Process Reengineering of MGMREGS

Part II: The Reengineered System

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# Introduction

Part I

An ambitious programme making employment, unskilled labour, as an entitlement was given to the poor of India as National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in 2005. The pioneer though is the State of Maharashtra which gave first the scheme and later embedded it in an Act as Employment Guarantee Act (EGS) in 1977.

So for the State of Maharashtra, the earlier EGS and now the MGNREGA are both applicable. Prior to introducing MGNREGA, EGS had not remained as an important programme on agenda of any of the political parties including the ruling party whichever be it. With MGNREGA, there came a hope that EGS will get rejuvenated since its objective of supporting the rural poor with security net and also creating infrastructure and assets is far from completed.

MGNREGA brought in some good features like, incorporating the Panchayat Raj Institutions giving more participative space to the communities. It took the concept of transparency at a level hitherto unseen in any of the development / welfare programme of the Government. It created the largest platform for financial inclusion by making it compulsory to pay the wages of the labourer through Bank / Post accounts. It created a neutral space for lodging complaints through a website. It encouraged, rather made it mandatory to use IT for bringing in reporting, transparency, monitoring and communication.

Maharashtra EGS had to incorporate all this and apply it on the same mechanisms it had been using or create new mechanisms. In the process of this acceptance of changes and in an environment of ‘bad image’ of earlier EGS due to corruption, the implementation mechanism thus evolved turned out to be rather a disjointed set of processes and managing the same became more and more difficult. And then the MGNREGA/EGS being implemented to achieve its stated objectives became acutely difficult.

Hence, this attempt to look at all the processes, their interconnections and make it more simple, smooth, convenient so as to bring in efficiency and effectivity. This report starts with understanding of the present, Existing System by describing and it and giving its ground level actual implementation based on our experience. Then the basic drawbacks are explained.

Part II

After having seen the existing system and its drawbacks in Part I of the document set, it is our responsibility to work on the mechanism that can improve the performance of the programme and take it towards its objective. It is more than accepted by all stakeholders especially the actors that there is a need to bring in change for improvement.

A first set of desired changes can be brought in immediately so that in the next season starting November 2011, labourers are more likely to get their entitlement and the programme moves a little closer to its objectives.

We realise that lot of detailing is involved in all of these but a conceptual acceptance is necessary so that we can go ahead and use the appropriate knowledge resource for working out the finer, ready to implement document.

Principles of this Process Reengineering

* Block as the basic unit of implementation, the delivery loop completes at Block.
* Digitisation of all data and as close to source as possible
* Transaction based MIS
* Fund transfers – e managed
* Reports generated not submitted leading to Monitoring at all levels real time
* Suo-moto disclosure of information assisted by IT
* Focus of knowledge in asset creation
* Development Cadre as Implementors
* Optimisation of resource use
* Training agency independent of implementation agency
* Independent Grievance redressal
* Standard communication ways for inter-functionary communication

# Transaction Management System (TMS)

A transaction MIS is a system which is used at the transaction level. All transactions will be carried out through this system. For MGNREGA it will broadly have four categories.

1. Labourer
   1. Registration
   2. Employment tracking
2. Asset
   1. Technical design estimation
   2. Work Progress
3. Muster and MB
4. Fund
   1. Labour
   2. Material
   3. Admin

This transaction MIS will be a software which will be written in an integrated way i.e. considering all these four aspects of MGMREGA. This transaction MIS will be deployed across Maharashtra. All the information will be singly managed by this system. The blocks will have computers where this software will be installed. We can call this the Block Computer Centre (BCC).

An important feature of this transaction MIS will be that it will work in quasi-online mode. This means that data can be entered into the MIS at the block level in offline mode also. Periodically when internet is available the data is synchronised with the central server.

The transaction MIS will be referred to simply as transaction MIS or TMS in this document.

The MIS will have the data in digital form and this data will be periodically ported so that it is viewable on the MGNREGA website ([www.nrega.nic.in](http://www.nrega.nic.in))

We need to develop a system which will digitise the transaction. In some cases it may not be possible to digitise the transaction at source. For example the information of attendance is generated at the field. For such cases we can digitise it as close as possible to real time. A broad structure of such a system is explained in the figure below.

Developing our system which digitises the transaction, we have the following benefits.

* The transaction MIS can be completely controlled from Maharashtra
* Information of the transaction is available in real/near real time which allows for effective tracking and monitoring
* Seamless integration with NIC framework, ensuring real time reporting of data to central government
* Single Point of Contact (SPOC) with NIC to incorporate any changes required in reporting.
* The data entry interfaces can be regularly modified and continuous improvements can be made taking into account the ground problems faced.
* Provision to incorporate integration with eBanking and biometrics in the future.
* No need to ask for reports from field. All reports will be generated by system which will be available to all stakeholders for viewing. Hence our officials will be freed from the burden of making reports.

# Labourer Cycle Management

## Registration

Each labourer will be registered through an “Application for registration”. The details of this information required in this form are given in *Annexure.*

Process

1. The applicant family asks for registration form to Gram Rozgar Sevak. GRS provides the registration form and helps filling the form (or fills him/herself).
2. GRS checks for completeness of the filled information and verifies the application form for the following points
   1. Whether the family is resident of the village
   2. Whether the members belong to the family?
   3. Whether there is duplication of any of the member on the form on any other application?
3. GRS gives the receipt of the form through a “Receipt of application for registration”. The details of this form are given in *Annexure.*
4. GRS notifies GS about the receipt of forms. GRS (via GS) sends this form to BCC (Block Computer Center, as explained in Administrative Set up) and keeps a copy (carbon copy/Xerox copy) with himself/herself. (Include carbon paper/ stamp pad in GRS kit). In case of GS not functional/unavailable, the GRS himself travels to BCC along with a minimum number of forms (20 or 50). (In the latter case, GRS is entitled to get travel allowance for a particular number of forms). In case if the number of forms don’t reach minimum number in 7 days from receipt of first application, the GRS should send it with the Muster once Works starts.
5. The registration forms along with the job-card number assigned by the BCC must get back to GRS within 7 days of handling to GS. Otherwise, the GS should at least convey the job card number along with the head of HH. The details of how job card number as they are assigned is given in *Annexure*.

