CHAPTER IV
THE PROFILE OF THE EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME

Introduction:

The EGS has been in operation since last twenty years. During its existence for more than two decades the scheme has travelled a long way from the experimental stage and has become a permanent feature of the state initiative to confront directly the problems of poverty and unemployment in rural Maharashtra.

The compendium of rules and regulations published by the State Government in 1981 and subsequently updated in 1990 gives us a clear idea about the organizational and operational aspects of the scheme. For an effective implementation of the scheme a network of organizational structure has also been evolved at state, district and local levels.

The purpose of this Chapter is to provide a detailed profile of the EGS. This includes emergence of the scheme followed by its salient features. Thereafter the organizational structure of the scheme has been discussed.

Evolution of the EGS:

Though the EGS was formally launched in 1972, the
thought for providing employment to the ruralities on a selective basis was very much in vogue since the formation of Maharashtra State in 1960. Under the development schemes known as "Rural Manpower", a certain amount was placed at the disposal of the District Collector for meeting the needs of employment in rural areas. Prior to the EGS there were programmes like "Small Farmers' Development Agency", "Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers Agency", "Intensive Area Development Scheme", etc. These schemes and programmes were sponsored by the Central Government and adopted by the Government of Maharashtra. The Pilot Employment Guarantee Scheme which was operative in 1969-70 was the outcome of "the 15 point programme" accepted by the Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC) and adopted by the State Government after a careful re-appraisal of the policies and programmes under five year plans and their impact on the employment situation. A brief review of these efforts would be useful in understanding the background of the EGS.

15 Point Programme:

On the eve of the 5th General Election for Loksabha in 1971 the Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee announced a 15 point programme. It was stated in this programme that work would be provided on demand as far as possible
within the district to the needy people and the wages paid in accordance with the work done by them. Among other points the programme also mentioned the implementation of minimum wages for the agricultural workers. The programme was finalised in a joint meeting of the MPCC's study group and the Cabinet. The MPCC also recommended modifications in the then existing Pilot Employment Guarantee Scheme.

**Integrated Area Development (IAD) Programme:**

The EGS is a continuation of the then existing IAD programme. This programme was sponsored by the Central Government. The Chairman of the Rural Credit Survey Committee, Shri Venkatappaya, recommended Small Farmers Development Agency (SFDA) for the agricultural development of small farmers. The committee also suggested Wage Employment Programme for the agricultural labourers and marginal farmers who had either no land or no viable cultivable land of their own and hence could not get the benefit of the SFDA. Therefore, IAD programme was started. Works such as tree plantation, grazing, tree plantation on hills, orchards, were undertaken under this scheme. For the benefit of marginal farmers, provisions for community wells, supplying cattle, loan for poultry and other self-help projects were launched. It was experienced that many of these efforts failed as landless and marginal
farmers had no infrastructural base to execute them. The only alternative left was wage employment. In Maharashtra IADP was in operation in Satara, Ratnagiri, Yeotmal and Beed districts of the State. In the light of the experience gained from the IADP, discussion took place in the State at various levels about the practicability of regular scheme of guaranteed rural employment. V.S. Page and P.K. Sawant, the President of MPCC, met Vinoba Bhave, the veteran Sarvodaya leader. The latter suggested the village base for the EGS. In order to give a concrete shape to the scheme, the Department of Planning, Government of Maharashtra, organised a symposium on this theme. It was revealed in the symposium that very little was done in the Fourth Five Year Plan about agricultural labour and marginal farmers.

Pilot Employment Guarantee Scheme (PEGS):

It was thought proper to link the proposed rural work programme to IAD project so as to tackle the problem of growing rural unemployment in the State. Accordingly the Pilot Employment Guarantee Scheme (PEGS) was started in the selected villages of IAD blocks in 1969-70. The concerned village Panchayats were responsible for the implementation of the projects as per the principles laid down by the District Coordinating Committee of the IAD Blocks. The objective of the PEGS was to guarantee employment in
the form of unskilled manual work mainly to the agricultural labourers. The type of works undertaken in it included contour bunding, construction of roads, afforestation, wells, development of grazing, spinning, etc. The village Panchayat was the administrative unit for the purpose of implementation of the scheme. The scheme was in operation in one selected village of each of the IAD Blocks for a period of three months on an experimental basis. A provision of Rs. One Lakh per block was also made in 1969-70 with an addition of Rs.fifty thousand per block for additional demand if any. The scheme was extended to ten villages in Tasaon Block in the subsequent year.

A revised PEGS was sanctioned on the 24th November 1970 for 17 Panchayat Samities of eleven IAD Blocks. Even though it was the scheme of employment to the unemployed persons in the area, it neither spoke about guaranteed employment to the village nor aimed at full employment. Thus in the beginning the scheme had very limited objectives. On the 20th February, 1974 the then Chief Minister of Maharashtra placed on the table of the Legislative Assembly a comprehensive statement about the present scheme giving its details. He also reiterated in his statement the recognition of the right to work as enshrined in Article 41 of the Indian Constitution and thereby accepted the responsibility of full employment
to those who seek it as a major and fundamental objective of the Government's fiscal and economic policy. The house passed unanimously the resolution to implement the scheme. The Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Act 1977 (Maharashtra Act No.XX of 1978) (hereinafter called MEG Act), was passed subsequently which gave legal status to the EGS. The detailed rules governing the EGS were passed in 1979.

