

**Terminal Evaluation of UNDP Supported Project for
Operationalisation of the MGNREGA**

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**Dr. Hemnath Rao H. (Team Leader)
Dr. Reshmy Nair (Team Member)**



**ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF COLLEGE OF INDIA
BELLA VISTA, HYDERABAD 500 082.**

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AFPRO	-	Action for Food Production
AI	-	Appreciative Inquiry
AL	-	Adult Literates
AP	-	Andhra Pradesh
ASCI	-	Administrative Staff College of India
ATM	-	Automatic Teller Machine
CBI	-	Central Bank of India
CEC	-	Centre for Environment Concerns
CEGC	-	Central Employment Guarantee Council
CEO	-	Chief Executive Officer
CERD	-	Centre for Educational Research and Development
CSD	-	Council for Social Development
DPCs	-	District Programme Co-ordinators
DRDA	-	District Rural Development Agency
DSS	-	Deenbandhu Samajik Sanstha
EDI	-	Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India
GoI	-	Government of India
GoMP	-	Government of Madhya Pradesh
GoO	-	Government of Orissa
GoR	-	Government of Rajasthan
GPs	-	Gram Panchayats
GPS	-	Global Positioning System
HRM	-	Human Resource Management
ICT	-	Information and Communication Technologies
IEC	-	Information, Education and Communication
IGS	-	Indian Grameen Services
IIFM	-	Indian Institute of Forest Management
IIM	-	Indian Institute of Management

IIT	-	Indian Institute of Technology
INRM	-	Integrated Natural Resource Management
KVS	-	Kastkar Vikas Samitis
LRPs	-	Local Resource Persons
MDGs	-	Millennium Development Goals
MGNREGA	-	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
MGNREGS	-	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme
MoRD	-	Ministry of Rural Development
M.P.	-	Madhya Pradesh
NGOs	-	Non-Governmental Organisations
NHRC	-	National Human Rights Commission
NIFT	-	National Institute of Fashion Technology
NLMs	-	National Level Monitors
NPD	-	National Project Director
NREGA	-	National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
NRM	-	Natural Resource Management
PIN	-	Professional Institution Network
PRADAN	-	Professional Assistance for Development Action
PRIs	-	Panchayati Raj Institutions
RBI	-	Reserve Bank of India
RTBI	-	Rural Technology and Business Incubator
SAUs	-	State Agricultural Universities
SBI	-	State Bank of India
SEWA	-	Self Employed Women's Association
SHGs	-	Self Help Groups
SJP	-	Satat Jeevika Pariyojana
SK	-	Shilpi Kendra
SRI	-	System of Rice Intensification
SSKs	-	Soochna Seva Kendras
TCS	-	Tata Consultancy Services
ToR	-	Terms of Reference

TRIAGE	-	Tool for Real Time Information and Action for Governance and Empowerment
TS	-	Technical Secretariat
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme
U.P.	-	Uttar Pradesh
VRC	-	Village Resource Centre
VRP	-	Village Resource Person

Table of Contents

List of Annexures

List of Tables in Annexures

List of Figures and Boxes

Acknowledgement

Executive Summary

Chapter 1: UNDP Supported Project for Operationalisation of MGNREGA: A New Model of Development Partnership with the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India

Chapter 2: Terminal Evaluation of the UNDP Supported Project: Purpose, Approach and Methodology

Chapter 3: Evaluation of Convergence, Innovation and ICT Pilots: Key Findings

Chapter 4: PIN Studies: Key Findings

Chapter 5: Key Findings from Evaluation of Technical Secretariat, IEC and Capacity Building Components

Chapter 6: Conclusions

Chapter 7: Recommendations and Future Interventions

List of Annexures

- Annexure 1.1 : Salient Features of the MGNREG Act**
- Annexure 1.2 : Summary of Progress in Implementation of MGNREGA**
- Annexure 1.3 : Components of UNDP Supported Project**
- Annexure 2.1 : Minutes of the Meeting of the Terminal Evaluation of the Project for Support to Operationalisation of the MGNREGA**
- Annexure 2.2 : The List of Stakeholders Contacted/ interviewed**
- Annexure 2.3 : List of Documents Reviewed**
- Annexure 2.4 : Locations Sampled for Field Evaluation**
- Annexure 3.1 : Converging MGNREGA with Natural Resource Management: A Holistic Case Study of Partnership with the Professional Assistance for Development Action (PRADAN) in the Kandhamal District of Orissa**
- Annexure 3.2 : MGNREGA as an Entry Point for Inter-Sectoral Convergence in Madhya Pradesh: Stakeholders' Appreciative Inquiry**
- Annexure 3.3 : Low Cost Rural ATMs: Case of a Pilot Project in Tamilnadu**
- Annexure 3.4 : Pilot Project for Info-Kiosks in Rajasthan: Partnership with OneWorld**
- Annexure 3.5 : Partnership with SEWA for Skill Building**
- Annexure 3.6 : Partnership with Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDI)**
- Annexure 3.7 : Pilot Project for Skill Development: Partnership with PRATHAM**
- Annexure 3.8 : The Pilot Project Partnering BASIX**
- Annexure 4.1 : Suggested list of Topics for PIN Studies**
- Annexure 4.2 : List of Major PIN Studies Commissioned**
- Annexure 5.1 : Composition of the Technical Secretariat**

List of Tables in Annexures

Table 3.1.1	:	Social Outcomes from Pilot Projects
Table 3.1.2	:	MGNREGA Performance in Two GPs of K. Nuagaon Block
Table 3.1.3	:	LIMBARPADAR – Beneficiaries of MGNREGA-INRM Works
Table 3.1.4	:	GASUKIA – Enterprising Farm Pond Beneficiaries
Table 3.2.1	:	Pilot Project Villages Sampled for Field Study
Table 3.2.2	:	Enrolment of Additional Job Card Holders
Table 3.2.3	:	Performance of MGNREGA in Dhar and Alirajpur Districts
Table 3.2.4	:	Special Drive for Job Cards to Silicosis Affected Families
Table 3.2.5	:	Promoting Functional Literacy under SJP
Table 3.3.1	:	Installation of Four Low Cost Rural ATMs
Table 3.7.1	:	Progress of Functional Literacy

List of Figures

- Figure 2.1** : **The 4 ‘D’ Appreciative Inquiry Cycle**
- Figure 3.2.1** : **The ‘SJP Cycle of Poverty’ in Tribal Areas of M.P.**
(Annexure 3.2)

List of Boxes in Annexures

- Box 3.1.1** : **Activities Planned Under MGNREGA-INRM Pilots**
- Box 3.2.1** : **Activities Proposed Under the Pilot Project**
- Box 3.2.2** : **Experience of a Beneficiary of Relief Package for Silicosis Victims**
- Box 3.5.1** : **The Utility of SEWA’s Tools and Equipment Facilities**
- Box 3.5.2** : **The Pouch Making Group in Mohanpura**
- Box 3.6.1** : **The Experience of the weaver SHG in Bhadwon Ki Kotdi**

List of Boxes in Chapter 4

- Box 4.1** : **Development Alternatives**
- Box 4.2** : **The Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur.**
- Box 4.3** : **Council for Social Development, New Delhi.**
- Box 4.4** : **IIT, Chennai**
- Box 4.5** : **Action for Food Production (AFPRO)**
- Box 4.6** : **Centre for Environment Concerns (CEC)**
- Box 4.7** : **The Indian Institute of Forest Management, Bhopal**
- Box 4.8** : **Centre for Educational Research and Development (CERD)**

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ASCI Study Team

Executive Summary

ASCI has been assigned the Terminal Evaluation Study of the UNDP Supported Project for Operationalisation of MGNREGA, based on the ToR that was finalized in the meeting held on 17th February 2011 with UNDP and GoI in the MoRD. The study is based on a sample of pilot projects implemented in the states of Tamilnadu, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan where the focus was to promote convergence and ICT based innovations, human development, and to strengthen the various processes in the implementation of MGNREGA. The methodology deployed is a blend of AI and case study research keeping in view the fact that each project investigated was unique with a distinctive design and purpose. Besides a wide scan and use of secondary data, interviews with UNDP project team, partner organisations, senior officers of MoRD and sampled state governments were attempted.

2. The first chapter of the study brings out the nature of the learning partnership between the UNDP and the GoI. UNDP's role as a knowledge and technical support catalyst has been appreciated by the GoI in a programme fully funded with domestic resources. The factors influencing and reinforcing the partnership have also been discussed. The purpose and scope of the study with reference to the meeting held in February, 2011 to finalise the ToR, the approach and methodology adopted for the evaluation, methodological weaknesses and assumptions are discussed in the second chapter.

3. Based on a holistic case study of the pilot project implemented in partnership with PRADAN, an NGO that has developed standard INRM models based on their work in different parts of the country; an AI based study of a similar partnership with DSS and SK- a civil society group based in Indore, implemented in two districts of M.P., namely Dhar and Alirajpur; the low cost ATMs initiative in Cuddalore district of Tamilnadu; and the cluster of ICT and human development pilots implemented in the Bhilwara district of Rajasthan, the third chapter brings out the key findings from the evaluation of the 'Innovation Fund' component of the UNDP supported project. The findings have been very insightful, illustrating vividly how rural development programmes stand to benefit from synergies generated by the experience and active involvement of NGOs.

4. The ICT based pilots have shown the way to handle the massive flow of data on a real time basis in implementing MGNREGA, besides bringing in the much needed transparency and accountability across the chain of programme implementation processes. The feedback from the pilot for installation of low cost ATMs has led not only to the technical redesign of the ATM with huge potential for cost savings to the banks, but also other biometrics based e-governance initiatives have been spun off the project. Similarly the convergence of INRM, health sector, skill building for livelihoods and agricultural extension services with MGNREGA demonstrated by PRADAN, DSS-SK, SEWA and others have established the relevance and sustainability of these projects. Certain other pilots where the objectives were not fully aligned with MGNREGA or the project design was too ambitious, it was found that the outcomes were less encouraging.

5. The fourth chapter analyses the role of the PIN in networking the country's reputed academic and research institutions to provide researched feedback as well as recommendations to close performance gaps in the implementation of MGNREGA. By putting in place a system of robust guidelines for the PIN studies with a suggestive list of topics, the project generated a wealth of literature and information to support policy and programme management. The role and relevance of the Technical Secretariat in the MoRD, in providing direct professional and technical support with contribution to IEC and capacity building are examined in the fifth chapter.

6. The sixth chapter summarises the conclusions from the major components evaluated in this study, with focus on the processes that served to enrich the UNDP project and its outcomes as well as highlighting opportunities for review and improvement. The signal conclusion points to the potential that the pilot projects promise in empowering the MGNREGA wage seekers. More importantly, these projects can also be scaled up and replicated across the country to transform MGNREGA from a wage employment programme to a programme of sustainable livelihoods. To ensure that the lessons learnt from the support project are taken forward to the next level of programme design, a set of recommendations are made in the seventh chapter.

Chapter 1: UNDP Supported Project for Operationalisation of MGNREGA: A New Model of Development Partnership with the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India

MGNREGA: An Introduction

1. The Government of India (GoI) in the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) notified the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) on the 2nd. February 2006, heralding the advent of rights based legal framework for enhancing the livelihood security of rural households. The Act guarantees hundred days of wage employment in a financial year to any rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work at wage rates linked to the statutory minimum wage in each state. In the long history of wage employment programmes that India has implemented in pursuit of poverty alleviation, MGNREGA stands out for its emphasis on development of natural resources and assets at community and house-hold levels through a process of participatory decision making in Gram Panchayats (GPs) for strengthening the livelihood resource base of the rural poor. Yet, the primary objective of the Act is to provide wage employment on demand to self targeted households.

2. Beginning with the 200 most backward districts of the country in the first phase, 130 additional districts were covered under the MGNREGA in the second phase during 2007-08. Currently, the Act is implemented in 624 districts across India. The salient features of the MGNREGA may be seen from **Annexure 1.1** while **Annexure 1.2** presents a summary of the progress in the implementation of the Act since inception. By the end of the financial year 2010-11, eight billion person days of employment have been generated through 4.55 million works. Besides the physical and financial progress reported by the GoI, independent studies by institutions of repute have suggested that the implementation of the Act has primarily benefited the rural poor with enhanced wage bargaining power leading to buoyancy in the rural labour market. Other benefits include improved purchasing power of the rural poor; reduced distress migration to urban areas; augmented productivity of small and marginal farm holdings; regeneration of natural resources; empowerment of women; and strengthening of democratic processes of governance in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) responsible for local self government.

UNDP Supported Project: The Context

3. In assisting the operationalisation of MGNREGA, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has established a learning partnership with the GoI in its flagship rural poverty alleviation programme, fully funded with domestic resources. Aligning itself entirely as a knowledge and technical support partner, UNDP has played a niche role in strengthening the programme implementation processes and in supporting innovation and capacity building. This partnership marks a radical departure from the era of huge aid packages and programmes that meant highly structured ‘donor- donee’ engagements with host governments. The MoRD and the UNDP have demonstrated through the unique partnership over the last four years, how innovative, knowledge centric and flexible support systems can influence project outcomes, redefining the space, style and rules of engagement.

4. The essence of the partnership is captured in a UNDP¹ document which states that “UNDP has been successful in building a strategic collaboration with the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), the largest rural employment scheme in the world with a budget of US\$ 8.5 billion that reaches over 200 million of the poorest people in India, half of whom are women. Through a partnership with the MoRD, UNDP’s small resources of less than US\$ 1.5 million annually was used to improve the system of payment to workers, strengthening of management and monitoring systems, and ...”. The document further suggests that the partnership “has allowed UNDP to explore aspects of governance reform and rights based programming in a context where large scale replication is possible. Through our cooperation with the Ministry, UNDP’s US\$ 1.5 million annually strengthens technical support at the national level in its strategies to monitor effective implementation and innovate at decentralized levels”. In the MoRD, the Joint Secretary leading the MGNREGA as the National Project Director (NPD) believes that the ‘role and goal clarity’ that underpinned the GoI’s partnership with UNDP was central to the project framework.

¹ UNDP India Mid Term Review of the Country Programme Action Plan 2008-2012 (pp. 43)

Factors Influencing the GoI-UNDP Partnership

5. As mentioned in the previous section, the quantum of assistance under the UNDP supported project being very small in comparison with the GoI's programme budget for MGNREGA, the success of the project is entirely linked to the relevance, flexibility and the value addition that it could bring to the quality of programme implementation. The focus, therefore, has been on leveraging the limited resources under the UNDP project to close critical resource gaps that are not easy to address on account of cumbersome government procedures and processes. For example, hiring the services of expert personnel on a short-term service contract or partnering with a non-government organisation to experiment with a new idea to enrich the MGNREGA processes, are areas of unconventional decision-making in the GoI where guidelines for action are either inadequate or non-existent. The UNDP project with its innovation seeking approach and built-in flexibility has been viewed as an enabler by the stakeholders in closing such resource gaps through project components like the Technical Secretariat, Innovation Fund and the studies commissioned through the Professional Institutional Network (PIN).

6. Implementation of a rights based anti-poverty programme like MGNREGA involving huge financial budget is bound to be under the constant scrutiny of the media, civil society, parliament and other stakeholders, offering generous and even conflicting advice to the National Project Management Team. To be able to respond to their suggestions with informed and widely acceptable decisions, much knowledge support is needed by way of independent monitoring and assessment of the ground realities in regard to the programme implementation processes and the management solutions to overcome the shortcomings. And the responses will have to be quick and timely. The knowledge support systems and networks are better managed when a partner with proven commitment to the success of the programme and yet independent of the programme management structure can be enlisted for support. This need has been sought to be filled through components like the PIN in the UNDP supported project, which brought the country's best social science, management development and technology institutions to research the progress and problems in implementing MGNREGA.

7. Another major factor influencing and reinforcing the UNDP- GoI partnership on a win-win basis has been the dissemination of lessons learnt from implementing MGNREGA and the learning take-aways for rest of the developing world on one hand and the benefit of globally distilled feedback to the GoI for further strengthening the programme implementation processes. The national and international seminars, regional workshops and exchange visits that were supported by UNDP have contributed to enhanced development attention to MGNREGA, the world over. ‘The International Seminar on Rural Poverty: Key Initiatives in Achieving Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Role of NREGA’ organised jointly by the GoI in MoRD and the UNDP on the 21-22 January, 2009 was one such event that provided a platform for policy makers, academics, researchers, advocacy groups and rural development practitioners from different parts of the world to share their views and experiences in planning and implementing anti-poverty programmes. Similarly, the Round Table organized to discuss the progress in implementation of MGNREGA in March 2010 at Udaipur, Rajasthan on the occasion of the visit of UNDP Administrator, Ms. Helen Clark, provided an opportunity for a critical appraisal of MGNREGA with the active participation of the Union Minister for Rural Development, GoI and other stakeholders including the PIN partners.

Programme Contours and Components

8. Given the context and the factors influencing the GoI- UNDP partnership, the UNDP project for support to MGNREGA has been an evolving response to the challenges of programme implementation. The various components of the UNDP Supported Project that evolved over the last five years are listed in **Annexure 1.3**. The support from UNDP in the initial years (2006-2007) covered primarily a series of monitoring and evaluation studies commissioned through academic and social science research institutions to assess and document the early progress and problems in implementing the wage employment programme, with focus on women’s participation. Preparation of field manuals was also initiated to guide the planning and execution of the shelf of projects from amongst the categories of works permitted under the Act. The focus of assistance shifted to organising technical and knowledge support in later years, as the technical cell was established in 2008 for direct support to the MoRD, the linkages with academic and technical institutions were fortified through the PIN and innovation pilots were initiated.

9. As the project progressed further, attention was given to the production and dissemination of high quality Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials and an innovation fund was set up in 2009 to promote partnerships with civil society organisations to experiment with concepts that could potentially enrich human development outcomes from MGNREGA. Following an evolutionary path, over the five-year period, the UNDP supported project has promoted over 84 partnerships with reputed management and social science institutions alongside civil society organisations as part of the PIN. A knowledge network was established to encourage experience sharing and problem solving among the District Programme Co-ordinators (DPCs) and other project functionaries which has drawn an online membership of over 1100 officers. The project also supported capacity building of project functionaries and piloted a series of projects for experimenting with convergence and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) based initiatives for strengthening the core processes vital to effective implementation of MGNREGA.

Chapter 2: Terminal Evaluation of the UNDP Supported Project: Purpose, Approach and Methodology

Purpose and Scope of Terminal Evaluation

1. The UNDP and the GoI in the MoRD have assigned the Administrative Staff College of India (ASCI) with a study to carry out the terminal evaluation of the UNDP Supported Project for Operationalisation of MGNREGA. The purpose of this evaluation study is primarily to assess how the above project has impacted the MGNREGA, from a study of the sampled components and initiatives; document the findings and lessons learnt as the basis for post-project decision making; and to make recommendations to strengthen the project for the future. The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the study were discussed with UNDP and MoRD at a meeting held on the 17 February 2011. After detailed discussion about the genesis and the nature of support that UNDP has been extending to MoRD for operationalisation of MGNREGA, the scope of the study and the sample plan for field investigation were finalised as shown in **Annexure 2.1**. The following are the major project components evaluated in this study:

- i) Implementation of innovation pilots on ICT, skill development to demonstrate improved human development outcomes and the processes of innovation based on projects sampled from Rajasthan and Tamilnadu states
- ii) Strategy for networking with professional institutions drawing on a sample of PIN studies
- iii) Nature of knowledge sharing and planning for convergence through pilot partnerships with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) like PRADAN in Orissa
- iv) Role and contribution of the Technical Secretariat in providing technical and professional support to MORD including IEC and capacity building initiatives

2. The study has been designed to evaluate the multi-component project by extending the analysis from an in-depth examination of select initiatives mentioned above. This is a methodological weakness of this evaluation study as a larger multi-stage sample plan specific to each project component would have made the study more evidence based and

imparted greater empirical rigour to the evaluation process. To an extent, this weakness has been sought to be overcome by drawing richly on the secondary data from past studies, duly acknowledging the same, wherever relevant. Given the nature and structure of the project which consists of numerous pilots experimenting diverse themes, it was also apparent that traditional methods of evaluation based on beneficiary surveys and rooted in cost benefit analysis of the impact generated, would have been inappropriate.