The job card number should be formed like this

* State - 2 digits
* District – 2 digits
* Block – 2 digits
* Gram panchayat – 3 digits
* Village – 2 digits
* Family – 6 digits (4 for family number, 2 for member id)

1. GRS files the form to a file available with him/her and gives the family a job card. The details of job card are in *Annexure*.
2. The forms for addition or deletion of family need to be specified.

## Opening Bank/Post Account

After labourer receives job card number, he/she opens the bank or post account. The GRS is well conveyed about where to open the accounts. The GRS helps labourers in opening of accounts. Depending on which type of account, the account opening procedure differs.

1. Bank account with business correspondent
2. Bank account without business correspondent
3. Postal account

After the account is opened, the GRS prepares a list and sends the account numbers to BCC for data entry. After account number is received, GRS marks the account number on each of job card and each registration application.

## Demand for Work

The demand must be reached to BDO for getting a status or stock update. Details of the demand (such as exactly which labourers demanded work) need not go into the system as the data entry might be cumbersome and unnecessary.

The prescribed format for demand for work is specified in *Annexure*. The format for receipt for demand of work is specified in Annexure. There are four ways through which labourer(s) can demand for work.

1. Labourer calls the Call Center ( as explained in Grievance Redressal) and registers his/her (and of family members) demand of work. The labourer must specify his/her job card number while demanding work through this mode. He/she must specify the duration and period during which he/she seeks work.

If a labourer has registered ( during the initial registration process) his/her mobile number, he/she is not needed to specify the job card number thus simplifying the process for labourer. After calling, the labourer is given a ticket number which is considered as receipt of demand.

Since the demand is directly digitized, no data entry is needed to be done.

1. Labourer(s) fills up the application for demand and gives it to GRS. GRS keeps the forms to himself/herself and registers the demand to the system by sending SMS to a pre-specified number. This number is conveyed to all GRS while training. By sending SMS to this number, GRS specifies the number of people who demanded the work. TMS interprets this number of people who demanded work and the GRS who sent that message.

In this case, the GRS gets a ticket number for demands submitted through the TMS. He/she writes the ticket number on receipt of application and gives it to labourer(s) demanding the work.

Since the demand is directly digitized, no data entry is needed to be done.

1. When GRS is not functional or unavailable or non-cooperating, labourer(s) give the filled demand form to GS. GS registers the demand by SMS similar to previous case. The receipt also is issues similar case.

1. When GRS/GS both are either not functional or unavailable or non-cooperating, labourer(s) submit their demand form to BDO. If BDO is unavailable, they submit their demand to inward at BDO office and get the receipt. The extension officer or APO registers the demand in a similar way described above by sending SMS.

Notifications of the demand to stake holders.

As demand gets registered, notifications are sent via sms/email to various actors/stake-holders. The stake holders include GS, and concerned Officer at PS and ZP. The frequency of sending these notifications could be once in three days in peak season (December-June) and once in seven days in off season(July-November). Also, the PS/ZP can view the demand received Gram Panchayat wise/ Block wise through the TMS.

## Allocation of Work

After the demand is received and reviewed by GS and APO, the APO allocates work from Shelf of Works (through TMS). Once this is done the status of the work changes to ‘In Progress’. The shelf can be prioritized for certain kind of works. The labourers are notified about the work allotment through a letter addressed to the GRS-Gram Panchayat. The format is specified in *Annexure*.

## Work Commencement and Worksite Facilities

The Technical Officer goes to the work site and explains the work to GRS. He/she gives line out for labourers to work. The muster starts on the first day of work.

**Work site facilities**

1. Creche – The GRS tells the labourers of this facility and understands the demand for the same. If number of children below age 5 on the work site, exceeds 5, the GRS appoints one labourer (preferably old lady) per 5 children as Dai and explains her wage earnings to the group.
2. First aid box – The GRS is given first aid box in his/her kit. He can get new first aid box (or any of its contents) by requesting APO.
3. Shed at work site – The GRS conveys the number of people working on work site to GS and requests to provide shed. Providing shed is GS’s responsibility.
4. Drinking water – The GRS appoints one labourer (preferably lady) per 25 labourers for providing drinking water. If water availability is scarce, GRS can appoint more labourers for 25 labourers for drinking water and explains her wage earnings to the group.
5. Formation of Gang – A group of say 8 to 15 labourers can form a gang. So that they work together throughout the entire work completion. This will help in making correct measurements to calculate work done. Let the labourers decide the formation of the gang, the GRS can facilitate the formation.

## Unemployment allowance

Details of how a labourer can apply for unemployment allowance and how he can be given unemployment allowance should be defined clearly. The authority responsible for handling unemployment allowance applications should be independent than implementing authority such as Ombudsman. The details should be defined and integrated with the TMS. The onus of defending the applicant’s claim will lie with implementing authority.

## Awareness and Labour education

Since this is a demand driven scheme is it important the Labourer is aware of the Act and the entitlements. This task is best performed by an agency outside the Government and the implementing agency. One way is to make the Government create spaces like one wall of Gram Panchayat to be painted with information about NREGA and radio/TV advertisements about NREGA. Another way can be to involve nearby local college students to reach out to the Labourers on Work -site and give information and address their doubts. Labourer’s children would be literate even though the Labourer may not be, then the College students can inform the children of the Labourer especially related to payment details and ways to check and also about various ways of Grievance redressal.