The Emergence of the Employment Guarantee Scheme (EGS):

The emergence of the EGS is the result of a number of factors. Our assumption is that the scheme is the outcome of the agitations and struggles in the different parts of Maharashtra during the late sixties and the early seventies resulting in the wage employment to the rural population. It has been observed by Sulabha Brahme in her report on the peasant resistance in Maharashtra, that "during this period the different organizations of the agricultural labourers and the political parties organised the struggle for the right to work. As a result of this the Maharashtra Government accepted the scheme. Brahme further says that "the purpose of the scheme was not to allow the army of the unemployed in Maharashtra to the movements already started in the North-East and the Southern states. The EGS had given a way to discontent of the rural people. The discontent among the rural people had been reflected in the increasing incidents of "the morchas", "the dharna", "the gherao" in the various districts of the
According to Rath, an eminent economist, a stagnant economy of the state in the sixties constituted the basis of the programmes like the E.G.S. He further elaborated that the difference in the agro-climatic conditions and the cropping pattern of the different regions of the state reflects the instability in the food production coupled with the frequent droughts, necessitated the emergence of the schemes like the EGS.

We have probed into the circumstances under which the scheme has come into existence. It has been presumed that no government undertakes any such scheme unless pressured by some outside elements like agitating masses. This question has been raised in interviews with a number of respondents to understand their viewpoints on this matter. Almost all interviewees agreed over the point that it was the heavy demand for the work during the severe drought conditions of 1972-73 which led to the emergence of the EGS. The demand for such works, they observed, did not come from the marginal and the small farmers and the landless labourers only, but also came from the middle level farmers.

The political and social activists who were interviewed emphasised the point that it is the political
compulsion which is at the root of adopting this scheme. A leader of the Communist Party of India said in this context that the Congress Party in the state was worried about the likely exodus of a large segment of the small farmers and the agricultural labourers from its fold. Bhosle, a leader of the Lal Nishan group, attributes the emergence of the EGS to the organization and demands put forward by the workers' organizations. They took out a morcha of about twenty-five Lakhs for this purpose, which was unique in character, on the 15th and 16th June, 1973. Following were the demands of these workers' organizations, 1) work on demand, 2) reasonable and equal wages, 3) weekly payment of wages. All urban and rural workers in the state participated in it. It was an expression of unity of the workers belonging to different castes as well. Therefore, according to Bhosale, the EGS is the result of the Government's response to the pressure of public demands.

An activist from Aurangabad, Shantaram Pandere, argues on similar lines about the emergence of the scheme. According to him the implication of engaging rural workers on the EGS works would be diverting them as well as their leaders from organizations for the wider course of socio-economic transformation.

V.S. Page, the pioneer of the scheme and the Chairman of the EGS Council for a very long time since its inception, said in his interview that, "it was not exactly the
discontent among the workers but it was the large-scale migration, increasingly due to the expansion of the sugar industry in the state, which was at the root of the emergence of the scheme". He further elaborates that the Government of Maharashtra thought it proper to check the migration by providing employment to the agricultural workers. The change in the outlook of the Planning Commission of India, according to Page, was also a factor responsible for the introduction of the EGS. Page explained that attention was given to the common man in the process of planning.

In short, on the basis of the above discussions it can be said that there are different opinions about the emergence of the EGS, viz.

1) emergence of the scheme is the product of inherent limitations of climatic variations in different regions of the state.

2) It is an instrument to tackle the problem of large-scale migration of agricultural workers mainly towards sugar factories.

3) It is also an instrument to tackle the problem of frequent occurrence of drought in the state.

4) The scheme is also a result of change in the attitude of the Planning Commission of India. However, ultimately the agitations of the workers in their intensive form for
the demand of work, resulting into fear in the minds of the ruling party in the state about the loss of its political base, prompted the Government of Maharashtra to launch the EGS in 1972.

Aims and Objectives of the EGS-

The MEG Act, 1977 enumerates the objectives of the scheme as follows: -

1) To make effective provision for securing the right to work laid down in Article 41 of the Indian Constitution.
2) To provide gainful employment to the individual who needs work and who desires to do manual work.
3) To produce durable assets in such areas through labour-intensive projects, capable of providing durable assets to the community, were to be launched.
4) To provide continuing employment to the surplus manpower in cottage, village, small-scale and agro-based industries.

Salient Features of the Scheme:

Different provisions in the Act and the compendium of rules give us an idea about the exact nature of the scheme. The salient features of the scheme, as reflected in the Act, are as follows:-

(1) The Right to Work - The MEG Act, 1977 clearly states that "Every adult person in the rural areas of the State
of Maharashtra shall have a right to work, that is, to get a guaranteed employment for doing unskilled manual work". This provision is quite consistent with Article 41 of the Indian Constitution which states that "The State shall, within the limits of its economic capacity and development, make effective provision for securing the right to work, to education and to public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement and in other cases of undeserved want". Thus providing work on demand is the guiding principle of this scheme. However, the Act does not give this right in an absolute form. There are a few limitations to this right as envisaged in the scheme. They are-

i) The guarantee is restricted to manual work only.

ii) There is no choice of work to the workers.

iii) The works shall be provided as far as possible within the area of Panchayat Samiti where the worker resides but if not possible, in other Panchayat Samiti area, however, in any case not outside the district.