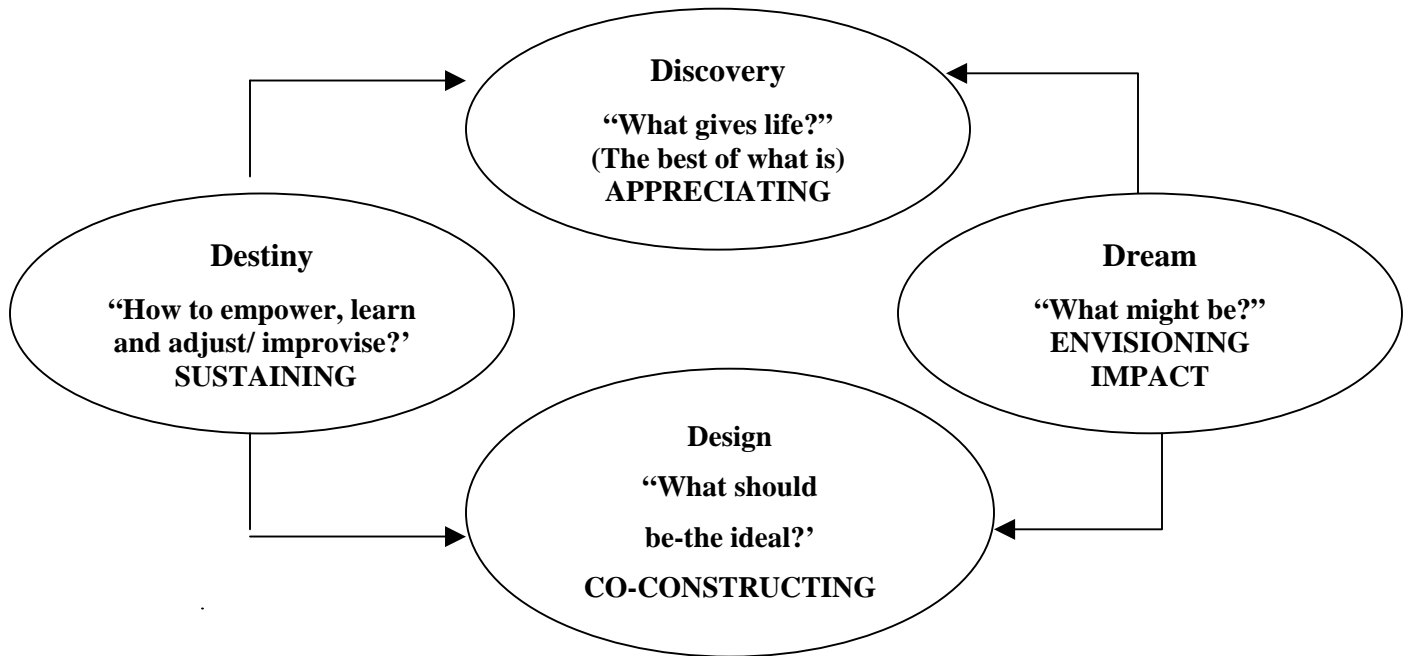
Approach and Methodology

3. Keeping in view the diversity of components in the UNDP supported project and its thrust on experimentation to infuse technology and facilitate innovation through various schematic processes of MGNREGA, a customised methodology based on Appreciative Inquiry (AI) was conceived to guide this terminal evaluation study. Since AI is an acceptable approach to identifying the best of "what is" to pursue dreams and possibilities of "what could be", it was found to be the most effective way of investigating the contribution of pilot projects initiated with UNDP assistance and what potential exists for future support interventions. AI involves collaborative inquiry, based on interviews and affirmative questioning, to collect and celebrate the good news stories of a community—those stories that enhance cultural identity, spirit and vision. Local people can use their understanding of "the best of what is" to construct a vision of what their community might be if they identify their strengths, then improve or intensify them through the appreciative cycle² shown in **Figure 2.1**.

4. The methodology also seeks to blend AI with case study research to deepen the evidence for findings from the evaluation of the initiatives sampled for field study. Case studies are particularly useful in depicting a holistic portrayal of the experiences and results from a programme. There is often a misconception that a case study is akin to a journalistic account of a success or failure in programme implementation, though journalists trained in case study research protocol do produce empirically valid case study material. The support for the use of case study method in programme evaluation literature

² Cooperrider, David *et al* (2007). "Appreciative Inquiry Handbook".. San Francisco: Berret-Koehler

Figure 2.1: The 4 ‘D’ Appreciative Inquiry Cycle



has been growing in recent years. To evaluate the effectiveness of a program's processes, including its strengths and weaknesses, evaluators might develop cases studies on the program's successes and failures³. When a series of unique initiatives launched to support an ongoing development programme have to be evaluated, each with a distinctive purpose and design as with the UNDP Supported Project for operationalisation of MGNREGA, case study method comes across as the most preferred approach to evaluating such initiatives.

5. The data collection involved focus interviews with wage seekers in the villages, multiple stakeholders including the functionaries implementing MGNREGA at the village (Gram Panchayat/ habitation) level, block and district levels. Throughout this study, the expression ‘wage seekers’ is used to refer to all those members of rural households who possess a job card and have participated in MGNREGA works. Focus group discussions with MGNREGA wage seekers remained the core source of the data used in the study. Discussions and consultations with representatives of civil society

³ Patton, Michael Q (2001) “Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods”. London: Sage

organisations in addition to those who partnered with UNDP, field managers of banks, academics and researchers who participated in the PIN were helpful in getting insights in to how the development sector at large perceived the partnerships established by UNDP to support MGNREGA. The views and experiences of the Joint Secretary (MGNREGA) in the MoRD, other members of the National MGNREGA Project Management Team and the information shared in detail by the Assistant Country Director and her team at UNDP, New Delhi were integral to the methodology. The views of senior officers of the state government at the level of commissioners/ directors of rural development and secretaries to the government in the departments of rural development were also obtained in regard to the impact of the project, in the sampled states.

6. A large amount of secondary data available in the form of both published and unpublished reports with UNDP and MoRD was examined including a sample of PIN study reports. The MGNREGA website which is a repository of programme information including power point presentations made by different institutions and individuals, has been a valuable source of information and reference support for this evaluation study. A focus group discussion was held with a sample of professionals from the Technical Secretariat and members of the Secretariat who could not join the discussion were interviewed separately over phone. A list of stakeholders who were interviewed is at **Annexure 2.2** and the list of documents reviewed is at **Annexure 2.3**. **Annexure 2.4** shows the sampling of districts, blocks and gram panchayats/ habitations for data collection and field evaluation by the ASCI study team. It would be relevant to mention here that to ensure the independence and objectivity of the evaluation processes, the involvement and intervention of the MoRD and UNDP have been kept at the minimum during the field work and consultations with state governments and other stakeholders.

Chapter 3: Evaluation of Convergence, Innovation and ICT Pilots: Key Findings

Introduction

1. This chapter evaluates the various initiatives piloted under the UNDP Supported Project to converge MGNREGA with other development schemes and sectors and to infuse Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) at different points in the programme implementation chain for achieving increased transparency, efficiency and accountability. The above pilot projects were supported through the ‘Innovation Fund’ set up by the UNDP to promote human development outcomes from innovations in implementing MGNREGA. The evaluation findings are based on the analysis from the case studies and appreciative inquiry carried out with the sampled projects in the states of Tamilnadu, Orissa, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh to investigate the processes, partnerships and project outcomes. The in-depth holistic exploratory case study of a pilot project for convergence of Integrated Natural Resources Management (INRM) with MGNREGA in the Kandhamal district of Orissa may be seen at **Annexure 3.1**. This case study helped evaluate how partnerships with non-governmental organizations in bringing sustainable Natural Resource Management (NRM) practices to converge with MGNREGA could promote livelihood security among the tribal families in a district that had been scarred by violent conflict between two communities.

2. Similarly, using the tools of ‘Appreciative Inquiry (AI)’ the pilot project supported by UNDP in the Dhar and Alirajpur districts of Madhya Pradesh (M.P.) was studied to explore the benefits arising out of customised development of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials translated into local tribal dialects. The pilot project titled ‘Satat Jeevika Pariyojana’ (Sustainable Livelihoods Project) was aimed at improving the quality in implementation of MGNREGA by empowering the wage seekers, particularly women, with functional literacy and awareness of their rights through a partner organisation named Deenbandhu Samajik Sanstha (DSS) and Shilpi Kendra (SK). More importantly this project illustrates the potential for converging MGNREGA with other social sector development programmes like the health programme targeted at providing succour to victims of Silicosis disease, prevalent among migrant workers employed in hazardous mineral based industries. This AI based detailed report is at **Annexure 3.2**.

3. Further, an ICT based pilot project launched in Tamilnadu for development of low-cost ATMs with biometrics linked finger-print authentication and local language interface was also studied. Each of these ATMs is linked to a branch of the State Bank of India (SBI). The Gram Panchayat (GP- Village Council) transfers wages due to the MGNREGA wage seekers electronically to the bank accounts of individuals and payments can be drawn by them through ATMs in the villages. **Annexure 3.3** outlines the pilot project. The Bhilwara district in Rajasthan is widely recognized as the innovation bed for a series of initiatives that were aimed at preventing erosion of traditional skill sets in the rural areas; converging MGNREGA with livelihood support systems; promoting financial literacy and linking financial services with sustainable livelihoods through micro finance; and deploying ICT for infusing transparency and efficiency in the implementation of MGNREGA. These pilot projects are described in **Annexures 3.4 to 3.8**.

Relevance and Effectiveness of the Pilot Projects

4. The partnerships promoted under the UNDP project with Non Government Organizations (NGOs) like PRADAN for integrating NRM practices with MGNREGA works in Orissa; the Satat Jeevika Pariyojna (SJP) in MP; OneWorld, SEWA, PRATHAM and others in Rajasthan have eloquently demonstrated how rural development programmes can benefit from synergies generated by the experience and active involvement of NGOs. The above partnerships contributed in varying degrees to innovation and transparency in programme implementation at the grass roots level. These pilot projects, each of them unique in its own way, showed the potential benefits that can be harvested by scaling up and replicating them in other states.

5. Lack of awareness of various provisions of MGNREGA and the rights based issues inherent in the Act has been a serious constraint to realising its goals and objectives in full. As the SJP project implemented in the two tribal dominated districts of MP has shown, regular orientation programmes for members of the community and the extensive use of IEC materials and campaigns have the potential to enhance awareness about the rights and entitlements of the job card holders. The job card holders in the SJP pilot districts were particularly excited with the display of pictorial posters, hand outs, pamphlets, booklets and the MGNREGA beneficiary hand book, all translated in to the

Bhili and Bhilali tribal dialects. These publicity materials were easily understood by the tribal families, particularly the women who are not very comfortable with the Hindi language. A video documentary used during the community training programmes and the Rojgar Haq Yatra (Procession on Right to Wage Employment) had a deeply empowering effect on the tribal families reflected in the increase in the number of job cards from 4103 to 4865 in the 22 villages of 12 GPs covered under the SJP intervention.

6. The ICT based pilots have shown the way to handle the massive flow of data on a real time basis in implementing MGNREGA, besides bringing in the much needed transparency and accountability across the chain of programme implementation processes. As Mr. Sushil Kumar Lohani, State Project Director (MGNREGA) observed, “the pilot projects have yielded the confidence that even rural poverty alleviation programmes can be ICT enabled”. The deployment of ICT is now widely recognized as a source of value addition to MGNREGA particularly for timely disbursement of wages to wage seekers, which has been a major area of concern in every state. The outcomes and lessons from the pilots have been useful not only from the point of view of enhanced efficiency in programme implementation but also in feeding the biometrics based e-governance policies of the GoI.

7. The partnership with OneWorld was aimed at empowering the MGNREGA wage seekers across 20 proximate villages from two Gram Panchayats (GPs) in the Bhilwara district and one GP in Udaipur district of Rajasthan with timely and easy access to information through one Info-Kiosk in each G.P. The Info-Kiosks provide information about the status of their application for job cards, person days of wage employment completed, available days of employment against the job card, wages accrued and received, as well as status of ongoing and completed works. The performance of this pilot project is summarised in **Annexure 3.4**. The project functionaries now use community radio for IEC work to further increase awareness of MGNREGA among the village communities. Around 60 volunteers have been trained to programme and produce MGNREGA related features for narrow casting to listeners’ clubs which points to both the relevance and potential for expanding the scope of the project. As Mr. Namiur Rehman, CEO, OneWorld describes, “the ICT pilot project has spawned an eco-system

of innovation for strengthening implementation of MGNREGA. When the cost of the hand held biometric-GPS locator devices comes down further, one can hope to see delivery of enhanced services, beyond problem solving”.

8. The pilot project supported by UNDP and MGNREGA in the Kandhamal District of Orissa brings out the possibilities and opportunities for transforming a wage employment programme like MGNREGA into a programme of sustainable livelihoods through effective convergence of Integrated Natural Resource Management (INRM) practices with MGNREGA works. In a district where the social fabric had been torn apart by ethno-communal clashes, a partnership between the district administration and an NGO like PRADAN has offered a viable approach to promoting productivity of small land holdings handicapped by very challenging topography through a series of soil and water conservation models, coupled with the System of Rice Intensification (SRI). The INRM-MGNREGA convergence has also enabled small and marginal tribal farmers to switch over to more remunerative cropping patterns, contributing to social harmony between the conflicting groups who now aspire for better livelihoods rather than brood over their losses suffered during the conflict. The case study at **Annexure 3.1** supports this finding.

9. The relevance and effectiveness of the UNDP project in promoting MGNREGA as a platform for promoting skill development in pursuit of livelihood security is also evident in the pilot project implemented in partnership with Self Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) in the Bhilwara district of Rajasthan as may be seen from **Annexure 3.5**. The skills imparted mostly to women wage seekers under MGNREGA, in pouch making, assembly of solar lanterns and preparation of washing powder, paper cups etc. along side a push on the agriculture development front through organisation of farmers’ Self Help Groups (SHGs) and the operation of farm equipment depots, have been appreciated by the beneficiaries. Similar pilot implemented through another NGO called PRATHAM (**Annexure 3.7**) illustrates possibilities for imparting computer skills in a functional literacy mode through capacity building of local youth to serve as trainers in the villages. Both the SEWA and PRATHAM pilot projects seek to bring synergies between MGNREGA and rural livelihood support systems for income enhancement.

10. The evaluation study finds shortcomings in regard to pilot projects implemented through the Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDI) and BASIX. These projects were progressing behind the schedule and it was felt that their evaluation was somewhat premature, as the original objectives had not been fully realised. On initial assessment, as can be seen from **Annexure 3.6**, the EDI initiative in Rajasthan to improve the marketability of handloom products through provision of modern looms and development of superior fabric designs among both vocational and non-vocational weavers, has not met with much success either in skill development or in terms of impact at the marketplace. While the more fundamental objective of the pilot project is to impart weaving skills to MGNREGA wage seekers even if they are not from the traditional weaving class, as a way of ensuring that traditional skill sets in the rural areas are not lost to MGNREGA works, the evaluation team believes that this pilot is not aligned with the core objectives of MGNREGA, which explains the slow progress of the project. Further, the GoI's Ministry of Textiles in the Development Commissionerates of Handlooms/ Handicrafts has similar schemes, convergence with which could have been explored.

11. The innovation pilot implemented by the Indian Grameen Services (IGS), an affiliate of BASIX, the NGO involved with rural micro-finance, was aimed at deepening financial literacy among MGNREGA wage seekers by linking financial services with opportunities for livelihoods, as discussed briefly in **Annexure 3.8**. The pilot started off well with an intensive financial literacy campaign but much delay has occurred in distributing the biometrics enabled bank cards as less than half of the trained wage seekers, had been delivered the same when the evaluation team was in the field. Even the operationalisation of the delivered biometric cards was getting delayed. The assessment of the study team is that this pilot is a case of highly ambitious project design, seeking to achieve too much in too short a time with the involvement of multiple partners like the commercial banks and their correspondents and technology service providers. The relevance of the project is not in doubt but the efficiency in its implementation has not been satisfactory.

Impact and Sustainability

12. A significant outcome of the pilot projects has been the recognition among the state governments particularly at the district and block levels of administration that reputed

NGOs can be partnered with, to improve the quality and intensity in implementation of the MGNREGA. The District Administration in Khandamal district of Orissa has decided to extend the INRM works of PRADAN to additional GPs outside the coverage of the pilot projects and their decision to associate more NGOs like SWATI, JAGRUTI and others illustrates the change in their outlook towards NGOs. Similarly, the Zilla Panchayat, Dhar in M.P. is actively considering the involvement of SJP in a project being formulated by the District Administration to promote cropping intensity through MGNREGA in 12000 farm holdings of tribal families who have received land titles under the Forest Rights Act. This new found trust between state governments and NGOs, though seminal at this stage could potentially mature in the years ahead.

13. The MGNREGA-INRM pilots have raised the capacity of the village communities to manage the natural resources more efficiently. In the Kandhamal district of Orissa, growing awareness of INRM models and confidence generated by the pilot project among the members of both warring communities to plan their future livelihood security is prompting entrepreneurship in the villages. Farmers are converting their small land holdings in to fish ponds even at the risk of not having enough land to grow foodgrains. Despite the fact that paddy yields have almost tripled from adopting SRI in paddy cultivation, the prospect of cost intensive multi-purpose farm ponds of larger size (150 X 100 X 8 feet) being sanctioned by the Palle / Gram Sabhas (Village Councils) under MGNREGA is being seen as an opportunity by enterprising small farmers to foray in to fish culture. An equally encouraging outcome from the MGNREGA-INRM pilots has been the heightened sense of voluntarism among single member households in the villages to dedicate their assets for the welfare of the community.

14. A distinct improvement in the socio-economic status and micro-level human development in the villages where the pilot projects were implemented is quite evident as the field evaluation studies in Orissa, MP and Rajasthan have shown. Many households surveyed during the course of the case study on MGNREGA-INRM convergence in Orissa have acquired additional assets such as goats and bullocks with the increased income, both from wages and higher farm yields. The impact of the pilot project in Khandamal can be gauged from the fact that farmers who could not earn more than Rs

5,000 per acre from traditional crops like pulses and jowar, are now looking forward to earning anywhere between Rs. 10,000 and Rs. 35,000 on account of the shift in the cropping pattern towards higher value adding vegetable crops like cauliflower and orchard crops like mango. This has encouraged them to increase spending on the education of their children, health and food consumption.

15. Similar findings emerged out of the SJP study in MP where the most vulnerable section of the rural community was found to be the migrant labourers who worked in mineral based industries and fell victims to the terminal Silicosis disease. A special drive was launched for issue of job cards to Silicosis affected families and for providing less strenuous work to them like taking care of the infant children at crèches and supplying drinking water. The impact was that the affected families did not have to send young children to work at MGNREGA sites and elsewhere as adult members could earn wages. The pilot also brought out a powerful learning about how the presence of a dedicated Village Resource Person (VRP) outside the government system could facilitate effective public service delivery such as release of old age and widow pensions, pensions to physically challenged and even issue of rations cards to families below poverty line.

16. As **Annexure 3.3** substantiates, the feedback from the pilot project for installation of low cost Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs) in the Cuddalore district of Tamilnadu has led to design improvements by the manufacturer, Vortex Engineering, who have now incorporated a twin-cassette cash dispensing system so that the speed of cash delivery is improved. Though the pilot project itself has suffered from operational constraints and the original objective of dispensing wages through the ATMs has not been fully realized, both the relevance and the impact of the project have been encouraging. The ATM pilot has offered many lessons particularly the feasibility of introducing biometric features for authentication, which has enabled the country's central bank (Reserve Bank of India) to take a decision on permitting ATM transactions without numeric pin codes.

17. It has also been realized that a more intensive IEC campaign is needed to demonstrate and educate the wage seekers on the operation of the ATMs, particularly on the use of other fingers of the hand for identification where the thumb signs are not clear. Measures

are also being contemplated for improving the connectivity to the SBI core-banking server so that electronic fund transfer can be made faster into each beneficiary's account. As Professor. Ashok Jhunjhunwala at IIT-Chennai commented, "The piloting was a move to try out whether technology can be used to serve the unserved population and whether some basic sense of banking services and saving habits can be generated in the rural population. The lessons learnt are significant for the future".