This can make way for an informed Labourer community to meaningfully participate in community monitoring and also during Social Audit processes.

# Works Cycle Management

## Preparation of Shelf

In order to ensure durable productive assets are generated efforts need to be put in from the planning stage. The line agencies have the technical know how to do this planning keeping the watershed angle in mind. Line agencies can be given a dedicated role since they have the expertise for preparing project plans. They can assess data from various State and Central agencies for making of Technical designs. A consolidated plan of works for every Gram Panchayat can be done at war footing by availing the services of the line agencies. The Shelf preparation campaign can be given to Line agencies as a special assignment. The output will be the plan of works of a Gram Panchayat with the detailed technical estimates and designs. These plans will be submitted to the BDO. The BDO will give the administrative sanction and this plan will be converted to the shelf for that Gram Panchayat.

Technical estimation is based on the Schedule of Rates (SoR) or Daily Schedule of Rates (DSR). These are revised as the wage rate changes. And also when Time and Motion studies are conducted to observe the changed reality and incorporate the observations to prepare a new SoR. One suggestion is that while designing and analysing the observation of any Time and Motion Study it is very important to align that with the agro climatic conditions. With this it will be possible to prepare Block wise SoR so that the averaging is more fair to the labourers who toil all through the day and earn as per the work done.

Planning is the backbone for creating good useful assets. Planning with initial site measurements, a design based on the same and not a ‘type’ design, translating the design meticulously to obtain technical efficiency are important for creating useful assets. There is need to engage the experienced Line Agencies in a campaign mode to prepare shelf of every village of say five years.

In order to fulfil the objective of generation of quality assets, ‘Asset Manager’ will the system, part of the TMS that we will create. This will record the process of asset generation from List of Works, Technical Estimate, Technical Sanction, Administrative Sanction, Recording of MB and Evaluation of wages and Completion certificate.

Figure ‑: Shelf Preparation

1. **List of works**

The probable list of works that are to be taken up in the GP, is to be prepared by the GP. The GS through communication with people (such as Shivar Pheri, Gram Sabha) makes this list of works.

The different kinds of works that can be taken up and how to fill the formats is known to the GS through training. The list is fed to the Asset Manager. The GS makes a village wise list of works for her GP. The technical team should be able to add to this list. The additions will have to be ratified by the GP.

1. **Technical Design and Estimation**

The task of technical estimation is a knowledge intensive activity. How well this is done will govern the quality of asset generated, whether correct wages get evaluated, the tracking of progress while the work is being done. For doing so, the following knowledge work needs to be done. For doing so a study group with the requisite technical skills will have to be formed. The objective of this study group will be as follows.

1. Identification of the different types of works that can be carried out under NREGA. (Called W1, W2,…,Wn)
2. Each work will be divided into Sub Works (SW1, SW2,…,SWn)
3. The Sub works will be further measured in terms of tasks (t1, t2,…,tn). These tasks will be as in the DSR.

Figure ‑: Technical estimation format

Once this type of identification is done, a software will be prepared in which this knowledge will be embedded. In order to make an estimate for a particular work from the list of works on the system, the concerned TO will print a format from the Asset Manager for that work.

The TO will visit the site and take measurements to make the estimates of the sub work wise tasks based on the field conditions. The TO will come to the BCC and will feed these estimates into the Asset Manager. Along with the unskilled portion, the format will also incorporate the estimation material and administrative expenses that will be incurred and this will also be fed to the asset manager. Based on this data the Asset Manager will generate the Technical Estimate of the work.

1. **Technical Sanction**

The generation of the technical estimate by the AM will itself be the technical estimate. This will be checked by TO. Such a work will automatically be listed into the works awaiting administrative sanction.

1. **Administrative Sanction**

The BDO of the Block will login to the system. The list of works awaiting administrative sanction will be displayed. The BDO will sanction these works through biometric and digital signature. These works will then automatically be transferred to the shelf of works of that village. The status of such works is set to ‘On Shelf’

**Convergence**

MGNREGA has other important objective of creating good, useful and relevant assets for the village. This is to ensure the much needed rural infrastructure to increase productivity, increase production, enable diversity in crops and better connectivity to markets for their goods. This is required for any village to enhance their livelihood potential. MGNREGA has a promise built into it to realize this potential. Though MGNREGA is being implemented through a specific stream of implementation mechanism, the other stakeholders for building up rural infrastructure are necessary to contribute to achieve its rather larger goal of addressing rural poverty.

This can be achieved through some ways as outlined here.

1. For preparing shelf, which is the basic document for ensuring good rural infrastructure, we have recommended a campaign like programme with active and focused participation of all Line agencies. This has been detailed in the Works section.
2. This Shelf so prepared can be shared with all State department agencies if and when the MGMREGA demand is not enough to use all the Works on Shelf. It can also be shared when say Agri department has decided to take up say watershed in a set of villages, then this same Technical estimates with design can be made available to them.
3. The design and details of the Completed Works under MGMREGA can be shared with other State departments for further value addition to increase its usefulness to the villagers. For eg Village Pond to Fisheries for development.

## Muster and MB Management

### Muster

Let’s look at muster management for two different approaches differently. We can have different ways of digitizing muster and measurement book depending on the priority blocks (as explained in Section 6.1).

### Paper based muster

Every muster has a code which is unique. The muster code can be formed by combining district code, year, month (in which musters are printed) and muster number. The musters are issued to GRS according to his/her need every month. In case, allotted musters get exhausted early, the GRS can request muster to the GS/APO. TMS keeps track of musters issued and musters used/returned. If a muster is damaged or misplaced, the GRS has to inform BCC about it.

