

EVALUATION SERIES NO: 89



GOVERNMENT OF KERALA

**THE PERFORMANCE OF NREGS IN PHASE I &
PHASE II DISTRICTS IN KERALA
AN EVALUATION STUDY**



**EVALUATION DIVISION
KERALA STATE PLANNING BOARD**

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

MARCH 2011

EVALUATION SERIES NO: 89

**THE PERFORMANCE OF NREGS IN
PHASE I & PHASE II
DISTRICTS IN KERALA

(AN EVALUATION STUDY)**

EVALUATION DIVISION
KERALA STATE PLANNING BOARD
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

MARCH 2011

CONTENTS

List of Tables

List of Figures

List of Appendices

Abbreviations

List of References

Executive Summary

Chapters	Particulars	Page
1.	Introduction	30 - 45
2.	National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (Salient Features and Main Components)	46 - 66
3.	Implementation of NREGS in Phase I Districts I Wayanad District II Palakkad District	67 - 117
4.	Implementation of NREGS in Phase II Districts I Kasaragod District II Idukki District	118 - 168
5.	Main Findings, Suggestions and Recommendations	169 - 174

List of Tables

No.	Tables	Page
Chapter 3		
3.1	Year Wise Details of No. of Families Registered and Job card Issued in Wayanad District	70
3.2	Year Wise Details of Employment Generated (House holds & Labour Days) in Wayanad District	70
3.3	Year Wise Details of Financial Performance in Wayanad District	73
3.4	Year Wise Details of Work Status in Wayanad District	74
3.5	Year Wise Details of No. of Families Registered and Job card Issued in Edavaka Panchayat	76
3.6	Year Wise Details of Employment Generated (House holds & Labour Days) in Edavaka Panchayat	77
3.7	Year Wise Details of Financial Performance in Edavaka Panchayat	78
3.8	Year Wise Details of Work Status in Edavaka Panchayat	79
3.9	Year Wise Details of No. of Families Registered and Job card Issued in Kaniyambetta Panchayat	85
3.10	Year Wise Details of Employment Generated (House holds & Labour Days) in Kaniyambetta Panchayat	86
3.11	Year Wise Details of Financial Performance in Kaniyambetta Panchayat	88
3.12	Year Wise Details of Work Status in Kaniyambetta Panchayat	89
3.13	Distribution of total workers (Main & Marginal) in Palakkad as per 2001 census	95
3.14	Year Wise Details of No. of Families Registered and Job card Issued in Palakkad District	96
3.15	Year Wise Details of Employment Generated (House holds & Labour Days) in Palakkad District	97
3.16	Year Wise Details of Financial Performance in Palakkad District	98
3.17	Year Wise Details of Work Status in Palakkad District	99

3.18	Year Wise Details of No. of Families Registered and Job card Issued in Akathethara Panchayat	100
3.19	Year Wise Details of Employment Generated (House holds & Labour Days) in Akathethara Panchayat	101
3.20	Year Wise Details of Financial Performance in Akathethara Panchayat	102
3.21	Year Wise Details of Work Status in Akathethara Panchayat	102
3.22	Kongapadam ward- details under NREGS	103
3.23	Details of workers in Alanalloor Panchayat	109
3.24	Year Wise Details of No. of Families Registered and Job card Issued in Alanalloor Panchayat	109
3.25	Year Wise Details of Employment Generated (House holds & Labour Days) in Alanalloor Panchayat	110
3.26	Year Wise Details of Financial Performance in Alanalloor Panchayat	111
3.27	Year Wise Details of Work Status in Alanalloor Panchayat	111
Chapter 4		
4.1	Year Wise Details of No. of Families Registered and Job card Issued in Kasargod District	119
4.2	Year Wise Details of Employment Generated (House holds & Labour Days) in Kasargod District	120
4.3	Year Wise Details of Financial Performance in Kasargod District	121
4.4	Year Wise Details of Work Status in Kasargod District	122
4.5	Details of wards and Panchayats selected for study in Kasargod District	123
4.6	Year Wise Details of No. of Families Registered and Job card Issued in Madikkai Panchayat	124
4.7	Year Wise Details of Employment Generated (House holds & Labour Days) in Madikkai Panchayat	125
4.8	Year Wise Details of Financial Performance in Madikkai Panchayat	126
4.9	Year Wise Details of Work Status in Madikkai Panchayat	127
4.10	Year Wise Details of No. of Families Registered and Job card Issued in Chengala Panchayat	134
4.11	Year Wise Details of Employment Generated (House holds & Labour Days) in Chengala Panchayat	135

