NREGA Implementation in Andhra Pradesh

As we saw it

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List of Abbreviations

1. APD – Assistant Project Director
2. APO – Assistant Program Officer
3. BC – Business Correspondent
4. CO – Computer Operator
5. CSP – Customer Service Provider
6. EC – Engineering Consultant
7. EFMS – Electronic Fund Management System
8. eMMS – Electronic Muster and Measurements System
9. FA – Field Assistant
10. GO – Government Organization
11. GoAP – Government of Andhra Pradesh
12. GOI – Government of India

13. GP – Gram Panchayat
14. MCC – Mandal Computer Center
15. MKSS – Majdur Kisan Shakti Sanghatan
16. MPDO – Mandal Parishad Development Officer
17. NGO – Non Government Organization
18. NREGA – National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
19. PD – Project Director
20. PDA – Personal Digital Assistant
21. RD – Rural Development
22. SHG – Self Help Group
23. SOR – Schedule of Rates
24. SSAAT - Society for Social Audit, Accountability and Transparency
25. TA – Technical Assistant

1 Introduction

Andhra Pradesh embarked on NREGA with great zeal. The then Government took it as an opportunity to reach the villages and villagers hitherto unreached. A powerful program to transfer money into the hands of the poorest of the poor and built much needed rural infrastructure. Moreover, all the money was coming from the Central Government kitty. This had the potential to be a very popular program. And this popularity would be useful in the elections. That was the logic we were told. The result is a very robust, well functioning system of getting NREGA implemented efficiently.

The most outstanding feature of the implementation process is that the entire process is digitized. The job card, muster, measurements, payments orders, technical plans, sanctioning, fund transfers and all such tasks of the process chain are electronically done. As a result, the entire data is available almost real time. This helps in monitoring and transparency.

An important management principal that has been adopted is that field officers do not need to send reports. As the processes are digitized, the system is programmed to generate relevant reports based on the data. The Monitoring Reports, the Exception Reports, Performance Review Reports are generated and are available to all to study, understand and take corrective action.

There is good communication built up amongst all the levels of administration. Different methods in addition to usual meetings, like TV program with phone in are being used to have dialogue, get feedback, introduce new techniques, new type of works and such. The feedback is taken seriously as an input to improvise.

Relevant modern technology like using mobiles to capture field level data or using the RBI policy of encouraging Business Correspondence for financial inclusion are being explored and implemented confidently.

Last but not the least; training is an important integral part of the implementation process. Induction training is a must before anybody joins and then there are repeat training every year for everybody. Trainings are separately designed for Field Assistant, Technical Assistant, Engineer Consultant, Asst. Program Officer, Computer Operator and such. There are illustrative posters, films and manuals to aid the training. This creates uniformity in understanding the tasks involved in the process and their individual responsibility in the process chain.

As a forum for active participation of the wage seekers, villagers, Panchayat Raj institutions' elected representatives with field level functionaries, Social Audit has proved to be meaningful. In this forum, monitoring is by the former and hence proves to be empowering for them. This can be considered a good forum of direct democracy.

The overriding theme was that there is a constant search to bring in more effectiveness, to find ways to minimize scope for malpractices and to bring in transparency.

2 Administrative Processes

Administration is the backbone of any implementation program. In Andhra Pradesh, the detailing of all the implementation process is something to learn from. Here we look at the various aspects of the implementation process. It is important to note here that right at the beginning GoAP chose Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) for IT support.

2.1 Human Resource

In Andhra Pradesh, there is a separate team as Human Resource Management under Director, NREGA. This shows the value given to personnel in the implementation process. Table below describes the present team working on NREGA.