Muster has to be single page muster printed on both sides of thick A-4 size paper. This ensures easy accessibility and field availability of muster. Use of one Muster sheet for each gang is necessary for correct recording of attendance and will also help in taking measurements gang wise for correct evaluation of work done. Format for muster is specified in *Annexure*.

Where paper based muster is used, the GRS takes daily attendance on the muster and at the end of the week, muster is sent to BCC (via GS). The muster received at BCC is entered into TMS by data entry operators.

### Electronic muster

The paper based muster is used in this case only to keep track of records. Every GRS is equipped with a mobile of certain specifications. The mobile device used by GRS is loaded with necessary data (such as village, work and labourer data) and software. The data in the mobile is refreshed periodically (such as every month).

The attendance is taken into software loaded on the mobile. The software is designed to work even if there is no mobile connectivity (quasi-online mode). The data is sent to server directly whenever the mobile comes in network range. Thus the attendance is updated daily to the server and the data entry of muster is completely eliminated.

For verification, a few paper musters are selected at random every week and are verified with the electronic muster data.

### Measurement Book

Work measurement will have to happen every week. Measurement will be gang wise. The TO will be given a format and a form. The TO will take measurements onsite and record them in the given format. The form will be filled for each gang. The form will have the following details. The TO will be trained on how to do the calculations and fill the format.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Work Code:……………………………. | Muster Code of Gang: …………… |  |
| Task Type | **Quantity** | **Units** |
| t1 | 100 | No |
| t2 | 5.5 | Cum |
| t1 | 50 | No |
| tn | Xyz | Abc |

Figure ‑: Input sheet for work measurement

Thus the AM will record the measurements task wise. It will be possible to tally the tasks with the estimate value and a technique for tracking the progress of asset will have to be developed. Along with this we will have another format which will record the status of the Sub Works. The Sub Works will be a Yes/No type of form. This form will be printed from the system. The form will have the list of Sub Works as per the Technical Estimate. At the time of entry of measurements the information of Sub Works will also be entered. If a Sub Work has been completed then its entry will be done. Thus Sub Work wise tracking of work will be possible.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Work Code:……………………………. |  |
| Name of Sub Work | **Date of Completion** |
| SW1 | DD/MM/YY |
| SW2 | DD/MM/YY |
| SW3 | DD/MM/YY |

Figure ‑: Input sheet for Sub Work completion status

The digitisation of measurement book can happen similar to muster. There can be two ways of doing this – 1) Paper based recording and entry at BCC 2) Mobile based recording and direct updation to the server.

## Work Completion

After completion of work, the TO will update the status on the TMS to ‘Complete’. The work will be listed in the ‘Completed works’ list and it will be ready for inspection. In order to have a visual representation videos, taken by GRS, of the before, during and after of the Works can be uploaded on the system. This will provide a visual record of the work.

# Fund Management

An Electronic Fund Management System (EFMS) manages the transaction and the book keeping of transactions. All fund transfers are electronic. The entire fund is kept at one location. Authorised personnel have access to these funds through an Authorisation process of biometric identification and digital signatures.

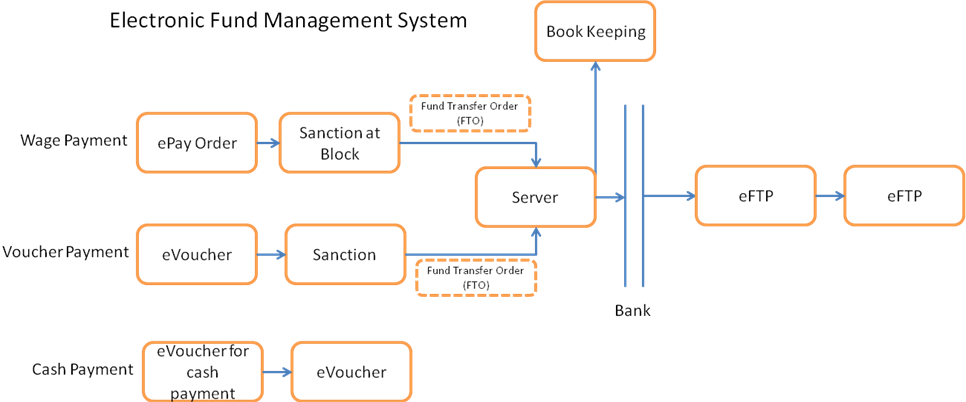
1. The transaction and its book keeping happen together. So tracking of transactions can be done in real time.
2. The access to funds can be controlled by setting limits for transactions for different personnel.
3. Transactions can be categorized under different heads at the time of transaction. As a result real time tracking of expenses under labour, material and admin can be done.
4. The transactions can be further categorized under sub categories such as salaries, stationery, transport, IT support etc.
5. Since the fund is located at one place processes such as keeping advances, shortage of funds at one location and excess of funds at another are eliminated.
6. Electronic transfers reduce transaction time.

Figure ‑: Electronic Fund Management System (EFMS)

## Wage Payment procedure

Every labourer will have an account in a post or bank. Each of this account will be connected to a core bank account. We will call this account eFTP (Electronic Fund Transfer Point). Depending on the type of account opened by the labourer, the eFTP will be decided.

Payment to Gram Rozgar Sevak, on time and regularly, is very important for them to give good performance. Presently, in many places, they get included in the Pay Order. But booking this expense needs to be clearly conveyed to the Block offices.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No** | **Type of account** | **eFTP** | **Location where labourer receives the wage** | **Pay Order Required?** |
| **1** | Core bank account | Same as the core bank account | At the branch where account is opened | No |
| **2** | BC | Account as per discussion with the bank | In the village, through BC | Yes |
| **3** | Non core bank account | Core bank account as suggested by the bank | At the branch where account is opened | Yes |
| **4** | Post account | Core bank account of corresponding Sub Post office or Head Post office | At the post office where account is opened | Yes |

1. **Core bank account**

In case the labourer has a core bank account, the wage will be electronically transferred directly to the account. This will complete the transaction.