4.12	Year Wise Details of Financial Performance in Chengala Panchayat	137
4.13	Year Wise Details of Work Status in Chengala Panchayat	138
4.14	Year Wise Details of No. of Families Registered and Job card Issued in Idukki District	146
4.15	Year Wise Details of Employment Generated (House holds & Labour Days) in Idukki District	147
4.16	Year Wise Details of Financial Performance in Idukki District	148
4.17	Year Wise Details of Work Status in Idukki District	148
4.18	Details of wards and Panchayats selected for study in Idukki District	149
4.19	Year Wise Details of No. of Families Registered and Job card Issued in Kanjikuzhy Panchayat	150
4.20	Year Wise Details of Employment Generated (House holds & Labour Days) in Kanjikuzhy Panchayat	151
4.21	Year Wise Details of Financial Performance in Kanjikuzhy Panchayat	153
4.22	Year Wise Details of Work Status in Kanjikuzhy Panchayat	153
4.23	Year Wise Details of No. of Families Registered and Job card Issued in Erattayar Panchayat	161
4.24	Year Wise Details of Employment Generated (House holds & Labour Days) in Erattayar Panchayat	161
4.25	Year Wise Details of Financial Performance in Erattayar Panchayat	162
4.26	Year Wise Details of Work Status in Erattayar Panchayat	163

List of Figures

No.	Particulars	Page
Chapter 3		
3.1	Proportion of SC, ST and Women in total NREGS workers in Wayanad (per cent)	71
3.2	Year Wise Details of Employment Generated in Edavaka Panchayat	77
3.3	Year Wise Details of Employment Generated in kaniyambetta Panchayat	87
3.4	Proportion of SC, ST and Women in total NREGS workers in Palakkkad (per cent)	97
3.5	Year Wise Details of Employment Generated in Akathethara Panchayat	101
3.6	Year Wise Details of Employment Generated in Alanalloor Panchayat	110
Chapter 4		
4.1	Proportion of SC, ST and Women in total NREGS workers in kasargod (per cent)	120
4.2	Year Wise Details of Employment Generated in Madikkai Panchayat	125
4.3	Year Wise Details of Employment Generated in Chengala Panchayat	135
4.4	Proportion of SC, ST and Women in total NREGS workers in Idukki (per cent)	147
4.5	Year Wise Details of Employment Generated in Kanjikuzhy Panchayat	151
4.6	Year Wise Details of Employment Generated in Erattayar Panchayat	162

List of Appendices

No.	Particulars	Page
Chapter 1		
1.1	Year Wise Details of No. of Families Registered & Job Card Issued in Kerala	175
1.2	Year Wise Details of Employment Generated (House holds & Labour Days) in Kerala	175
1.3	Year Wise Details of Financial Performance in Kerala	176
1.4	Year Wise Details of Work Status in Kerala	177
1.5	List of Identified Ward Level Samples Studied	178