Table 2-1: Human Resource Details

No	Designation	Short Form	Functioning level	Exclusively for NREGA?	On contract?	Equivalent designation in Maharashtra
1	Commissioner, Rural Development	-	State	No	No	
2	Director, NREGA	-	State	Yes	No	Secretary, NREGA
3	Collector	-	District	No	No	Collector
4	Project Director	PD	District	Yes	No	Deputy Collector (EGS)
5	Mandal Program Development Officer	MPDO	Mandal	No	No	Block Development Officer (BDO)
6	Assistant Program Director	APD	District, 1 for each 5-6 mandals	Yes	No	-
7	Assistant Program Officer	APO	Mandal, 1 for each mandal	Yes	Yes	-
8	Engineering Consultant	EC	Mandal, one for 5-6 TAs	Yes	Yes	-
9	Technical Assistant	TA	Mandal, one for 5-6 gram panchayat	Yes	Yes	Jr. Engineer
10	Field assistant	FA	Mandal, one for each gram panchayat	Yes	Yes	Gram Rojgar Sevak
11	Computer Operator	CO	Mandal, 2 for each mandal	Yes	Yes	Outsourced agencies
12	Mate	-	One for each group of wage seekers	-	-	Mate
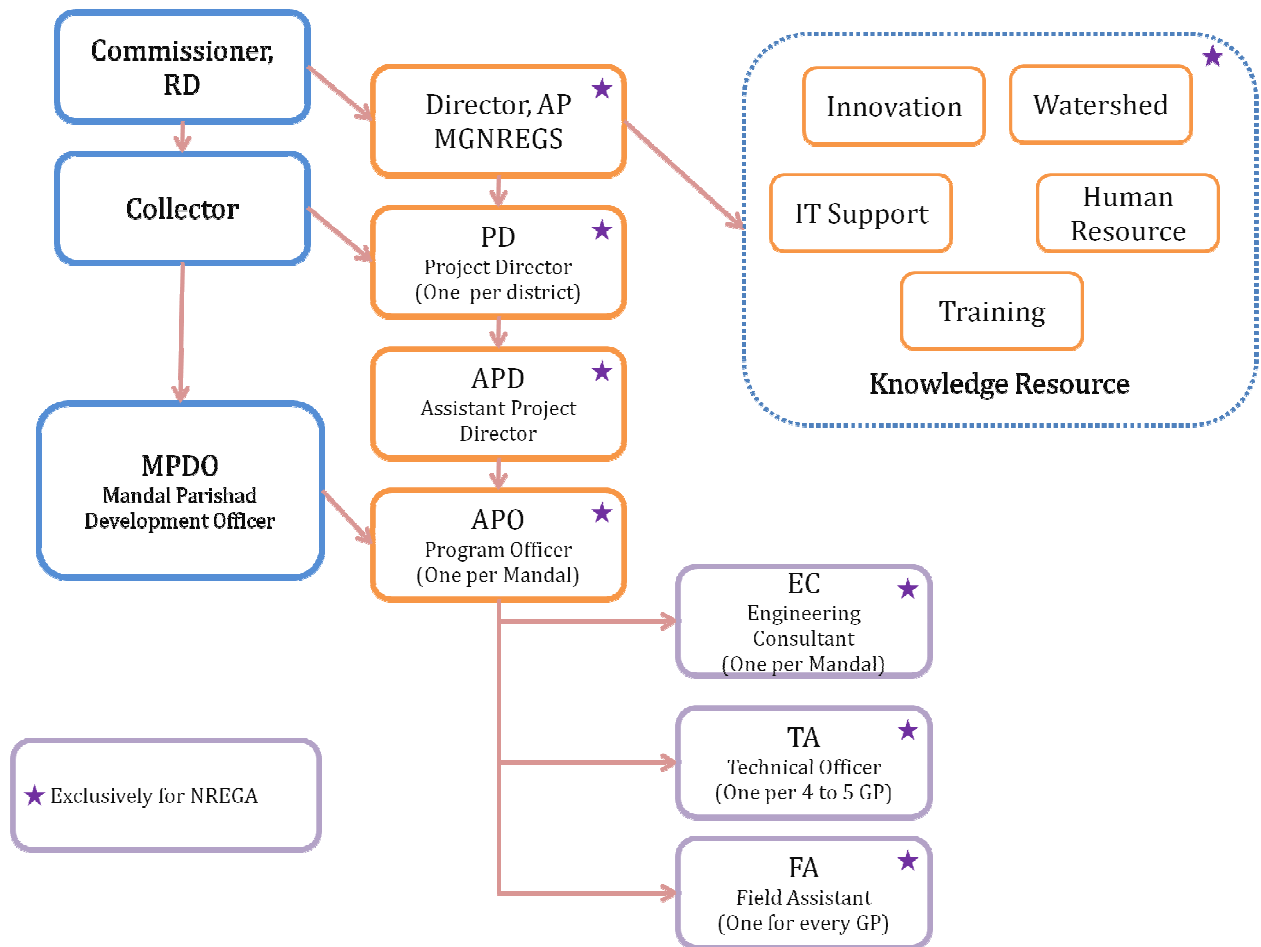
Figure 2-1: Organizational Chart

The responsibilities of each of the personnel are defined below.

1. Director NREGA is responsible for state-wide implementation of NREGA.
2. Collector (District Program Coordinator) is responsible for district-level implementation of NREGA with the assistance from PD.
3. The PD is responsible for the entire district's NREGA implementation. He/she acts as mediator between Director NREGA and the APDs/APOs. PD is also responsible for providing all the data to the society, social audits.
4. MPDO is mainly responsible for sanction of payments and sanction of works (if required).
5. APD looks every 5-6 Mandal for NREGA implementation. He/she acts as mediator between PD and APO
6. APO is responsible for the Mandal level NREGA implementation
7. Computer operators are responsible for data entry at Mandal Computer Center (MCC)
8. FA is responsible for taking everyday attendance at the work site, registration of new wage seekers, conveying demand for work to the APO and act as mediator between APO and wage seekers.
9. TA is responsible for measurements of the works and getting measurements for low-budget estimates of works
10. EC is mainly responsible for quality monitoring of works done and technical supervision of TAs.

11. Mate assists FA in taking attendance for the group.

Director, NREGA is supported with a team with dedicated personnel. They work on various ideas such as improving quality of works, reducing malpractices, introducing new techniques to improve efficiency etc.

2.2 Process Flow

Mandal office is the hub of administrative activity. All the aspects of the implementation process as described below originate and culminate in this office. The APO and EC are located here. This office is equipped with two computer and necessary support like internet, printers and power backup. Two computer operators handle all the data entry work here. This setup is referred to as Mandal Computer Center (MCC).

Figure 2-2: APO explaining the software at the MCC

Note: Administratively a Mandal in Andhra Pradesh is equivalent to Taluka in Maharashtra except that a Mandal is much smaller than a Taluka. On an average, a Mandal has maximum 25 Grampanchayats. Based on the number of Grampanchayats, a Taluka will be equivalent to 4 to 5 Mandals.

2.2.1 Shelf Preparation

Shelf of works consists of works which have technical and administrative sanction and can be started as per wage seeker demand. The shelf preparation includes the following steps

1. Suggestion of works by villagers

The FA consolidates a list of works based on the suggestion by villagers.

2. Ratification by legislative body

The suggested works are ratified by the Gram Sabha, Panchayat Samiti and Zilla Parishad and the procedure for bringing these works on the shelves begins.

3. Estimate preparation and technical sanction

A special software has been prepared for making estimates. 55 different kinds of works have been identified. For every work certain input data have been defined. The TA takes a print out of the input

data sheet and fills it onsite. These input values are then fed to the estimation software and it generates the estimate. A lot of research has gone into making this software intelligent. Generation of estimate is in itself the technical sanction of the work. The estimate also gives the total person days this work can generate and the breakup of the skilled and material component. The copies of estimates are always available with the FA.