18. In the final analysis, the relevance, effectiveness and impact of this vital component of the UNDP supported project is reflected in the very design of each pilot project, the activities envisaged and the key inputs that the pilots provided to reinforce effectiveness across different processes along the programme chain of MGNREGA. The transfer of knowledge and capacity for micro-planning to bring about convergence of MGNREGA with natural resource management; the innovative approach to IEC, functional literacy and inter-sectoral convergence with health related programmes; and the effectiveness of the pilots in identifying the potential for integrating both farm and non-farm livelihood opportunities, are lessons that are valuable. Also, the numerous ICT pilots for empowering the wage seekers under MGNREGA with real time access to data on wages and works, promises great scope for increased transparency and accountability in programme implementation. The findings also call for caution against projects that are not designed around the core of MGNREGA or those that are very ambitious in scope. Above all, this entire component of the UNDP project is sustainable in the areas and communities where the pilots were implemented, since the knowledge transfer would enable the communities to pursue the development models demonstrated through the pilots. As regards ICT pilots, where infrastructure resources such as broadband network, computer hardware and software may need expansion and up gradation, the state governments are inclined to support the same since they see considerable value addition from these facilities.

Scalability and Replicability

19. Both the GoI in MoRD and the state governments have appreciated the outcomes from the pilot projects and efforts are being actively made to scale up the benefits from the pilot projects in the villages and blocks where they were originally implemented and

replicate them elsewhere across regions and states. Convinced by the transparency and stronger accountability that can be brought to bear on the implementation of MGNREGA, the MoRD has been contemplating a national roll out of the ICT project with biometrics based authentication features right down to the village level to provide for a user friendly people's information system, building on the pilots. The strategy document titled, "National Framework for Biometrics enabled ICT for People's Empowerment under MGNREGA" was brought out following which the national roll out has been proposed. The proposal is now at an advanced stage of implementation in GoI.

20. The state governments are also keen to replicate both the ICT and other human development pilots. Without waiting for the GoI's national roll out, the Government of Rajasthan (GoR) have already engaged a consultant for preparation of a detailed project report for the state wide roll out of ICT pilots implemented in Bhilwara and Udaipur districts with additional features to provide for real time access to the accounting and financial information system under MGNREGA. A call center with a dedicated help line and two-way functionality for grievance redressal as well as dissemination of information to both callers and non caller is being contemplated. In regard to other innovation pilots such as those aimed at skill building and livelihood security, convergence with the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) is being proposed. Similarly, the GoO is keen to replicate the results from both the ICT pilots in Cuttack and Mayurbhanj districts as well as the innovation pilots for micro planning, natural resource management and capacity building of grass roots level project functionaries.

Chapter 4: PIN Studies: Key Findings

Introduction

1. The MoRD in the GoI recognised the potential role that academic institutions like the IITs, IIMs, State Agricultural Universities (SAUs) and other reputed institutions involved in social science research and management development can play in enhancing the quality of implementation of the MGNREGA through concurrent monitoring and evaluation, quick appraisal studies, action research, case studies, capacity building and related interventions. Following a round table conference in August 2008, over fifty institutions evinced interest in contributing to the implementation of MGNREGA and were organized in to the Professional Institutional Network (PIN). In 2008-09, 13 members of the PIN were assigned MGNREGA evaluation studies each in one state by MoRD and UNDP. Subsequently more studies were commissioned on diverse themes. This chapter highlights the findings from the evaluation of a sample of PIN studies across the states included in this study- M.P., Orissa, Rajasthan and Tamilnadu.

Project Concept and Processes

2. Within two years after MGNREGA was initiated, the MoRD in the GoI and the UNDP recognised that the programme implementation was not uniform across the states and there was wide variation even in the interpretation of MGNREGA processes as well as programme impact. The monitoring and evaluation system involving performance reviews with states governments, analysis of MIS based progress reports, monitoring by members of the Central Employment Guarantee Council (CEGC) and NLMs were found useful in diagnosing the irritants to progress of MGNREGA but the need for a deeper research in to the issues and challenges of implementing the programme as well as the capture of best practices wherever reported, was considered more appropriate. Academic institutions and civil society organizations involved actively with education, training and consultancy in the areas of social sciences, management, agriculture and rural development were identified as a potential source of support for carrying out quick appraisals and structured impact evaluation studies. This has been the rationale for organising the PIN and most institutions invited for initial discussions by MoRD and UNDP expressed a strong commitment join the PIN.

3. Though the core objective of the PIN was to develop a system of concurrent monitoring and independent appraisal of MGNREGA, a few institutions also offered to provide capacity building and IEC support while others committed to initiating action research to ensure iterative process improvements and renewal for enhancing the programme quality. Robust processes were put in place to screen and identify members of the PIN who could carry out studies on specific themes depending on their proven expertise in rural development. The UNDP's support has been central to promoting the objectives and activities of the PIN, particularly in ensuring that the studies were methodologically sound and that they were targeted at addressing the strategic issues that had emerged in the initial years of implementing MGNREGA.

4. A balance was struck between the research interests of PIN partners and the salient aspects of MGNREGA in defining the scope of the studies awarded to different institutions. Since the essential features of MGNREGA include expansion of employment opportunities in rural areas and its positive impact on poverty alleviation; ensuring payment of statutory minimum wages with parity between men and women; empowerment of members of scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, women and other vulnerable sections of rural communities through the rights based frame work of the Act; reducing distress migration; and enhancing financial inclusion and literacy by routing wages through the banking system and the network of post offices, the quick appraisals through PIN were designed to investigate progress on the above aspects.

5. The PIN partners were also provided with detailed guidelines on the sample plan, use of tools and techniques for both qualitative and quantitative approaches to evaluation, stakeholder coverage and even chapter plans to ensure a broad sense of uniformity in the format for the PIN studies. The PIN component of the project also encouraged in-depth studies of thematic interest from the policy point of view to the GoI and the state governments. These included studies to evaluate and index empowerment of women through MGNREGA, impact of MGNREGA on Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs – Local Self Governance) since the Act mandates their active involvement in planning and implementing the programme, role and participation of civil society, quality of assets

created and above all the impact of MGNREGA on natural resource management through the various soil and water conservation works permitted under MGNREGA and the aggregate impact on agriculture. These economic, social and institutional development issues apart, the PIN studies were also designed to identify, highlight and disseminate innovations in core processes and best practices for maintenance of MGNREGA records, measurement of works, muster roll entries, timely disbursement of wages, grievance redressal, social audit and IEC for increased awareness about the programme. To guide PIN members in their choice of research topics, a suggestive list of topics was also developed and disseminated (**Annexure 4.1**).

Relevance and Effectiveness

6. The efficiency with which large number of studies was carried out on MGNREGA through the PIN network within a short time period of three years, and the geographical coverage of the studies extending to all states of the country, is unprecedented. The diversity of themes and spread of the institutional network is very impressive as may be seen from the **Annexure 4.2**. If the relevance of the PIN studies is borne out by the vigorous participation of the country's best known management development and social science research institutions included in the PIN, the effectiveness is evident from the nature of findings from the PIN studies in relation to the issues that had been identified as the possible and potential outcomes from MGNREGA, during the initial years of programme implementation. The effectiveness of PIN studies is further reflected in the fit between their objectives and the recommendations made for strengthening MGNREGA, as can be seen from the studies sampled in **Boxes 4.1 to 4.8**.

7. Seeking to evaluate the programme implementation in two states of Uttar Pradesh (U.P.) and M.P., the study by Development Alternatives (**Box 4.1**) pointed to the need for greater co-ordination among the line departments and to decentralising the planning process down to the GP level as the way forward for developing an adequate shelf of projects, ensuring quality of assets created and promoting convergence. The findings from this study find resonance from the study carried out by IIT, Kharagpur in Orissa (**Box 4.2**) which recommends simplification of procedures and creating a single point command for co-ordination of line departments, to achieve convergence. The

complementarity of these studies could serve as a framework to guide the design of suitable governance structures at the village, block/ district and state levels to make development convergence happen. The effectiveness of the PIN studies is further illustrated by the support the above two studies lend to the findings from the Council for Social Development (CSD) study (**Box 4.3**) conducted in twelve states which highlights the need for capacity building of PRI functionaries and convergence as the basis for effective utilization of assets created under MGNREGA. The study by IIT, Chennai (**Box 4.4**) makes the case for a review of the rural schedule of rates just as the other studies (**Box 4.5 to 4.8**) suggest both policy level and operational reviews

Box 4.1: Development Alternatives

From their study of implementation of MGNREGA in the states of M.P. and U.P., it emerged that planning the shelf of projects at the GP level was the biggest challenge. Instead of the plans taking shape at the gram sabha, these plans were actually found to be prepared by the block level administration with very little involvement of the village communities. The lack of an adequate data base on the resources available at GP level was a major hindrance as this data is distributed across the files of different line departments- forests, minor irrigation, agriculture and others. The study recommends co-ordination among these departments as vital to improving the quality of assets under MGNREGA works as well as for formulating convergence projects.

Box 4.2: The Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur

The objective of this study was to appraise the progress of convergence between MGNREGA and other development schemes of the Government of Orissa (GoO). Based on a sample of four blocks each from two districts of Mayurbhanj and Ganjam, the key recommendations from the study for effective convergence to happen, include:

- Clarity on nature and extent of participation by line departments.
- Improving coordination across line departments and ensuring unity of command
- Resolving the free riders problem in convergence projects
- Reducing formalities in paper work and providing for a single window system.
- Simplification of procedures by creating a separate cell in the state level MGNREGA unit for facilitating convergence initiatives.

Box 4.3: Council for Social Development, New Delhi

Captioned, ‘Socio-economic Impact of Implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Act in India’ the study was conducted in 23 selected districts of 12 states of the country viz. Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhatisgarh, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. The key recommendations of the multi-state study report submitted in September 2010 have been:

- Bridging the entitlement gaps under MGNREGA through the coordinated action of the Panchayati Raj Institutions, civil society and government departments.
- Ensuring productive utilisation of the assets created under MGNREGA through increased convergence with other development schemes and projects.
- Addressing the issue of social inclusion through social mobilization and awareness building about MNREGA in all the extremist affected regions.
- Ensuring good governance through rejuvenation of village monitoring committees and strengthening the social audit process
- Training and building the capacities of panchayati raj functionaries and officials

- through civil society organisations, NGOs and academic institutions.
- Encouraging farmers who have improved their irrigated area through MGNREGA works to adopt remunerative cropping patterns for higher incomes.

Box 4.4: IIT, Chennai

The IIT, Chennai evaluated the implementation of MGNREGA across five districts of Tamilnadu namely, Cuddalore, Dindigul, Kanchipuram, Nagapattinam and Thiruvallur from May 2009 to July 2009. Their key recommendations were:

- Creating an independent task force to identify a shelf of projects at the GP level and present them before Gram Sabha for discussion and approval.
- Devise performance indicators at the GP, block and district levels for effective monitoring of MGNREGA.
- The study pointed to poor work site facilities and suggested including the same in the list of substantive performance indicators.
- The level of wage payment was found to be lower than the guaranteed minimum wage. The study recommended review of the rural schedule of rates.

Box 4.5: Action for Food Production (AFPRO)

A study on “Monitoring and Streamlining Convergence of MGNREGA with other ongoing schemes” was conducted in the Dewas district of Madhya Pradesh. The key recommendations of the study include:

- Revision of the 60:40 ratio for wages and materials which is necessary for the creation of durable assets
- Flexibility to provide more than 100 days employment on each job card

Box 4.6: Centre for Environment Concerns (CEC)

Carried out from November 2009 to November 2010, this study was more in the nature of an action learning project for promoting a network of civil society organizations in select districts of Andhra Pradesh. CEC worked with six partner NGOs in three districts of A.P. – Medak, Chittoor and Anantapur to promote capacity building of MGNREGA project functionaries through mandal, district and state level workshops. The study served as an action learning project for various stakeholders leading to development of an IT based ‘Tool for Real Time Information and Action for Governance and Empowerment (TRIAGE).

Box 4.7: The Indian Institute of Forest Management, Bhopal

This study titled, ‘Impact Assessment of MGNREGA Activities for Ecological and Economic Security’ sampled four districts of M.P.- Panna, Chhindwara, Dhar and Ujjain.

The key recommendations of the study were:

- Appointment of additional technical officers in line departments to reduce delays in the measurement of running or completed works.
- Sensitising stakeholders on the role of MGNREGA in climate change adaptation .
- Maintaining ecological sustainability of irrigation wells through selection of appropriate sites for construction of wells, maintenance of proper recharge pit, afforestation etc for recharging the ground water level.
- Increasing forest cover through compilation of spatial and ground data to identify patches for afforestation under MGNREGA

Box 4.8: Centre for Educational Research and Development (CERD)

The study appreciated a measure introduced by the Government of Andhra Pradesh to ensure transparency and accountability through deployment of information technology (IT) which provides a two way process of verification of muster roll maintenance so that names and attendance of wage seekers are not tampered with. This system has been recommended for implementation in other states, too.

Impact on Policy and Programme

8. The findings of various studies carried out by the PIN members have provided an independent and effective feedback on the progress and problems in implementing the programme on the ground. Even as the PIN studies were initiated, a sense of tighter monitoring of MGNREGA by the GoI was perceived by the state governments and many states did make corrections and improvements in the programme implementation processes and procedures. The findings and recommendations of the PIN studies were formally communicated by the GoI for action by the respective state governments while the full reports were also added to the MGNREGA website for access to all stakeholders. Each study, irrespective of the methodological variation and quality of output, has made a contribution to the understanding of the best practices as well as shortcomings in the implementation of MGNREGA in states and regions where the studies were carried out.

9. However, linking process improvements in programme implementation or policy changes to individual study reports is not feasible as many changes are triggered even as research teams interact in the course of their data collection with programme managers at block and district levels or policy makers at state and national levels. There have been instances of muster roll closing schedules having been staggered, revision of MGNREGA convergence guidelines and review of schedule of rates for wage determination on the basis of PIN studies. The Government of Tripura, for instance, has now signed a memorandum of understanding with Tripura Grameena Bank and the Tripura State Cooperative bank on the recommendations of a study by the National Institute of Rural Development for covering all registered job card holders under MGNREGA with business correspondent services. Yet given the multiplicity of sources of information to decision makers and their positional transfers as well as the overlapping nature of decision structures, pinpointing a particular study as the source of change has been difficult for the evaluation team to determine.

Chapter 5: Key Findings from Evaluation of Technical Secretariat, IEC and Capacity Building Components

Introduction

1. An important component of the UNDP Supported Project for Operationalisation of MGNREGA has been the provision of a Technical Secretariat (TS) to assist the GoI in MoRD with specialised professional and technical competencies, generally not available at the support level in the civil service system. Reporting to the NPD, MGNREGA (Joint Secretary to GoI– MGNREGA), the members of TS are expected to provide professional assistance and technical support in facilitating strategic as well as functional review of programme implementation processes at various levels of governance, based on feedback from across the country; documentation and assistance in problem solving; and serving as the hub for knowledge sharing, dissemination of best practices, formulating and monitoring various other components of the UNDP supported Project.

2. The positions advertised and filled up in the TS are shown in **Annexure 5.1**, including the serving incumbents and the personnel separated from the TS. While members of the TS are recruited jointly by UNDP and MoRD, their services are kept entirely at the disposal of officers in the MoRD who are also responsible for appraising and reviewing the performance of the TS staff before extending their annual contracts. This chapter evaluates the relevance and effectiveness of the contribution by the TS to MGNREGA. The relevance of the IEC materials and related knowledge products as also the contribution of the UNDP project to capacity building work have been examined. The knowledge products developed by the TS under the UNDP supported project have also been sampled in evaluating the performance of the cell.

Relevance and Effectiveness of the Technical Secretariat

3. The relevance and effectiveness of a service support project like the TS is best evaluated by the feedback from officers of the host department who are directly assisted by the TS staff. The MGNREGA Programme Team headed by the Joint Secretary in the MoRD has been quite appreciative of the support and services provided by the TS. Though the evaluation study team did not have access to the annual performance

assessment reports of the members of the TS, the positive feedback from the MoRD under whose direct scrutiny the TS has been functioning, is compelling evidence of its satisfactory performance. The members of the TS have also expressed satisfaction over their contribution to the MGNREGA, during a focus group discussion with them, and they have also emphatically articulated the rich learning experience that their respective assignments have offered to enrich their personal careers. The mutuality and congruence of the two-way feedback between MoRD and the TS encourages the evaluation team to believe that a proper Human Resource Management (HRM) fit exists between the service users and the service providers. From the viewpoint of effective HR practices, however, the members of the TS have made certain suggestions which are discussed later in this chapter and which could help reduce the high levels of staff attrition (**Annexure 5.1**).

4. There have been opportunities as ‘non-participant observers’ for this study team to evaluate the performance of a section of the TS, which corroborates the feedback from the MoRD about the effective role that the TS has played in the implementation of MGNREGA. Further, representatives of the state governments and district administration as also the institutions who have partnered various components of the UNDP supported project believe that the TS had served as an informal channel of communication with MoRD, providing information support, clarifications and suggestions in interpreting the guidelines issued by MoRD from time to time on various aspects of implementing MGNREGA. This value addition by the TS to diverse stakeholders of MGNREGA has been possible on account of the multi-disciplinary character of the TS which includes experts in Monitoring and Evaluation; Management Information Systems and ICT; Convergence and Rural Development; Irrigation and Soil Engineering; Watershed Management and other areas related to human development.

Contribution and Impact

5. The TS has been an integral part of the support system in the MoRD for preparation of guidelines, manuals, work plans and feed back to policy makers at all levels. Further, they have been assisting the national project management team in the analysis of reports received from the National Level Monitors (NLMs); visiting study teams constituted by the GoI and the UNDP; study reports submitted by members of the PIN; inquiry reports

received from different teams constituted to investigate omissions and commissions by MGNREGA project functionaries and members of PRIs. Members of the TS have also contributed to the work of several working and expert groups constituted to examine specific MGNREGA processes, project review committees, inter-ministerial groups and standing committees of the MoRD, Planning Commission and others. The role of the TS in setting quality standards at MGNREGA work sites based on their review meetings held with state governments while in the field; dissemination of best practices in deploying ICT for increased transparency and accountability; facilitating transition of the MIS from a transactional to a real time paradigm; formulation of labour budgets, social audit and grievance redressal mechanisms; and above all in identifying training gaps and co-ordinating with state institutes of rural development and NGOs for capacity building of MGNREGA project functionaries have been well documented.

6. The technical cell also contributed richly to the development of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials such as the Literacy Primer; 'Rozgar Sutras' capturing the best MGNREGA practices from different districts across India; and the 'Sarpanch Pustika' for capacity building of Gram Pradhans (Chiefs of Village Councils), in addition to 30 film and television spots highlighting the distinctive features of MGNREGA and the success stories from different parts of the country. The TS has also brought out more substantive publications such as the field works manual incorporating guidelines for developing quality assets in MGNREGA; The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) Design, Process and Impact; Reports to the People on MGNREGA; and a series of publications titled 'MGNREGA Knowledge Network Series'. A knowledge repository with over 700 articles on MGNREGA has been created along with leads to guide potential research on MGNREGA as a vehicle for alleviating poverty. The TS is also credited with drafting or providing support in drafting guidelines for convergence of MGNREGA with other development schemes of the Ministries of Agriculture; Water Resources; Environment and Forests; Panchayati Raj and other departments within the MoRD.

HRM Issues in the TS

7. From the discussion held with the members of the TS, it emerges that contribution of the secretariat could have been richer if certain elements of the HRM policy were

addressed. These include the duration of the contract which is currently 12 months. The staff of the TS opined that since considerable time is needed in getting acquainted with the complex features of MGNREGA and the work culture in the MoRD, a minimum contract period of two years would instill a sense of security as well as bring stability to the work of the Secretariat. Out of 25 persons recruited in the secretariat since inception, there had been a separation of 13 members of staff pointing to 50% attrition over a five year period which may have been reduced if the contract period was longer. The academic qualifications and experiential requirements of the TS staff were commensurate with their job descriptions and most of them being in the younger age bracket, their energy level was generally high.

8. There was also a suggestion that a formal induction programme of two to four weeks could help the newly recruited staff to understand their task environment in its entirety, before being assigned charge of their positions in the TS. While most of them have had very good on-the-job learning, it would be consistent with sound HRM practices to provide an opportunity for job orientation before regular placement. Such an orientation would also help refine the inter-personal and organisational communication skills of the staff who are required to interact with multiple stakeholders within and outside the MoRD and UNDP. The evaluation team was also left with an impression that there was an opportunity to enhance the team's productivity through regular off-site reviews and knowledge sharing retreats for better team cohesiveness, as they are reporting to different officers within the MoRD. Since the job content of the professionals in the TS primarily involves promoting knowledge diffusion and networks to strengthen MGNREGA, the need for brain storming and knowledge sharing within the TS cannot be over emphasized.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

The following conclusions emerge from the terminal evaluation study of the UNDP supported project for MGNREGA based on the components evaluated:

General

1) The context and approach to partnership between UNDP and the GoI in the MoRD has opened up new space for knowledge based support systems that enable host governments to experiment, innovate and redesign programme processes while implementing a large nation-wide development programme like the MGNREGA, even while the programme is wholly funded with domestic resources. Assuming the character of a learning partnership, the UNDP supported Project for operationalisation of MGNREGA has produced many lessons to learn for both partners. While UNDP has gained valuable insight into the scope and challenges of implementing a huge anti-poverty programme that the MGNREGA is, the GoI appreciates that the size of the technical assistance component is not important. Rather, the appropriateness, flexibility and design of the support system makes a bigger difference as has been demonstrated by the UNDP supported project which enabled MoRD to attempt diverse and decentralised innovations in programme implementation.