List of Abbreviations

ADS	Area Development Society
AE	Assistant Engineer
AS	Administrative Sanction
AXE	Assistant Executive Engineer
BPL	Below Poverty Line
BPO	Block Programme Officer
CDS	Community Development Society
DLM	District Level Monitoring
DPC	District Programme Co-ordinator
DPP	District Perspective Plan
EGS	Employment Guarantee Scheme
GP	Gram Panchayat
HH	Household
IAY	Indira Awaas Yojana
JPC	Joint Programme Co-ordinator
KDP	Kerala Development Programme
LSGD	Local Self Government Department
MIS	Management Information System
NREGA	National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
NREGS	National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme
PCR	Project Completion report
PP	Perspective Plan
PPC	People's Plan Campaign
PRI	Panchayati Raj Institution
PWD	Public Works Department
RD	Rural Development
RDD	Rural Development Department
REGS	Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme
RTI	Right to Information
RWSP	Rural Water Supply Programme
SC	Scheduled Caste

SCB	Service Co-operative Bank
SEGC	State Employment Guarantee Council
SGRY	Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana
SGSY	Swarnajayanthi Gram Swarozgar Yojana
SoR	Schedule of Rates
ST	Scheduled Tribe
TS	Technical Sanction
TSC	Total Sanitation Campaign
VEO	Village Extension Officer
VLC	Village Level Committee
VMC	Vigilance and Monitoring Committee
WEP	Wage Employment Programme

List of References

1. Impact Assessment of Nregs in Kerala Evaluation of Systems and Processes by Jos Chathukulam and K. Gireesan Centre for Rural Management (Crm) Kottayam, Kerala
2. Impact assessment of NREGA in three Panchayat of Kasargod District by K>N.Nair and T.D Sreedharan Anoop Kumar
3. Operational guidelines issued by SIRD Kerala
4. Kurushetra Dec.2009
5. Economical & Political weekly June 2009
6. Southern Economics Dec 2009
7. Yojana March 2009

PREFACE

When the NREGS was first introduced in 2006 there was a widespread belief that the Scheme, though of great potential benefit for other states in the country, was of little relevance to Kerala. Kerala's problem was generally supposed to be one of educated unemployment rather than of simple unemployment (the difficulty of getting simple labour for odd jobs, as well as the high wage rates, were cited as evidence in support of this alleged absence of simple unemployment); and since educated unemployment required the creation of skilled rather than unskilled manual jobs, NREGS was considered inapposite for Kerala. But the scale of registrations in Wyanad and Palakkad, the two districts where the NREGS was first introduced in the state, came as a big surprise for most observers. Since then even as the coverage of the scheme was widened, the demand for work under it has continued to remain buoyant.

The solution to this puzzle, of why in an apparently tight labour market there should be so much latent demand for unskilled manual employment lies in the fact that NREGS has drawn to its fold workers belonging to the marginalized categories: the tribal people who earlier used to migrate to neighbouring states in search of employment for only a fraction of the wage rate offered under the NREGS, and, above all, women, who had simply dropped out of the work-force. In fact as the present study shows, 87 percent of the working days created through the NREGS have gone to women alone.

The fact that women have come forward to work under the NREGS in such large number does not mean that the "discouraged worker" effect operated earlier, i.e. that the sheer absence of jobs had made them drop out of the work-force. It is more a result of the popularity of NREGS itself, which arises for two reasons: first, NREGS work does not carry the stigma of working for an employer; and second, it is work that does not require travel over long distances.

NREGS in the context of Kerala therefore has brought in a distinct improvement in the conditions of life of the marginalized sections of the rural population. And since it has kept out contractors and developed a fairly efficient system of wage payment, free of the usual malpractices, it has had a degree of effectiveness that is quite striking. Of course it would be over-optimistic to claim that the right to employment has at last been authentically institutionalized; but the salutary nature of the change brought about by the Scheme cannot be denied.

This evaluation study of the NREGS has been carried out by the Evaluation Division of the State Planning Board under the overall guidance and supervision of Smt. Saraswathy, the Chief of the Division. We are grateful to the people's representatives, and officials associated with the NREGS, in the selected districts and panchayats, who have extended their cooperative for this study.

I should thank Dr. Arindam Banerjee, Research Associate of the Centre for Development Studies at the time, who assisted with the finalization of the questionnaires. But above all I would like to express our deep sense of gratitude to Professor Jayati Ghosh of the Jawaharlal Nehru University, who, as the Honorary Adviser for this study, was extremely generous with her time and helped at all crucial stages of the work.