Work Estimate

State	: Andhra Pradesh	District	: Anantapur	Mandal	: Amarapuram
Panchayat	: Amarapuram	Work Code	: 121656103003010431	Survey No.	: 463/5
Type of Work	: Earthen Bunding				
Work Name	: Earthen Bunding				
Work comm Date	: 22-Jun-2007	Start Date	: 03-Jul-2007	Completed Date	: -

Task Name	Quantity	Units	Labour Cost Unskilled(Rs.)	Labour Cost Skilled(Rs.)	Material Cost(Rs.)	Total Cost(Rs.)	Person Days
Earth work excavation in hard soils for stone outlet	6.28	Cu.m	455	0	0	455	5
Earth work excavation in hard soils	655	Cu.m	36025	0	0	36025	360
Procurement of 225/300mm Rough stone	22.88	Cu.m	0	0	1472	1472	0
Tractor hire charges for stone outlet	10	Trips	0	0	1130	1130	0
Breaking of clods~Tamping and Sectioning in Hard soils	655	Cu.m	11463	0	0	11463	115
Engaging Labor for Collection of 225-300mm stone with loading and unloading	22.88	Cu.m	1144	0	0	1144	11
Engaging Labor for Drypacking of 225-300mm stone for pitching	20.8	Cu.m	1560	0	0	1560	16
Total			50647	0	2602	53249	507

Figure 2-3: Estimate

What measurement data is required for a particular kind of work is precisely known to the TA/EC because of the software. The EC/TA gets the data collection format in printed form and records the measurements on the proposed work site. The collected measurement data is then entered into the estimation software at MCC.

4. Administrative sanction for the works

The estimate is sent to Collector for sanction through the software. The Collector gives the administrative sanction through the system and the work is promoted to the shelf. It is now ready to be started.

2.2.2 Work Commencement

AP government has a made a policy to start a new work on a Monday only. Each work has a unique work ID and can be tracked into software by the work ID. The wage seekers convey their demand for work to APO through FA. The demand is entered into the software. From the required number of person days, a work is selected from shelf of works. FA goes to Mandal office on preceding Friday to confirm starting of the work and conveys the wage seekers about it. A typical farm pond is shown in Figure 2-4.

Figure 2-4: A Farm Pond

2.2.3   Muster and Measurements

2.2.3.1   Initial System

A muster is a single page printed on both the sides of the thick paper. It has a hologram on it so that it can't be duplicated. Each muster has a unique number and is for 6 days: Monday to Saturday. One muster is provided for one gang. A gang must have minimum 10 and maximum 20 people. Entry of new wage seekers to the work is allowed on every Monday and Tuesday only. After Saturday's attendance, FA gets the musters to MCC for entry into the software system.
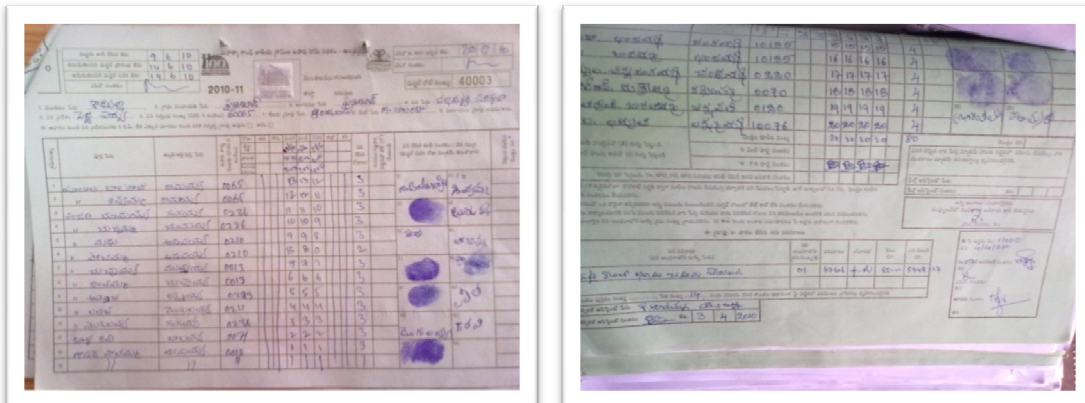

Figure 2-5: Muster Front and Back Page

Measurements are done by TA. The measurements for a work are recorded on every Saturday. The measurement book format is simple – the measurements are recorded along with the cumulative rate for work (including soil type, lead, lift). The rates (SOR) are provided to all TAs which acts as ready reckoner.

2.2.3.2   Mobile based electronic muster and measurement system (eMMS)

Mobile based muster and measurements system is already implemented in two districts by September 2010. It will get implemented by November 2010 across the state according to the officials.

Every FA/TA/EC/APO is given with a mobile of particular specification. Half the cost of the mobile is reimbursed by the government and individual has to put half of the money. The mobile is loaded

with the respective software according to the roles. The mobiles are also loaded and updated with the necessary information such as names of wage seekers in the village, the work identification codes, etc. The mobiles are also loaded with GPS tracker software. The muster and measurement software can be used offline (when the mobile network coverage is unavailable) and the information can be sent to the server as and when the FA/TA gets mobile network access.
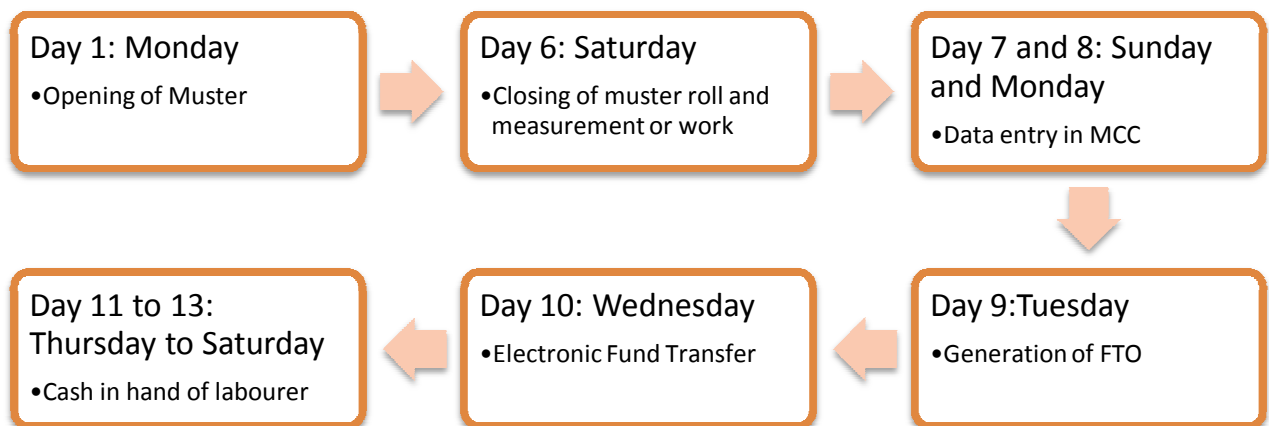
The FA mobile is loaded with the muster software. Muster software records the attendance of each wage seeker on the job and sends to the server as a message through mobile. A squad team at MCC is supposed to visit random work locations after the attendance is entered.