2) The major factors influencing and reinforcing the UNDP- GoI partnership include the value addition from UNDP's independent and informed feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of the programme implementation processes, while being fully committed to the success of the programme. Further, leveraging its limited resources, the UNDP project enabled the MoRD in closing critical resource gaps that are not easy to address on account of the complex financial and administrative procedures in the GoI. Dissemination of lessons learnt from implementing MGNREGA and the learning take-aways for rest of the developing world on one hand and the benefit of globally distilled feedback to the GoI, has introduced complementarities in the partnership, creating a win-win orientation.

3) The partnerships promoted under the support project by UNDP with Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) like PRADAN for integrating Natural Resource Management (NRM) practices with MGNREGA works in Orissa; the Satat Jeevika

Pariyojna (SJP) in MP; OneWorld, SEWA, PRATHAM, BASIX and others in Rajasthan are eloquent examples of how rural development programmes can benefit from the active involvement of NGOs in bringing about innovation and transparency at the grass roots level. These pilot projects, each of them unique in its own way, has had a demonstrating effect on the state governments who are now aware of the potential benefits that can be harvested by scaling up and replicating the pilots in other districts. The state governments of Orissa and Rajasthan are keen to replicate both the convergence and ICT pilots in other districts of their respective states. The processes and organisational structures that took shape in the course of the pilot projects such as the role of Local Resource Persons in the INRM-MGNREGA pilot; the Village Resource Centres in the DSS-SK pilot; or the Farmers' SHGs formed under the SEWA pilot, would serve to guide future projects.

4.) The innovation and ICT pilots have instilled confidence at all levels of programme management that much scope exists under MGNREGA to experiment with out-of-box ideas ranging from deployment of ICT at any one end of the programme value chain as the Low Cost ATMs pilot in Tamilnadu shows or across the programme value chain as the lessons from the pilots in Rajasthan illustrate, to converging MGNREGA across sectors like agriculture, health and education, which the pilots in M.P., Orissa and Rajasthan demonstrate. While the pilot studies encourage innovation, they also offer lessons on how it is useful to ensure that such initiatives are realistic and are well within the core framework of MGNREGA provisions and guidelines. A conclusion is also compelling that civil society groups and NGOs would like to learn from one another even as innovative ideas are being sought to be introduced in the rural communities.

Strengthening MGNREGA Processes

5. While it is generally assumed that enough awareness exists among the wage seekers about various provisions of MGNREGA and the rights based issues inherent in the Act, the partnerships forged in the course of pilot projects indicate that scope for greater inclusion exists, if the IEC campaigns can be customised to address the learning needs of marginalized and disadvantaged groups and functional literacy is promoted among them as the DSS-SK pilot in M.P. has achieved. From the SJP project implemented in the two tribal dominated districts of MP, it is interesting to find how the display of pictorial

posters, hand outs, pamphlets, booklets and the MGNREGA beneficiary hand book, all translated in to the local Bhili and Bhilali tribal dialects are more easily understood by the tribal families, particularly the women who are not very comfortable with the Hindi language. Again, participatory micro-planning is at the heart of developing the shelf of projects required to address demand needs for wage employment under MGNREGA as well as ensuring the relevance and quality of assets developed under the programme. The INRM-MGNREGA convergence points to the potential for empowering rural communities with capacity to plan and manage their natural resources in a manner that can metamorphose MGNREGA from a wage employment to a programme of sustainable livelihoods in rural areas.

6. The ICT based pilots have shown the way to handle the massive flow of data on a real time basis in implementing MGNREGA, besides bringing in the much needed transparency and accountability across the chain of programme implementation processes. The deployment of ICT is now widely recognized as a source of value addition to MGNREGA particularly for timely disbursement of wages to wage seekers which has been a major area of concern in every state. The outcomes and lessons from the pilots have been useful not only from the point of view of enhanced efficiency in programme implementation but also in feeding the biometrics based e-governance policies of the GoI. The use of community radio for IEC work in Rajasthan to increase awareness of MGNREGA among the village communities, further substantiates that technology has the potential to revolutionise even basic MGNREGA processes such as IEC. It is obvious that the pilots have been relevant and effective in strengthening MGNREGA processes which the states are keen to scale up and replicate.

Beyond Wage Employment

7. While the potential for sustainable livelihood support through MGNREGA does exist, very interesting outcomes not envisaged originally under MGNREGA have emerged from the pilot projects. There is strong evidence that the INRM-MGNREGA pilot implemented in a district where the social fabric had been torn apart by ethno-communal clashes, has enabled the district administration to restore harmony and confidence for the embattled groups to co-exist in peace. The promise of a viable approach to promoting

productivity of small land holdings handicapped by very challenging topography and the possibility of switching over to more remunerative cropping patterns has had a healing effect on the members of both communities in conflict. This conclusion is also fortified by the relief that MGNREGA could provide to the victims of silicosis and their families in M.P. under the SJP pilot by providing special attention to their state of health while engaging them on MGNREGA works.

8. A multi-pronged skill building strategy combined with farm and non-farm extension services and livelihood opportunities can produce very interesting results that can potentially redefine the role of MGNREGA in providing stable livelihoods to the rural poor, as the SEWA experience in Rajasthan has thrown up. By enabling wage seekers to acquire new skills in making paper based utility products, assembly of solar lanterns, preparation of washing powder and the organisation of small and marginal farmers into Self Help Groups (SHGs) for managing and maintaining farm tools and equipment depots from where farm implements can be hired by needy farmers, the pilot has shown the way forward for converging skill linked rural livelihood systems and agricultural extension services with wage employment. Similarly, the fact that rural communities have the capacity to absorb modern computing skills and are willing to learn from each other through effective partnerships within the community is borne out by the PRATHAM experience in Rajasthan.

The PIN Processes

9. The PIN was conceived to develop a system of concurrent monitoring and independent appraisal of MGNREGA and a few institutions also offered to provide capacity building and IEC support. The effectiveness and performance of the PIN partners in identifying topics of both policy and programme relevance, was enabled by a set of sound processes and guidelines put in place by UNDP and MoRD. The screening of PIN members and assignment of specific studies and themes depending on their proven expertise in rural development as well as setting out broad guidelines on methodology, sampling plans and even chapter plans contributed to consistency in approach and format of the study reports. The large number of studies carried out on MGNREGA through the PIN network within a short time period of three years, the geographical coverage of the studies extending to

all states of the country, the diversity of themes selected for PIN studies and the vigorous participation of the country's best known management development and social science research institutions, can be attributed to the efficient project management processes.

10. The effectiveness and impact of the PIN studies is evident from the nature of their findings in relation to the issues that had been identified as the possible and potential outcomes from MGNREGA. The credibility of the PIN studies is reflected in the corroborative nature and complementarity of the inter-institutional findings on various themes and the recommendations to strengthen MGNREGA. Linking these findings and recommendations, however, to process improvements in programme implementation or policy changes in the GoI or the states, has not been possible since frequent transfers of project functionaries and the overlapping nature of decision structures in state and the central governments make it difficult to establish such linkages.

Performance of the Technical Secretariat, IEC and Capacity Building

11. A proper HRM fit exists between the MoRD who are the direct users of the services of the TS and the services made available by the staff of the Secretariat. Besides assisting the national project management team of MGNREGA in the analysis of reports received from stakeholders on the programme implementation; study reports from members of the PIN; inquiry reports from investigations in to complaints against project functionaries, the TS has also contributed to the work of several working and expert groups constituted to examine specific MGNREGA processes and to other statutory and administrative organs of the GoI. Their role in ensuring the transition of the MGNREGA-MIS to a real time orientation as well as monitoring all other components of the UNDP supported project including innovation and ICT pilots has added enduring value.

12. The technical cell has also contributed richly to the development of innovative IEC materials, co-ordinating with state institutes of rural development and NGOs for design and delivery of capacity building programmes, in addition to knowledge products capturing the best MGNREGA practices from different districts and states across India. The TS has also provided active support to drafting guidelines for MGNREGA convergence with other development schemes of various Ministries of the GoI and

evaluating claims from states for the awards of excellence in administration of MGNREGA. Yet, opportunities exist for enhancing the performance and productivity of the TS team and reducing personnel attrition levels, if superior HR practices can be adopted to provide induction training, better knowledge sharing opportunities and more stable service contracts to members of the TS staff.

13. The above conclusions are based on a small sample of projects implemented on a pilot basis. This should be seen as evidence of the potential for replication and expansion of the pilots in other regions and states. After a substantive number of pilot projects are implemented in other geographies, more evidence through deeper empirical investigation can be built up for wider dissemination as a matter of policy to take MGNREGA to higher levels of implementation, beyond wage employment for the unskilled rural poor. Further, the evaluation of components like technical secretariat, IEC and capacity building leave no doubt that the direct value addition from professional and technical support services has been positive and more attention needs to be given to the knowledge renewal and capacity building of the secretariat staff themselves so that they are motivated to higher levels of performance. The PIN has been an unprecedented institutional arrangement facilitating the participation of reputed academic and research institutions in rigorous evaluation of MGNREGA, problem solving as well as developing a literature base that can be leveraged for education and training purposes.

Chapter 7: Recommendations and Future Interventions

As the findings and conclusions from the study indicate in the previous chapters, the ‘UNDP Supported Project for Operationalisation of MGNREGA’ has been a knowledge centric and innovation seeking partnership with the MoRD that enabled experimentation with diverse ideas and accumulation of both tacit and explicit knowledge about the implementation of MGNREGA. The study team believes firmly that the clarity about the role of the support partner, the relevance, design and flexibility of the project components and the programme management style have been instrumental in realising to a large extent, the goals of the support project. Hence, in terms of relevance and effectiveness, the study team believes that the support project has been a structured learning partnership with very satisfying and efficient outcomes. The following recommendations are being made, however, for taking the project forward to higher levels of effectiveness.

1. The lessons learnt from implementing the project to support MGNREGA in the last five years suggest that any future interventions for continued partnership with the GoI should be based on the same premises that contributed to the success of the current project- playing the role of a catalyst in providing objective feedback on the progress and outcomes from implementation of the programme; retaining the flexibility to close resource gaps, particularly in areas where the search for innovation and creative outcomes is relevant; and providing a global platform for exchange of experience and researched lessons about the impact of rights based employment guarantee programmes like MGNREGA in reducing poverty and in achieving the MDGs. *This study, therefore, recommends that the basic spirit and framework of the project should not be diluted in any way while expanding the size and intensity of future interventions.*

2. The various partnerships and pilot projects implemented under the ‘Innovation Fund’ have established the benefits of providing support structures and systems that facilitate access to knowledge and practical understanding of methods and techniques to leverage natural resources for securing and enriching livelihoods while participating in MGNREGA works. This transfer of knowledge requires community centric IEC campaigns, flexible access to opportunities for acquiring functional literacy, local

resource personnel from outside the rigid government structure to empower the wage seekers with participatory micro-planning processes and above all the confidence that avenues exist for redressal of their grievances when their entitlements under MGNREGA are denied for any reason. To address these expectations from wage seekers, *there is a need to decentralise the support system down to the state and district levels so that the state governments can initiate pilots on their own to make localized innovations down at the district, block and even village levels. The decentralisation would help state governments and MGNREGA functionaries at district and block levels to scale up and replicate the successful pilots, with speed and commitment.*

3. The merits and benefits of convergence have been demonstrated effectively through the pilot projects like PRADAN in Orissa or the SJP in M.P. *There is a need to scale up these initiatives to cover more states and districts on one hand and involve more NGOs / academic institutions on the other, to capture through action research the actual process by which knowledge, technology transfer and motivation to switch to new livelihoods takes place at community and individual levels.* There is a paucity of literature in this area and the consequent gaps in understanding and practice. Different state governments have interpreted the convergence guidelines of the GoI in ways that suit the priorities of the states and their available structures for governance. If state specific guidelines can be developed on the basis of action research and outreach events are organised at state and district levels to discuss and refine the guidelines, the scope and success of convergence which is becoming central to the effectiveness of MGNREGA, can be enhanced.

4. *By the same logic as with decentralising innovation and convergence pilots for livelihood support, there is a need to extend the PIN support to state governments.* Many of them are not fully involved with or convinced about the findings of the PIN studies, commissioned nationally. The UNDP supported project should encourage partnerships with state and regional level academic institutions, under the aegis of the state governments, so that the results of appraisal and evaluation by the state level PIN partners are quickly taken on board for implementation. *A similar recommendation is made on the basis of the findings of this study for providing technical secretariat like support structures at the state level, with state specific competency profiles and staffing*

patterns. The technical cells in the states can even have vertical knowledge linkages with the TS in the MoRD for problem solving, exchange of solutions and drawing support for innovations in the design of MGNREGA shelf of works and their implementation.

5. *Even as the support project is recommended for decentralisation, there is a need to deepen the partnership at the national level with the MoRD.* For instance the Professional Institutional Network (PIN) can be made more extensive and vigorous by commissioning longitudinal studies and action research in the districts and states where pilot projects were initiated in the early years of MGNREGA so that this evidence coupled with the output from state level PIN studies can be harnessed to inform the next generation policy changes in the implementation of MGNREGA. Similarly, ICT based initiatives tend to produce outcomes that lend themselves to large scale replication across the country, with only marginal changes where needed. There should be a greater thrust on implementing ICT based initiatives in co-ordination with the MoRD to technologically strengthen higher level MGNREGA processes like wage disbursement based on speech recognition.

6. There is a serious need for capacity building of project functionaries at the district and block levels as most of them have inadequate knowledge of the procedures and processes for effective implementation of MGNREGA. They generally lack the aptitude necessary for innovation and experimenting with new ideas. This has resulted in a situation which is best described in the words of Sumanthra Ghoshal and Christopher Barlett (Managing Across Borders, 2002) who emphasized that *'We cannot manage third generation strategies through second generation organizations with first generation managers'*. *The complexities and strategic implications of MGNREGA for alleviating poverty in the country demand a human resource management system that UNDP can consider supporting, on the basis of a comprehensive study. This implies the need for state-level studies to analyse the training needs of project functionaries at the district level and below and develop customised learning processes, pedagogical tools and content to deepen the competencies of MGNREGA managers at the operating levels.*

7. *In the pilot projects sampled for the study, it was found that one or two villages in each GP were targeted while all villages in the same GP should be ideally covered for*

effective demonstration of any pilot project or experiment. Problems of equity within the GP also arise when project coverage within the GP is not full. For instance, intervention by PRADAN in one or two villages in each GP is hardly adequate to demonstrate and disseminate the value addition from the INRM projects since each GP in Orissa has atleast 8-10 revenue villages not to talk of the scattered hamlets and habitations in the tribal areas. This further reinforces the recommendation for decentralizing the support.

8. Further, while the outcomes from the ICT pilots in Rajasthan are impressive, scaling them should be accompanied by intensive IEC effort, more in the nature of extension education rather than mere awareness building. The experience of wage seekers in Tamilnadu while using low cost ATMs is instructive on the need for such extension based IEC effort. *Hence, while scaling up the ICT based pilot projects, this provision for extension education must be factored in as part of the IEC strategy so that MGNREGA wage seekers are not just excited but are truly empowered from deploying technology.*

9. The deployment of additional resource personnel at the grass roots level such as the LRPs in Orissa and VRPs in M.P., has established beyond doubt that the existing staffing pattern at the GP level is not adequate to implement MGNREGA to the satisfaction of all stakeholders. This triggers the need for developing additional support at the GP level for successful implementation of MGNREGA, particularly where convergence with both livelihood based and social sector developments programmes is envisaged. *UNDP may consider supporting a few reputed NGOs to serve as partners in providing such support at the GP level in each state. A beginning could be made with a pilot project in four or five states and two or three districts could be targeted with this resource support.*

10. *For MGNREGA to make the big leap from being a wage employment programme to a programme of sustainable livelihoods, there is adequate scope to carry out functional literacy campaigns and skill building work for wage seekers at MGNREGA work sites.* While convergence with other schemes such as the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) is relevant here as is being currently proposed by the GoR, there is need for a UNDP Supported Project to produce stronger evidence of how these efforts can empower unskilled wage seekers with new skill sets as the SEWA and EDI pilot projects seem to

demonstrate. For example, the operation of farmers' SHGs for timely supply of farm tools is a very relevant concept from the viewpoint of input support to agricultural production. The possibility of extending similar support to small and marginal farmers who are also MGNREGA wage seekers, across other elements of the agriculture/agribusiness value chain including production and post harvest marketing can be explored by enlarging the scope of the pilots. At the same time, the feasibility of imparting traditional vocational skills to non-traditional groups needs more evidence.

11. The time duration for each pilot project has been about one year on an average. Since the partner organizations need time to develop rapport with the local population in the target area and this being a time consuming process, *UNDP may consider providing at least 18 months as the project implementation period for partner institutions, in future.* Further, clear targets need to be agreed on projected outcomes rather than confining the MoUs to activity levels. Also, a dependency syndrome is observed among most NGOs as they do not like to exit the areas where they have been successful. This blocks the opportunity for new NGOs with innovative ideas to extend their reach. *UNDP may find ways of breaking the dependency by incentivising NGOs with new projects in new areas subject to their withdrawal from areas of previous operation.*

Annexure 1.1: Salient Features of the MGNREG Act

Salient Features of the MGNREGA are summarized below:

- a) Adult members of a rural household may apply for employment if they are willing to do unskilled manual work.
- b) Such a household will have to apply for registration to the local Gram Panchayat, in writing or orally.
- c) The Gram Panchayat after due verification will issue a Job Card to the household as a whole. The Job Card will bear the photograph of all adult members of the household willing to work under NREGA. The Job Card with photograph is issued free of cost.
- d) A Job Card holding household may submit a written application for employment to the Gram Panchayat, stating the time and duration for which work is sought. The minimum days of employment have to be fifteen.
- e) The Gram Panchayat will issue a dated receipt of the written application for employment, against which the guarantee of providing employment within 15 days operates.
- f) Employment will be given within 15 days of application for work by an employment seeker.
- g) If employment is not provided within 15 days, daily unemployment allowance in cash has to be paid. Liability of payment of unemployment allowance is of the States.
- h) At least one-third of persons to whom work is allotted have to be women.
- i) Disbursement of wages has to be done on weekly basis and not beyond a fortnight.
- j) Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) have a principal role in programme planning and implementation.
- k) Each district has to prepare a shelf of projects. The selected works to provide employment are to be selected from the list of permissible works. The different categories of permissible works are as follows:

- Water Conservation and water harvesting
- Drought proofing (including plantation and afforestation)
- Irrigation canals including micro and minor irrigation works
- Flood Control and Protection Works
- Minor irrigation, horticulture and land development on the land of SC/ST/BPL/IAY and land reform beneficiaries
- Renovation of traditional water bodies including desilting of tanks
- Land Development
- Rural Connectivity

The shelf of projects has to be prepared on the basis of priority assigned by Gram Sabha. At least 50% of works have to be allotted to Gram Panchayats for execution. A 60:40 wage and material ratio has to be maintained. Contractors and use of labour displacing machinery are prohibited.

Work should ordinarily be provided within 5 km radius of the village or else extra wages of 10% are payable.

- l) Work site facilities such as crèche, drinking water, shade have to be provided.
- m) Social Audit has to be done by the Gram Sabha at least once in every six months.
- n) Grievance redressal mechanisms have to be put in place for ensuring a responsive implementation process.

All accounts and records relating to the Scheme are to be made available for public scrutiny and to any person desirous of obtaining a copy of such records, on demand and after paying a specified fee.