Thiruvananthapuram
18/03/2011

Vice-Chairman
State Planning Board

FOREWORD

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) is a right based social protection initiative which guarantees 100 days of employment in a financial year to any rural house hold whose adult members are willing to do unskilled manual work. The act came in to force initially in 200 districts across the country in 2nd Feb 2006. Later extended to all districts from April 2008 onwards.

The potential of NREGA spans over a range of possibilities. The choice of works suggested in the Act addresses chronic problem like draught, deforestation and soil erosion. So that the employment generation can be maintained on a sustainable basis. The uniqueness of this Act is that it eliminates gender discrimination in wages, elimination of work contracting, payment of wages through banks/post offices to prevent corruption. Through social auditing transparency and accountability is maintaining in all levels of implementation.

NREGA has been implemented in three phases. In the 1st phase Wayanad and Palakkad Districts were selected from Kerala and in the 2nd phase kasargod and Idukki were also selected. In 3rd phase all Districts are brought under the scheme. In conformity with the Act the State Government have issued guidelines for implementation of the scheme. The present Evaluation Study is concerned with the performance analysis of implementation of NREGS in phase I and phase II Districts in the state. The methodology followed was to select two different Panchayat from different block of each District and the selection was done on the basis of average and better performance in NREGA. To examine the process of implementation one ward from each Panchayat was selected and studied through structured questionnaires by selected investigators. For the collection of data the support from People's representatives of Panchayat including President, Vice President, standing Committee members, ward members and officials like Secretary and NREGA staff was worth mentioning.

The study reveals that for the last four years 19.20 lakh families in the state got employment under the scheme and the women participation was 87%. Among them 67000 families got 100 days employment for the last four years. The fund utilization also showed

95% expenditure during 2009-10. The major problem observed in the survey is that delay in payment, low wages compared to local rates, lack of useful works, limited activities as per the act and lack of NREGA staff. All these problems can be rectified by integrating the scheme with local body scheme and dovetailing NREGS fund.

The study was conducted by the team of Officers of the Evaluation Division including Smt. Michel Nirmala, Sri.K.J.Koshy, Assistant Directors, Sri.Shajeer, Research Assistant under the over all supervision of Smt.K.Saraswathy,Chief (I/c) of the Division.

Prof.Jayati Ghosh of Jawaharlal Nehru University was the Honorary Advisor supported greatly for the conduct of the study and preparation of the Report.

Thiruvananthapuram
27/11/2010

Member Secretary
State Planning Board

Executive Summary

NREGA is envisaged to enhance the livelihood security of households in the rural areas of the country by providing at least one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in every financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.

NREGS has been implemented in the state as a means for the survival of a section of the unskilled labourers in rural areas. It has created confidence and expectation among the rural poor, especially women who are engaged in environmental cleaning, deforestation and road connectivity. The huge potential of the scheme enabled the poor to address their problems of poverty, education and the need for improved facilities in health to a greater extent. The greater participation of women in NREGS is an indication of the wide scale acceptance of the local people towards the scheme. The scheme is being implemented in the state in three phases.

The study was conducted in the Phase I Districts of Wayanad and Palakkad and the Phase II Districts of Idukki and Kasargod. The methodology of the study was to identify two Panchayats, each from two different blocks of each district, based on best and low/average performance in NREGS.

For the analysis of the strength and weakness of the implementation of the scheme, one ward was also selected from each panchayat and 10 to 15 % of the samples were selected from each ward. Four types of questionnaires were designed for collecting details of different levels of participation and one investigator from each panchayat was selected for the purpose of collection of data to complete the survey within a period of one month. Questionnaire I was designed for collecting the views of Peoples representatives and Officials of the Panchayat connected with NREGs and other three questionnaires were intended for mates, workers, and households respectively.