Further about the land development programmes the provision is that the works shall be provided, as far as possible, within a radius of five kilometers from the village of the workers. Only those able-bodied adults, who registered themselves in the prescribed proforma (Form No.4) and make a demand for work, would be provided with employment.
(iv) The guarantee is limited to rural areas of the state only.

(v) During abnormal situations such as scarcity or natural calamity the scheme shall stand suspended as the work will be available under various relief programme.

(2) Labour-Intensive Productive Works

The EGS proposed to take up only labour-intensive productive works, i.e. those works which create durable community assets and which have a ratio of 60:40 in the wages of unskilled labour and other expenses. These latter include the expenditure on equipment, material, supervision charges, wages of masons, carpenters and other skilled workers, salary and allowances of the EGS staff, expenditure on amenities at work sites, etc. Further labour-intensive works also mean such works which do not need any special training to the workers.

(3) No Choice of Work

The workers, demanding EGS works have no choice of the work and sites. They cannot insist upon employment of a particular kind. The provision in this regard expects workers to get employment within a distance of 8 Kms. from their residence. If the distance is more, camping arrangements for the workers are to be made as per rules. By and
large, work is provided within the Panchayat Samiti area even though technically workers can be assigned work anywhere in the district.

(4) **Planned Activity**

The District Collector is responsible for preparing a blue print - annual plan of the district - of the EGS works. The period of the annual plan is from the 1st of October to the 30th of September of the year. The Block-wise blue print of the district is prepared considering the estimated demand for the employment by workers in the ensuing year and the local resources available are taken at the time of preparation of the plan so that workers are available for normal agricultural activities in the area during the season.

While preparing the plan, the provision for works shall be made for one and half times the estimated workers seeking employment. This would enable the authorities to cope with the unforeseen situation arising out of scarcity or natural calamities leading to increased demand for the works. These extra fifty per cent are treated as works on shelf. The annual plan is to be approved in the District Co-ordinating Committee.

(5) **Registration Procedure**

According to section 8 (2) of the MEG Act it shall
be the duty of the State Government to provide employment to every such person registered with an officer specified for this purpose. Only those registered are eligible to obtain work under the MEG Act. Registration is also a condition for claiming unemployment allowance in case no employment could be provided by the Government. Generally the Talathi or Gramsevak is nominated as registration officer. Registration can be done orally or by applying in writing. It is valid for a period of 5 years initially and can be renewed subsequently every 5 years. The register maintained by the Registration Officer in this regard enables the government to assess the need of employment in the concerned area.

(6) Payment of Wages:

As per Section 7 of the MEG Act the wages shall be directly linked with the quality and quantity of the work done by the worker. The wages shall be equal to the minimum wage for agricultural labour for the lowest zone fixed by the State Government. The Act also provides for a fortnightly wage payment one day before the Bazar day of the area. The amount of the wages has to be paid to all workers at the work site only. A notice has to be displayed at the work site indicating wages paid in terms of quantum of the work done. There is also a provision
under which any one of the functionaries, viz. Talathi, Gramsevak, Police Patil, shall be present at the time of distribution of wages and sign the muster. This is to prevent corruption and ensure proper identification of the wage earners. Due consideration is given to the following factors while fixing the rate of the wages -

(a) The EGS wages should not result in diverting labour from normal farm activities. (b) The rate should be at par with off-season agricultural wages.

(7) **Equality of Wages:**

The MEG Act provides for equal wages to both male and female workers. That is one of the attractions for womenfolk to attend the EGS work sites.

(8) **Food for Work:**

The distinguishing feature of the EGS was a system of payment of wages partly in kind. The Government of Maharashtra launched a public works programme, under Food for Work, in collaboration with Co-operative American Relief Everywhere (CARE). The workers from tribal areas and drought-prone areas and other scarcity areas of the state were getting wages partially in the form of wheat supplied by the CARE under this programme. The three-fold objectives of the programme were to provide employment, to build assets and to raise nutritional standards of the
workers through the supply of wheat. This programme was initially started on a pilot basis on one percolation tank work in the village Sawalghat in Nasik district in December, 1974. Subsequently, it was extended to 125 works from 14 Talukas of 11 districts of the State in February, 1975 and further extended to all works by April, 1976. The cash portion of the wages on these works was paid out of the EGS funds. Thus the programme became an integral part of the EGS and continued upto February, 1981. The programme provided substantial relief to the workers especially during periods of scarcity. Of course this programme (FFW) is not part of MEG Act but has been adopted by the Government as a matter of policy and linked up with the EGS wages in kind.

(9) **Unemployment Allowance:**

The MEG Act makes a provision for unemployment allowance in lieu of work at the rate of Rs.2/- per day. It is nothing but a token amount indicating the acceptance of the responsibility for the rural unemployed by the State. The unemployment allowance is governed by the following conditions:

1) The demand for work from an unemployed person should be made by him in the prescribed proforma. Thus registration is a must for claiming unemployment allowance under the MEG Act.
ii) If work is not provided within 15 days from the date of the demand for the work, the worker is entitled to claim this allowance.

