CHAPTER VII

Summary, Conclusions and Implications of the Study
CHAPTER – VII

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

In the light of analysis in the preceding chapters, it is attempted here to summarize the findings of the study. The main objective of the study is to examine the performance of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) in Andhra Pradesh—with special reference to Chittoor District. At the dawn of the twenty-first century, about 26 percent of people are under-nourished in India. Not only do they lack access to sufficient money to buy food and other essentials, but neither do they have access to sufficient schooling, adequate housing, nor medical care. Those in rural areas are often face shortage of water and fuel. Fertile land and water for farming are becoming scarce increasingly. About one third of Indians lived in poverty in 1990s. Alleviation of poverty and employment generation has always been the main focus of development planning in India. Employment generation through public works is considered as one of the important means to improve the socio-economic life of the disadvantaged and marginalized sections of the society in India. Although a large number of multi-faceted and multi-pronged poverty alleviation and employment generation programmes were launched, the incidence of poverty continues to be wide-spread, particularly among Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, small and marginal farmers and landless labourers in rural areas. After five decades of sustained developmental efforts, India has the world’s largest number of the poor i.e., over 260.25 million; of whom, as many as 193.24 million, are in rural areas. At the all India level, however, the percentage of people living below the poverty line has declined from 54.90 per cent in 1973-74 to 26.10 per cent in 1999-2000 and it has decelerated from 56.40 per cent to 27.09 per cent in rural areas and from 49 per cent to 23.62 per cent in urban areas for the same period.

Although there has been a rapid reduction in the proportion of people living below the poverty line, a little over one-fourth of the population is deprived of their basic needs of life and more so in respect of SC’s, ST’s and OBC’s as compared to Other Castes. The persistence of high poverty among the weaker sections of society has become a matter of great concern in the context of achieving one of the Millennium Development Goals.
Rural India is real India. Rural areas account for nearly three-fourth of the population of the country and have a much larger concentration of people below the poverty line. Small size of land holdings, poverty, unemployment, under-employment, starvation, mal-nutrition, ill-health, illiteracy, ignorance, idleness, less mobility of labour, casteism, exploitation by vested interests, low productivity, unorganised sector are some of the features of rural areas in India. An analysis of the 43rd Round Survey of National Sample Survey Organisation (1987-88) revealed that a little over 90 per cent of the rural poor are below the poverty line in major States. Significantly, the rate of poverty is much higher in villages than in urban areas. Development of India lies in the socio-economic emancipation of the rural masses; villages do provide opportunities in traditional occupations; but, then, the youth are lured by the urban opportunities for pursuing higher education and seeking more remunerative careers promising job satisfaction.

Keeping in view the magnitude of the problem and its importance in the developmental strategies of a country like India, it has been felt that it would be of great practical significance to study the problem at the village level following an intensive approach in order to get a clear perspective of the role of employment guarantee schemes in the process of poverty eradication in rural areas. Accordingly, Chittoor District in the drought-prone Rayalaseema region of the State of Andhra Pradesh, is selected for the study purpose. Multi-stage, stratified random sampling technique was employed. There are 66 revenue mandals in the Chittoor District in which implementation of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in terms of targets and achievements and man-days of employment generated. In the first stage, from the list of six mandals, one mandal from each category was randomly selected. In the second stage, from each mandal, two villages were randomly selected. Totally, twelve villages were selected from the six mandals. In the third stage, from each village, a ten per cent of sample respondents were drawn from the list of all beneficiary families prepared for house-hold survey. About 25 per cent beneficiaries were randomly selected from each Gram Panchayat with due representation to major caste categories to which beneficiaries belong. In all, four hundred and ten sample beneficiaries employed in the work of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) were selected from the twelve Gram Panchayats. In order to assess the impact of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme on income,
consumption expenditure and employment levels, a total of one hundred and ten non-beneficiaries, who did not participate in NREGS works, were randomly selected to act as 'control group' while selecting the non-beneficiaries.

