Chapter 3

Implementation Mechanism of MGNREGA
MGNREGA, the largest poverty alleviation programme initiated by the Government of India in the year 2005 had the sole objective to offer a legal guarantee of 100 days of employment to every rural household, whose adult members are willing to do unskilled labour at minimum wage rate. Programme also envisages the creation of sustainable community assets besides protecting environment, reducing migration & empowering rural women.

For any programme to succeed it is imperative that it should be implemented effectively at all levels. Mere introduction of any programme never means the end of the problem or the achievement of the set objectives. A poorly organized programme is bound to prove to be a failure despite its massive investment because it gives rise to a number of deficiencies & inefficiencies like slow & poor decisions, lack of co-ordination among the different levels & line departments, poor specification of duties etc. A structurally sound programme & scheme on the other hand can produce better results even with a modest investment because a well designed scheme encourages growth, diversification, improves administration, ensures coordination at all levels & hence tones
up the overall operation of a programme. Truly speaking the success or failure of any development strategy/programme largely depends on its implementation rather than its mere introduction. Against this backdrop, present chapter makes an effort to discuss the details of organizational & procedural implementation of MGNREGA.

**Implementation structure of MGNREGA**

The MGNREGA Act underlines the legitimate role of Panchayats in its implementation mechanism. The recognition of Panchayati Raj Institutions is the main agency of implementation under MGNREGA. The programme comprises of following five tier of implementation (fig. 3.1) viz; (i) Gram Panchayat (ii) Block Panchayat (iii) District Panchayat (iv) State Government & (v) Central Government. In this five tier system, Gram Panchayat occupies the bottom & Central Government the top.

**Fig. 3.1 Implementation structure of MGNREGA**
Implementation Mechanism of MGNREGA

1. **Gram Panchayat (GP):** It is the basic agency which is responsible for the registration of households, issuance of job cards, providing work etc. Gram Panchayat has to select, design & implement 50% of the works.

2. **Block Panchayat:** Block Panchayat is the second tier which deals with the implementation of the programme. The Block Panchayat undertakes the remaining 50% of the work either at their own level or at District Panchayat or jointly undertaken by them. It also looks after the updating of the data under the programme relating to works, muster roll entries etc.

3. **District Panchayat:** Besides implementation of non mandatory works, District Panchayat also coordinates the activities of programme at the district level. This panchayat also prepares the district annual plan & the five year perspective plans in consultation with Gram & Block Panchayats.

4. **State Government:** The state government functions like a facilitator in the flow of MGNREGA funds. It is also responsible for setting up the State Employment Guarantee Council which acts as an advisor to the Government on implementation, monitoring & evaluation of the programme in the state.

5. **Central Government:** The Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India is the nodal agency for MGNREGA implementation. The Central Government has the authority to set up Central Employment Guarantee Council for receiving advice on MGNREGA implementation besides independent evaluation & monitoring of the scheme. The Central Government also has to prepare the budget & disburse the funds.

Implementation mechanism at the State Level

In J&K the Act was extended partially in May 2007 & to the whole of the state since April 2008. Details of implementation mechanism in our state is discussed here under.
Implementing & monitoring authorities

1. **Central Employment Guarantee Council:**

   In view of section 10 of the MGNREGA Act, the Government of India formulated Central Employment Guarantee Council which consists of a chair person, members appointed by the Central Government which include official & non-official members. The main duties & functions of this council include:

   a) To establish a Central Evaluation & Monitoring system.
   b) To advise the Central Government on all matters regarding the implementation of this programme.
   c) To promote the widest possible dissemination of information about the schemes and
   d) Preparation of annual reports.

2. **State Employment Guarantee Council:**

   Under section 12 of the central Act, the state Government constitute a State Employment Guarantee Council known as J&K State Employment Guarantee Council (JKSEGC) for the purposes of monitoring & reviewing the implementation of this Act at the state level. The state council consists of a chairperson & members appointed by the State Government which include official & non official members. The main functions & duties of the State Council include:

   a) To advise the state government on all the matters regarding the programme & its implementation at the state level.
   b) To determine preferences of works.
   c) To review the time to time monitoring of the programme & its grievances redressal mechanism and also to bring improvements in the programme.
   d) To promote & disseminate the information about MGNREGA Act & other schemes under its ambit.
e) To prepare the annual reports to be laid before the state legislature by the state government.

f) To do any other duty or functions as assigned by the central or the state government.

**Principle authorities for planning & implementation of the programme**

The principle authorities for planning & implementation of the programme under the act are Panchayats at (i) district level, (ii) intermediate level and (iii) village level.