However, there are certain exceptions to the rules providing the unemployment allowance. They are as follows:

- Unemployment allowance shall not be payable:
  1) If the employment could not be provided to the worker due to abnormal situations.
  2) If a person fails to report to the given work site within a period of 7 days.
  3) If the worker has claimed unemployment allowance even if he has employment.
  4) As per MEG Act registration is a must for claiming unemployment allowance.

(10) Amenities and Personal Benefits:

(A) Amenities-

In addition to the wages to the workers, the MEG Act also provides for some amenities to them. Section 7 of the Act makes provision in this regard. These amenities can be grouped under two categories. The first category includes common amenities for both male and female workers and the second category covers amenities exclusively for women workers. The amenities under the first category
include - i) Providing tools and implements for manual work or hiring charges for this purpose @ 20 paise per day in lieu of supplying the tools. Besides, payment @ 30 paise per day is provided as sharpening charges for equipments to all workers. ii) Temporary sheds for workers for rest during the recess; drinking water and first aid box at the work sites. iii) Providing goggles to workers doing metal crushing to protect them from eye injuries. iv) Organising camps, comprising huts for each worker family at the work site in case the productive work could not be provided within a distance of 8 Kms. from the village. v) Arrangements for a fair price shop, visit of the medical officer of the near Primary Health Centre are also provided.

The amenities under the second category are - i) engaging a woman labourer to look after the welfare of children generally below the age of 3 years accompanying their mothers on work sites. ii) Providing creches for infants.

(B) Ex-gratia Payment-

There is also a provision for ex-gratia payment by the government on certain occasions. According to Section 7 (xiv) any physical injury caused to any person employed under the EGS works by accident arising out of and in the course of his employment entitles the worker to free medical treatment, hospitalisation, including diet. He is also
entitled to daily wages at half the rate of minimum wage. In case of the death of a person ex-gratia payment of Rs. 5000 shall be made to the next of his kin. In case of disablement, such person shall be entitled to ex-gratia payment as may be determined by the competent authority subject to a maximum of Rs. 5000. Similar provisions exist in respect of maternity benefit and family planning operations. The female workers are entitled to ex-gratia payment equal to 30 days at the rate of minimum wage of the lowest zone irrespective of the number of children. There are certain conditions in order to claim it including that of 150 days of prior attendance. In the case of a family planning operation, the female and male worker is entitled to 14 days and 7 days wages respectively.

**11) Funding of the EGS:**

The unanimous resolution of the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly on the EGS speaks of the assurance that the scheme will not be discontinued for want of money. The unique feature of this scheme is provision of a special fund created for this purpose. According to Section 12 of the MEG Act the following taxes are levied for building up this fund: a) Professional tax b) Land revenue surcharge, c) Surcharge on sales tax and vehicles, d) A tax on urban land, e) EGS tax on irrigated land, etc. The amount equal to the revenue collected against these taxes would be
provided to the EGS fund from the budget of the State Government. The idea behind the professional tax is that those who are already employed in any form should come to the rescue of those who are unemployed.

(12) **Compensation of Land Required:**

In order to undertake EGS works such as percolation tanks, roads, etc. it becomes necessary to acquired private land of the villagers. Various EGS circulars have instructed the collectors, the land acquisition officers as well as the implementing officers to dispose of the cases of acquisition of land and payment of compensation to the owners of the land expeditiously. The proposal for land acquisition is to be submitted to the Collector and the land acquisition officer by the officer of the concerned implementing agencies. The land is acquired as per the provision in the Land Acquisition Act, however, compensation is to be paid out of the DPTC fund and not out of the EGS fund. The Divisional Commissioner has at his disposal credit limit to advance and to make final payment to the concerned parties towards compensation. However, in cases of big works, such as major or medium irrigation projects as well as State and national highways where a small portion of work is taken under EGS, the compensation is to be paid from the budget heads of the appropriate departments.
(13) Types of Works Undertaken in the Scheme:

The main agencies implementing the EGS works are State government Departments of Irrigation, Building and Communication, Agriculture, including Soil Conservation, Forest and Social Forestry, and the Zilla Parishads. It is the overall responsibility of the District Collector to provide works and employment in consultation with these implementing agencies. As per the EGS rules, it is binding on the part of the implementing agencies to execute works sanctioned by the Collector. It is the responsibility of the implementing agency to maintain accounts and a record of the quantum of work done, attendance of the workers and the wages paid.

The Collector is empowered to take action against the officers for their failure in the proper and effective implementation of the EGS works. As per the recent guidelines of the scheme a new work can be started only on certain conditions. They are as follows:

a) There are sufficient workers available in agricultural and semi-agricultural areas.

b) If the plan and the non-plan works in the area are inadequate to absorb the workers in the villages resulting into an increased demand for the work.

c) If the ongoing EGS works unable to accommodate the increasing number of workers.
d) If there is demand for the work from at least 50 persons. However in case of hilly or tribal areas the number can be reduced to 20-25 persons.

e) The new works can be started only after completion of the process of survey, technical approval, administrative approval and final work orders of the Collector, etc.