Both primary and secondary data were collected for the present study for analyzing, drawing inferences and arriving at conclusions, keeping in view the objectives of the study. Primary data were collected by administering pre-tested questionnaires to the sample respondents. Data pertaining to the implementation of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme were collected by administering separate questionnaire to all sample village Panchayats. Secondary data were collected from the reports available at the Chief Executive Officer, Zilla Parishad in Chittoor, all sample Grama Panchayats in the District, Annual Reports of the Ministry of Rural Development, New Delhi and Bureau of Economics and Statistics, Government of Andhra Pradesh. The data were analysed by making use of appropriate statistical tools such as percentages, averages, T-tests and ANOVA analysis. The period of the study pertains to the year 2007-08. The data were collected from the sample respondents for the ten month period from March 2007 to December 2008.

Major Findings

Sex composition of sample beneficiaries indicates that there are 67 per cent male and 33 per cent female beneficiaries and only 66.90 per cent male and 33.10 per cent female non-beneficiaries. The percentage of males seems to predominate over that of females, in both the categories of sample beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of the six sample mandals of the three divisions of the district.

Classification of sample respondents on caste basis reveals that those backward castes are more predominant among the beneficiaries followed by 'Scheduled Castes' (SCs), 'Scheduled Tribes' (STs) and Other Castes (OCs). In absolute figures, 27.07 per cent are found in Scheduled Castes, 11.95 per cent in Scheduled Tribes 47.08 per cent in 'Backward Castes' and 13.90 per cent 'Other Castes' and among the respondents in the category of non-beneficiaries, there are only 26.90 per cent among Scheduled Castes, 12.30 per cent among Scheduled Tribes, 46.90 per cent among Backward Castes and 13.80 per cent among Other Castes.
Age wise distribution of respondents indicated that among the beneficiaries, a highest percentage, constituting 23.41 per cent, were found in the age group of 26-35 years; whereas, in the case of sample non-beneficiaries, 24.61 per cent of them were found in the age group of 15-25 years.

In respect of caste-wise marital status of the sample respondents, we observed that among the sample beneficiaries, 66.82 per cent are married and 33.18 per cent are unmarried; but there are only 66.92 per cent married and 33.08 per cent unmarried among the non-beneficiaries. We thus find that the percentage of married and unmarried, both in the categories of sample beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, is more or less, the same.

The total size of the family indicates that among the sample beneficiaries, 50 per cent have small families, 30 per cent medium families and 20 per cent large families. Of the non-beneficiaries, 50 per cent have ‘medium families’, 33 per cent ‘small families’ and 17 per cent ‘large families’. Obviously, the percentage of sample beneficiaries with small families is highest (50 per cent) as compared to the highest percentage of sample non-beneficiaries with medium families (i.e. 50 per cent).

Classification of sample respondents according to their education level shows that among the beneficiaries, there are 17.80 per cent illiterates, 21.95 per cent with primary level education and 60.25 per cent with secondary level of education. But there are only 66.15 per cent illiterates, 20 per cent with primary level of education and 13.85 per cent with secondary level of education among the non-beneficiaries. Evidently, the percentage of illiterates was less (i.e. 17.8 per cent) among the sample beneficiaries as compared to 66.15 per cent illiterates among the sample non-beneficiaries. Besides, we find that the percentage of sample beneficiaries who had secondary education was high (i.e. 60.25 per cent) as compared to sample non-beneficiaries. Literate beneficiaries seem to have greater access to information pertaining to NREGS works.

In regard to the occupational status of the sample respondents, it was found that among the sample beneficiaries, agricultural labourers constituted 64.87 per cent, followed non-labourers (20 per cent), and rural artisans (15.13 per cent). But, then, among the sample non-beneficiaries 74.61 per cent comprised agricultural
labourers, followed by 15.39 per cent of non-labourers and 10 per cent of rural artisans. Agricultural labourers constituted highest percentage both in the case of sample beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries.

The land-holding pattern of respondents shows that sample beneficiaries, owned 54.21 per cent of irrigated land and 45.79 per cent of unirrigated land; whereas, 15 sample non-beneficiaries owned 47.80 per cent of irrigated land and 52.20 per cent of unirrigated land. Evidently, those who owned irrigated land have an edge over those who have high percentage of unirrigated land.

We found that among the sample beneficiaries, 90 per cent have own houses and 10 per cent live in rented houses. But there are only 90 per cent with own houses and 10 per cent live in rented houses in the case of sample non-beneficiaries. Evidently, those who have own houses were high in number both in the case of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries.