The objective of the study was to analyse how the demand driven employment granted scheme is implemented in the Districts, including how many families benefited from 100 days of employment in a financial year. Further, it was also intended to observe whether it enabled the creation of productive assets, protection of the environment and empowerment of women in rural areas etc.

The impact of the scheme was analysed by taking into account of the major four components such as number of families that registered for job cards, the families that obtained job cards, employment generated and major activities taken up under the scheme. Similarly the implementation procedure was also analysed and the views of various categories of officials and non-officials associated with the programme were collected, consolidated and incorporated in the report.

Phase I - Wayanad District

Wayanad and Palakkad are the two backward districts identified in the Phase I implementation of NREGS in Kerala during 2006-07. Out of the total number of 179438 rural households in Wayanad District, 99600 (51%) registered for job cards and 74156 (74% of those registered) obtained job cards during 2006-07. During 2007-08, the families registered for job cards increased to 83% and job cards issued increased to 95 % of the registered. In the subsequent two years, there were increases in the issue of job cards to 98% and 99% respectively. The proportion of SC and ST families that registered for and obtained job cards showed a cumulative increase of 99% for SC and 98% for ST during 2009-10.

In 2007-08, 63068 households got employment, 5235 families got 100 days of work and employment provided for 6210 SC and 23469 ST families. Similarly the person days of employment generated also showed a rapid increase to 1658535, of which women work days constituted 59% during this period. In the next year all indicators reflected a decrease except the women days of employment generated.

During 2009-10, there was an increase in certain indicators and decrease in others, but most of the components showed a progressive picture. The total number of household that got employment and families that got 100 days employment increased but at the same time the participation of the SC/ST families showed decline. Women's participation increased. One possible reason for the variation is that the commitment of the panchayat and others connected with this scheme is not that strong, because of the perception that the Programme only benefits the NREGS workers and their families. However, the remarkable progress achieved during 2007-08 reflects the efforts made for the effective implementation of NREGS during this period.

Women's participation in NREGS in Wayanad district is double that of the average of all the districts in the state. In terms of person days of work, the share of women workers is much higher and has increased from 51% percent in 2006-07 to 59% in 2007-08,

77% and 79% respectively in 2008-09 and 2009-10. This is probably due to the gender wage differences existing in Kerala. Since non-NREGS work involves significantly lower wages for women's work, this has encouraged more women to accept NREGS work than men.

NREGS fund allocation made to the District for the last four years has increased and expenditure has also increased from 47% of the allocation in 2006-07 to 89% in 2009-10. For wages 94% to 79% of the expenditure was utilized during 2006-07 to 2009-10 and material component ranges from 9% to 14% in last four years.

All the activities approved under the act are taken up in the District and prioritized. Although the district is ST-dominated, very little attention has been given to the provision of activities on land owned by SC/ST or IAY beneficiaries. During 2007-08, out of the Programme of works, 98% were completed. During 2008-09, 985 work projects were completed against 6787 activities initiated and there was 82% achievement during 2009-10. Incomplete programmes are carried over to the next year.

1. Edavaka Panchayat

Among the two Panchayats selected for the study from the district, Edavaka Panchayat was selected as the best performing Panchayat in NREGS. Job cards were issued to 92% to 99% of the registered households for the last four years. However, in the case of ST, during 2006-07, only 81% of the registered got job cards. The possible reason is that all those registered did not demand job cards.

There were significant increases in employment generation in all the years except in the third year (2008-09). The financial performance also revealed an increasing trend in allocation and utilization. The rate of expenditure out of allocation was high to start with at 95% in 2006 and increased to 98% in 2010.

The Panchayat has taken up seven works under the scheme but priority was given to rural connectivity, flood control and land developments throughout the four years. No programme has been taken up in the land held by SC/ST farmers under NREGS in the panchayat. While more than 95% of the allotted funds have been utilized, a good number of projects are still ongoing.

For the detailed analysis of the implementation process of NREGs, Thonichal ward was selected from the Panchayat.