**Functions of the Panchayats at the district level:**

a) To finalize & make approval of the annual shelf of projects to be taken up under the programme.

b) To make supervision & monitoring of the projects taken up at the block & district levels.

c) To bear some other functions as may be assigned by the state council from time to time.

**Functions of the panchayat at intermediate level:**

a) To make approval of the annual plan at the block level & forwards it to the District Panchayat for final approval.

b) To make supervision & monitoring of the projects being taken up at the Gram Panchayat & block level.

c) To do other functions as may be assigned by the state level council to it.

**District programme coordinator:**

Under section 14 of the Act, any district level officer can be designated by the state Government as district programme coordinator who according to the provisions of the act seems to be responsible for the implementation of the programme at the district level.
Functions of the district programme coordinator:

a) To make assistance to the district administration and Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in discharging its functioning under the programme and any other scheme,

b) To make consolidation of the plans prepared at the Block & Panchayat levels & also the project proposals received from other implementing agencies to include them in the annual shelf of projects approved by the District level Panchayat.

c) To accord necessary sanction and administrative approval wherever necessary.

d) To coordinate with block development officers/ programme officers functioning within their jurisdiction and the implementing agencies to ensure that the respondents are provided employment as per their entitlements under the Act.

e) To make review, monitoring & supervision of the performance of the block development officers/ programme officers.

f) To carry out timely check of the works in progress.

g) To make grievances redressal of the respondents.

The district programme coordinator is responsible for preparing labour budget every year by the end of December for the next financial year. This labour budget contains all the details of anticipated demand for unskilled manual work for the district and the plan for engagement of labourers in the works covered under the scheme and submits it to district panchayat for approval.

In case of J&K State since Intermediate/Block & District level Panchayats are not in place, therefore the district annual plan under MGNREGA is put up before District Development Board for approval. As per guidelines, by 31st December each year district body should approve the annual MGNREGA plan for next financial year. In case the district body is not able to meet by or before 31st December, the annual MGNREGA plan for the next year is deemed to be approved.
Gram Panchayat/ Halqa Panchayat (GP/HP)

Under section 16 of the MGNREGA Act the Gram / Halqa Panchayat has the responsibility to identify, execute & supervise the projects in the Gram/ Halqa Panchayat area to be taken up under the scheme is as per the recommendations of the Gram sabha and for execution & supervision of such works. For execution and supervision of such works (i) Gram panchayat may start any work under the programme within its jurisdiction as sanctioned by the programme officer (ii) The Gram panchayat in consultation with the Gram sabha & ward sabhas prepares a shelf of projects & a developmental plan to be taken up under the programme when the demand arises. (iii) The gram panchayat forwards proposals of developmental works to the programme officer by giving the order of prioritization of the works to be taken up & also for the scrutiny & preliminary for the development projects including the order of priority between different works to the programme officer for scrutiny and preliminary approval prior to its execution (iv) The programme officer allot 50% of the works in terms of its cost to be implemented by the Gram Panchayats. It also supplies to each Gram Panchayat with the muster rolls for the works sanctioned & to be executed by it as well as a list of employment opportunities available elsewhere to the residents of the Gram Panchayat (v) The Gram Panchayat allocates employment opportunities among the applicants and asks them to report for work (vi) The works taken-up by the gram panchayat under the scheme have to meet the required technical standards and measurements.

Implementation of MGNREGA in study area

1. **Awareness:** Awareness is the major element for the effective implementation of MGNREGA programme because more the awareness more higher will be their participation level. Awareness builds the confidence level of the beneficiaries as they then become knowledgeable about different entitlements & provisions of the scheme which facilitates them to fully participate in the programme. It was observed in study area that majority of the beneficiaries were unaware of the various entitlements of MGNREGA (table 3.1).
Table 3.1: Distribution of sample respondent’s in context of knowledge on basic entitlements of Act

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Block</th>
<th>Guaranteed days of employment</th>
<th>Un-employment allowance</th>
<th>Accidental benefits</th>
<th>Planning</th>
<th>Social audit</th>
<th>Programme officer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sundarbani</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doongi</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub Total</td>
<td>209(87%)</td>
<td>23(10%)</td>
<td>8(3%)</td>
<td>177(4%)</td>
<td>76(32%)</td>
<td>22(9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not aware</td>
<td>31(13%)</td>
<td>217(90%)</td>
<td>232(97%)</td>
<td>63(26%)</td>
<td>164(68%)</td>
<td>218(91%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand total</td>
<td>240 (100%)</td>
<td>240 (100%)</td>
<td>240(100%)</td>
<td>240(100%)</td>
<td>240(100%)</td>
<td>240(100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field survey  
Figures in parenthesis are percentage to total

In the study area, the extent of awareness about MGNREGA among beneficiaries remained major causation for the faulty implementing mechanism of the scheme. It is evident from the table 3.2 that majority of the beneficiaries were illiterate & belonged to deprived classes with the result that they remain unaware about various processes & issues regarding MGNREGA programme.