Type of houses owned by respondents reveals that the sample beneficiaries who have Kuccha houses constituted 64.63 per cent, followed by owners of pucca houses (20.25 per cent) and thatched houses (15.12 per cent); whereas, the sample non-beneficiaries owned 65 per cent of Kuccha houses, followed by 20 per cent of thatched houses and 15 per cent of pucca houses. It is evident that both the sample beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries owned, more or less, 65 per cent of Kuccha houses. But the percentage of sample beneficiaries who owned pucca houses was high (20.25 per cent) compared to sample non-beneficiaries who owned 15 per cent pucca houses.

Status of housing of the respondents by caste wise reveals that there are 27.07 per cent Scheduled Castes, 11.95 per cent Scheduled Tribes 47.07 per cent Backward Castes and 13.90 per cent ‘Other Castes’ among the sample beneficiaries. 26.92 per cent are Scheduled Castes 12.32 per cent Scheduled Tribes 46.29 per cent Backward Castes 13.84 per cent other castes among the non-beneficiaries.

It is observed that in the case of total average value of assets, it was highest i.e. Rs.7822 (57.52 per cent) for live-stock, followed by consumer durables valued at Rs.4771 i.e., (55.08 per cent). The total average value of agricultural implements is lowest at Rs.1004 constituting (7.38 per cent). As compared to sample beneficiaries,
the total average valued of live-stock is Rs. 8275 i.e (65.14 per cent), followed by consumer durables value at Rs.3710 i.e (29.20 per cent) and agricultural implements valued at Rs.717 i.e (5.64 per cent). The overall total average value of assets of sample beneficiaries is high i.e Rs13597 as compared to that of sample non-beneficiaries at Rs.12702.

When we look at the distribution of sample NREGS workers, out of 410 of them, 206 are male earners and 69 are male dependents and 41 are female earners and 94 are female dependents in the Chittoor district. Male earners predominate over female earners and majority of the female members are dependents on earners in all the three divisions of the district.

By and large, there are 152 male earners and 123 male dependents and 41 female earners and 94 female dependents among the non-beneficiaries. Of total sample, dependents are more predominant than earners in the both categories of male and female in the sample mandals.

Average days of employment of sample respondents indicates that the total average number of days of self-employment is 32.24 per cent, wage employment is 36.18 per cent and other employment is 31.58 per cent in the case of sample beneficiaries. However, we find that 62.01 per cent of the sample non-beneficiaries are self-employed and 37.99 per cent in other employments.

The total average income of beneficiaries is found to be Rs.15225.20 and it is Rs.12994.80 for non-beneficiaries. As the income of non-beneficiaries fluctuate, as compared to the assured wage-incomes of the sample beneficiaries they may be employed in the works of NREGS and helped to pursue income-generating activities.

It is observed that the total average income of the sample beneficiaries is Rs.12876.34 as compared to the total average income of the sample non-beneficiaries at Rs.9568.96 beneficiaries earned more income as compared to non-beneficiaries by maintaining small enterprises, like dairy, rearing goats and sheeps besides wages earned under NREGS.

It is noticed that the total average consumption expenditure of the sample beneficiaries is Rs.16276; whereas, it is Rs.15715 for non-beneficiaries. The sample
beneficiaries incurred more expenditure on food, fuel and lighting, medical expenses and 'transportation' compared to the sample non-beneficiaries; whereas, in the case of sample non-beneficiaries, they incurred more expenditure on items such as 'clothing' and 'education' as compared to 'food' and 'fuel'.

We found that the total average expenditure of the sample beneficiaries is Rs.19923.98 whereas, it is Rs.16094.73 among the non-beneficiaries. On the whole expenditure incurred by the beneficiaries is more than that of non-beneficiaries. Factors such as joint family system, more number of children, old age people account for the high amount of expenditure especially in Yerravaripalle and Chinnagottigallu mandals.

It is estimated that total average expenditure of the sample beneficiaries is Rs.20273.26; whereas, it is Rs.15654.10 among the non-beneficiaries. The expenditure incurred by the beneficiaries is more than that of non-beneficiaries because, expensed more on consumer goods, occasional consumption of cheap liquor or beer and toddy to remove body pain, besides expenditure incurred on festivals and celebrations of death ceremony.

When we look at the debt profile of the respondents, we found that the total average size of debt incurred by the sample beneficiaries was Rs.14211 as compared to Rs.19115 of the sample non-beneficiaries. The total average debt incurred by the sample beneficiaries is less, as compared to the sample non-beneficiaries because the beneficiaries had access to institutional credit and different government institutions at a lower rate of interest. Moreover, the per head debt burden got gradually lessened consequent to the incremental wage income they could earn from being employed in NREGS works.