Annexure-1.2: Summary of Progress in Implementation of MGNREGA

National Overview					
	(FY 2006-07) 200 Districts	(FY 2007-08) 330 Districts	(FY 2008-09) 615 Districts	(FY 2009-10) 619 Districts	(FY 2010-11) 624 Districts (*)
Households Employment provided	2.10 Crore	3.39 Crore	4.51 Crore	5.25 Crore	5.49 Crore
Person Days (in Crore)					
Total	90.5	143.59	216.32	283.59	257.15
SCs	22.95 (25%)	39.36 (27%)	63.36 (29%)	86.44 (30.4%)	78.75 (30.6%)
STs	32.98 (36%)	42.07(29%)	55.02 (25%)	58.74 (20.7%)	53.61 (20.8%)
Women:	36.79 (41%)	61.15 (43%)	103.57 (48%)	136.40 (48%)	122.74 (47.7%)
Others:	34.56 (38%)	62.16 (43%)	97.95 (45%)	138.40 (48.%)	124.77 (20.4%)
Average person day per household	43 Days	42 Days	48 Days	54 Days	52.51 Days
Financial Detail					
Budget Outlay (In Rs.Crore)	11300	12000	30000	39100	40100
Central Release (In Rs.Crore)	8640.85	12610.39	29939.60	33506.61	35235.79
Total available fund with States (including OB: In Rs.Crore)	12073.55	19305.81	37397.06	49529.99	52572.11
Expenditure (In Rs.Crore)	8823.35	15856.89	27250.10	37938.16	39377.27
Average wage per day	Rs.65	Rs.75	Rs.84	Rs.91	Rs.100.23
Works' Details					
Total works taken up (In Lakhs)	8.35	17.88	27.75	46.01	50.78
Works completed	3.87	8.22	12.14	20.94	25.85
Water conservation	4.51 (54%)	8.73 (49%)	12.79 (46%)	23.33 (51%)	18.64 (36.7%)
Provision of Irrigation facility to land owned by SC/ST/BPL/S & MF and IAY beneficiaries:	0.81 (10%)	2.63 (15%)	5.67 (20%)	7.77 (17%)	4.31 (8.4%)
Rural Connectivity	1.80 (21%)	3.08 (17%)	5.03 (18%)	7.63 (17%)	24.7 (48.6%)
Land Development	0.89 (11%)	2.88 (16%)	3.98 (15%)	6.29 (14%)	1.76 (3.4%)
Bharat Nirman Rajiv Gandhi Seva Kendra				0.14 (0.27%)	1.03 (2.0)
Any other activity	0.34 (4%)	0.56 (3%)	0.28 (1%)	0.98 (2%)	0.44 (0.86)

Source: MoRD, GOI (2010) "Biometrics Enabled ICT for People's Empowerment under the MGNREGA".

*Provisional figures from MGNREGA-MIS, www.nrega.nic.in

Annexure 1.3: Components of UNDP Supported Project

1. A technical cell, to support MORD, comprising experts on Soil and Irrigation, Forestry and Agriculture, Convergence, ICT, Communications, management Information Systems and Data Analysis.
2. Support a Network of Professional Institutions for concurrent monitoring of MGNREGA and provide feedback to MoRD
3. An Innovation Fund to demonstrate improved human development outcomes for MGNREGA workers.
4. Involve a network of professional institutions in monitoring and documenting convergence initiatives in districts.
5. Initial documentation of implementation arrangements, coverage and early outcomes.
6. Set up a knowledge network for exchange of best practices and sharing of implementation challenges and solutions amongst district and state officials.
7. Development of and broadcast of films on MGNREGA, television spots, publishing brochures, printing and dissemination of the MGNREGA operational guidelines.
8. Documentation of social audit process in 23 districts across the country.
9. Developments of works manuals for afforestation, rural roads, watersheds and other works permissible under MGNREGA.
10. Demonstration of ICT pilots for distribution of wages to workers and to improve transparency under MGNREGA.
11. Training manuals by State Institutes of Rural Development in AP and Kerala.
12. Develop Primers to increase literacy so that workers engaged in MGNREGA can learn basic reading and writing to enable them to apply for works.
13. Multi-stakeholders workshops: Conducting workshops involving key stakeholders at National, State and District Levels. Some key workshops planned include an international seminar.

Source: UNDP's Original TOR for Terminal Evaluation of the Support Project for MGNREGA

Annexure 2.1: Minutes of the Meeting on ToR for Terminal Evaluation of the Project for Support to Operationalization of the MGNREGA

February 17, 2011

Ministry of Rural Development, New Delhi

1. A meeting to discuss the TOR and scope of work for terminal evaluation was held at the Ministry of Rural Development on February 17, 2011. The meeting was chaired attended by Ms Amita Sharma, NPD-UNDP project and Joint Secretary MGNREGA, Ms Sumeeta Benarji, Assistant Country Director, Governance, Mr Nilay Ranjan, project officer MGNREGA project and Dr Hemnath Rao, ASCI, Principal Investigator for terminal evaluation project.
2. The major **support areas** for the UNDP project at present are: (i) Technical Support to the Ministry: Setting up of Technical Cell, (ii) Professional Networks: Setting up of professional networks, (iii) IEC processes: Developing IEC publications, manuals, films, TV spots, on MGNREGA and (iv) Innovation Pilots: Implementing innovation pilots on skill development, ICT, HDI, planning and works
3. The main parameter for evaluation should be e nature of knowledge partnership and knowledge sharing, technical and professional support to Ministry, Strategy for Network with Professional Institution, Process of Innovation, and Policy change. The team will interact with official at Ministry, Member of Technical Cell and field visit to following state and district
 1. Bhilwara and Udaipur, Rajasthan for Innovation pilot project
 2. Cuddalore and IIT Chennai, Tamil Nadu for ICT innovation and PIN studies
 3. ACCESS, CSD in Andhra Pradesh for Convergence pilots project
 4. Kandhamal, Orissa for NRM based planning by PRADAN
4. The outcomes of the evaluation should be based on
 1. Nature of partnership-Cost Effective, Innovative, Flexible and Sustainability
 2. Professional and Technical support-Institution Credibility, Monitoring Mechanism, Review Meeting, Reporting System,
 3. Technical Cell-Nature of work, Work output, Efficiency, qualification and experience, recruitment process
 4. IEC and Capacity building-
5. Recommendations of the Project for future collaboration

Annexure 2.2: The list of Stakeholders Contacted/ Interviewed

Section A: Officers of UNDP / GoI and State Governments

Sl. No.	Name & Designation	Organisation & Address
	Delhi	
1	Ms. Amita Sharma Joint Secretary to GoI	Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) Department of Rural Development Krishi Bhavan, New Delhi-110001
2	Ms. Sumeeta Banerji Assistant Country Director (Governance)	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) 55, Lodhi Estate, New Delhi - 110 003, India
3	Mr. Nilay Ranjan Convergent & Rural Development Expert UNDP Technical Secretariat	MoRD Krishi Bhavan, New Delhi-110001
4	Mr. Ritesh Saxena MIS & ICT Expert UNDP Technical Secretariat	MoRD Krishi Bhavan, New Delhi-110001
5	Mr. G.N. Sharma Expert (Irrigation and Soil Engineering) UNDP Technical Secretariat	MoRD New Delhi
6	Mr. Ashutosh Gupta MIS Officer UNDP Technical Secretariat	MoRD New Delhi
7	Dr. Manoj Sharma Documentation Associate UNDP Technical Secretariat	MoRD New Delhi
8	Dr. R. Gopinath Research Associate UNDP Technical Secretariat	MoRD New Delhi
9	Dr. Deepender Kumar Research Associate UNDP Technical Secretariat	MoRD New Delhi
10	Ms. Sandhya Santhanam Project Assistant UNDP Technical Secretariat	UNDP New Delhi
11	Mr. Ashok Sharma Project Coordinator UNDP Technical Secretariat	UNDP, Bhilwara Rajasthan
12	Ms. Marjo Maenpaa UNV Governance Support Officer	UNDP New Delhi

	Rajasthan	
13	Mr. Tanmay Kumar, IAS Secretary to Govt. of Rajasthan and Commissioner of Rural Development	Jaipur, Rajasthan
14	Mr. Omkar Singh District Collector	Bhilwara, Rajasthan
15	Mr. Ashok Kumar Sharma Project Coordinator with GoI-UNDP	UNDP Bhilwara, Rajasthan.
	Orissa	
16	Mr. Susheel Kumar Lohani Commissioner for Rural Development	Government of Orissa
17	Dr. Krishan Kumar Collector	Kandhamal, Orissa
18	Mr. Deepak Singh CEO	Zilla Parishad Dhar
19	Mr. Pradeep Kumar Rath Project Director	DRDA Kandhamal, Phulbani AT/PO : Phulbani Dist: Kandhamal Orissa
	Tamilnadu	
20	Mr. Gagandeep Singh Bedi, Former Commissioner of RD & PR,	Rural Development & Panchayati Raj (RD&PR) Chennai-15.
21	Mr. T. Udayachandran Director	Rural Development & Panchayati Raj Commissionerate of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Panagal Building, 4th and 5th floor, Jeenis Road Saidapet, Chennai-600 015
22	Mr. P.Ponnaiah, Additional Director	RD&PR Tamilnadu
	Cuddalore	
23	Mr. K. Veera Raghava Rao, Project Director	DRDA Cuddalore Dist. – 607 001 Tamilnadu
24	Mr. V. Padmanabhan BDO	Cuddalore, TN.
	Madhya Pradesh	
25.	Ms. Aruna Sharma Principal Secretary to GoMP	Department of Rural Development Bhopal.
26	Mr. Deepak Singh CEO	Zilla Panchayat, Dhar

27	Mr. Ashok Deshwal, IAS District Collector	Alirajpur, M.P.
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Section B : Partner's Institutions – Civil Society Organisations / NGOs

Sl. No.	Name & Designation	Organisation & Address
	CSD - New Delhi	
1	Dr. T. Haque Member Secretary Director	Council for Social Development (CSD) New Delhi
2	Prof. K.B. Saxena Professor of Social Justice and Governance	CSD Sangha Rachna 53, Lodi Estate, New Delhi - 110003.
3	Mr. Gitesh Sinha Research Assistant	CSD Sangha Rachna 53, Lodi Estate. New Delhi - 110003.
	IIPA – New Delhi	
4	Dr. Sachin Chowdhry Asst. Professor	IIPA New Delhi
	OneWorld – New Delhi	
5	Mr. Naimur Rahman Director (MD, OneWorld Foundation India)	OneWorld South Asia C-5, Qutab Institutional Area New Delhi-110016
6	Ms. Ranjita Kiosk Operator	OneWorld
7	Mr. Ashish Ojha Field Coordinator	OneWorld
	Rajasthan - Seva Mandir	
8	Ms. Swati Director Programs	Seva Mandir Old Fatehpura, Udaipur-313 004, Rajasthan, India
9	Shri Shailendra Tiwari Incharge: Natural Resource Development	Seva Mandir Old Fatehpura, Udaipur-313004, Rajasthan, India.
10	Ms. Chandini Secretary	Bhagawati Hathkarg Samiti Rachana Swayam Sahayata Samooh, Badvonki Kotdi, Tq. Hurda, Dist. Bhilwada, Rajasthan-311023
11	Mr. Niket Kumar Jha Assistant Coordinator	Self Employed Women Association
	Rajasthan – PRATHAM	
12	Mr. Perwinder Singh Programme Coordinator	PRATHAM, Bhilwara.

	Rajasthan – BASIX	
13	Mr. Dileep Gupta Senior Manager	BASIX, Bhilwara.
14	Mr. Mukesh Sharma Sr. Executive – IGS	BASIX, Bhilwara.
15	Mr. Om Niwash Sharma Executive	BASIX-IGS, Bhilwara.
16	Mr. Lakshman Jai Radio Programmer	
17	Mr. Sanjay Rana EDI	
	Tamilnadu	
18	Dr. Ashok Jhunjhunwala Professor	Department of Electrical Engg. IIT-Madras, Chennai-600036, India.
19	Mrs. Lakshmi Vaidhyanathan Director In-Charge	Rural Technology and Business Incubator Telecommunications & Networking (TeNet) Group Module 6, I Floor, IITM Research Park, Kanagam Road, Taramani, Chennai-600113
20	Sri K. Venugopal Branch Manager	State Bank of India Tiruppapulliyur Branch Padali Talkies Road, Cuddalore-607002
	Orissa	
21	Mr. Amulya Kumar Khandai Team Leader	PRADAN Project Office: Patra Street, Balliguda, Dist. Kandhamal-762103
22	Mr. Tapas Pal	Deputy Team Leader
23	Ms Bulbuli Sahu	Project Officer
24	Mr. Arun	I.T. Specialist
25	Mr. Kumwar Singh Village Resource Person (VRP)	Kharwat G.P.
26	Ms. Madhavi VRP	Balwani G.P.
27	Mr. Karn Singh VRP	Malwai G.P..
28	Mr. Mohan Singh VRP	Roddha G.P.
29	Mr. Karan Singh VRP	Malwai G.P.
30	Mr. Des Singh V.R.P.	Dhyana G.P., Kathiwada Block;

Section C : MGNREGA Wage Seekers who participated in focus interviews

Kandhamal District of Orissa	
G.P. / Village	Name(s)
Mahasingsh / Limbapadar	Madhuka Mallick, Raghunath Pradhan, Prehma Mallick (Dabu Mallick), Kanu Mallick, Ratnakar Mallick, Nimanti Mallick, Kunime Mallick, Sajahe Mallick, Parsuram Pradhan, Kansa Malik, Mahadev malik
Sirtiguda / Gasukia	Lungu Mallick, Nuari Mallick, Prantajini Mallick, Rusma Mallick, Rajani Mallick, Rangita Mallick, Ratnabati Mallick, Kadambati Mallick, Kasmati Mallick, Kimburi Mallick
Cuddalore District of Tamilnadu	
G.P. / Village	Name(s) / Job Card No.
Periyakanganakuppam	Anjammal (0047 B), Sekila (0089 A), Palaniammal (330 A), Lalitha (0106 A), Harikrishnan (0048 A), Mary (101 B), Thirvsang (0164 A), Rajan (95 B), Purani (216 B)
Pathirukuppam	Janaki Venkatesan (254 A), Mangala Chimni(470 A), Chinna Ponnu(107 A), Jayalakshmi (379 A), Sundari Ramalingam (378 A), Kuppu M/o Pounambel ((266 A), Rajendran (140 A)
Pechayankuppam	S. Sanker (1334 A), Valli R.(521 A), Parvathy (403 A), Pushpa (448), V. Lakshmi (490), P. Lakshmi (402)
Dhar District of Madhya Pradesh	
G.P./Village	Name(s)
Ghana / Sindiyapani	Kesar Singh, Shantilal, Sirla Thune, Santilal Dude
Dhayana	
Kalmi & Khaidi	
Kharwat & Palwat	
Umralli	
Balwani	Mr. Ram Singh, President
Badghyar	
Alirajpur District of Madhya Pradesh	
Malwai & Somkuan	
Roddha & Giljhari	Mr. Yedla Singh, President
Kharkua	
Titi & Dholkheda	
Lakshmini, Kusalwai, Chacraunda	
Ajanda	Mr. Mukesh Solanki Dhadu, Mr. Kalam, Mr. Chaniyagulab, Mr. Haridas Balu Patel, Mr. Narpat
Dhyana	Mr. Des Singh, Mr. Ghuman, Mr. Dhohel, Mr. Chamede, Ms. Daheri, Ms. Runi, Ms. Mendhi

Annexure 2.3: List of Documents Reviewed

1. Action for Food Production (2010), Report on 'Monitoring & Streamlining Convergence of NREGA with other Ongoing Schemes in Dewas District of Madhya Pradesh'.
2. Action for Food Production (2010), Report on 'Monitoring & Streamlining Convergence of NREGA with other Ongoing Schemes in Mandla District of Madhya Pradesh'.
3. Centre for Educational Research & Development (2010), Report on 'NREGA Processes and Practices in Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh'.
4. Council for Social Development (2010) Report on 'Socio-Economic Impacts of Mahatma Gandhi National Employment Guarantee Act in India'.
5. District Rural Development Agency (2009), MGNREGS in Kandhamal District, Kandhamal, Orissa.
6. Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (2010), Progress Report of 'Action Research on Integrating Handloom in NREGS in Rural Areas of Bhilwara, Rajasthan'.
7. Indian Institute of Forest Management (2010), 'Impact Assessment of MGNREGA's Activities for Ecological and Economic Security'.
8. Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur (2010), Report on 'Monitoring Convergence between MGNREGS and Ongoing Schemes of the other Ministries in Orissa'.
9. Indian Institute of Technology, Chennai (2009), Evaluation of MGNREGA in Five Districts of Tamilnadu, Chennai; RACE.
10. GoI, Ministry of Rural Development (2010), 'Biometric Enabled ICT for People's Empowerment under the MGNREGA'.
11. Participatory Rural Development Initiatives Society (2010), 'Monitoring & Streamlining Convergence of NREGS with other Ongoing Schemes in the Selected Pilot Districts of Andhra Pradesh'.
12. PRATHAM (2011), Progress Report of 'Skilling NREGA Workers in Bhilwara, Rajasthan'.
13. SEWA (2010), Progress Report of 'Setting up Model to make NREGS more Effective and Sustainable for the Poor in Bhilwara, Rajasthan'.

14. Samal, Ajay et al, (2005) MoRD ‘Implementing Integrated Natural Resource Management Projects under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act’ The Research and Resource Centre (RRC) PRADAN.
15. UNDP (2010), Mid Term Review of the Country Programme Action Plan 2008-2012
16. UNDP (2010), Professional Institutional Network: Concept Note and Background
17. UNDP Brochure, ‘Support to Implementation of MGNREGA

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19. Cooperrider, David *et al* (2007). “Appreciative Inquiry Handbook”.. SanFranciso: Berret-Koehler
20. GoI, Ministry of Rural Development (2008) “Guidelines on Convergence with NREGA” www.nrega.net/convergence

Annexure 2.4: Locations Sampled for Field Evaluation

State: Orissa			
District	Block	Gram Panchayat	Village / Habitation
Kandhamal	K.Nuagan	Mahasingh	Limarpadar
		Sirtiguda	Gasukia
	Balliguda	Barakhama	Nadapatanga
State: Madhya Pradesh			
Dhar	Dahi	Ghana	Sindiapani
		Balvani	Balvani
Alirajpur	Alirajpur	Roddha	
	Katthiwada	Dhayana	Dhayana
	Alirajpur	Ajanda	Ajanda
State: Rajasthan			
Bhilwana	Mandalgash	Mohanpura	
	Baneda	Bera	Jaswantpur
		Lambiakalan	
	Hurda	Bhadwan-ki-kotdi	
	Suvana	Suvana	
State: Tamilnadu			
Cuddalore	Cuddalore	Periyakanganankuppam	
		Pathrikuppam	
		Pachayankuppam	

Annexure 3.1: Converging MGNREGA with Natural Resource Management: A Holistic Case Study of Partnership with the Professional Assistance for Development Action (PRADAN) in the Kandhamal District of Orissa

Kandhamal's Development Challenges

1. A phase one district, Kandhamal had seen very little progress in the implementation of MGNREGA despite being one of the most backward districts of Orissa. As per the 2001 Census, 69% of the district's total population belongs to two ethnic groups namely the Kandho (Scheduled Tribe) and Pano (Scheduled Caste), the former accounting for 52% and the latter for 17% of the district's population of 0.65 million. Only around 15% of the geographical area of 764,900 hectares is cultivable. In spite of a low population density of 80 persons per square kilometre as against the state's average of 236, the average net sown area per rural family is a meagre 0.5 hectares which explains the very poor quality of cultivable land. The district's average annual rainfall of 1525 mm is a saving grace.

2. Difficult topography of land apart, the district has borne the brunt of ethno-communal conflicts for many years. In December 2007, a major skirmish was witnessed between two social groups but the worst riots erupted in August, 2008 which impaired normal life in the district due to unprecedented violence. Serious distrust and hatred amongst different sections of the society was palpable. The following details of damage to life and property emerged at the end of the riots.

- More than 25,000 persons rendered shelterless
- More than 4800 houses were damaged
- More than 50 deaths reported
- Livelihood disrupted as agricultural operations were suspended
- 118 shops and commercial establishments were damaged
- 229 places of religious worship were damaged
- 12 public institutions and some police outposts were bombed

This case study examines the role and contribution of the pilot project for developing sustainable rural livelihoods through convergence of MGNREGA with management of natural resources in partnership with a Non Governmental Organisation (NGO).