1. **Non Core bank account and Business Correspondent**

The concerned bank will provide the eFTP. The amount will be electronically transferred to the eFTP. Along with this a pay order will be generated and given to the Branch PO and Sub PO. The pay order will have the details of the individual account of the labourers. As per the pay order, the concerned branch will then deposit the amount into the individual accounts of the labourer.

1. **Postal Account**

In all the other cases, the wage will be transferred to the eFTP. For example, wages of 100 labourers has to be paid. These labourers have opened accounts at the nearest Branch PO which is located at Devgaon. Devgaon Branch PO is not linked to a core bank account. The corresponding Sub PO is at Trimbakeshwar and it has a core bank account. This core bank account will be the eFTP for the accounts of these 100 labourers. The total of the wages earned by these 100 labourers will be transferred electronically as one transaction. Along with this a pay order will be generated and given to the Branch PO and Sub PO. The pay order will have the details of the individual account of the labourers. Post will then deposit the amount on the individual accounts.

1. **Other Transactions**

In case of all other transaction an electronic voucher eVoucher will be generated by the system and funds will be electronically transferred directly to the account of the concerned stake holder. The options of accounts that the stake holder can open are the same as those mentioned for a labourer.

1. **Cash Transactions**

We can provide a facility to carry out cash transactions. The limit on the amount of cash transactions will be decided based on government norms. For cash transactions also the eVoucher will be generated by the system and the time stamp of the transaction will be stored. Thus a financial transaction can happen only through the system

## BC Model

Business Correspondent model works with the administrative structure consisting of two levels. The first level is that of the Government and the Banks. The second level consists of the banks and the Business Correspondence Agencies. The government gets into agreement with the banks. The banks get into agreement with the Business Correspondence Agencies (BCA). The task of registering the NREGA beneficiaries rests with the BCA. They record their biometric identities and open their accounts in the banks. Government deposits the wages directly in accounts of the NREGA workers. The money is withdrawn from the account periodically from the representatives of BCA who carry the cash and the small portable machine for bio metric identification. So, distribution of wages is the responsibility of the BCA.

This can ensure speedy payment disbursal to the labourers. The BCA appoints their contact person for each village and they take the responsibility of wages reaching the labourer. Instead of Post accounts which practically only route the wages, Bank can start providing other Banking services to the poor labourers through this BC model.

## Interim wage payments

While the mechanism to ensure timely payments gets instituted, it is against the law to continue with delayed payments. Delayed payments can adversely impact on the functioning of the programme. Hence advance or interim payments are suggested. A portion of the due payments can be paid right way, each week. without waiting for the measurement-evaluation-pay order-sanction routine. And every month or so, the differential payment can be credited to the Labourer’s account. This could increase the work for administration and may bring in a little complication for labourer to track their payments. But the benefit of getting paid regularly outweighs these aspects.

# Administrative Setup

Ideally a single line of authority and here preferably the Development cadre based line of authority is appropriate. Because it has the ‘attitude’ of giving and implementing welfare and development programmes; two it works with all PRI which are essential part of implementation of MGNREGA. So we recommend a ZP-BDO-GS-GRS line of implementation where the Technical team aligns horizontally. And yet there is a need for having the State agencies’ expertise and experience of Planning and Designing of Works available to the development team involved in EGS implementation. There can be ways of getting involvement of State Line agencies.

The entire line of execution is development cadre. The revenue department will not be involved in NREGA administration except for legal responsibility of the collector. The different officials at different levels are listed below.

The principal secretary is assisted with thematic teams to help him/her take decisions in IT, training and recruitments, watershed, finance, social audit. A Commissioner office exclusively for MGMREGA / EGS can be set up separately. This can support the basic Implementation, Coordination and Monitoring whereas the Principal Secretary’s office can be more involved in policy issues and coordinating with the Ministry and Central Government.

Apart from the hardware and software infrastructure, deployment of additional human resources on contract needs be done through some thresholds (of particular expenditure or labour attendance). The human resource personnel who can be allocated additionally (on contract) are as follows

* GRS at Gram Panchayat
* Data entry operators at Block
* APO or extension officer at Block
* BCC in charge at Block
* Technical team at Block

## Estimation of Potential

1. **Study**

Conduct a study through Yashada for estimation of potential of labourers for whom NREGA is designed.

1. **Objective of Study**

To estimate the block wise potential of labourers for whom NREGA is designed. The first study be conducted based on secondary data of the following parameters.

* Labour attendance – average of last three years
* BPL
* Marginal Farmers
* Landless
* Dry land (irrigation available)
* Availability of alternate employment
* More as considered relevant

1. **Use of Study**

Generate a list of Blocks as per the potential for demand from Labourers Grade 1, 2 and 3 … (How may number can be decided) and design the strategy of implementation for the different grades. This will be our first estimate of potential to give us an initial direction for our first implementation strategy. It should be modifiable based on experience.

Along with the estimation based on this study, the actual expenditure of the blocks will give an idea of the gap which can be overcome through NREGA.

## Prioritization of Infrastructure

Ideally, all block should have the best infrastructure. But since the infrastructure costs come from administrative expenses, we need to concentrate more on those blocks which have high labour demand or higher potential for labour demand based on a study as given below. For allocation of infrastructure and human resource, we need to prioritize blocks which have higher potential of NREGA works and more needy for NREGA labourers. For this, our infrastructure deployment policy needs to be multi-forked.

## Loop Closure at Block Level

To speed up the digitisation of data, data entry must happen at the Block level. This will ensure that the loop of activities will complete at the Block itself.