Further, we noticed that total average debt the sample of beneficiaries was Rs.6469.01, as compared to Rs.6085.01 of non-beneficiaries, because the beneficiaries. Seems to have incurred more debt as they had to meet the expenditure towards the celebration of marriage of their sons / daughters, besides expenditure incurred on consumption of cheap liquor for physical and mental relaxation.

The total average value of assets for the sample beneficiaries is Rs.13637.24; whereas, it is Rs.13482.32 for non-beneficiaries. But the value of assets of beneficiaries is a little bit higher than that of non-beneficiaries because they were engaged in small enterprises, vegetable business other small works.
We found that the total average net family income of the sample beneficiaries rose to Rs.15225.20 in the post-NREGS period as compared to Rs.1204.52 in the pre-NREGS, registering an incremental income of Rs.3182.68 with percentage variation of 26.42. Evidently, after getting employed under NREGS, the sample beneficiaries found an increase in their wage income which enabled them to save a part of their earnings in post-office and savings accounts to banks. Besides, women could save with Self-Help Groups (SHGs).

It is observed that the total average net family income of sample beneficiaries in the pre-NREGS was Rs.19097.25 which rose to Rs.24550.54 in the post-NREGS period. Certainly there is an increased in the total average net family income of the sample beneficiaries. Considered caste-wise, in the post-NREGS period as compared to the pre-NREGS period, the incremental income enabled them to meet their primary needs of food etc. without borrowing from money-lenders or land-lords at usurious rates of interest.

Further, we observed that the total average consumption expenditure of sample beneficiaries in the pre-NREGS period was Rs.15345, as compared to Rs.19774 in the post-NREGS with an incremental expenditure of is Rs.4429 and percentage variation at 28.86. With increased incomes in the post-NREGS period, the sample beneficiaries could afford to spend more on items such as food, clothing etc. As the dependents are found to be more in number compared to the wage-earners, they had to incur more consumption expenditure.

The average consumption expenditure of the sample beneficiaries in pre-NREGS period was Rs.17781.53 as compared to Rs.20797.53 in the post-NREGS period and the increase in value was Rs.3016 with percentage variation at 16.96. With increased wage-incomes, in the post-NREGS period the sample beneficiaries are induced to incur unproductive / wasteful expenditure on consumption of toddy, cheap, liquor, smoking, settling litigations in court.

The total average family consumption expenditure in the pre-NREGS was Rs.4199.58 and in the post-NREGS Rs.3268.15 with an average increase of Rs.931.43 and percentage variation at 22.17. The consumption expenditure in the pre-NREGS was higher than the post-NREGS because before implementation of NREGS, it was high and after getting employed in NREGS, the sample beneficiaries could afford to save a part of their earnings in the savings accounts of banks and post-office once in a fortnight or month.
We found that the total average debt of the sample beneficiaries in the pre-NREGS was Rs.39180 and it was Rs.29734, in the post-NREGS with an average decrease at Rs.9446 and percentage variation at 24.10. The total average debt in the pre-NREGS was high as compared to the post-NREGS. They could repay all their debts, and borrow the loans at low rate of interest from banks. In case of women, they could borrow loans at low rate of interest as members of DWCRA. Among each group, each person may take loan up to Rs.50,000 with low rate of interest.

It is observed that the total average debt of sample beneficiaries in the pre-NREGS period was Rs.9086.09 as compared to Rs.6990.93 in the post-NREGS period with an average decrease of Rs.2095.16 at a percentage variation of 23.05. They borrowed money from large farmers and money-lenders at high rate of interest during the pre-NREGS period because of their meagre incomes. The beneficiaries incurred debt for celebrating different festivals and for their children’s education and purchase of consumer goods.

The total average value of house-hold assets in the pre-NREGS period was Rs.11469.20 which rose to Rs.13637.24 in the post-NREGS period with an incremental income of Rs.2168.04 at percentage variation of 18.90 percent. Post-NREGS period beneficiaries increased their assets like, TV, Cellphone, milch cows; besides, for house construction and bathroom under the Indira Avas Yojana. After implementation of NREGS, their incomes have increased slightly enabling them purchase assets.