There is a vast list of works which can be undertaken under the EGS by different implementing agencies. Following are some of the works undertaken under different areas of operation of the EGS.

(a) Irrigation:

The works in connection with major irrigation projects and minor irrigation projects can be undertaken in this category. In addition to this, the works like canal repairs, percolation tanks, village tanks, Malguzari tanks - especially in Nagpur, Bhandara and Gadachiroli districts - etc. flood control works, Irrigation works related to Command Area Development also can be undertaken. Recently Jawahar well programme for the marginal farmers has also been included in the list of the EGS works.

(b) Agriculture and Soil Conservation:

In this category, usually two types of works are taken up viz. 1) Land development, 2) Soil conservation. The
group of land development activities include AYACUT development works of improvement in their minor irrigation areas, Nala training, comprehensive watershed development programme (COWDEP), etc. These programmes are for the maximum utilisation of water and land of the small and marginal farmers. Further this group of activities include horticulture, land improvement works on tribal and forest lands, development of lakes for fishery, land improvement works on lands of the agricultural universities and Maharashtra Farming Corporation, etc. Soil Conservation works include Kachha Bandhara, Bhumigat Bhandhara, Nala Bunding (in Marathi), water conservation, etc. The works under this category also include contour bunding, terracing, drains, distributory canals, tool canals, trenches, etc.

c) Forestry and Social Forestry:

Afforestation in the Government forestry, scheme for the development of woodlands, pastures belonging to Gram Panchayats, tree plantation along road sides, forest farming are some of the works included under forestry. Tree plantation on the land belonging to Gram Panchayats, Gairan, and along canals, soil conservation works for forestry, include some of the works under the category of social forestry.
d) **Road Works:**

The road plan of 1981-2001 provides for roads to villages useful for all seasons of the year. Roads under this plan involve 60 per cent or more of unskilled work. It also includes renewal of the roads which are from the previous plan as well as completing roads taken up under the EGS during the scarcity period of 1972-75. The road works under the EGS cover i) approach roads to the villages, ii) widening of the national highways, iii) roads in hilly areas, iv) Roads joining adjacent states, v) Roads belonging to approach roads to major irrigation projects, vi) Air strips, vii) Roads in 'C' category municipal areas, pathways, etc.

Besides these categories of works recently emphasis is also given on watershed development works under new programme "Shram Shaktitun Gramin Vikas Karyakram (in Marathi) and "Jawahar Well Programme".

**Organizational Set-Up:**

The remarkable feature of the organizational set-up of the scheme is its gradual development from time to time. The three main components of the organizational set-up are- 1) the State level EGS Council and a network of various committees operating at different levels. 2) Administrative Apparatus for co-ordination, control and supervision of the scheme. 3) Network of implementing Agencies consisting of Government Departments and Panchayat Raj Institutions.
The organization structure and functions of these components are discussed below.

(A) The EGS Council and Committees

1) The Maharashtra State Employment Guarantee Council:

The EGS Council and the Committees are an integral part of the scheme. Section 4 of the MEG Act provides for the State Employment Guarantee Council for the purpose of a periodical review and supervision of the implementation of the Act and Scheme. The Council advises the State Government on all matters concerning the Act and the Scheme and their implementation. It also undertakes evaluation of the Scheme from time to time and for this purpose collects statistics pertaining to the rural economy of Maharashtra. The Council appoints study groups for undertaking study of specific questions and problems connected with the implementation of the Act and the Scheme. The Council co-ordinates the working of district level committees.

The Council was first constituted on 6th April, 1979 under the Chairmanship of V.S. Page and 26 other members. The members of the council included prominent leaders from different political parties, some MLAs and MLCs, social workers, labour leaders and economists, etc. There were representatives of tribals, Muslims as well as SCs, STs and
NTs. The concil was subsequently reconstituted in April, 1981 and 1989. The Chairman of the Council is conferred the status of Minister of State of the Government of Maharashtra, during his tour to review the EGS works. He is also entitled to receive pay and other allowances as per the EGS rules. The staff of the council includes - a Secretary to the Council and other necessary Secretarial staff.

11) **EGS Committees**:

The Government Resolution of the 28th March, 1972 and the 20th September, 1974 made a provision for establishing a network of committees at the state, district, block and local levels. Section 5 of the MEG Act provides for organization of the district and Panchayat level committees. Similarly Legislative Assembly rules speak to the constitution of a legislative committee for the EGS. In the first session of every year and beginning of the session after the general election this committee is constituted.

Thus the different provisions in this regard provide for an EGS Council and 5 types of the EGS Committee viz., a) State level committee, b) Legislative Committee, c) District level committee and d) Block level committee and e) Local works committee.
a) **State Level Committee:**

The Government Resolution of 28-3-1972 under the clause 'Administrative arrangement' says, "At the State level there will be a State Employment Guarantee Committee under the chairmanship of the Chief Minister to give directions in regard to policies, planning, implementation, co-ordination and evaluation of the Scheme. As per Government Resolution dated 20-9-1974, the committee consists of Chief Minister as the chairman and the Ministers of Irrigation, Agriculture, Finance, Industries, Labour, Revenue, P.W.D. and Minister of State for Planning. The Secretary to the Department of Planning acts as Secretary to this committee.