The TA mobile is loaded with the measurements software. TA records the measurements on the mobile. TA is also needed to take a photograph of the work site which is sent along with the GPS coordinates of the site as a message. This information can be used to ensure that the attendance has been taken from an actual work site.

The eMMS system reduces the load on MCC data entry by decentralizing the data entry and ensures real time data availability and work efficiency.

2.2.4 Payment Process

The payment life cycle is described in Figure 2-6. Musters are maintained for a week and measurements are done every week. Thus payments can be done every fortnight.

Day 1: Monday	Day 6: Saturday	Day 7 and 8: Sunday and Monday
•Opening of Muster	•Closing of muster roll and measurement or work	•Data entry in MCC

Day 11 to 13: Thursday to Saturday	Day 10: Wednesday	Day 9: Tuesday
•Cash in hand of labourer	•Electronic Fund Transfer	•Generation of FTO

Figure 2-6: Payment Cycle

The wage seekers are provided with wage slips. The wage slips consists of the details of payment such as

- Name
- Job Card No.
- No. of days worked and period of work

- Wage to be paid
- Bank/Post account No.

The wage slips ensure that the wage seeker knows about how much money he/she will get and for what duration. As the payments are done through savings accounts only the wage seeker gets the money through the post or bank. With the wage slip in hand wage seekers are empowered and can dialogue with conviction with post/bank officials in case of delay or discrepancy in payment.

Figure 2-7: Wage Slip

Andhra Pradesh has now shifted to a completely electronically fund management system. This is described in the next section.

2.3 Electronic Fund Management System (EFMS)

With the Electronic Fund Management system, it is possible to do all the financial transactions electronically. The EFMS process is shown in Figure 2-8.

Money is maintained in one account and all Mandals can access it when required for making payments. After the muster and measurement data are entered, an electronic pay order is generated at the MCC which details the lists of accounts to which funds are to be transferred. This is ratified by the MPDO through a digital signature, biometric verification and a password and a Fund Transfer Order (FTO) is generated.
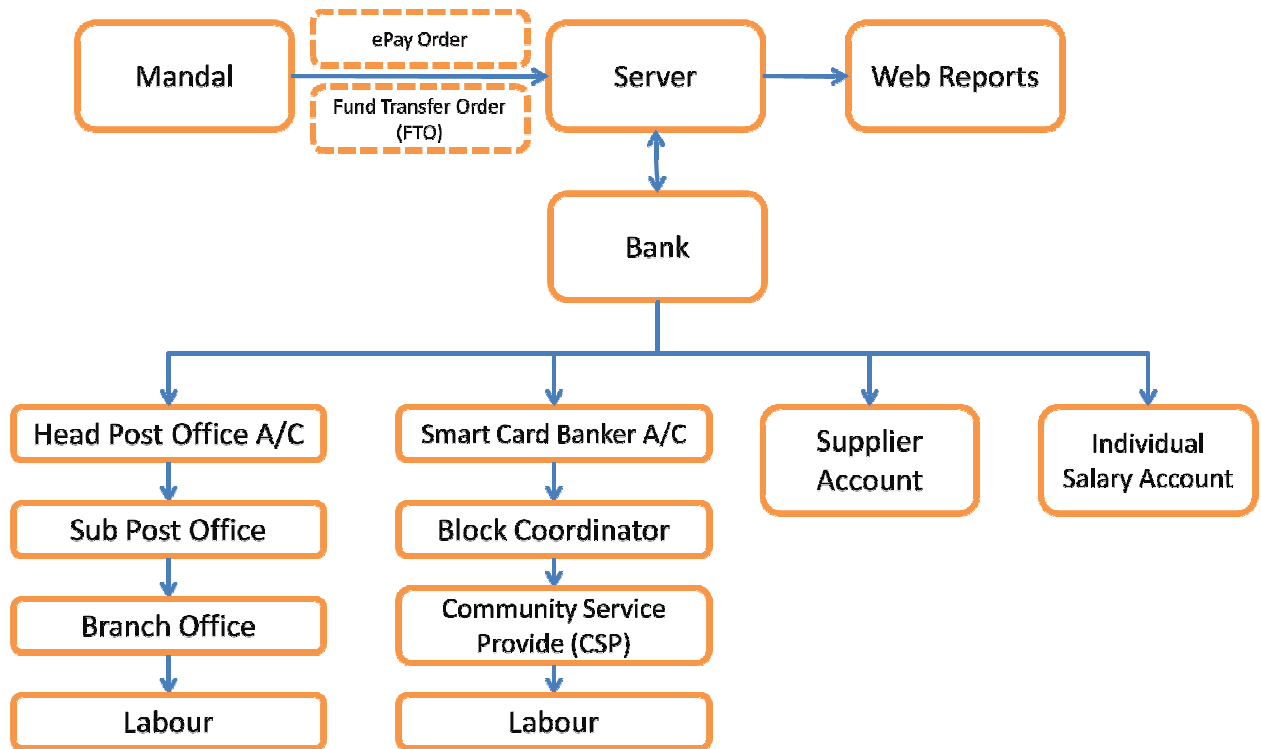
Figure 2-8: EFMS

Figure 2-9: An FTO

Funds are transferred from the Government NREGA Account to the Head Post office or Bank electronically. The post office or bank then arranges for transfer into the individual account based on the ePay Order which gives the details of how much money is to be transferred to which account. In case of post, the wage seeker goes to the post office and withdraws the money. This acts as a saving account and wage seeker can withdraw as much money as he/she wishes. The transaction is documented on the passbook.