It is found that the total average value house-hold assets of the sample beneficiaries in the pre-NREGS period was Rs.10560, which rose to Rs.135970 in the post NREGS period with an average decrease of Rs.3037 at percentage of variation of 28.76. Beneficiaries purchased house-hold assets like, bullocks, milch cows, sheeps, goats and text-books for their children, FM Radio, TV and cell phones.

The average number of man-days of employment of the sample beneficiaries in the pre-NREGS was 146, which rose to 227 man-days in the post-NREGS period with an incremental employment of 81 days, registering a 55.99 per cent variation (vide Table 6.12.2). The incremental employment was found to be high i.e. at 90 man-days among the sample beneficiaries in the caste category of ‘Backward Caste’,
followed by beneficiaries in the Scheduled Caste (88 man-days), Scheduled Tribes (76 man-days) and Other Castes (73 man-days). Evidently, the sample beneficiaries in the caste category of Scheduled Caste registered large number of man-days of incremental employment and they are making the most of their lands assigned to them.

Drawbacks/Constraints

The above observations clearly suggest that there are many drawbacks and constraints which are weakening the implementation of the employment and income generating programmes in rural India since their inception. Some of the constraints are:

i) Vital records not maintained: Data collection and maintenance at the Gram Panchayat and block level are poor, which hinders the process of verification of households eligible for payment of unemployment allowances. Moreover, job cards did not have photographs and those who caused delays in payment of wages were not penalized.

ii) Irregularities in Execution of Works: In several States, works were carried out without obtaining stipulated administrative and technical sanctions in advance. Additionally, many States used contractors and machinery to carry out the work in clear violation of the guidelines which specify that only manual labour should be used. Non-qualified persons such as peons and private secretaries were paid to carry out the work in the absence of technical staff and many works did not adhere to the specified wage to material costs ratio.

iii) Non-Payment of Wages: NREGS guidelines stipulate that every worker is entitled to a wage equal to the State Minimum Wage for agricultural labour and delays beyond 15 days must be compensated. However, many cases of non-payment of full wages, which were less than minimum wages, and non-compensation for delays in providing work, were observed. Delayed payments amounting to Rs. 15,592 crore and unemployment allowance for 16,29,747 person days remained outstanding in 24 States.

iv) Inadequate Project Pipeline: Gram Panchayats are required to prepare a development plan that includes a pipeline of potential projects. Typically, the
development plans should outline more projects than the projected demand for work to ensure fast processing of requests for works. However, many States do not prepare development plans citing a lack of professional capability. This causes unnecessary delays in providing work to individuals and hinders the creation of assets despite a demand for wage labour.

v) There are no competent institutions to administer the programme at the village level.

Existing institutions are in the hands of the elite, or of NGOs or Government departments which see them only as tools through which to deliver their own agenda.

vi) As responsibilities are not clearly articulated, some tasks remain unfinished and therefore regular audits carried out by disinterested volunteers.

Funds were misused and misappropriated on a large scale. The same work is being repeated in different names and very small works are being taken up. In spite of the rule stipulated, it was found that machinery such as proclaimers and tractors were being made use of in gross violation of the rule. Lower wage payment and gender wage discrimination is in practice in the study villages. The inability of Panchayat Raj institutions to provide the required technical supporting staff leads to poor and ineffective implementation of the scheme. Influential people monopolize the programme and informal 'brokers' act as 'gatekeepers' and demand payments for registration. In spite of a few drawbacks, we can say that the scheme will definitely bring about a great change in the rural India. For the last two years, the scheme is being implemented in 200 districts and it has been extended to all the 604 districts in our country. So far, the scheme has provided employment to all those who sought employment in most of the districts successfully. The scheme also helps in creating social wealth in the rural areas. The total number of beneficiaries runs into nearly one crore. For the success of this scheme, the responsibility of implementation should be shoulder by the Panchayat Raj Institutions. Some of the policy implications and recommendations made hereunder, it is hoped, will help the Panchayat Raj Institutions and developmental agencies at the grass-root level, in the effective implementation of the programme aiming at poverty alleviation, employment generation and income creation for the rural poor.
Policy Implications and Recommendations

The findings of the study suggest that, undoubtedly, NREGS programme is a boon to the people who are living below the poverty line in rural India. In drought-prone areas like Chittoor district, in spite of certain draw-backs in the implementation of the programme, employment and income generation programmes are very much needed to accelerate the pace of economic development and eradicate of poverty. The analysis presented in this thesis calls for formulating and effectively implementing policies relating to employment and income generation and alleviation of rural poverty. The scope of the scheme in selected villages is limited, which needs to be widened and there must be a clear demarcation of duties between the village Panchayats and the implementing officers/administrators.