The State level committee approves the guidelines and make a periodical appraisal of the employment situation in the rural areas of the state on a continuing basis.

b) **Legislative Committee on EGS:**

The MEG Act provides constitution of a committee of both the houses of legislature. The objectives of the committee are -

1) To examine, assess and evaluate the working of EGS, with special reference to benefits accrued to it and the impact made on the people under the Scheme and to find out the deficiencies and short-comings, if any, and to suggest measures to remove them.
ii) To recommend measures for a better working of the Scheme and to obtain the best results contemplated by the Scheme.

Composition of the Committee:

The committee consists of 15 members which include 11 from the Legislative Assembly and 4 from the Legislative Council to be nominated by the Speaker of the house and Chairman of the Council respectively. The Chairman of the committee shall be nominated by the Speaker. The members will hold office for a period of one year. The first such committee was constituted on the 10th April, 1975 under the chairmanship of Shri P.K. Sawant.

c) District Level and Panchayat Samiti Level EGS Committees:

The district level committees were first constituted in 1974. However, these committees were discontinued as per G.R. dated 30-6-1975. They were reconstituted afresh after a gap of 10 years as per the G.R. dated the 28th February, 1985. The Act also provides for a committee at the Panchayat Samiti level. Committees at both the levels meet quarterly. The EGS Cell in the Collectorate provides administrative assistance to the district level committee.
Composition of the District Level Committee:

1) Chairman - Minister-in-charge of the district.
2) Co-Chairman - Minister of State from the district.
3) Member - one elected MP from the district.
4) Member - two members from the elected MLAs and MLCs of the district.
5) Chairman of the Zilla Parishad.
6) Chairman of the Public Works Committee of the Z.P.
7) Two members belong to backward communities.
8) Two non-official members.
9) Two persons from the EGS workers or the registered workers' organization.
10) Chief Executive Officer of the Zilla Parishad.
11) Member Secretary - The Collector.

The project officers of the EGS Council from the district and the members of Integrated Tribal Development Project are permanent invitees of the Committee. One MLA or MLC, member generally includes those belonging to opposition parties. If there is no opposition party MLA or MLC from the district, then one member from the opposition parties is nominated as additional member of this Committee. The members belonging to backward classes, non-officials, workers' organisations are nominated by the Minister In-Charge of the district. Their tenure is for a period three years. The MP and MLA are also nominated by the Minister in-charge of the district.
(11) Composition of Panchayat Samiti Level

EGS Committees:

1) Chairman - nominated by the Minister-in-charge of the district from the members.

2) Member - MLA of the area.

3) Member - MLC residing in the area.

4) Member - Chairman of the Panchayat Samiti.

5) Member - Two members belonging to backward classes.

6) Member - Two non-official members.

7) Member - Two members, the EGS workers or representatives of the workers' organization.

8) Member - Project Officer to the Integrated Tribal Development Block.

9) Member - Member Secretary, Tahsildar.

The functions of these committees are similar within their respective jurisdictions. The main activities expected to be undertaken by these committees are as follows:

1) To give approval to the blue-print of EGS works.

2) To supervise and review the implementation of the scheme from time to time.

3) To suggest to the state government, the Council's measures for the effective implementation of the works and the Act.

4) The district level committees examine and follow up, the report of supervision done by the implementing agencies.

5) The district committee is also empowered to summon any implementing agency or other officer.
6) The committee makes visits to the works and inspects the functioning, especially the muster rolls and the wage payment as per prescribed rates.

d) Local Works Committee:

In order to supervise the EGS in the village and to check the irregularities in them, the Government Resolutions of 4-12-81 and 18-12-81 provide for the constitution of the local works committees if required. These committees are appointed by the block level implementing officers of the EGS such as Deputy Engineers, Sub-Divisional Soil Conservation Officers, etc. for particular works with more than 100 workers working on them. If the Zilla Parishad or Panchayat Samiti member is the resident of that village one of them is appointed as the chairman of this committee. If not, the chairman is appointed from the members of the Panchayat Samiti level EGS committee, the Sarpanch, the Police Patil, the Chairman of the village co-operative, the Head Master of the school from the concerned village. One of the above five, other than the chairman, is appointed as the member of the committee. Two representatives, one of them a woman, of the workers are also appointed on this Committee. The Committee gives visits to the work, inspects the work sites and makes its report to the Secretary of the Panchayat level EGS Committee.
Organizational Set-up of Administrative Apparatus:

The Employment Guarantee Scheme is under the control of the Department of Planning. However, there is no single department which has been entrusted with the entire responsibility of its implementation. There are a number of departments associated with the Scheme as implementing agencies, viz. Irrigation, Agriculture, B & C, Forest, Social Forestry, etc. These departments are responsible for the execution of the EGS works of their concern. In addition to the Departments of the State Government, the Zilla Parishads and Panchayat Samities also act as implementing agencies. The power to co-ordinate the activities of all these agencies, associated with the EGS, rests with the officers of the Revenue Department working at the different levels, viz. Divisional Commissioner, District Collector and Tahsildar, etc. These revenue authorities are also responsible for the task of supervision, control, and evaluation. Thus there are two sets of administrative apparatus - one is engaged in the implementation of the EGS work and another looks after the management of the Scheme.