The UNDP- MoRD Supported Pilot Project

3. The UNDP, New Delhi and MoRD in the GoI supported the Professional Assistance for Development Action (PRADAN) with a pilot project for capacity building of GPs in implementing Integrated Natural Resource Management (INRM) practices as part of the MGNREGA works for a six month period from October 2007 to March 2008. The pilot project was aimed at experimenting if INRM could facilitate a transition for MGNREGA from being an unskilled wage-employment programme to a programme for promotion of sustainable livelihoods for the poor rural households through creation of natural resource based productive assets. Kandhamal was one of the five districts selected across the country for implementation of the pilot project. Ten GPs were identified from three blocks (Balliguda, Dairingabadi and K. Nuagaon) for implementing the pilot project in twenty five villages/ habitations spanning the ten selected GPs in the district.

4. The activities envisaged under the pilot project are listed in **Box 3.1.1**. These activities were planned to promote INRM based on models and methods that PRADAN has developed over the years from its experience of working in different states of India. The INRM practices involve participatory planning among rural communities to enhance land productivity through soil conservation, rainwater harvesting and diversified cropping patterns. Though progress during the pilot project was hindered by law and order problems that cropped up in the district during December 2007, the initial results were encouraging enough for PRADAN to launch a separate pilot project in Gunjagaon GP of Kandhamal district with funding support from Oxfam later in 2008.

5. Based on the progress demonstrated in Gunjagaon in integrating INRM with MGNREGA, the UNDP, Bhubaneswar supported another project in five GPs for enhancing the capacity of village communities to plan and implement MGNREGA works utilising the INRM models developed by PRADAN. This second project was also approved for six month duration, from October 2009 to March 2010. In the meantime, the District Level Peace Committee constituted by the Government of Orissa in the aftermath of the riots of August 2008 saw a great opportunity to leverage the MGNREGA- INRM works to initiate the process of dialogue and reconciliation between the conflicting groups. The Committee in its guidelines formulated under the aegis of the Special

Administrator stated that "... in each of the affected villages one labour intensive work under MGNREGS will be started. In this "Work for Peace", both the communities should participate for creation of community assets of their choice. This will also provide minimum wage employment to all the families." Even as the second UNDP project got off to a start in the five GPs, the Kandhamal District Administration decided in November 2009 to involve seven other field NGOs with PRADAN as the nodal NGO for expanding the scope of MGNREGA- INRM 'works for peace' to six other blocks.

Box 3.1.1: Activities Planned Under MGNREGA-INRM Pilots

1. Orientation of the project personnel at district, block and GP levels on INRM based livelihoods for rural poor and opportunities for their convergence with MGNREGS.
2. Awareness of gramsabha members on their entitlements under MGNREGS.
3. Identification, training, deployment and monitoring of a large cadre of Local Resource Persons (LRPs) to serve as facilitators for participatory planning.
4. Helping adult members of rural households to understand their right to unskilled manual work for 100 days in a year under MGNREGA.
5. Capacity building of gramsabha in planning INRM based shelf of projects for providing wage employment under MGNREGA.
6. Preparation of GP wise INRM-MGNREGA project plans
7. Organising workers for implementation and monitoring of the MGNREGA works.
8. Ensuring transparent processes for quality in execution of MGNREGA works.
9. Guiding the rural communities in the effective use of the assets created.
10. Documentation of experiences, learning and sharing progress.

Outcomes from the Pilot Projects

6. The most significant outcome from the two pilot projects supported by the UNDP and MoRD has been an increase in awareness and capacity of the rural communities in villages where the pilot projects were implemented, to exercise their rights under the MGNREGA and participate in the Palli Sabhas (village councils at hamlet/ revenue village level) and Gram Sabhas (GP level village councils). In the three hamlets/ villages sampled for this case study- Limarpadar from Mahasingh GP and Gasukia from Sirtiguda GP of K. Nuagaon Block; and Nadapatanga from Barkhama GP of Balliguda Block, the wage seekers shared during the focus group discussions that the job cards were

previously in the possession of local labour contractors. Participation in the orientation courses organised as Information, Education and Communication (IEC) events under the UNDP- MoRD pilot projects for members of Self Help Groups (SHGs), Village and GP level committees, enabled the wage seekers to recover their job cards and demand employment. The social outcomes in this regard are summarized in **Table 3.1.1**.

Table 3.1.1: Social Outcomes from Pilot Projects

Social Unit	Pre-Intervention Status	Focus of Intervention	Outcome
Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vicious cycle of migration. No light at the end of the tunnel’ syndrome. - Unaware about NREGS and other govt.schemes - Most villagers did not attend pallisabha 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visioning exercise for family to aspire for a better life and plan towards it by accessing what is due under MGNREGS and other development schemes - Helping families especially women to attend pallisabha and demand execution of their plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Family is aware of the provisions under MGNREGS and seek access to wage employment - Family prepares plan taking into consideration its resource and skill base - Plans have been finalized and approved for 48 villages and INRM work has been initiated in around 20 villages which has instilled confidence amongst the villagers
SHG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most women have come together for well-being of their families but not aware of all options. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SHG level orientation and awareness of Rights and entitlements under MGNREGS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SHG is able to help its members work towards enhancing their wage employment under MGNREGA and prepare plans for developing INRM on their farm land
Village /GP Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lacked people’s trust and could not involve them in planning MGNREGA shelf of projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Village and Panchayat level orientation on MGNREGS and INRM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Members of GP understand the aspirations of families and village communities and realize how MGNREGS-INRM can help improve socio-economic status of the villages across the GP.

7. Following improved awareness of their rights and provisions under MGNREGA, the village communities torn apart by the social conflicts of 2007 and 2008 began coming

together to demand, plan and participate in the MGNREGA works. Job cards were issued to households that did not have the same or reissued to those who lost the job cards in arson during the ethnic conflict. The outcome was a growth in the person days of wage employment generated as may be seen from the progress shown in **Table 3.1.2** for two GPs of the K. Nuagaon block. In focus interviews, the wage seekers from the hamlets sampled from these GPs articulated that MGNREGA provided an opportunity for them to put behind their hostilities and work hand in hand at MGNREGA work sites. In recognition of having leveraged MGNREGA for restoring communal harmony, the district was selected for an award for the year 2009-10.

Table 3.1.2 MGNREGA Performance in Two GPs of K.Nuagaon Block

G.P.	Mahasingh				Sirtiguda			
	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
No of Villages	27	27	27	27	18	18	18	18
No of Households	1702	1702	1702	1702	1479	1479	1479	1479
No of Job cards	1073	1220	1365	1480	970	1320	1485	1618
Persondays of Employment	16170	27742	33049	54900	12000	32000	47000	56000

Source: PRADAN'S Database

8. As may be seen from **Table 3.1.3**, the INRM models demonstrated by PRADAN were integrated with MGNREGA in developing mango orchards in the upland farm holdings of nine tribal farmers who were also encouraged to cultivate vegetables as an inter-crop in the Limarpadar hamlet of Mahasingh GP. While the table shows a sample of nine farmers who participated actively in MGNREGA, the mango plantation was actually taken up in 22 acres by 22 households at the rate of one acre per house hold in this hamlet of 60 households at the planting rate of 160 saplings per acre. The excavation of pits for planting the saplings, fencing against grazing cattle and the mango saplings were all provided under the MGNREGA with guidance from PRADAN's Local Resource Persons (LRPs). Returns from the freshly planted mango orchards will have to wait for three more

years but cauliflower cultivation as an inter-crop or as a second crop in addition to the traditional rainfed paddy has already generated additional income for the farmers. This approach to planting fruit trees in uplands, pulses and vegetables in midlands aided by INRM models of water conservation and paddy in low lands following the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) has been very well received by jhooming tribal farmers, as it helps them enhance farm income without risking food security.

Table 3.1.3: LIMBARPADAR – Beneficiaries of MGNREGA-INRM Works

Sl. No.	Name	Job Card No	No. of Mango Plantation	No. of Farm pond	Wage days under MGNREGS	Type of crop	Additional Income (Rs.)
1	Madhuka Mallick	8332	160	3	100	Cauliflower	35,000/-
2	Raghunath Pradhan	8357	160	-	100	peas	5,000
3	Prehma Mallick		160	1	100	Cabbage, Cauliflower	10,000/-
4	Kanu Mallick	8371	160	8	100	Cauliflower	30,000/-
5	Ratnakar Mallick	8336	160	-	100	Cauliflower	10,000/-
6	Nimanti Mallick	8325	160	-	80	Brinjal pea	7,000/-
7	Kunime Mallick	8358	160	7	100	Cauliflower	30,000/-
8	Sajahe Mallick	8377	160	4	80	Potato	6,000/-
9	Parsuram Pradhan	8372	160	-	100	Cereals	7,000/-

9. Through field visits arranged for groups of small and marginal farmers to PRADAN's INRM demonstration sites in Keonjhar district within the state as well as IEC efforts, the pilot projects have motivated the village communities to develop participatory plans for implementing INRM practices through MGNREGA works on individual and community lands. In the early months of MGNREGA, the focus of work was almost entirely on road connectivity between villages and hamlets within each GP. With the capacity developed among the village communities to deploy participatory planning tools like resource mapping and asset planning, some villages where pilot projects were implemented now

feel empowered to continue the planning process on their own without external support. This confidence was demonstrated particularly by women members of SHGs in the Nadapatanga village of Barkhama GP where 100 out of 120 job card holding families have planned and implemented atleast one INRM model such as the 5% pit¹, 30 X 40 model², dug wells or land levelling all of which has doubled the cropping intensity in the village which predominantly drew livelihood support in the past from collection of Non-Timber Forest Produce and jhooming cultivation of red gram and turmeric.

10. Growing awareness of INRM models and confidence in the communities to plan their future livelihood security is prompting entrepreneurship in the villages. Farmers are converting their small land holdings in to fish ponds even at the risk of not having enough land to grow foodgrains. Despite the fact that paddy yields have almost tripled from adopting SRI in paddy cultivation, the prospect of cost intensive multi-purpose farm ponds of the Type 3 (150 X 100 X 8 feet) being sanctioned by the Palle / Gram sabhas under MGNREGA is being seen as an opportunity by enterprising small farmers to foray in to fish culture. As may be seen from **Table 3.1.4**, four farmers in the Gasukia hamlet of Bondaguda village of the Sirtiguda GP have been the beneficiaries of such ponds each costing around Rs. 1.50 lakhs. Their sense of entrepreneurship is commendable and is a positive outcome as one of them has already purchased out of personal resources and introduced 2000 fingerlings in the pond. Yet, in the absence of convergence with any scheme of the Fisheries Department and with no formal technical support, such investments could prove too risky for small tribal farmers. The risks could arise out of weather conditions, incidence of disease, market price fluctuations etc. and hence the need to address the issues of risk management and food security.

¹ 5 % Model: A pit which equals 5 % of the total area of the farm holding is constructed to serve as a source of irrigation for the plot during water scarcity. The excavated earth is used to strengthen field bunds.

² 30 X 40 Model: A method of in-situ soil and water conservation, it involves dividing uplands into small plots of 30 x 40 ft (30 ft along the slope and 40 ft across the slope), digging pits at the lowest point in each plot and bunding the plot using the soil dug out of the pits. By plotting unterraced and unbunded lands and creating water collection pits in each plot, run-off water is checked and collected.

Table 3.1.4: GASUKIA – Enterprising Farm Pond Beneficiaries

Sl. No.	Name	Job Card No	Asset
1	Lungu Mallick	7301	farmpond type-3
2	Nuari Mallick	7265	farmpond type-3
3	Prantajini Mallick	7288	farmpond type-3
4	Rusma Mallick	7294	farmpond type-3
5	Rajani Mallick	7248	5%
6	Rangita Mallick	7281	5%
7	Ratnabati Mallick	7241	5%
8	Kadambati Mallick	7312	5%
9	Kasmati Mallick	7278	5%
10	Kimhuri Mallick	7309	5%

11. A very encouraging outcome from the MGNREGA-INRM pilots in the Kandhamal district has been the heightened sense of voluntarism among single member households in the villages to dedicate their assets for the welfare of the community. The beneficiary of a dug well in Nadapatanga village, Ms. Jambuvathy Patel, a widow, revealed that she has dedicated the well provided to her under MGNREGA to the village community after her death. Another beneficiary, Ms. Parvathy Pande had been recommended for a similar well by the palle sabha in her individual land holding but she has located the well in such a way that the entire village draws water for their regular household consumption. It transpired during the focus interviews that the process of participatory planning has brought a sense of cohesiveness among the households in the village and a deeper appreciation of the need to leverage natural resources for the wider benefit of the village community. This sense of voluntarism has also contributed to social harmony.

12. The bottom line of the outcomes discussed above has been a distinct improvement in the socio-economic status and micro-level human development in the villages where the pilot projects were implemented. Rural households are encouraged to increase spending on the education of their children, health and food as participants of the focus group discussion in the Gasukia hamlet shared, where 80% of the job card holders have availed of 100 days of employment under the MGNREGA. Many households have acquired additional assets such as goats and bullocks with the increased income, both from wages and higher farm yields. Ms. Rusma Mallick from Gasukia gestured during the discussion,

her silver jewellery mortgaged several years back has now been redeemed from the better earnings that MGNREGA- INRM brought to her. Mr. Santosh Kumar Pande, Gram Sanjojak (mate) emphatically said during the focus interview that most communities in tribal dominated villages recognize that their lives revolve around four natural resources- forests, farm land, water and animal husbandry. The MGNREGA-INRM pilots have raised the capacity of the village communities to efficiently manage natural resources. . This view was endorsed strongly by the members of the Barkhama GP, Ms. Santhilata Nayak and Mr. Ganeswar Digal who reminded that the focus of MGNREGA would have been confined to roads and ponds, if not for the pilot projects on INRM.

13. Though the unit of analysis for this case study has been the rural poor who have benefited through MGNREGA- INRM works, an unmistakable outcome is the enhanced credibility of the NGOs with the District and State Administration. The evidence comes from the decision to involve other field NGOs like SWATI, Sewa Bharathi, Jagruthi and a few others as field NGOs to replicate the results from the pilot projects in other blocks of the District, with PRADAN as the lead organisation. The District Collector, Mr. Krishna Kumar expressed firmly that the micro-watershed based INRM practices was the way forward for MGNREGA works in the district to progress, with an active role for NGOs like the PRADAN. This view was supported by all other officers in the district including the Project Officer, District Rural Development Agency (DRDA), Mr. Dilip Ray who believes that the pilot projects have shown how wage employment can make way for livelihood security by enhancing the productivity of land and natural resources.

Annexure 3.2: MGNREGA as an Entry Point for Inter-Sectoral Convergence in Madhya Pradesh: Stakeholders' Appreciative Inquiry

Background

1. As part of the support project from UNDP for operationalisation of MGNREGA, an Innovation Fund was set up by the UNDP to promote human development outcomes from innovations in the implementation of MGNREGA. One of the projects supported by the Fund was an initiative called the Satat Jeevika Pariyojana (SJP), a sustainable livelihood project implemented in partnership with a civil society organisation called the Deenbandhu Samajik Sanstha (DSS) and Shilpi Kendra (SK), for promoting inter-sectoral convergence of social sector development programmes with MGNREGA as the point of entry. The partnership focused on migrant workers in the Dhar and Alirajpur districts of Madhya Pradesh (M.P.) who were affected by silicosis, a terminal illness that labour migrating from these districts for work in the quartz industry in the neighbouring state of Gujarat, are prone to.

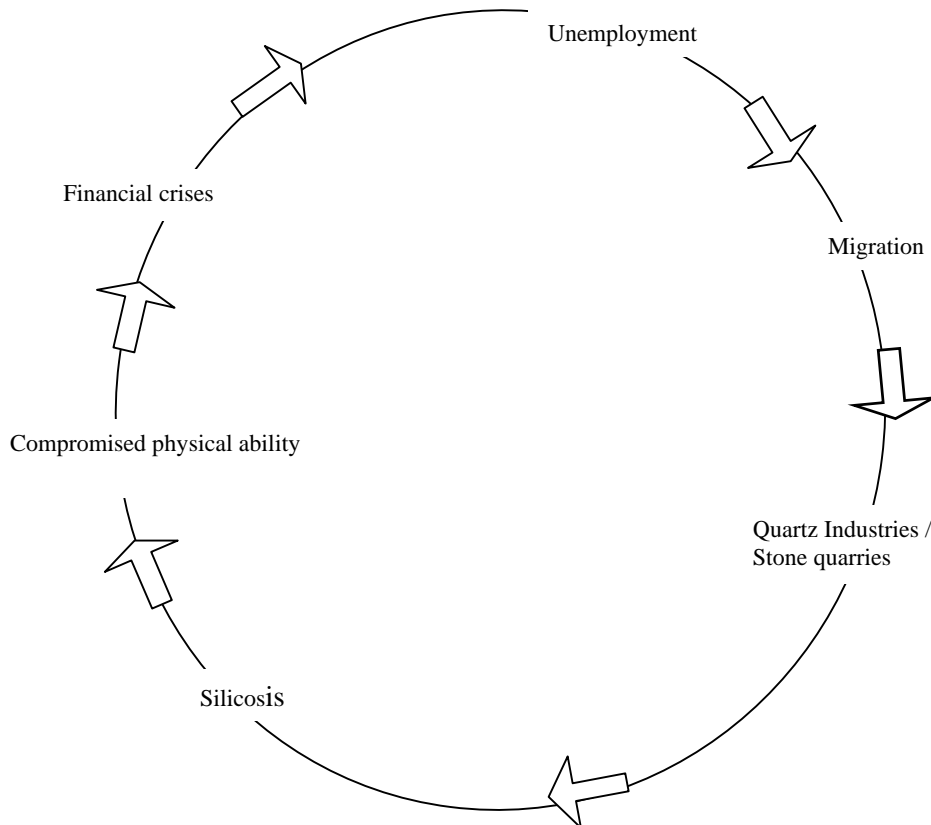
2. The project partners, DSS & SK are actively engaged with welfare work for the victims of silicosis. They moved the Supreme court of India and the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in 2006-07 for compensating the silicosis affected families and after a protracted legal process, the DSS & SK have finally succeeded in securing an order in November, 2010 from the NHRC directing the Government of Gujarat to compensate the next of the kin of 238 persons who lost their lives to silicosis, at the rate of Rs. three lakh per family. While championing the cause of the silicosis victims, DSS & SK saw an opportunity for the affected families to get out of the vicious cycle of poverty as interpreted by them in **Figure 3.2.1**, through MGNREGA and other ongoing schemes of the GoI and Government of M.P. (GoMP). This chapter attempts an AI based study of the outcomes from the above partnership.

UNDP-MoRD Pilot Project: Objective and Activities

3. The pilot project was initiated in September 2009 and it concluded in December 2010 in the name of SJP. Under the project 22 villages were targeted from 12 GPs, 6 each from the two districts of Dhar and Alirajpur. The various activities proposed under the pilot

project are shown in **Box 3.2.1**. These activities were aimed at strengthening the implementation processes under MGNREGA and promoting convergence with other development programmes on health, education and social security through capacity building efforts from wage seekers up to the village secretaries and elected members of the GPs. Lack of awareness of various provisions of the Act was seen as the most serious constraint to the progress of the programme in the two tribal dominated districts- 55% of population in Dhar district belong to scheduled tribes as per 2001 Census, while the figure is 85% for Jhabua district out of which Alirajpur district was carved out in 2008. At the core of the project are two components, one for promoting functional literacy of the wage seekers through Village Resource Centres and the other for increased awareness about the various provisions of MGNREGA through customized IEC materials and events compatible with tribal dialects and learning culture.

Figure 3.2.1: The ‘SJP Cycle of Poverty’ in Tribal Areas of M.P.



4. The project organisation for SJP included one Village Resource Person (VRP) in each of the 12 GPs besides two field co-coordinators and one consultant for each of the two districts. Two project offices were set up, one for each district. Being a civil society group engaged primarily in advocacy for victims of silicosis, DSS & SK invested considerable effort in the initial stage of the UNDP-MoRD project for building up the capacity of its own field staff, particularly the VRPs who were drawn from the village communities where they were deployed to serve under the pilot project. In other words, this pilot project motivated and nurtured a partnership with a civil society group that had no serious involvement with MGNREGA related work, earlier. After the orientation of the VRPs and field co-ordinators on MGNREGA and its key provisions, village profiles were prepared taking stock of the implementation of various development schemes including MGNREGA in each village to serve as a baseline.