The TMS needs to be same throughout the state. Every Block Computer Center (BCC) has basic infrastructure of 2 computers, 1 printer and 2 data entry operators. Cyclic and crucial sources of data are muster and measurement book. The muster and measurement book data will reach in two different ways to the TMS.

1. Paper based muster and measurement recording and then data entry at Block : In blocks with very low volume of works, this system will be used. Everyday attendance is taken by GRS on the muster. At the end of the week, the muster is physically sent to BCC. Similarly, technical personnel record measurement data on paper based measurement recording format and that too is sent to BCC. At BCC, data entry operators digitize muster and measurement data.
2. Paper based muster and measurement recording with faster data entry options : In blocks with higher volumes of works and more expenditure, this system will be used. Here, paper based musters are used similar to the above option. In addition, the data entry is either decentralized using mobile based recording and transfer of data or it is made faster by installation of Optical Mark Recognition scanners at the BCC.
3. Mobile based recording of muster and measurement data
4. OMR scanner based data entry at BCC

Depending on technical feasibility, the paper based muster can be replaced by hand-held computing devices which are capable of recording attendance by biometric method and directly transferring data to BCC via mobile connectivity.

If we talk biometric here, we have to introduce it everywhere else.

The other hardware needed – such as computers and scanners also can be allocated based on the prioritization.

## HR

Ideally a single line of authority and here preferably the Development cadre based line of authority is appropriate. Because it has the ‘attitude’ of giving and implementing welfare and development programmes; two it works with all PRI which are essential part of implementation of MGNREGA. So we recommend a ZP-BDO-GS-GRS line of implementation where the Technical team aligns horizontally. And yet there is a need for having the State agencies’ expertise and experience of Planning and Designing of Works available to the development team involved in EGS implementation. There can be ways of getting involvement of State Line agencies.

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The principal secretary is assisted with thematic teams to help him/her take decisions in IT, training and recruitments, watershed, finance, social audit. A Commissioner office exclusively for MGMREGA / EGS can be set up separately. This can support the basic Implementation, Coordination and Monitoring whereas the Principal Secretary’s office can be more involved in policy issues and coordinating with the Ministry and Central Government.

Apart from the hardware and software infrastructure, deployment of additional human resources on contract needs be done through some thresholds (of particular expenditure or labour attendance). Remuneration to part time personnel like GRS and on contract personnel needs to be in line with their job profile. GRS payment is very crucial. They need to be paid not just on commission basis but a combination of fixed payment and commission can be a good start. The human resource personnel who can be allocated additionally (on contract) are as follows

* GRS at Gram Panchayat
* Data entry operators at Block
* APO or extension officer at Block
* Technical team at Block
* Messenger: The messenger person is communicator between block and gram panchayats. The physical transportation of MGMREGA documents – mainly muster to be transported weekly – can be done by a messenger person. With blocking having high number of works going simultaneously, appointment of messenger will speed data entry of musters and other documents.
* BCC in charge: BCC in charge is person who maintains the IT setup at BCC and ensures smooth functioning of IT setup. Where the block is big and the IT resource handling cannot be done by Extension Officer alone, the BDO should be permitted to have a BCC in charge

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| No | Designation | Place | Reports to | Exclusive for NREGA? | Role | On contract/ comission for NREGA? |
| 1 | GRS | Village | GS | Yes | Implementation | Yes |
| 2 | GS | GP | BDO | No | Implementation, Coordination | No |
| 3 | BDO | Block | CEO | No | Implementation, Coordination, Monitoring | No |
| 4 | APO | Block | BDO | Yes | Implementation, Coordination | Yes |
| 5 | BCC In charge | Block | BDO | Yes | IT | Yes |
| 6 | Data entry operator | Block | BDO | Yes | IT | Yes |
| 7 | Technical officers – ZP | Block | BDO/CEO | No | Implementation | No |
| 8 | Technical officers - on contract | Block | BDO | Yes | Implementation | Yes |
| 9 | Deputy CEO | District | CEO | Yes | Implementation, Coordination, Monitoring | No |
| 10 | CEO | District | Divisional Commissioner | No | Coordination, Monitoring | No |
| 11 | Collector | District | Divisional Commissioner | No | Coordination, Monitoring | No |
| 12 | MIS Coordinator | District | Deputy CEO | Yes | IT | No |
| 13 | Extension officer **(?)** | Block | BDO | No | Implementation, Coordination | No |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 14 | Technical officers - planning and execution | District | CEO | No | Implementation, Coordination | No |
| 15 | Technical officers - Quality control | District | CEO | No | Coordination, Monitoring | No |
| 16 | Principal Secretary | Secretariat | Ministry | Yes | Policy | No |
| 17 | Secretary's team at Secretariat | Secretariat | Principal Secretary | Yes | Coordination, Monitoring | No |
| 18 | Thematic teams at Secretariat | Commissioner Office | Principal Secretary | Yes | Coordination, Monitoring | Yes |

## Training

This is the most important activity to bring in basic understanding of the programme, appropriate changes and getting the new formats used properly. A separate desk at Commissioner Office will help push this. All the trainings can be accomplished in collaboration with YASHADA. YASHADA can design, plan, conduct and prepare trainings for all the following personnel. Government officials from across the States can be chosen to contribute for various activities in training. Civil Society Organizations with expertise / experience can also be involved.

Training is meant to enable personnel to take up their Role and Responsibilities properly. The Responsibilities of various actors in the delivery mechanism has been described in GoM’s GR and also in the Annexure of the NREGA Operational Guidelines 2008 3rd edition. The Training programme and the appropriate Manuals for each of the actor will be designed to provide the Knowledge, Skills and Attitude required to take up that Role effectively.