The remarkable feature of the organizational set-up of the scheme is its gradual development from time to time. Yet another characteristic of staffing that can be observed from the EGS literature is that the technical and supervising staff is equipped on the recommendations of the Legislative
Committee reports and the reports of the study groups appointed by the Government. The following are the main administrative units under the organizational set-up of the scheme.

(A) Administrative Set-up of Controlling Apparatus:

(i) (a) State level - There is a separate EGS section in the Planning Department to deal with this Scheme. This section comprises the following personnel as shown in the table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Personnel</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Chief Engineer who holds the rank of Joint Secretary</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Under-Secretary</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Officer on Special Duty (Vigilance)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Executive Engineer (Vigilance)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Senior Auditor</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Auditor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Assistant Secretary/Clerk</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Research Officer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Research Assistant</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Stenographer (Higher Grade)</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Clerks</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12. Clerk-cum-Typist .. 12

Total .. 66

(Source: Department of Planning, Government of Maharashtra; The figures indicate the position as of 29th February, 1989)

(i) (b) The Management and Information System:

The unit was first introduced in 1958. Its main objective was to study the flow of benefits commensurate with the expenditure incurred and monitoring the impact of the Scheme at various levels. There is electronic data processing section in the Department of Planning for this purpose. This unit consolidates information collected through weekly, fortnightly, monthly, six-monthly and yearly progress reports.

(ii) EGS Cell at Divisional Level:

Section 6 (a) of the MEG Act (inserted in 1980) states that the Divisional Commissioner shall be the competent authority to supervise and review the implementation of the scheme in the revenue division under his charge. The Divisional Commissioner shall be competent to issue directives to the Collectors, other officers, local authorities and other bodies regarding the implementation of the Scheme. It shall be incumbent on all of them to carry
out such directions. As a result the inspection and supervisory cell has been created at each revenue division in 1977. In order to facilitate the work of supervision, including technical supervision, the EGS cell at this level is provided with the following staff.

Table No. 4.2

EGS Cell at Divisional Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Personnel</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Officer on Special Duty - Ex-Officio Deputy Development Commissioner (including the Superintendent Engineer occupying this post. Later on other than SE such as the Joint Director of Agriculture, The Conservator of Forest, etc. have been appointed on this post. Therefore, the designation was changed to OSD from SE).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Assistant Commissioner EGS</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Deputy Engineer</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Stenographer (Higher Grade)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Head Accountant</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Junior Engineer</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Aval Karkun, Clerk-cum-Typist, Peon, Driver, etc. as per requirement.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Department of Planning, Government of Maharashtra, GR-EST-1289/A-7/EMP-3 Mantralaya, Bombay, 28 February, 1989).
(iii) District Level

The Collector is responsible for the implementation of the Scheme at the district level. It is he who coordinates and controls the EGS works. He allocates works to the implementing agencies. Last, but not the least, he is responsible for providing employment to the workers. In order to fulfil these tasks there is a cell at the Collectorate level also.

There are three types of functionaries for - (1) regular inspection and supervision, (2) audit, and (3) vigilance. The staffing of the EGS cell, general and technical, in the district includes staff at the headquarters of the District and staff at the Tahsil level allotted by the Collector. A full-fledged Employment Guarantee Scheme cell of a district comprises one Deputy Collector, one Deputy Accountant, one Aval Karkun and one clerk-cum-typist.  

Such cells were first created in 1975 in 9 districts, and subsequently extended to all districts by 1977, such a cell was created in Aurangabad district on the 24th November, 1976.

The EGS cell controls and supervises the working of all implementing agencies in the district including those or Zilla Parishad in respect of administration, accounts and to the execution of EGS works. The cell is also expected to point out irregularities during the visits to the
EGS works. It gives guidance to the implementing functionaries whenever sought for. The cell deals with matters pertaining to the works relating to Public Accounts Committee, a legislative committee on the EGS, reconciliation work of expenditure, settlement of outstanding audit objections, inspection relating to clearance of contingency bills, etc.

The audit squad is responsible for checking the implementation of works with reference to the number of workers on the muster roll, output of work done, timely payment of wages, technical supervision regarding the quality of the work, arrangement made for development of labour and all other matters regarding the EGS in accordance with the objectives and procedures prescribed by the Government in this regard. The squad reports its findings and observations to the Collector.

The cell at the Collectorate except seven districts is also provided with vigilance squad with the purpose of making surprise visits to the EGS works. In addition to the vigilance squad, 7 districts of the state including Aurangabad have a separate inspection squad and also vigilance and quality control squad. The inspection squad is expected to hand over cases involving irregularities if noted, to the vigilance and quality control squad. By 1989 the total staff at the Collectoral level in the
29 districts of the State had reached 565 functionaries. They include Deputy Collectors, Naib Tahsildars, Deputy Accountants, Aval Karkuns, clerks, typists, driver, peons, etc.

The staffing position of the EGS cell of Aurangabad district is shown in Table No.4.3.

