture, PWD, IPH etc. have also been involved in the preparation of shelf of projects of permissible works under NREGA and execution thereof.

Achievements during 2009-10 (upto February, 2010)

- (a) Since inception of the scheme, job cards to 9,69,930 rural households have been issued.
- (b) During the year 2009-10, wage employment to 4,49,558 households has been provided by generating 240.80 lacs mandays.
- (c) During 2009-10, 27,472 works have been completed under the scheme.
- (d) During 2009-10, funds to tune of Rs. 472.00 crore have been spent under the scheme out of total availability of Rs. 550.39 crore with the districts.
- (e) In order to ensure Transparency in the disbursement of wages to the workers, 8,20,212 saving accounts of NREGA workers have been opened in banks and post offices and wages are being disbursed through these accounts.
- (f) The recruitment of 40 Junior Engineers, 35 Junior Accountants and 12 computers is under process.

Impact of the Scheme

Implementation of NREGS in the State has been proved and important tool to give a legal guarantee of employment to any one in rural areas who is willing to do casual manual day work. Thus, an employment guarantee act has provided a universal and enforceable legal right to the most basic form of employment. It is a step towards legal enforcement of the right to work. The implementation of the Act has checked the migration of labour and it as also been a major source of empowerment for women. By creating directly productive economic assets under the scheme, rural livelihood base has been strengthened. The employment guarantee act has also strengthened the bargaining power of unorganized workers.

The impact assessment study of the implementation of NREGA in the State has not yet been conducted. However, the aforementioned results of the implementation of NREGA are based on the feedback obtained from the implementing agencies and assessing the impression of the general public towards the implementation of NREGA in the State.

Major Achievements made during the year 2008-09 and 2009-10 (upto October, 2009)

Achievements during 2008-09

- (a) During the year 2008-09, wage employment to 4,45,713 households has been provided by generating 205.28 lacs mandays.
- (b) During 2008-09, 22,281 works have been completed under the scheme.
- (c) During 2008-09, funds to tune of Rs. 500.90 crore were available with the districts out of which Rs. 332.28 crore have been spent under the scheme.
- (d) For smooth implementation of the scheme, 1081 Gram Rozgar Sewaks, 92 Computer Operators and 42 Jr. Engineers have been engaged under the scheme in various Districts/Blocks and Gram Panchayats.
- (e) In order to ensure Transparency in the disbursement of wages to the workers, 4,08,964 saving accounts of NREGA workers have been opened in banks and post offices and wages are being disbursed through these accounts.
- (f) Schemes for Horticulture plantation, Land development and Minor irrigation works under NREGS on the private land of SCs/STs and BPL families have been prepared by the Department and circulated to all the Blocks for implementation.
- (g) Other line departments like Forests, Agriculture, Horticulture, PWD, IPH etc. have also been involved in the preparation of shelf of projects of permissible works under NREGA and execution thereof.

Achievements during 2009-10 (upto September)

- (a) Since inception of the scheme, job cards to 9,05,218 rural households have been issued.
- (b) During the year 2009-10, wage employment to 2,90,200 households has been provided by generating 111.207 lacs mandays.
- (c) During 2009-10, 13,917 works have been completed under the scheme.
- (d) During 2009-10, funds to tune of Rs. 212.31 crore have been spent under the scheme out of total availability of Rs. 294.81 crore. However Rs. 228.00 crore have been released during the month of October, 2009.
- (e) In order to ensure Transparency in the disbursement of wages to the workers, 5,37,469 saving accounts of NREGA workers have been opened in banks and post offices and wages are being disbursed through these accounts.
- (f) The recruitment of 40 Junior Engineers, 35 Junior Accountants and 12 computers is under process.

Achievements during 2009-10 (upto December)

- (a) Since inception of the scheme, job cards to 9,40,199 rural households have been issued.
- (b) During the year 2009-10, wage employment to 3,92,505 households has been provided by generating 179.55 lacs mandays.
- (c) During 2009-10, 12,892 works have been completed under the scheme.
- (d) During 2009-10, funds to tune of Rs. 351.87 crore have been spent under the scheme out of total availability of Rs. 493.10 crore.
- (e) In order to ensure Transparency in the disbursement of wages to the workers, 4,67,306 saving accounts of NREGA workers have been opened in banks and post offices and wages are being disbursed through these accounts.