Some of the common points while designing training modules are –

* + - Understanding the process of NREGA
    - Role clarity and their tasks
    - Understanding formats
    - Expenses booking
    - MIS
    - Coordination with other stake holders

It will be useful to plan all the trainings during monsoon when there is generally no demand for works and personnel can spare time. A training calendar can be announced in say May for the entire period and for all the personnel across State and put it up on net (more on this in Communication) for all to plan.

### Gram Rozgar Sevak

Training for Gram Rozgar Sevak is the backbone of the programme. A very good, functional Gram Rozgar Sevak can solve many of the present problems of implementation.

A package of training and practice spaced over a period of time will be a good training form for their role. An e-training module can let them learn and understand at their pace. This e-learning module needs to be interspaced with interaction with local administration. An illustrative Manual cum Reference book needs to be given, of course in Marathi to each GRS.

After this ‘Initial’ Training phase, every year Refresher training of three days will be necessary. This needs to be timed just before the season starts. The changes, new GRs, instructions based on last year’s experience need to be incorporated in this Refresher Training.

### Gram Sevak

The training for the Gram Sevak who have had experience of implementing MGMREGS and the one’s who have not had the experience need to be separated for training. This is necessary since their requirements are different. The experienced would need more of trouble shooting and guidance for the problems faced by them. The experienced will need training, once a year, to discuss the experience of their last season and to present the changes / new GR. The Shelf, TMS needs to be shared with them.

For the Gram Sevak who are new to MGMREGS, a separate training schedule of say 3 to 4 days giving basic understanding of the programme, their role, role of Gram Rozgar Sevak, importance of TMS.

A Manual cum Reference Book for Gram Sevak is necessary.

### Technical Personnel

Training of personnel especially who are on contract is pre-requite for them to function and deliver. A training schedule, every year, of say 3 to 4 days giving basic understanding of the programme, their role, preparing of technical estimates needs to be taken up here.

A Manual cum Reference Book for is necessary.

### Data Entry Operators (whether outsourced or in house)

A training schedule, every year, of say 3 to 4 days giving basic understanding of the programme, their role, importance of TMS, the various interfaces needs to be taken up here.

A Manual cum Reference Book for is necessary.

### Dy. Collectors; Dy. CEO and MIS Coordinator

Supervisor/ Monitor / Coordination role of district officials like Dy. CEO and MIS Coordinator to take at least 2 days training to prepare for the coming season. Monitoring formats, changes required as per state/central notifications needs to be discussed here. A set of latest GRs, notifications, last year performance and this year’s labour budget need to be the training material.

### Ombudsman

The independent authority to be placed in each district are meant to be outside of the Administrative Set up. So there is an obvious need for their orientation to understand the Act and their role and functioning. (More on this in Grievance Redressal)

## Monitoring

### Reports

Traditionally our State had Muster as the basic record regarding attendance as well as payments details of wages as well as material component. But now the attendance and payment need to be bifurcated. Muster will have only attendance data and corresponding Pay order will have its Payment details. So for a particular work there will be weekly records of Muster, Pay Order and Measurement valuations (MB).

The database thus formed should be able to generate relevant Monitoring reports for administrators of different levels, for the Gram Sevak, for the Block Officials, for the district Officials and the State Officials. This could be in addition to the reports required to be submitted to the centre periodically. Some sample formats for this are given in the *Annexure.*

Maharashtra is used to Weekly reports as a basic monitoring and information document for EGS. This gives data about labour attendance and available shelf of work for every week across the state – block/district/division. This is good as snapshot information. With a little more effort more can be obtained to understand the status of implementation by collecting a little more data on weekly basis.

Getting a report of the demand received during the week, Works started, ongoing Works, payments made, accounts opened and such along with the usual weekly report can serve a much better monitoring purpose. It can provide the cyclical patterns to give idea about the process of implementation. Also presently demand is not notified to any higher level authority so if the demand gets suppressed in the delivery mechanism, there is no way for the higher monitoring authorities to know this. And demand is the most crucial starting point of the basic process of this programme.

Next important indicator for the programme’s implementation is timely payments. These Weekly reports can provide data on demand and works so that future payments can be anticipated. If that does not reflect in the next series of Weekly reports there is need to check out with the concerned authority. And since these Weekly reports provide cyclical process indicators, it would be difficult to ‘make up’ data.

Since the data entry is at Block and there MB software in place the data entry of Musters and Payments would be digitised. Weekly Monitoring reports should be all System generated. So that consolidation at different levels of administration is automatically available.

### Performance Reports

The Monitoring indicators that we plan give also provide direction to implementation. The entire implementation gets geared towards accomplishing these indicators of performance. Hence it is very important that the indicators we design capture the entire spirit of the policy and not just ensure efficient implementation of the Scheme.

For NREGA, we have good set of indicators to ensure the employment objective being monitored for its performance. The other important objective of durable assets is not being captured very clearly, so a new set of indicators needs to be worked to monitor types and quality of Works being carried out. For instance, how much rainfall used to flow off the village terrain and how much is being captured through the Watershed treatment measures? Similarly with soil conservation, type and length of road connectivity added, how much additional land brought under cultivation with land development and such. Also we need capture the output side which can indicate impact on poverty like ; how many people who are usual migrants stayed in village due to this scheme, how many have started second season rabbi due to availability of water, or have farmers shifted to different crops due to availability of water and such.

These indicators can be integrated into the system of data capturing and report generation for reviewing performance periodically.

### Review and Plan Meetings

These reports provide the necessary information for taking decisions and actions for better and smoother functioning. Regular review for this is essential. Periodic meetings at Divisional Office with district officials; at District with Block Officials and Line agencies, at Block level with Gram Sevak and technical team are essential during the season. In this the performance during immediate past based on the Monitoring reports, circulation of latest GR, requirements of the State and Central agencies need to be discussed and decisions arrived at.