Box 3.2.1 : Activities Proposed Under the Pilot Project

- Developing village profiles of all the 22 villages selected from 12 GPs.
- Identification and appointment of village resource persons (VRPs) in each GP.
- Developing MGNREGA Manual, Booklet and Posters in local tribal languages.
- Formation of VRCs for promotion of functional literacy in 22 villages
- Training of SJP Field Co-ordinators and VRPs.
- Dissemination of Manual, Booklet and Posters on MGNREGS to all stakeholders.
- IEC work in the village community on issues of rights under MGNREGA and opportunities to enhance education and health care.
- Training of Panchayat Karmis/ Panchayat Secretaries and Mates on maintenance of relevant records, accounts, measurement of work etc.
- Organise Employment Guarantee Awareness Campaigns.
- Monitoring of benefits to worker and women working at MGNREGA worksites.
- Conducting Social Audit of MGNREGS Processes.

Stakeholders' Appreciative Inquiry

5. To understand and evaluate how the stakeholders have benefited from the pilot project, a sample of four villages, two each from the Dhar and Alirajpur districts, were selected for field study as shown in **Table 3.2.1**. The VRPs from two other GPs namely Kharwat and Kalmi in Dahi block and from Malwai GP in Alirajpur block were also invited to the neighbouring villages visited for field study, and were interviewed. One village namely Ajanda in Alirajpur block which is outside the cohort of 22 villages covered under the pilot project by SJP, was also visited as a way of appreciating the difference in the implementation of MGNREGA vis-à-vis the SJP villages. Focus interviews were carried out with individual job card holders registered under MGNREGA; beneficiaries of functional literacy at VRCs; SJP's VRPs; village secretaries; victims of silicosis; and GP members in the above villages sampled for field visits. Officers of the GoMP at the block and district levels and members of civil society were also interviewed. The publicity and IEC materials, teaching materials used in VRCs and reports of journalists who have reported on the pilot project were studied besides the project completion report of DSS & SK to inform the stakeholders' AI.

Table 3.2.1: Pilot Project Villages Sampled for Field Study

Dhar District			Alirajpur District		
Block	G.P.	Village	Block	G.P.	Village
Dahi	Ghana	Sindhiyapani	Alirajpur	Roddha	Roddha
	Balwani	Balwani	Kattiwada	Dhyana	Dhyana

Wage Seekers' Appreciation

6. Following a series of orientation programmes for members of the community and the extensive use of IEC materials and campaigns carried out in the project villages, awareness about the rights and entitlements of the job card holders has gone up significantly. The job card holders were particularly excited about the display of pictorial posters, hand outs, pamphlets, booklets and the MGNREGA beneficiary hand book, all translated to the Bhili and Bhilali tribal dialects which are widely spoken in the two districts. These publicity materials were easily understood by the tribal families,

particularly the women who are not very comfortable with the Hindi language. A video documentary used during the training programmes was particularly well received for its clarity about the MGNREGA provisions and processes. The Rojgar Haq Yatra (Procession on Right to Wage Employment) was highly appreciated. It was an eye opener for the wage seekers who seemed to have felt deeply empowered after the event. These processions traversing contiguous villages have also had the effect of uniting wage seekers from different villages. The wage seekers were also mobilized by SJP to observe a protest against the branch of the Co-operative Central Bank in Dahi which shook the other branches in the district to expedite wage payments. With support from SJP, the silicosis patients and their family members could fill the relevant application forms for opening savings accounts to facilitate routing of the wage payments.

7. The outcome from these activities has been the increase in the number of job cards from 4103 to 4865 in the 22 villages of 12 GPs covered under the SJP intervention, as **Table 3.2.2** shows. These figures are at variance with the MIS of the GoMP and the GoI. While it was not possible to carry out the job card count in the villages sampled for field visits, during the focus interviews, however, some job card holders conveyed that they were migrating in the previous years to Gujarat state and were not available in the villages to avail of the job cards in the first year of implementation of MGNREGA. Hence, the most vulnerable group of wage seekers who are migrant labourers could access the job cards almost four years after the programme was launched. The outcome is also reflected in the increase in annual person days of employment generated, after the SJP intervention. This can be appreciated from **Table 3.2.3** which also compares performance in the GPs sampled for field evaluation with the Ajanda GP where SJP did not intervene. Focus interviews with a sample of village community in Ajanda showed very low levels of awareness about MGNREGA and its implementation in the GP.

Succour to Silicosis Affected Families

8. Special attention was given to the silicosis affected families and to each member of the family, particularly the victims who were facilitated to serve on a job that was not very stressful in view of their health conditions. This included taking care of the infant children at crèches, supplying drinking water to the wage seekers and assisting the mates

and technical staff with measurements of progress in the implementation of works. This intervention also helped the silicosis affected families to avoid sending young children to work at MGNREGA sites and elsewhere as adult members could earn wages. In the special drive for issue of job cards to silicosis affected households, 201 households were enrolled from eight GPs as shown in **Table 3.2.4**. Parallel attendance registers maintained by the VRPs served as a check to ensure that MGNREGA benefits were extended to the silicosis affected families. SJP also leveraged the pilot project to ensure through the VRPs that the full package of benefits announced by the GoMP for silicosis affected families reached them, as illustrated by a beneficiary's experience who herself happened to be a VRP appointed under SJP in the Balwani GP (**Box 3.2.2**).

Table 3.2.2: Enrolment of Additional Job Card Holders

Sr.no	Gram Panchayat	No. of Job cards	New job cards issued	Total Job cards (March, 2011)
	Alirajpur District			
1	Malwai	209	41	250
2	Roddha	257	196	453
3	Laxmini	307	-	307
4	Kharkua	446	35	481
5	Titi	279	283	562
6	Dhayana	319	42	361
	Dhar District			
7	Ghana	258	10	268
8	Kharwat	387	30	417
9	Balwani	217	125	342
10	Umralli	372	-	372
11	Kalmi	494	-	494
12	Badgyar	558	-	558
	Total	4103	762	4865

Source: SJP, DSS & SK

Table 3.2.3: Performance of MGNREGA in Dhar and Alirajpur Districts

District	Block	Grampanchayat	Person days of Employment		
			2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Dhar	Dahi				
		Ghana	12107	13831	16444
		Balvani	9192	12506	16075
		Kharvat	7132	9227	12681
		Kalmi	10364	18228	16539
Alirajpur	Katthiwada	Dhayana	4983	7622	8401
	Alirajpur	Ajanda	-	10596	7504

Source: GoMP-MIS (www.nrega-mp.nic.in)

Table 3.2.4: Special Drive for Job Cards to Silicosis Affected Families

Village	Job Cards	Village	Job Cards
Titi	19	Malwai	32
Balwani	07	Roddha	42
Kalmi	11	Dhyana	50
Badgayar	9	Bholwat	31

Source: SJP, DSS & SK

Box 3.2.2: Experience of a Beneficiary of Relief Package for Silicosis Victims

Ms. Madhavi had just begun her academic year hoping to scale past the secondary school stage and explore the frontiers of pre-university education which none from the Bhil tribe she belonged to, in the Balwani village of Dhar district has been able to achieve. Her two elder brothers, neither of whom could progress beyond middle school after losing their father when they were very young, were a great source of encouragement in her endeavour. The younger among the two brothers had migrated a couple of years back to the neighbouring state of Gujarat in the hope that he could supplement the income of the elder brother from the family's small farm of two acres. Working in the quartz based industrial units where silica based pollution levels are known to be notoriously high, Madhavi's brother was soon diagnosed to be suffering from the terminal disease that had

already claimed a few young lives from her village- Silicosis.

Her hopes of getting past the high school lay shattered as her brother returned home and silicosis claimed his life soon, thereafter. Madhavi knew that the family was in for the crisis that has taken such a heavy toll on so many families from numerous villages like her's that were known to have been the catchment areas for recruitment of casual labour to work in Gujarat's quartz industry. There were nearly thirty families in her own village of Balwani reeling under the crisis caused by the disease. Though the efforts of civil society groups like the DSS & SK have contributed to increased awareness of the dangers of contracting silicosis from migrating to work in the unorganized mineral-based industries of Gujarat, the youth had very little incentive to stay back home as there was no other source of livelihood security.

To the village community of Balwani, MGNREGA was at best a good memory of families having received job cards assuring them of 100 days of employment in a year. They could only hope and pray that the Sarpanch (president) of the GP or the Village Secretary would give them an opportunity, sooner or later, to earn some wage employment. The villagers were hardly aware of their rights under the Act and the families whose adult members were suffering from silicosis simply did not dare to seek work at MGNREGA work sites as that would involve hard manual work that the patients were incapable of performing and were medically advised against attempting. The GoMP had announced a package of benefits to enable the silicosis affected families to keep their heads above waters but on ground, there was very little being delivered.

As Madhavi was fighting to overcome her personal grief, she saw an opportunity to alleviate the suffering in her family and also help others when the SJP team identified her and offered her the position of VRC under the pilot project. She took up the assignment more as an opportunity to facilitate the village community, particularly the silicosis affected families, in accessing the benefits due to them under the MGNREGA and other schemes of the GoMP. With support from the SJP team colleagues based in Dahi and Indore, Madhavi organized the VRC in Balwani and arranged seven additional MGNREGA job cards to the silicosis affected house-holds. They were also provided

wage employment on demand to suit their health conditions. She also co-ordinated with the GP functionaries to ensure that the following benefits reached the silicosis patients including her own family:

- 50 kg of foodgrains pack per family of silicosis victim
- Benefit of Rs.10,000/- under the Parivar Sahayata Yojana (Family Relief)
- Kapildhara Kua (dug well) under MGNREGA for interested families
- Free medical examination and distribution of medicines to patients
- Referral to the district government hospital for treatment.

Thanks to Madhavi's efforts through the VRC, 16 out of 20 members of the village who became functionally literate were women. The stepped up IEC effort, functional literacy work at VRC, mobilization of the community to participate actively in the gram sabha (village council) meetings and maintenance of records of attendance at MGNREGA work sites by Madhavi, stirred the GP in to positive action. While the overall performance of MGNREGA implementation in Balwani showed marked improvement, the relief that her efforts brought to the silicosis affected families 'is her greatest achievement' claims Madhavi as she prods the tribal women to demonstrate their new learning at the VRC.

Convergence with other Social Sector Schemes

9. The pilot project demonstrates how MGNREGA could also become the platform for convergence of various social sector development schemes of the GoI and the states. The VRCs set up under the SJP did much to synergise the other schemes promoting adult literacy. Using the rights and privileges available under MGNREGA as a context and through the use of customized IEC materials in local tribal languages, the VRCs in 14 out of the 22 villages could promote functional literacy as **Table 3.2.5** shows, among 342 MGNREGA wage seekers, one third of them being women. The project personnel could also facilitate release of old age and widow pensions, pensions to physically challenged and even issue of rations cards to families below poverty line. The SJP team had moved the Public Health and Engineering Department to install additional hand pumps for water supply in some villages while the National Rural Health Mission personnel were invited

to offer health extension services at MGNREGA work sites. Most importantly, other civil society groups including those from neighbouring district of Barwadi have now come to participate in promoting MGNREGA awareness, following the SJP intervention.

Table 3.2.5: Promoting Functional Literacy under SJP

So.no	Village Resource Centre (VRC)	Beneficiaries of Functional Literacy		
		Male	Female	Total
	Village			
	Alirajpur District			
1	Somkua	28	09	37
2	Roddha	17	12	29
3	kushalwai	22	07	29
4	Kharkua	17	07	24
5	Dholgarh	21	08	29
6	Dhayana	17	09	26
	Dhar District			
7	Sindiyanani	12	05	17
8	Kharwat (Badapura)	23	11	34
9	Kharwat (Sastayapura)	12	06	18
10	Balwani	04	16	20
11	Umarali(Badayapura)	15	05	20
12	Umarali(Jamilipura)	13	08	21
13	Khaidi	12	13	25
14	Badagyar	8	5	13
	Total	221	121	342

Annexure 3.3: Low Cost Rural ATMs: Case of a Pilot Project in Tamilnadu

Among the earliest ICT based pilot projects supported in 2008 for promoting low cost ATMs with finger-print authentication and local language interface through the Rural Technology and Business Incubator (RTBI) at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Chennai, the project involved setting up four ATMs in November, 2008 for drawal of wages by MGNREGA workers. The four ATMs manufactured using the technology from the IIT-C by Messrs. Vortex Engineering at half the cost of standard ATMs available in the market, were installed under the pilot project in four villages of Cuddalore block in Cuddalore district. Besides low cost of initial investment, the Vortex ATMs function with less power and hence are energy efficient. A fingerprint scanner is used for both registering fingerprints (one time process) and for authentication of each transaction. Interested Job card holders in the four villages were issued with ATM cards after their accounts were opened with the State Bank of India (SBI), Cuddalore and their finger print data was captured, as per details shown in **Table 3.3.1**. Since Tamilnadu had switched over to payment of MGNREGA wages in cash in the early months of programme implementation, contrary to the GoI guidelines on routing wages through banks or post offices, the pilot project was expected to pave the way for institutional disbursement of wages.

Table 3.3.1: Installation of Four Low Cost Rural ATMs

Sl. No.	Name of the GP	Total Registered Individual Job Card Holders	No of ATM Card Holders	Transaction Amount till the closure of ATM
(1)	Periyakanganankuppam	708	431	6,58,879
(II)	Pathirikuppam	563	190	5,65,565
(III)	Pachayankuppam	2770	281	6,750
(IV)	Thiruvanthipuram	1862	60	4,950
	Total	5903	962	12,36,144

Outcomes from the Pilot Project

2. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had accorded a six month approval for the pilot project after which all the four ATMs were decommissioned by the IIT-C, the last one in September, 2009. The experiences shared by the users of the ATMs in all the four villages were mixed as the evaluation report of IIT-C has observed. Some wage seekers who are relatively more tech-savvy expressed during the focus interviews that the ATMs offered greater flexibility in drawing the wages and checked possible leakages. Women wage seekers, particularly those in the younger age groups felt empowered with the use of ATMs as it offered them an opportunity to save part of their wages and also security for the savings. On the other hand, complaints were also voiced that the kiosk operator where the ATMs were set up, did not co-operate fully. Since the pilot ATMs used a single cassette, cash delivery was slow vis-à-vis the issue of receipt by the machine, prompting some anxious users to leave the kiosk in despair while the cash delivery would have popped up a little later. There were also instances of the finger print authentication failing due to frayed thumbs of the users, lack of internet connectivity and even confusion over balance amounts printed on the receipts, in the absence of pass-book to back up the ATM users. A telling comment was made by Ms. Mangalavathy, President of the Pachayankuppam GP that, “the machine is a boon when one understands its working and it works. But when it does not work for two weeks at a stretch as it happened with the ATM in her village, she had to lend money to the villagers to contain their frustration’.

3. The feedback from the pilot project has led to design improvements by the Vortex Engineering who have now incorporated a twin-cassette cash dispensing system so that the speed of cash delivery is improved. A realization has also dawned that a more intensive IEC campaign is needed to demonstrate and educate the wage seekers on the operation of the ATMs, particularly on the use of other fingers of the hand for identification where the thumb signs are not clear. Measures are also being contemplated for improving the connectivity to the SBI core-banking server so that electronic fund transfer can be made faster into each beneficiary’s account. As Professor. Ashok Jhunjhunwala at IIT-C commented, “The piloting was a move to try out whether technology can be used to serve the unserved population and whether some basic sense of

banking services and saving habits can be generated in the rural population. The lessons learnt are significant for the future”.

4. This is very true as all the stakeholders of the project are revisiting options to ensure that the problems encountered during the pilot project do not recur. Prof. Jhunjhunwala is quite pleased with the fact that the lessons from the pilot project have influenced the GoI policy on biometrics based e-governance including the work of the Unique Identity Development Authority of India. Discussions with the SBI officers in Cuddalore indicated that the pilot project has motivated the Bank to review their choice of technology for ATMs in rural areas all over the country. They have already placed an order on Vortex for supply of 600 improvised ATMs. Now that the security related issues with the biometrics based pilot ATMs have been resolved, the RBI is likely to regularize installation of the same. This has fueled further research on voice based biometrics for easy transfer of funds through mobile phones in rural areas, with very positive implications for financial inclusion. These speech based technologies are being incubated at the IIT-C's RTBI which only shows that the pilot project has demonstrated that an opportunity exists for expanding banking services among the rural population, using MGNREGA as an entry point.

Annexure 3.4: Pilot Project for Info-Kiosks in Rajasthan: Partnership with OneWorld

The UNDP and MoRD supported this project from October 2009 to September 2010 for setting up three Info Kiosks- one each in the Kanda and Suvana GPs of Bhilwara district and one in the Korabar GP of Udaipur district. This ICT- based pilot project implemented in partnership with OneWorld, was aimed at empowering the MGNREGA workers across 20 neighbouring villages around the info-kiosks with timely and easy access to information about the status of application for job cards, person days of wage employment completed and available against the job card, wages accrued and received and status of ongoing and completed works in the GP. Serving as an end-to-end system for enhancing the transparency and accountability of various actors responsible for implementing MGNREGA, the Info Kiosk uses an icon based digital touch-screen and bio-metric based thumb impression for identification and validation.

2. The graphics based touch-screen offers a user friendly interface with audio prompts in Hindi. The model permits online registration of the request of wage seekers for employment, grievance registration, job allocation, generation of e-muster roll and issue of payment advice to bank. These info kiosks are locally known as the Soochna Seva Kendras (SSKs). Interestingly, the use of the SSKs for demanding employment with dated slips and for grievance registration is very marginal. Under the pilot project, OneWorld has also developed hand held devices that function as mobile SSKs and can be deployed at the job sites for the MGNREGA workers to register their attendance using thumb impression integrated with the Global Positioning System (GPS), showing the local geo-coordinates of the work site. Since the device confirms the workers' attendance with time, date and location of the site, manipulation of muster rolls and creation of ghost work or worker records is checked.

3. The pilot project has also encouraged OneWorld to use community radio for IEC work to increase awareness of MGNREGA among the village communities. Around 60 volunteers have been trained to programme and produce MGNREGA related features for narrow casting to listeners' clubs. In Suvana GP alone which was sampled for field

evaluation, 17 episodes on MGNREGA have been broadcast incorporating community voices and 57 narrow casts were made across 19 listener groups. The voices from the project villages are also broadcast by OneWorld through FM (102.6 MHz) every third Wednesday of the month. Radio has thus been fully leveraged to empower the rural community. As Mr. Namiur Rehman, CEO, OneWorld describes, “the ICT pilot project has spawned an eco-system of innovation for strengthening implementation of MGNREGA. When the cost of the hand held biometric-GPS locator devices comes down further, one can hope to see delivery of enhanced services, beyond problem solving”.

Annexure 3.5: Partnership with SEWA for Skill Building

A pilot project with SEWA (Self Employed Women's Association, Ahmedabad) was implemented from October 2009 to September 2010 for leveraging the MGNREGA to promote human development through skill building in six villages of: Mohanpura, Fatehpura, Anwasa, Swarupura, Dol ji ka kheda and Kumharon ka Jhopda (Part of Nim ka kheda) in Bhilwara district. The following activities were envisaged under the pilot project:

- Skill building in pouch making, assembly of solar lanterns, paper dish/ cup making, washing powder preparation etc.
- Micro-planning for development of natural resources through land leveling and bunding.
- Setting up of Tools and Equipments Depots to be managed and maintained by the Kastkar Vikas Samitis (KVS)- Farmer SHGs, for timely availability of farm tools
- Setting up of a revolving fund of Rs. 10,000 each in the project GPs for bulk purchase of seeds, fertilisers and other inputs to farmers.
- Preparation of vermin compost and organic fertilisers through KVSs.
- Collaboration with agricultural extension machinery of the Government of Rajasthan (GoR) for farmers' training in progressive agriculture practices through crop demonstrations and exposure visits to research farms etc.

Project Outcomes

2. Six tools and equipment depots with adequate farm tools ploughs, sickles, hoes, solar lanterns, drills, cutters, dusters, sprayers and weeders were organized one each in the villages covered under the pilot project, with an investment of around Rs. 400,000. Any farmer member of the KVS could borrow these equipments on nominal fee. The income from the user fee was parked in a fund for maintenance of the equipment. According to

SEWA, 50 out of the total of 82 farmers who regularly use the facility belong to the poorer sections of the community with little access to agricultural implements. The case of Mr. Prem Singh from Mohanpura village which was sampled for field study (**Box 3.5.1**) is illustrative. Around 20 farmers have benefited from land development works in the village. Almost all the farmers in the project villages have benefited from agricultural extension services like exposure visits, farmer training programmes and bulk purchase of agricultural inputs. The collective bargaining power of the small and marginal farmers has gone up through bulk procurement of agricultural inputs like seeds and fertilisers.