Recommendations

The foundation of NREGS lies in the Act ratified by the Parliament, which makes it different from several other government schemes. In comparison to other workforce schemes, NREGS's novelty lies in features such as minimum wages and unemployment allowances. However, the timing of wages payments and lack of training provided to Gram Panchayats raises concerns about its implementation. As a demand-driven programme, the success of NREGS depends on the awareness of the people and their involvement in planning, delivery, and monitoring through social audits that have been built into the scheme. Some of the important recommendations are listed below.

1. Payment through bank accounts and post offices: To overcome problems of non-payment of wages and to separate the implementing agency from the payment agency, the scheme's guidelines advocate for the State Governments to make payments through bank accounts or post-offices. To date, States have been slow in doing this but are now accelerating the process. However, since many labourers do not have experience using bank accounts, post offices have emerged as the preferred mode of receipt of wages.

2. Online Data Collection and Verification: Since the verification of data has proved to be different, Ministry Of Rural Development has made it mandatory to use online data collection systems. This adds to transparency and may help
curtail financial and physical irregularities. For example, it will help monitor payment of unemployment allowances that arise from delays in providing employment within the stipulated 15 days after the receipt of application.

3. **Measurement of Wages and Impact of Work**: Data on works undertaken highlight a shift from water conservation to land development. The most likely reason is differences in wage calculation methods and employing the same method across works would remove this constraint. According to the current guidelines, only wages are measured and not assets created. This focus on expenditure over outcomes has resulted in many projects not being completed. Measuring the value of assets created could help track the status of projects, ensure the completion of works, and gauge their impact on the village economy.

4. **Strengthening Village Level Planning and Implementation**: Providing Gram Panchayats the necessary training to evaluate and develop projects may help expedite the process of planning and implementation. This would also reduce the incidences of project delays and inaccurate estimation of project duration and costs.

5. **District Perspective Plans and Annual Plans**: Despite the NREGS guidelines stressing the importance of making five year and annual plans, not all States comply with it. One exception is the Andhra Pradesh Integrated Natural Resource Management Plans for each Gram Panchayat, which identified works for the next 6-7 years. Other States would benefit from adopting similar procedures. Annual plans help prioritize works and can facilitate more accurate estimation of the demand for labour. Maintaining a long-term pipeline of projects is also essential to minimize delays in providing employment in a timely manner and thus minimizing the amount of unemployment allowances the States must pay.

6. Identifying village requirements based on People Participatory field surveys.

7. Making continual data analysis to gauge the programme effectiveness.

8. Standardizing work measurement practices.
9. Incorporating better communication practices to ensure awareness of the scheme among the prospective beneficiaries.

10. Promoting educated/skilled people, according to their profile, for the long-term benefit of their career and village development.

11. Devising performance indicators to measure the success of NREGS works.

12. Ensuring that total available funds are utilized effectively.

13. Taking necessary steps to provide 100 man-days of employment as mandated in the Act.

14. Reducing the gap between the works sanctioned and works completed.

To reduce the administrative cost of organizing the poorest of the people, who are kept in ignorance of their entitlement, or are discouraged from applying, priority should be given to the poor and deprived people. The ‘job card’ application and work demand system should be kept very simple and transparent. As there are more landless poor in Chittoor District, who totally depend on farm work and other seasonal manual labour, the number of man-days of employment has increased from 100 to at least 150 man-days so that the labour can eke out a better livelihood. During agricultural operations, the labourers, who depend upon the NREG works, should be allowed to work on their traditional work of farming activity. The participation of women should be increased on par with the men for raising the income of the family. As there will be no work throughout the year, particularly for women, they should be accommodated in unskilled works such as reeling activity in the silk industry, weaving mats, and making articles from palm leaves etc. Officials who are responsible to supervise the activities of NREGP practices should not be biased and corrupt in order to facilitate the smooth implementation of the programme. The co-ordination between the Panchayath Raj institutions and the State Governments should be maintained for the effective implementation of the programme.