National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, AP

MPDO Office Copy

Payment Order

To,
Zero-MASS.

Date: 26/10/2009

Payment Order No: 2198

Dear Sir/Madam,

Sub: Payment of wages for the Work Earthen Bunding-Pada Gadda , Work Code 172243509010010038 for the period 21/06/2009 to 27/06/2009 . This work is being executed in GOLLAPALLE Habitation.

Kindly arrange to pay the wages for the following people.

S.No	Group Name	Jobcard ID	Name	Disabled	No of days worked	Wage Per Day (Rs.)	Crowbar Charges / Basket Charges.(Rs.)	Total Amount to be paid (Rs.)	Previous excess Payments(Rs)	Balance Amount to be Paid (Rs.)	Account No.
1	1132 M.Daniel	09010010272-01	Manne Daanel	No	4	110.88	12	456	0	456	30344902255
2	1122 Shankraiah	09010010007-01	Tenugu Malayya	No	3	112.54	9	347	0	347	30344902288
3	1128 M.Jangaiah	09010010028-01	Minupur Kishtayya	No	4	110.88	12	456	0	456	30344902357
4	1130 G.Narsimulu	09010010272-04	Manne Yaadamma	No	4	110.88	12	456	0	456	30344902517
5	1128 M.Jangaiah	09010010139-03	Niradi Sudhakar	No	4	110.88	12	456	0	456	30344902630
6	1129 T.Dasharath	09010010152-01	Nadiminti Chandayya	No	4	110.88	12	456	0	456	30344902652

Mandal Program Control Center: KONDAPUR
System developed by Tata Consultancy Services Ltd

Figure 2-10: Pay Order

In case of bank accounts, AP government has introduced Business Correspondent agencies which are the interface between the wage seeker and the bank. This is explained in detail in the next section.

With EFMS districts do not need to be given advances. Every Mandal gets exactly as much as it needs. Thus the issue of shortage of funds does not become bottleneck. Exceptions in transactions are monitored by generating exception reports.

2.4   Business Correspondents

Business Correspondents are the interface between the Bank and the wage seeker. This method has been recommended by RBI for financial inclusion. This includes an agency which is called the Business Correspondent. This agency is appointed by the Bank. This agency appoints Customer Service Providers (CSP) in the village. They are equipped with a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) and a Biometric Finger Print Scanning Device. The PDA is used for the digital documentation of transaction and the scanner ensures the identity of the person.

Through this system the wage seeker gets cash in the village. Efforts of travelling to the bank are eliminated. The CSP is mostly a woman from a SHG of the village. She's at least 10th class and preferably daughter-in-law of the village. She gets paid retainer amount + incentive amount. The incentives are based on transaction amount. She is also responsible for bank account opening.

Currently, the entire payment is given to the wage seeker in cash. So this mechanism is used just as a fund transferring mechanism. This is not being used as a saving bank account.
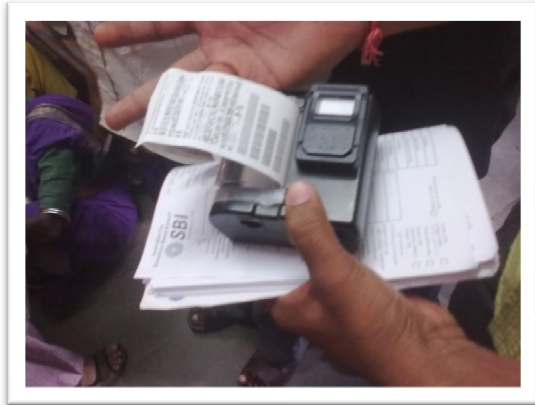
Figure 2-11: CSP with the Hand Held Device

2.5 Schedule of Rates (SOR)

The Schedule of Rates guarantees a minimum wage of Rs 100 per person per day as on September 2010. The SOR is illustrative and ready-reckoned for ease of use. It is entered in the software system and is in synchronization with the estimation software and the measurement software.

The SOR is suitable modified for summer season and physically disabled wage seekers. People work lesser in summer as a reaction to heat so rates are increased accordingly. The rates for disabled are 30% more than the normal rates.

2.6 Training

Andhra Pradesh has given special importance to training. The least busy season of implementation is the monsoon, hence this is used creatively for recruitment and training. Series of training are held during this time. Separate training for each of the role is designed. All the field functionaries, APO, EC, FA, TA are given induction training and then regular training every year. There are training aids like Posters, Films and Manuals. Manuals are very illustrative, and look simple which are being used to refer to by the field functionaries.

There are Cluster Level Resource Centres for a Cluster of Mandals. These were centres to provide training to Personnel of different programs. It is simple and equipped with a dormitory type residential hall, a training hall with TV and Board and such training aids. Everyone in the field today has had training which gives them role clarity.
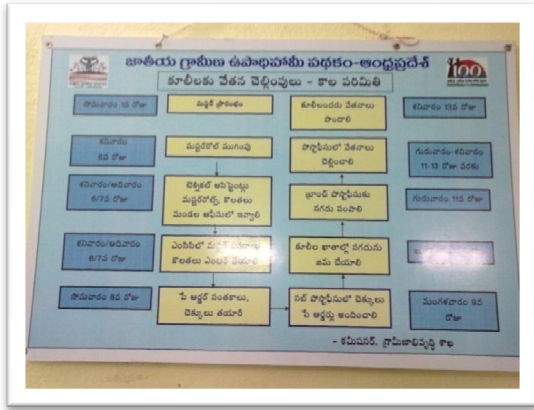
Figure 2-12: Flex boards designed for Training

3 Monitoring and Grievance Redressal

Monitoring and Grievance Redressal is an important dimension of a program. The processes used in Andhra Pradesh are listed below.