Table 3.2: Distribution of sample workers according to literacy level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blocks</th>
<th>Illiterate</th>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>High school</th>
<th>Above high school</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sundarbani</td>
<td>30(21%)</td>
<td>88(61%)</td>
<td>6(45%)</td>
<td>19(13%)</td>
<td>1(1%)</td>
<td>144(100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doongi</td>
<td>36(37%)</td>
<td>37(39%)</td>
<td>4(4%)</td>
<td>19(20%)</td>
<td>0(0%)</td>
<td>96(100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>66(27%)</td>
<td>125(52%)</td>
<td>10(4%)</td>
<td>38(16%)</td>
<td>1(1%)</td>
<td>240(100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field survey  
Figures in parenthesis are percentage to total
Figure 3.2: Distribution of sample respondent's social group wise

From Fig. 3.2, it can be inferred that the disadvantaged group participation accounts for 31% SC’s, 25% ST’s & also 17% were from other backward classes.

2. **Source of information:** During field survey information on the major source of information regarding MGNREGA was also gathered from beneficiary households. The data so generated is given in table 3.3. It is visible from the table that chief source of information as stated by as many as 94% of beneficiary households was from Panchayat office. It may be added at this juncture that panchayat office though happens to be the one from where base line information for implementation of the programme is given to the beneficiary households but author feels that during this era of technology television is a very effective instrument for the dissemination of information about every activity which however was missing in the study area as only very dismal percentage of 1% of beneficiary households told that they came to know about MGNREGA through media or posters.
Table 3.3: Response of respondent's in respect of Main sources of MGNREGA information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blocks</th>
<th>Gram Panchayat</th>
<th>Media</th>
<th>Poster</th>
<th>Gram Rozgar Sahayak</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sundarbani</td>
<td>137(95%)</td>
<td>1(1%)</td>
<td>2(1%)</td>
<td>4(3%)</td>
<td>144(100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doongi</td>
<td>89(93%)</td>
<td>0(0%)</td>
<td>1(1%)</td>
<td>6(6%)</td>
<td>96(100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>226(94%)</td>
<td>1(1%)</td>
<td>3(1%)</td>
<td>10(4%)</td>
<td>240(100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source: Field survey**  
Figures in parenthesis are percentage to total

During the field studies however Gram Panchayat officials expressed that they actively take part in disbursement of information regarding MGNREGA but none of the respondent in the study area claimed of having any knowledge about various notices put up in the panchayat offices. It was also observed in the field that for the proper implementation of the programme Gram Panchayat could not make any dent in such areas as the transparency & accountability of the programme because as per guidelines muster rolls needed to be available at Panchayat office & at worksite but in reality in the study area muster roll like documents were never available at worksite.

3. **Mismanagement of job cards:** - Information regarding job card is represented in table 3.4. It becomes apparent from the table though majority (90%) of the respondent household got their job cards easily. Beneficiary households however also stated that during the earlier years of the programme in the study area, respondents even worked without job cards & said that they got their job cards at worksite only.

It was also observed during field survey that practice of faulty allotment of job cards was very common in the study area as present author through interactions with respondents found that usually it is mandatory on the part of MGNREGA that entries are made in job card for work & wages as well. During field visits respondents however stated manipulation concerning number of days
they worked & the wages they earn as it is apparent from the table 3.4 that majority (51%) of the beneficiaries were not having entries in their job cards.

Table 3.4: Distribution of respondents according to the entries on their job cards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Block</th>
<th>Sundarbaní</th>
<th>Doongi</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of respondents having entries on their job cards</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>117 (49%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of respondents not having entries on their job cards</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>123 (51%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>240 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field survey

Field observations further revealed that in some cases payments were even being released on the name of the respondent who have practically not worked but were facilitated by the panchayat secretaries (as per respondents) in release of payments without works. Respondents even complained that panchayat secretary keep job cards in his custody & even payments are released on their behalf without their knowledge. Also in some cases job card holder gave his job card to other person for the employment & in return some amount is paid to them without any work. So much is the manipulation regarding these that in the study area respondent brought under the notice of present author about one case where one of the person who by profession was a Government employee was even having a job card which is against the guidelines of the programme.