**Table No.4.3**

**EGS Cell at Aurangabad Collectorate**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Personnel</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Deputy Collector</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Naib Tahsildar</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Deputy Accountant</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Aval Karkun</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Clerk-cum-Typist</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Driver</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Peon</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 27

*(Source: Department of Planning GR-EST-1289/A-7/EMP-3 dated February 28, 1989).*

Added to these are technical personnel such as Deputy Engineers, Junior Engineers, etc. attached to the district cell.
(B) Organizational Set-up of Implementing Agencies:

The study group appointed by the Government to study the implementation of the EGS works, as far as their requirement of staff is concerned, recommended creation of divisions and sub-divisions in the Department of Irrigation, B and C and other concerned departments. Accordingly the organizational set-up of these implementing agencies have come into existence.

(1) Irrigation Department:

In September, 1976 three divisions and thirty-three subdivisions in the state were sanctioned to undertake survey, execute and supervise the EGS works in the Irrigation Department. They included one division and six subdivisions in Aurangabad district. These divisions and sub-divisions were created as per the recommendations of the study group. Similar divisions and sub-divisions were created subsequently in other districts of the state.

(ii) B and C Department:

To begin with one division and four sub-divisions were opened in Thane district in 1976. The number of divisions increased to 16 and those of sub-divisions increased to 79 throughout the state by 1989. The composition of divisions and sub-divisions is more or less similar to those of Irrigation Department.
(iii) Forest Department:

The afforestation works and other forest works such as establishment and maintenance of nurseries are manned by forest divisions and sub-divisions. Almost all forest divisions and sub-divisions of Maharashtra are provided with the staff for implementation of afforestation works under the EGS.

By 1989 the total strength sanctioned under various categories allotted to different districts and that of Aurangabad district is as given below in Table No.4.4:

Table No.4.4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designation</th>
<th>State position 1988</th>
<th>Revised position</th>
<th>Aurangabad district</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Range Forest Officer</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range Officer</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forester</td>
<td>594</td>
<td>429</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest Guard</td>
<td>1278</td>
<td>859</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerk</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountant</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peon</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Department of Forest) Government of Maharashtra.
(iv) **Soil Conservation**:

The Soil Conservation Divisions and Sub-divisions implement the bunding and other land improvement works. There are no separate divisions and sub-divisions for EGS works in the Department of Agriculture and Soil Conservation. There were 31 Soil Conservation divisions and 158 sub-divisions in the state in 1988. Many of them were engaged in the implementation of the EGS works.

The following flow chart will explain the organizational set-up of the Scheme at different levels on the one hand and the functional relationship in the administrative apparatus on the other hand. The chart also helps to understand the co-ordination, control and supervision mechanism at implementation levels. (See Flowchart of the Organizational set-up of the EGS).

**Conclusion:**

To sum up it can be said that the organizational set-up, gradually developed, consists of (1) Council and Committees of non-officials to deliberate, advise and supervise as democratic control mechanism and (2) officials at different levels engaged in the co-ordination and the actual implementation of the Scheme. There is no single department for the EGS. Therefore, a number of departments are associated in its implementation. The Collector as a key figure, has to co-ordinate the functioning of the whole Scheme in
his district. This set-up is a skeleton of the formal structure. In practice the working of the Scheme does not strictly adhere to the formal set-up. There are some organs which are on paper only; and there are some bodies which are treated as adhoc bodies. For example at the Panchayat Samiti level the EGS committees are actually not formed in many talukas including Aurangabad. The District level co-ordination committee is not generally constituted on full scale. It depends on the whims of the Minister incharge, his district and other political considerations. The representatives of workers are seldom nominated. The EGS Council chairman is changed with the change in the Chief Minister. The post is also used, as it carries status of state minister to accommodate some influential politician. For example when V.SPage was already Chairman of the Council the post of additional Executive President (Karyadhyaksha) (in Marathi) was created. The Council does not meet frequently. The study groups are formed occasionally. The only continuity being observed in respect of EGS Legislative committee. Thus these structural defects lead to a number of irregularities in the execution of the Scheme. They have been discussed in Chapter VII of this study. Further the gaps and the lapses in the organizational set-up are result in widening the scope of politicization in the Scheme. If the
organizational devices such as EGS committees, EGS Council and other provisions of the MEG Act become inoperative, the vested interests are bound to play their role. Therefore, the political process of the EGS needs to be analysed. In the next two chapters, i.e. Chapters V and VI an attempt has been made to unfold the political process of the EGS with the help of the field work conducted for this study.
CHAPTER IV: NOTES AND REFERENCES:


2. Ibid.


6. The report provides a table giving issues on which agitation in the form of morchas, dharnas, gheraos etc. were organized and the districts in which the organizations were reported during the drought period (1972-73) in Maharashtra.

7. In his interview at Gokhale Institute of Economics and Politics on 20-2-1989 the renowned economist Neelkanth Rath expressed his views about the emergence of the EGS.

8. Interview of CPI Leader, Aurangabad on 18-6-1990.


10. Section 3 of the MEG Act 1977 provides for every adult person in rural area right to get guaranteed employment for unskilled manual work.


12. The scheme for undertaking land shapping grading works under Soil Conservation, in the command areas of minor irrigation tanks. Ibid., 538.


cont...
13. Ibid., p. 774.


15. Various Reports of the EGS Legislative Committee have made recommendations for creating various posts - general and technical staff.


17. Ibid., p. 215.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid., p. 203.