3.1 Monitoring through Reports

Digitization of data enables the system to generate reports. Once data is fed into the system, reports are automatically generated by the system. No officer is expected to write reports. They are a byproduct of digitization of data. This culture of systemic report generation is an important management innovation. Some of the reports are mentioned below.

3.1.1 At a Glance

As the name suggests, at a glance reports give an overall picture of the status of implementation. These can be viewed at State, District, Mandal, and Grampanchayat level. The concerned officer can use this report to get a quick idea of status and know the areas that need to be looked into. An example for the state is provided below in Figure 3-1.

3.1.2 Exceptions

To anticipate the problems and be able to solve them in time, some exceptions have been identified. If this exceptional behavior is observed, then the system lists it in the exceptional report. Some of the exception reports are as follows.

- List of Mandals with Material Expenses exceeding 40%
- Expenditure exceeding sanctioned limits
- Payment Delays
- GPs with no expenses
- GPs whose shelf has been exhausted

R1.1 NREGS-AP AT A GLANCE

Report for the Financial Year of 2010-2011
Report as on Date 08. 10. 2010
State : Andhra Pradesh

Total No of Districts under EGS			22
Total No of Mandals			1098
Total No of Grampanchayats			21859
Total No of Habitations			68990
Total No of Jobcards Issued			1,18,50,441
Total No of Adult members enrolled in Jobcards Issued			2,81,88,868
		Financial Year of 2010-2011	Cumulative Since Inception
Works administratively Sanctioned	Number	18,63,331	27,04,862
	Value-(Rs in Lakhs)	2,88,83,45.46	3,76,27,85.99
Works in-progress	Number	6,20,724	-
	Value-(Rs in Lakhs)	1,41,28,79.68	-
Total No of Works Completed	Number	2,55,471	10,97,002
	Value-(Rs in Lakhs)	44,68,05.56	1,32,12,46.10
Total Expenditure	Wages (Rs in Lakhs)	29,73,28.48	1,06,12,49.64
	Material and Skilled Wages (Rs in Lakhs)	9,29,12.28	22,14,62.49
	Contingency (Rs in Lakhs)	1,08,32.34	3,96,76.00
	Total (Rs in Lakhs)	40,10,73.11	1,32,23,88.13
Wage Employment Provided	Household (Nos)	60,48,920	88,12,008
	Individual (Nos)	1,14,84,267	1,72,13,443
	Men (Nos)	52,35,200	80,22,678
	Women (Nos)	62,49,067	91,90,765
	SC Individual(Nos)	29,21,921	44,37,817
	ST Individual(Nos)	17,09,458	23,59,603
	Disabled (Nos)	65,084	99,066
Total No of Person days generated		30,66,13,831	1,18,95,79,622
Average Wage rate per day per person (Rs.)		96.97	89.21
Average No of days employment provided per Household		50.69	-
Total No of Households completed 100 Days of Wage Employment		7,90,349	31,42,846

Figure 3-1: Report of NREGS-AP at a Glance

3.1.3   Performance Review Reports

Performance review reports are generated and Mandals/Districts/GPs are ranked based on the performance. Performance is evaluated based on a weightage given to certain parameters. They are as follows.

Average person days per Household	25%
Working Households per Mandal	20%
Timely payments	20%
Average days by SC&ST	15%
Works completion	10%
Households completing 100 days	10%

Every Mandal/District gets a rank for individual parameters as well as overall rank. This is just to maintain a healthy comparison and motivate officers to improve performance and also know the areas to focus on for improvement.

3.1.4 Special Reports

These is a constant contact between the administration and TCS and based on the need of different stake holders, tailor made reports are also generated for specific monitoring or policy making. For example a report was generated which gave a list of all the workers which had worked for more that 20 days per year for the past 3 years. These were identified as the most needy workers and are now being organized into Srama Sakthi Sanghas. These Sanghas will be focused on for the next 3 years and it will be specifically ensured that these get 100 days employment per year.

3.2 Monitoring of Processes

The availability of data helps in tracking every person, every household, every work and every rupee spent. Monitoring techniques not only capture the malpractices but the fact that such efficient techniques exist reduce malpractices in the longer run.

3.2.1 Financial Monitoring

The fund transfer processes are completely electronic. When generating pay orders they are classified based on their type, such as wages, material expense, stationary, vehicle hiring etc. The system provides upper caps for these expenses if required. Thereby these expenses are systemically controlled.

3.2.2 Data Validity Monitoring

With eMMS technology, the daily attendance will be sent to the MCC by 11 am that day. The system will then generate random villages where APO will go and verify. For measurement of works, the mobile will also send GPS data along with measurements. This will be useful to know if the measurement happened on the site.

3.2.3 Review Meetings

Review meetings are organized at different levels to take a stock of activities as well as solve difficulties. On every Wednesday, a review meeting it taken by the APO at the Mandal office. All the FAs, TAs and EC attend the meeting. FAs submit photocopies of musters so that data entry can begin immediately. Similarly the PD takes a review meeting of the APOs and Director NREGA takes review meetings of PDs on a regular basis. The monitoring reports generated by system are available on the website and the exceptions in these are the points for discussion. The meetings act as a communication platform to discuss the issues faced as well as tackle inefficiencies if any.