When Process indicators are well defined and that data is captured, the software application can be made to generate reports pertaining to the Process Indicators at specific stages of implementation. This clearly shows the performance of the team at that stage of implementation. For example when payment to the labourers is delayed, it is important to know where exactly in the process delay was set in, like - at the time of measurement, or at the time of evaluation, or at the time of preparing pay order or sanctioning pay order or at Bank or Post during disbursal. This information is important to take appropriate corrective measures to avoid future delays. With process indicators and its reports Process Accountability can be established.

## Communication

An online messaging and communication system for government functionaries is needed for communication. This system will be authentication based and will have logins for government functionaries till Panchayat Samiti level. This framework will provide a systematic means for providing feedback from staff at different levels such as Block, district. An example of such a framework is Samvadini system from MKCL.

We welcome the newly created website http://egs.mkcl.org/. This has facilitated the communication of GR, instructions to functionaries till block level.

For MIS related communication, the MIS coordinators should be given responsibility to update data entry personnel about the changes in MIS.

## Community Monitoring

This is a people centric programme with basic decision in people’s domain. In the same spirit it is expected that Monitoring of the programme can also be by people especially the Labourers. Though Labourer gets direct benefit in terms of wages, the whole village community is the beneficiary in terms of the Assets being created. Hence the whole community is interested in getting this scheme implemented and implemented properly.

So it is important to have an institutional arrangement for the community to participate and Monitor. A Village level Committee can take up issues of implementation and misappropriation if any. A committee at Block and District level is also needed for Monitoring. These Committees can be consisting of relevant administrators, elected representatives, representatives of the Labourer, both male and female and representatives of the Gram Rozgar Sevak.

## 

# Grievance Redressal

## Call Centre for Citizens

We recommend that a call center facility for citizens where citizens can register their complaints by calling a number. A complaint thus received should be allocated to district relating to that geographic area (district or division). The caller will get a ticket-id as the complaint gets registered and the complaint status can be tracked there after by this ticket-id. Policy makers at state level can get a direct feedback from citizens across the state. Before launching such a call center, it should be publicized well through print, radio and television media.

## Ombudsman

As per the Guidelines of the Central Government, an Ombudsman is placed for every district. After Training they can assume office at District. Their presence needs to be made public by giving news in the local vernacular print media. Their cell numbers, emails and office address need sto be publicized. They shall work as per the guidelines of the Central Government.

## NREGA website

There is a provision to lodge complaints on the nrega.nic.in website. This needs to be monitored by a particular person at the Commissioner’s Office.

## Loknyayalay

This scheme is embedded in Law. Hence some kind of recourse to Law is also expected especially when there is gross mis-governance. Presently Loknyayalay are meant to hold quasi-court sittings and take complaints from Labourers. But this has not been very useful since this Court is under the District Legal Aid Society and is not so well functioning.

For all the present grievance redressal mechanism it is very important that they are well advertised in vernacular language in local media so that people get to know and start accessing the same.

The functioning of all these Grievance redressal methods need to have a mention in the MIS reporting and available to all on the nrega website.

## Social Audit

Audits are necessary as feedback. For improving implementation for taking corrective measures it is important to get micro and macro perspective. This is required by the policy makers and the decision makers in implementation. We suggest two ways of Social Audit. One a micro format like Public hearing and another format giving a macro view like Evaluation studies. We also suggest that the Chairperson of a Social Audit process be Labourers, both male and female, to ensure that it functions as people’s Audit.

1. **Public Hearing**

Central Government has made Social Audit mandatory. As the term suggests it is meant to be an audit with people and not just the usual financial audit. The pre requisite for such an audit involving people directly is the availability of information. The Shelf, the Technical estimate of the Works taken up, the Muster, the Pay Orders and such need to be made available to all Gram Panchayats.

A Public hearing programme at Cluster levels ( group of 10 to 15 Gram Panchayat), at a relatively bigger village ( generally which has weekly bazaars) on a bazaar day has to be organized. The ZP, PS, GP administration personnel and elected representatives need to be present. Media should be invited. Labourers and villagers of the GP of this cluster need to be informed of this date at least two weeks in advance. (ensure a procedure for the same).

At this Public Hearing the information related to Regsitration, demand and Works need to be read out and objection invited after reading each of these. Whenever there is some complaint and or objection it has to be addressed by the concerned official. This has to be recorded in the proceedings. (hopefully the elected representatives, labourers will ensure this). The unresolved complaints objections need to be forwarded to appropriate authotity and a note to that effect to be given to the GP and the concerned villager immediately. The entire Public Hearing can be video recorded evidence, monitoring and further action.

1. **Studies**

Evaluation

The State Government can commission studies every year through external agencies. The external agency could be an academic institution or a registered society working on rural development issues. The criteria can be worked out. The number of Blocks for study, the sample, can be based on say, number of Labourers employed, number of Works, expenditure, number of complaints and such. This has to be initiated and coordinated at the State level. The study needs to be based on a uniform methodology and at least 70% of the material needs to be objective and the rest based on Focus group discussions with administrators, elected representatives and villagers with labourers.

The Studies can be commissioned every August to be undertaken between October to December and report to be submitted by February.

While the Public hearing can throw up particular problems, the Evaluation studies can give a larger picture and provide a glimpse of the trends. Both these ways of understanding the picture is useful for planning the improvisations.

Overview

Another set of Studies through reputed academic institutions could be to understand the social process in tune with this programme, impact of this scheme on different socio-eco aspects of Labourer families and village communities. Some studies we suggest are :

What does the ‘prospective’ egs/nrega labourer want?

How migration affects communities especially women and children below 14 years of age?

How to ensure Technical Accountability so that Quality is assured?

How to prepare Works pla, labour budget in amore people-centric way?

What kind of sub-schemes can be added to durable, useful ensure asset building?

What economic processes get ushered in due to this programme in a cluster of villages?