Box 3.5.1: The Utility of SEWA’s Tools and Equipment Facilities

For Mr. Prem Singh, a 43 year old MGNREGA worker and small farmer from Anwasa village, the tools and equipment facility provided by SEWA has been very helpful. “I was completely dependent on the tractor owners for ploughing my field earlier. The tractor owners charged Rs. 300 per hour. Despite charging such exorbitant rates, availability on time was still a problem. The crop yield and quality are both affected if the farm is not ploughed and sowing is not on time. The tool kits hired out through VKS is a great boon for many farmers like me. We have been able to plough our lands on time and have also been able to save on costs. A good plough can now be hired for just Rs. 20 a day. Other machinery like weeders and sprayers which had to be hired from the neighbouring villages in the past, are now available here at a nominal fee.

3. The skill building activities initiated under the pilot project have added a new stream of income to the MGNREGA workers, particularly women. The training courses designed and delivered by SEWA in pouch making has helped at least 20 women from Mohanpura and Anwasa villages earn additional income as the experience of one group shows (**Box 3.5.2**). Similarly, 20 women have been trained in making washing powder after which the group manufactured and sold about 70 Kilogrammes of washing powder. Though the group is yet to break-even, the new skill has given them the confidence to succeed with growth in the volumes handled. Another group of 12 women were trained in the assembly of solar lanterns while others trained in making paper cups and paper dishes claim to earn

around Rs. 6000/- per month from making 400-500 paper cups in a day's working shift of 8 hours from the comfort of their homes.

Box 3.5.2: The Pouch Making Group in Mohanpura

Ms. Manju Kanwar, a 41 year old lady who has received two month training for pouch making says her group consisting of 10 people has independently started making pouches. They manage to make about 100-150 pouches in a month. Though each of them is only able to save about Rs. 50 per month, this does form an additional source of income supplementary to what they earn under MGNREGA. She was also very appreciative of the exposure visits arranged by SEWA. “The exposure visit to Ahmedabad, arranged by SEWA was a life changing experience. The villagers even spread the rumour that we will be sold off. For the first time in my life, I got the opportunity to move out of my village and interact with people from other villages. I have also gained the confidence of addressing a gathering which I could not dream of earlier.”

Annexure 3.6: Partnership with Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDI)

The EDI was partnered with from October 2009 to September 2010 under a pilot project whose sole objective was to preserve the traditional skills of artisans, craftsmen and weavers participating in MGNREGA works and even improvise those skills. Four villages around Bhilwara- Dholi, Jaitpur, Bhadawon ki kotri and Kothia were identified for implementing the pilot project. The project was initiated with a baseline study that brought out the challenges faced by weavers in marketing their products, primarily in terms of a fit between the existing products and the emerging demands of the marketplace. Keeping this in view, the EDI identified 100 active MGNREGA workers, 25 each from the above four villages who were interested in weaving activities. Further, these weavers most of whom were women have been organised into six SHGs.

2. The EDI intervention also involved identification of modern looms and in collaboration with Hindustan Zinc Ltd. (Corporate Social Responsibility- CSR Wing), 50 such looms have already been distributed to 50 weavers. The GoI in the Ministry of Textiles is being approached for providing 50 additional looms to the remaining target group of weavers. Designers, marketing and technical experts from the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) and from Handloom Training Institutes were engaged to advise the selected weavers on the latest trends in weaving techniques and design development. Four local master trainers have also been appointed to guide the six weaver SHGs. The groups have completed a six month course in weaving and EDI hopes that these newly skilled weavers would integrate weaving activities with MGNREGA. It may yet be premature to evaluate this pilot as the experience in Bhadwon Ki Kotdi (**Box 3.6.1**) shows.

Box 3.6.1: The Experience of the weaver SHG in Bhadwon Ki Kotdi

Ms. Kali, 22, daughter of Mr. Ramachander belongs to a family of five. “The training given by Ms. Chandni under the EDI pilot has given me the confidence to weave towels on my own and I can weave up to five towels a day, working about 8 hours”, says Ms. Kali. The towels woven by Kali fetch her Rs. 5 a piece. That is a daily earning of Rs. 40/-, far less than what she could earn from working on MGNREGA site. Though the margin is different for different items, say a bed sheet, Kali and her colleagues in the SHG have not yet acquired the proficiency that would enable them to earn enough to motivate them to adopt weaving as a regular profession. Yet they are happy with the new learning experience and would like to pursue the same after they fully utilize the 100 days of employment that their families are guaranteed under the MGNREGA.

Annexure 3.7: Pilot Project for Skill Development: Partnership with PRATHAM

Implemented from December 2009 to November, 2010, the partnership with PRATHAM, an NGO, was aimed at promoting functional literacy and agricultural skills among MGNREGA wage seekers, while imparting computer skills to the younger wage seekers with aptitude for the same. The pilot project covered 50 villages across four blocks namely Banera, Hurda, Mandal and Mandalgarh in Bhilwara district. The PRATHAM project co-ordinators identified and trained cluster coordinators each of whom was expected to mobilise 'literacy volunteers'. Almost 30% of the 5384 adult learners were trained by school children. The literacy volunteers were provided free computer learning by the master trainers of PRATHAM and the former were asked to carry out adult literacy work either at work site or in the community for two hours a day. The teaching kit was provided by PRATHAM and each volunteer was assigned responsibility to make five MGNREGA workers, functionally literate.

2. The end line survey results of the pilot project till December 2010 may be seen from **Table 3.7.1**. Apart from adult functional literacy, 741 computer literates were generated by PRATHAM and of these trainees, six have been gainfully employed at PRATHAM. Further, as part of the agricultural skilling component, 1086 persons were trained in soil testing; 241 in drip irrigation techniques; and 600 in promoting vermin culture. PRATHAM has also established one drip irrigation unit in Chhanga Ka Kheda village of Bera Panchayat in Banera Block for demonstration purposes.

Table 3.7.1: Progress of Functional Literacy

Level of Adult Literacy	No. of ALs
No. of Adult Literates (ALs)	5384
No. of AL who can read letters only	647
No. of AL who can read words only	1784
No. of AL who can read paragraphs	2930
No. of AL who can put signatures only	23

Annexure 3.8: The Pilot Project Partnering BASIX

Yet another pilot project supported from October 2009 to September 2010 for promoting MGNREGA linked innovations in Bhilwara, is the partnership with an NGO namely BASIX. The project was planned to cover seven villages namely Rayla, Beran, Jaswantpura, Surajpura, Lambia Kalan, Lotiyas and Alinagar in the Baneda block of Bhilwara district with the following objectives:

1. To promote financial literacy amongst the MGNREGA savings bank account holders
2. To facilitate access to basic financial services through Business Correspondents.
3. Integration of the financial services with opportunities for sustainable livelihoods.

Keeping in view the above objectives, a baseline survey was carried out in all the seven project villages with a sample of 541 households actively seeking wage employment under MGNREGA. The survey results pointed to low awareness of financial institutions, with 66 percent of the surveyed households never having visited any financial institution and about 80 percent lacking the knowledge to make basic banking transactions like deposits and drawals.

BASIX' Intervention

2. The Indian Grameen Services (IGS), a non-profit affiliate of BASIX Group was designated as the business correspondent for Central Bank of India (CBI) in the project villages for delivery of financial services to MGNREGS workers. The IGS in turn has tied up with Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) for providing biometric technology services to support the project. An intensive financial literacy programme was organised covering more than 4000 MGNREGA wage seekers at the worksites and villages through movies, interpersonal contacts and group discussions. Biometric cards were distributed to 1295 job cardholders. Since most of them had their savings bank accounts in post offices

before, BASIX organized opening fresh savings accounts with the CBI, while their biometric data was simultaneously collected and stored in the TCS server. The CBI, after verification of the applications for savings accounts with the entries in the server, permitted the distribution of the biometric cards. BASIX also organised training to orient the mates, Gram Rojgar Sevaks (MGNREGA- Village Employment Assistant) and members of GPs on the above project. BASIXI claims that the stage has been set for the biometric card holders to conduct all banking transactions at their doorstep though the biometric cards have not been operationalised yet.

Annexure 4.1: Suggested list of Topics for PIN Studies

- **Supplementing Employment and Livelihood Opportunities:** The basic objective of MGNREGA is to provide a fall- back employment source, when other employment alternatives are scarce or inadequate. By providing up to 100 days of employment MGNREGA provides an additional source of income during lean agricultural season.
- **Economic and Social Empowerment of Women through Equal Wages, Greater Work Opportunities:** The Act encourages participation of women and adds a dimension of equity to the process of growth. Narratives of workers indicate that MGNREGA has not only proved to be an independent employment source for women but also given them a greater role in decision-making within the household.
- **Increase in Income and Wages:** Over the past three years there has been an increase in minimum wages for agriculture labourers across the country, and the average wage per person day at the national level has increased from Rs. 65 in 2006 to Rs. 83 in 2008.
- **Inclusive Growth Particularly for Disadvantaged Groups- BPL/SC/ST/Disabled:** Experience has shown that it is the poorest of the poor and the most vulnerable groups who seek employment under MGNREGA. The participation of SCs and STs is 55% with near equal participation of women in the workforce. Thus, MGNREGA is self targeting.
- **Financial Inclusion-Bringing the Marginalized into the Formal Banking System:** Under MGNREGA, around 5.7 crore (upto December 2008) bank and post office accounts have been opened. Feedback from districts points towards greater savings for the workers, greater transparency in wage disbursement as well as an increased access to the formal banking system and facilities.
- **Creation of Durable & Productive Assets & Effective Convergence Practices:** Through its emphasis on water conservation, MGNREGA has not only proved to an important scheme for drought prone areas but it has also created durable and productive

assets for years to come. For instance the ponds created under MGNREGA are being used for pisciculture and the roads constructed have only increased access to markets.

- **Increase in Agricultural Productivity:** Significant rise in ground water levels has been reported following MGNREGA works leading to higher agricultural productivity. The resultant increase in small and marginal farmers' income is also contributing to better inputs to farming.

- **Regeneration of Natural Resource Base through Plantation, Afforestation, Water Conservation and other Activities:** The auxiliary objective of the Act is to strengthen natural resource management through works that address causes of chronic poverty like drought, deforestation and soil erosion and to encourage sustainable development.

- **Quantification of Environmental Services, Adaptation and Mitigation of the Effects of Climate Change:** MGNREGA workers through different permissible activities like water conservation and drought proofing are rendering environmental services. These are also helping in adaptation to climate change. The impact of MGNREGA works on climate change and benefits like carbon credits that can accrue to the rural people need to be studied.

- **Stemming of Migration (at the level of the village, district and/or state):** Reports have indicated that by providing employment on demand within 5 kms of the village, MGNREGA has helped in stemming migration from villages to cities.

- **Strengthening of Panchayati Raj Institutions:** Under the Act, the shelf of projects has to be prepared by Gram Sabha. At least 50% of works have to be allotted to Gram Panchayats for execution. Panchayat Raj Institutions [PRIs] have a principal role in planning and implementation.

- **Ensuring Transparency and Accountability through Information Technology:** For example, the use of MIS and Smart Cards for wage disbursement

- **Building Social Capital:** Formation of social capital through awareness generation/ social mobilization, social audits etc
- **Impact of MGNREGA on Districts Affected by Left Wing Extremism:** Districts in states such as Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Orissa
- **Other Multiplier Effects of MGNREGA:** Apart from being a path breaking wage employment programme, MGNREGA has become a vehicle for empowering local communities to enhance their livelihood security and to renegotiate their rights with institutions of governance. Other multiplier effects include better village development through participatory planning and convergence practices.
- **Any Innovation/Best Practice/Case Studies/Beneficiary Narratives:** The design of the Act is encouraging the State Governments and districts to evolve innovative solutions to the infrastructural or procedural constraints.

Source: UNDP Concept Note and Background Paper on PIN

Annexure 4.2: List of Major PIN Studies Commissioned

Economic Impact - Supplementing and Augmenting Rural Incomes:

- Study on the Implementation of MGNREGA in the North Eastern States conducted by the Indian Institute of Management, Shillong.
- Study on the Implementation of MGNREGA in Gujarat and West Bengal conducted by Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad.
- Study on the Implementation of MGNREGA in both the States Bihar and Jharkhand conducted by the Institute of Human Development
- “Supporting the Operationalization of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA in Khasi Hill, Meghalaya”, by Martin Luther Christian University.
- “Research study on changing gender relations through MGNRES” in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu done by NIRD Hyderabad.
- “NREGA process and practices in Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh:Appraisal cum research study”, by Centre for Educational Research & Development
- “Concurrent Evaluation of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in the State of Uttarakhand” by IIT Roorkee, conducted in the districts of Udham Singh Nagar and Chamoli.
- “Impact Assessment of NREGA in Bankura and Purba-Medinipur Districts of West Bengal” by IIT Karagpur, Karagpur.

Ensuring Food Security

- “Socio-Economic Impacts of Implementation of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA” by Council for Social Development in tribal areas of Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Jharkhand and Andhra Pradesh.
- “Impact Appraisal Study of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA” in Aurangabad and Ahmednagar district, Maharashtra by Watershed Organisation Trust.
- “Impact Assessment of Mahatma Gandhi NREGS on Sustainable Asset Creation and Livelihood” conducted by IDYWC in Madhya Pradesh (Chindwara and Balaghat) and Rajasthan (Banswara and Alwar).
- “NREGA process and practices in Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh:Appraisal cum research study”, by Centre for Educational Research & Development.

Increase in Wage Rates

- Study on the Implementation of MGNREGA conducted by ND University of Agricultural Sciences, Faizabad and Indian Institute of Management, Lucknow.
- “Socio-Economic Impacts of Implementation of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA” by Council for Social Development.
- “Concurrent Evaluation of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in the State of Uttarakhand” by IIT Roorkee, conducted in the districts of Udham Singh Nagar and Chamoli.

Reduction in Distress Migration

- Study on the Implementation of MGNREGA conducted by the Indian Institute of Management, Shillong.
- Study on the Implementation of MGNREGA conducted by the Centre for Science and Environment, Sidhi in Madhya Pradesh.
- “Impact of MGNREGS on Scheduled Castes in Rajasthan” carried out in Sirohi and Karauli districts by National Institute of Rural Development.

Others

- Social-Economic Empowerment of Women under National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) by National Federation of Indian Women in the districts of (Rajnandgaon) Chhattisgarh, (Jhabua) Madhya Pradesh, (Mayurbhanj) Orissa, (Cuddalore) Tamil Nadu with focused on women workers in NREGA.
- An Assessment of the Performance of The National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme in Terms of its Potential for Creation of Natural Wealth in India’s Villages conducted by Centre for Science and Environment in the districts of Nuapada (Orissa) and Sidhi(Madhya Pradesh).
- Process, Institution, and Mechanism of Implementation and Impact Assessment of NREGA in Bihar and Jharkhand conducted by Institute of Human Development, New Delhi.
- NREGA Surveys in Anantapur, Adilabad, Raichur and Gulbarga (2007-08) conducted by Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore in the states of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

- Evaluation of MGNREGA in Rajasthan conducted by Institute of Development Studies, Jaipur in the districts of Karauli, Banswara, Dungarpur, Jhalawar, Jalore (Rajasthan)
- Study on the Implementation of MGNREGA conducted by DISHA, Ahmedabad in the states of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.
- Study on the Implementation of MGNREGA conducted by Centre for Social Development in the districts of Dhamtari, Bastar (Chhattisgarh), Malkangiri, Dhenkanal (Orissa), Khunti, Gumla, (Jharkhand) Adilabad and Cuddpeh (Andhra Pradesh)
- “Quick Appraisal of Five Districts under NREGS in Uttar Pradesh” by Indian Institute of Management, Lucknow in Jalaun, Kushinagar, Jhansi, Gorakhpur and Bareilly.
- “Impact of MGNREGS on Scheduled Castes in Rajasthan” by National Institute of Rural Development.
- “Socio-Economic Impacts of Implementation of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA” by Council for Social Development, with focus on socially disadvantaged groups in Rajasthan among other states.
- Study on the Implementation of MGNREGA conducted by the Institute of Human Development in Bihar and Jharkhand.
- “Concurrent Evaluation of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in the State of Uttarakhand” by IIT Roorkee, conducted in the districts of Udham Singh Nagar and Chamoli.
- “Research study on changing gender relations through MGNRES” in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu done by NIRD Hyderabad.
- “NREGA process and practices in Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh: Appraisal cum research study”, By Centre for Educational Research & Development.
- “Quick Appraisal of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA in Andhra Pradesh” in Adilabad, Guntur and Anantapur districts by Administrative Staff College of India, Hyderabad.
- “Impact Appraisal Study of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA in Aurangabad and Ahmednagar district, Maharashtra by Watershed Organisation Trust.
- “Socio-Economic Impacts of Implementation of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA” by Council for Social Development.
- The study entitled “Impact Assessment of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA’s Activities for Ecological and Economic Security” by IIFM, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.

- Study on the Implementation of MGNREGA conducted by University of Agricultural Sciences, Bengaluru, in four districts Chitradurga, Davanagere, Shimoga and Hassan of Karnataka.
- An Assessment of the Performance of The National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme in Terms of its Potential for Creation of Natural Wealth in India's Villages" by the Centre for Science and Environment, New Delhi.
- "Impact of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme on the Living and Working Conditions of Women in Rural India" conducted by the Indian School of Women's Studies Development in Karnataka, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh, and Jharkhand.
- "Assessment of the Effectiveness and Impact of Kapildhara Sub-Scheme under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme" in Madhya Pradesh by Madhya Pradesh Institute of Social Science Research.
- "Impact Appraisal Study of Aurangabad and Ahmednagar District in Maharashtra" by Watershed Organisation Trust.
- "NREGA process and practices in Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh: Appraisal cum research study", By Centre for Educational Research & Development.

Source: UNDP Concept Note and Background Paper on PIN

Annexure 5.1: Composition of the Technical Secretariat

A. Serving Members of the Technical Secretariat

Sl.No.	Position Advertised	Vacancy Code	Name of the Incumbent	Years of Service
1.	Convergence and Rural Development Expert	UNDP/SC/2009/068	Mr. Nilay Ranjan	4 year
2.	Research Associate	UNDP/SC/2009/070	1) Dr Deependar Kumar 2) Dr R.Gopinath	2 year 2 year
3.	Project Assistant	UNDP/SC/2008/040	Ms. Sandhya Santhanam	
4.	Documentation Associate	UNDP/SC/2011/05	Mr Manoj Sharma	3 year
5.	Project Coordinator	UNDP/SC/2010/58	Mr. Ashok Sharma (Bhilwara)	
6.	Management Information System (MIS) Officer	UNDP/SC/2007/XXX	1) Mr. Ritesh Saxena 2) Mr Ashutosh Gupta	3.9 year 3.9 year
7.	Data Support Officer	UNDP/SC/2007/XXX	Mr. Anil Tripathi	3 year
8.	Expert (Irrigation and Soil Engineering)	UNDP/SC/2007/XXX	Mr G.N.Sharma	3 year

Source: UNDP, New Delhi

B. Former Members of the Technical Secretariat

Sl.No.	Position Advertised	Vacancy Code	Name of the Incumbent	Years of Service
1.	Communication Expert	UNDP/SC/2009/069	Mr. Ershad Ahmad	2 year
2.	Research Associate	UNDP/SC/2009/070	1) Ms. Malashree Bhargava 2) Ms. Sonali David	1.5 year 9 month
3.	Project Assistant	UNDP/SC/2008/040	Ms. Yasmeen Akhtar	2 year
4.	Monitoring and Evaluation Expert		Ms. Neelakshi Mann	2.5 year
5	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer	UNDP/SC/2007/XXX	Ms. Nidhi Vij	2 year
6.	Training Officer	UNDP/SC/2007/XXX	Ms. Neeta Dubey	2 year
7.	Project Coordinator	UNDP/SC/2010/58	Ms. Shafali Rajora	1 year
8.	Data Support Officer	UNDP/SC/2007/XXX	Mr. Ashutosh Mishra	1 year
9.	Communication Assistant for NREGA	UNDP/SC/2007/XXX	Ms. Sachal Aneja	2 year
10.	Human Development Expert		Mr. Dayaram	9 month
11.	Project Officer		Mr. Biswas Chakravarty	8 months
12	Watershed Expert		Mr. Ramakrishnaiah	9 month

Source: UNDP, New Delhi