3.3 Grievance Redressal

3.3.1 Helpline

A toll free number has been started where one can call and register the grievance. The grievance is recorded and the operator interprets the grievance and is sends it to the concerned officer. A time limit is set for response by the officer. After the limit elapses the grievance automatically gets escalated to the higher officer and on the 14th day to Director NREGA.
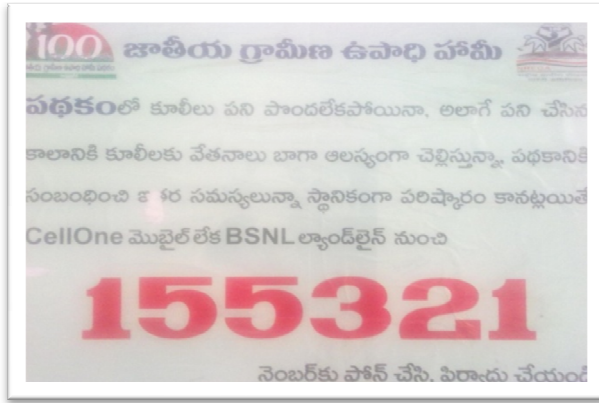
Figure 3-2: An advertisement of the toll free Helpline

3.3.2 Social Audit

While the social audit acts as a monitoring mechanism and to uncover malpractices it is also useful for Grievance Redressal. People can directly voice their grievances to the PD of the district and immediate action is taken by the PD. More detailed description of this process in Chapter 4.

3.3.3 Television Program

Every Wednesday, the Director NREGA sits in a phone in program on the regional TV channel, Mana TV. Every Mandal office is equipped with a Plasma TV and cable connection. All the Mandal officers i.e. from FA to APO watch this program. In case of any difficulties they can phone in and ask for clarifications. This is a very innovative idea as it considers grievances of people in the administration. This also enables the Director to dialogue with the machinery to motivate them. It also acts as a medium to update the field functionaries about the changes that are made.

Figure 3-3: Television Program being viewed at Mandal Office

4 Social Audit

GoAP has a very good system in place for implementation of NREGA. Monitoring of the program at various levels of administration is built into the System. All data of planning, delivery, payment is digitized and available on the web for all to study. This ensures transparency. There are special avenues created for lodging complaints directly like toll free number, web-based registration of compliant, periodic review meetings and such. Yet there could be some wrongdoing somewhere such as fudged muster, wrong measurements, wrong names, pending payments, incorrect payments, availability of other worksite facilities and such. To unearth these, the ultimate mechanism is of Social Audit.

Social Audit is a process. This is a process where active and informed participation of the beneficiary is necessary. It is a process of checking all the records generated during implementation, with the reality. Since this is a process of audit, it cannot be conducted by the implementing agency. And so, a separate Society has been formed which is more of an NGO rather than a GO. The Society is called Society for Social Audit Accountability and Transparency. MKSS has played an important role in setting up the process and taking up the initial trainings. The director is on contract from another NGO and most of the staff consists of experienced people coming from NGOs, from all over India. This provides the basic credibility to the process.

The process consists of first forming a State Resource Team. They are trained in the why and how of the organizing and conducting of Social Audit. Then the District resource team is formed who are trained by State resource Team. The district resource team goes into Mandals, villages and forms a temporary group of Village Volunteers. They are given training for conducting Social Audits in villages. The trained team of village volunteers is allotted villages/Mandals other than village of residence. This gives better neutrality and freedom to them to get information freely. The payment for Village Volunteers Rs.100 + 100 (DA+TA) per day, upto 1000 (preferably a job seeker); the District Resource Team member gets Rs. 8000 per month + Rs. 100 DA + TA at actual + sim card 300 and the State Resource Team member gets Rs.14000pm+DA+TA+Communication.

The basic responsibility has been taken up by GoAP, so all the costs of the process are borne by the Government. GoAP on its part provides all the necessary records for scrutiny. It also takes responsibility of security, if necessary with Police protection is provided at the time of Public hearing. House visits are conducted to verify records and the findings are read in the Gram Sabha. After all the villages in the Mandal are covered, a Public Hearing is arranged at the Mandal office. The Project Director (District level officer for NREGA) is the presiding officer. He has the authority to take decision, to the extent of filing police, criminal complaints of fraud. The Public hearing is attended by the elected representatives like the President of the Panchayat Samiti, members, Sarpanch of some of villages. The Social Audits are planned to be conducted every six months, but they admit that they are unable to cover all the area and ensure this periodicity. Once declared, date of the Social Audit is not changed.

We could attend a Social Audit at Mandal Aleru, District Nalgonda. There are 18 villages in this Mandal. All the Field Assistants, the Technical Assistants, the Assistant Project Officer, the Engineer consultant, the Mandal Parishad Development Officer were present. A member of the State Resource Team, member of staff from Society office and all the Village Volunteers who conducted Social Audit

in the villages were ready with their village-wise report and a consolidated Mandal report. And most importantly there were couple of hundred villagers! Mandal level report had the following format

Sr. No/Name of Gram Panchayat/Issue/Amount/Responsible person/Decision

The volunteer read out details of the record of each complaint like the name, job card number, the work id number, name of village/habitation.

The seating arrangement with a pendal, a mike system and complete video recording is the responsibility of the Mandal office. One by one the Village Volunteers came and read out the report. The Project Director discussed with the concerned officers/people and gave orders. There were few issues of medical compensation, delay in material payment, procedure for giving payments to the legal heir for a wage seeker who died, quality of a land development work, demand for verification of measurements of a Check Dam, payment amount deposited into wrong account, wage seeker's job card details not updated and such. For all such cases appropriate action was initiated and the case was ordered to be completed within a week or 10 days.

The major complaint from a village where the Field Assistant had created a false muster and had deposited payment into a dead wage seekers account and withdrawn it by involving the Branch Post Master as an accomplice. The Field Assistant had resigned. Yet the Project Director ordered a criminal offence to be registered against both the Field Assistant and the Post Master.

The participation of the villagers was very good. Especially noticeable was that the women were seen in majority. Their confidence and assertiveness showed that the process was also empowering the wage seekers and provided them space for meaningful participation.