4. Application for employment: - Data on employment demanded & provided to the households is given in table 3.5. It is evident from the table- 3.5 that 240
beneficiaries demanded employment but only 105 respondents were provided with employment & also that the average days of employment were only 47 days which are very less as people in the study area are of more rural character & are in need of more employment days. It was also noticed during field survey that people usually have notion that to get job under MGNREGA is at the mercy of Sarpanch. It is also in place to mention here that some of the respondents used to give their job cards to other households for getting benefits through them.

**Table 3.5: No. of respondent’s who demanded & got employment in the study area**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Block</th>
<th>Total no. of respondents</th>
<th>Respondents who demanded employment</th>
<th>No. of respondents who have been provided employment</th>
<th>Average Mandays</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sundarban</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doongi</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Field survey*  
Figures in parenthesis are percentage to total

Regarding employment, respondents shared that the 100 days of employment is on the papers only accept for two households in Doongi block, none of the respondent household could get 100 days of employment. The beneficiary households also informed that what to talk of 100 days of employment during one financial year, they have not even got a total of 100 days of employment since last three financial years. Under MGNREGA usually different types of works are undertaken in any Panchayat but very surprisingly the villager households of Panchayat Danwa in block Doongi stated that in their village they have worked under one category of work only since the inception of the programme.
5. **Poor quality of assets:** - Usually 50% of the works under MGNREGA are to be executed by the Gram Panchayat. The members of Gram Panchayat & Gram Sabha hence need to be briefed & trained to implement the works in a proper way. It was however revealed by the villagers during field visits & interaction that Gram Sabha meetings where actually the plans for works approved & executed are discussed never get publically displayed. Generally according to MGNREGA guidelines ratio of labour: material should be 60:40. This according to present author leads to creation of poor quality of assets as material cost is very low. Elaborating it further respondent households are expressed that even this 40% share of material also remain either (i) on paper only (by conveyance of JE & Panchayat Secretary) & may not be received at worksite which consequently leads again to very poor quality of assets or (iii) if somehow material is issued for work, it is released very late by which time most of the work at worksite has been completed.

6. **Poor planning & lack of coordination among villagers & official members:** - During field visits, it was observed that poor planning by the programme functionaries has led to the implementation challenge as from the field it was evident that only individual works were taken as compared to the community assets which leads to the rivalry between the functionaries & people as they have to give more focus on community assets rather than individual assets. It was also so many times repeatedly apparent from the field that coordination was not there in the field between the official members & among villagers which resulted that so many works could not complete.

7. **Payment of wages:** - Data from the field reflected that wage payment in the study area was the main concern they stated that besides delayed payments wages are not paid according to the guidelines. Maximum of the beneficiaries stated that they receive their wages usually after more than 15 days or even after 3-4 months & even after year in some cases. (After interactions with the beneficiaries it came to limelight that some of the respondents were not even aware about minimum wages & when we contact them they replied that we are getting Rs. 300 wages in
MGNREGA). Majority of the beneficiaries expressed the system of wage payments should be as per the guidelines so as to make programme truly a beneficial one. One of the beneficiary in Panchayat Marchola stated that I worked in MGNREGA to gain some income for the marriage of my daughter but the payments were so delayed that it could not help me.

8. **Worksite facilities**: - According to MGNREGA guidelines it is mandatory to provide basic facilities like drinking water, shade, first-aid box & crèche facility. It was observed in the field that however no such facility was available at worksite. When confirmed from the beneficiaries they stated that the functionaries usually told that there is no such provision in the scheme and you should drink water from local bowli’s etc and beneficiary households also stated that the trees near the worksite were treated as shady shelters. To work under such inefficient & substandard working conditions beneficiary households expressed, especially women folk stated does not create congenial atmosphere at worksites.

9. **Payments on bogus accounts/people**: - It was observed during field visits that the payments are sometimes released on the name of the beneficiary whose name they stated being hypothesized does not exist in the workers list. In this context even bank officials also stated that the functionaries sometimes send the payments of those also whose record is not available i,e who are not even in the workers list.

10. **No social audit held**: - The provision of social audit to be held after every six month basis needs to be conducted as per MGNREGA guidelines but in study area no social audit was held & even majority of the people were not aware of social audit. In the study area it was found that state Government appoints Social auditor but even then the social audit are never conducted.

11. **No Grievances redressal mechanism**: - It was observed in the study area that people were not aware about the grievances redressal mechanism under MGNREGA. Author could not find existence of such system in the study area.