Figure 4-1: A Social Audit in progress

Government's involvement in providing all the records, arranging the Public Hearing and taking actions based on the Orders of the Presiding officer provides credibility to the efforts of the Society.

The entire process involving villagers, job seekers, all field functionaries, member of independent agency coming together to correct issues looks like a beautiful form of direct democracy.

* Social Audit is necessary

* Social Audit has to be conducted by a neutral, third party

* The decisions have to be backed by the Government

* Independent NGOs conducting Social Audit is good. But what if 'NGOs with vested interest' (like initiated by local political leader) come in? This will take away the 'neutral' part.

* If independent NGOs conduct Public Hearing, who takes responsibility of addressing the complaints? So involvement of the Government is necessary.

5 Innovations

5.1 Land inventory

To prioritize beneficiaries from vulnerable section of the society in agriculture land development works that can be done through NREGA, the government has taken a step to create agricultural land inventory records.

The land inventory is prepared by conducting survey in each village of the state. The survey is a onetime activity. Family details consisting of caste and family members, the family land holdings are recorded in the survey. The land holding details include area, ownership, location and irrigated/non-irrigated status and similar details about the land.

Through land inventory, the government is ensuring that the beneficiaries are not just those who have political strength in the villages but those who have smaller land holding and those who belong to vulnerable sections of the society.

Land inventory is backend process to shelf generation. Based on the survey, the works required for development of these lands are identified and the system generates technical estimates for those works and then added to shelf of works. It has been decided that these works will be given preference over the other works.

5.2 Srama Sakthi Sangha

The state has taken an initiative to increase its commitment to the wage seekers who are in need of work. The state has identified the serious wage seekers – who have worked at least 20 days in last three years and has offered them to form a group of about 20 which is called Srama Sakthi Sangha. These groups will be exclusively focused to ensure that they receive maximum employment.

6 Conclusion

We would like to conclude our report by saying that Andhra Pradesh has been able to perform with such effectiveness because of their strong focus on systems which include:

- Digitization of data at source
- Real time availability of data
- Completely Electronic Fund Management
- Rigorous Training
- Estimation Software
- Activity Loop Closure at Mandal Level
- Electronic Muster and Measurement Systems (eMMS)
- State being an equal partner in Social Audit and taking responsibility of outcome
- Continuously evolving and feedback driven administrative processes
- Conceptual and technical innovations at all levels

7   Annexure

7.1   List of Team

Sameer Rane, MKCL

Ashwini Kulkarni, Pragati Abhiyan

Priyadarshan Sahasrabuddhe

Dhananjay Muli

7.2   Study tour details of MKCL team

| Sr. No.	Date	Location	Details	Person Met
1	27/09/2010	NREGS Office Hyderabad	Presentation by Director, NREGA and Director SSAAT (Society for Social Audit, Accountability and Transparency). Department of Rural Development, Govt. of AP	Director,NREGA : A Murali Director SSAAT: Ms Soumya
2	28/09/2010	Visit to Medak District : Kowdipally Mandal,Faizabad & Bujurampet Villages	Payment of wages through Biometric Device, MCC – Demo of RAGAS software & interaction with wage seekers	APD : Mr. Nirmal Kumar APO : Mrs. Geeta Devi
3	29/09/2010	Visit at Ranga Reddy District : Kandukur Mandal, Village : Pulimamidi	Generation of Pay order, Digital sanctioning of pay order by MPDO and interaction with wage seekers	APD : Mr. Vishuvardhan Rao
4	30/09/2010	Visit at Nalgonda District : Aleru Mandal	To observe an ongoing Social Audit and its impact.	Resource person of Social Audit society : Ms Kavita Shrinivasan MPDO : Mr. Jalandhar Reddy APO : Mr. Balaswamy PD : Mr. Shrinivas Baba
5	1/10/2010	Visit to District Collector office, Ranga Reddy	Funds Management at District level	Finance Manager : Mr. Prabhakar Reddy TCS person : Mr. Amrut Kumar PD : Mr. Surya Rao

7.3   Photos
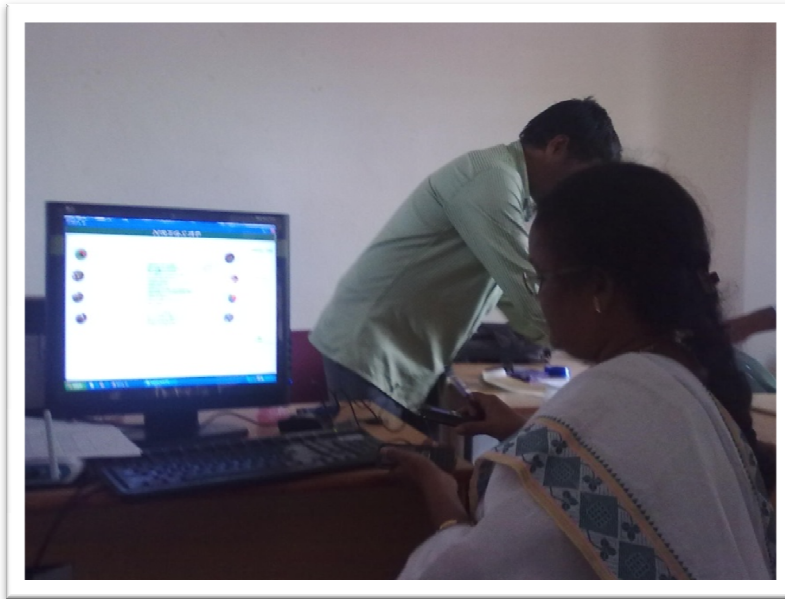
Figure 7-1: MPDO authorizing transaction with Digital Signature

Figure 7-2: Muster is displayed in GP for pubilic viewing

Figure 7-3: Discussion with Wage Seekers

Figure 7-4: Audience at the Social Audit