2. Kaniyambetta Panchayat

Kaniyambetta Panchayat, the second Panchayat selected from Wayanad District, was studied as the average performing panchayat. The number of families that registered and obtained job cards has increased during this period except in the case of SC category. Job cards were issued to 95% of those registered during 2006-07 and 2009-10 and 99% during 2007-08 and 2008-09.

With regard to employment generation, it was observed that the proportion of households who were provided with employment as percentage of those with job cards has never reached half. Efforts were made for the effective implementation of the scheme in 2006-07, but in 2007-08 progress in each indicator was less than in the first year and even in 2008-09, the progress was not up to the level of 2006-07. However in 2009-10 all the indicators showed improvement, which suggests that the panchayat is in the way of improvement. During this period 1973 families got employment, 56 families got 100 days of employment and the proportion of employment to SC was 9% and ST was 34%. Women's days of employment have been increasing and the proportion of women days ranges from 61% to 83%.

The financial indicators suggest good performance over the years. During 2006-07 it was 66% and it increased to 95% in the subsequent years. Interviews and discussions with the Panchayat officials indicated that adequate funds are not released to the Panchayat, as a result of which they could not provide employment to all the job card holders. It is evident from their financial performance that they utilised nearly 95% of the provision. If funds are not provided to meet the demand of project and labour demand, it is contrary to the provision of the Act.

The major activities initiated in the panchayat under the scheme include water harvesting 32%, land development 36% and flood control and protection 17%. There was no scheme for SC/ST or IAY beneficiaries during these years.

Kozhinchangad ward was selected and studied with respect to detailed implementation from Kaniyambetta Panchayat - the main conclusions are provided at the end of the summary.

Phase I - Palakkad District

Palakkad district is the second district selected from Kerala in the Phase I implementation of NREGA. The total number of household in the district is 530216 and the rural BPL is 244662. The number of families registered for job card has increased every year. Up to 2009-10, 232753 household were registered and obtained job cards, including nearly 21% SC and 6% ST households.

95% of the rural BPL are registered and received job cards in the District. The number of households that got 100 days of NREGS work increased from 255 in 2006-07 to 6987 in 2009-10. All categories of households reflected an increase in registration, job card issue and employment generated under NREGS. The number of days of employment generated for women showed a cumulative increase in four years by 40%, 67%, 78% and 92%. Since Palakkad is the highest SC concentrated district in the state, nearly 24% of the work days are constituted by this category.

The proportion of NREGA funds utilized in the District was reasonably good in the four year period, with rates of expenditure of 64%, 87%, 67% and 94%. During 2008-09, the rate of expenditure was 67%, but it does not mean that the expenditure position was low, since the fund allotment was double to that of the previous year and it was given as advance. In absolute terms, an increased expenditure position was maintained in the scheme.

With respect to the activities initiated in the district, all activities mentioned in the Act such as water conservation, water harvesting, draught proofing, micro irrigation works, irrigation facilities for land owned by SC/ST were implemented and the completion level was 68%, 62%, 78%, 47% in the last four years. One notable feature is that the District is SC concentrated and adequate attention was given to irrigation facilities for land owned by SC/ST in every year.

1. Akathethara Panchayat

Akathethara Panchayat was selected from Palakkad district for the study as the best performing Panchayat. The cumulative number of families registered and obtained

job card showed an increasing trend for the last four years. Out of 5470 workers in the Panchayat nearly 42 % are registered under NREGs the number of card holders are the same during 2009-10. Minor variations are seen in the number of SC/ST categories.

The employment generation details revealed that there was a tremendous increase in the number of households who got 100 days of work in 2008-09. In the next year it declined to 226 families from 252 families. The person days of work have also increased in the four years and the share constituted by women also increased to 92% during 2009-10.

There was 100% expenditure in the first two years and in third year reported 92% expenditure incurred and in the last year expenditure (104%) exceeded the allotment. In the first two years, reimbursement was made and in the next two years prior allocation was made available.

In Akathethara Panchayat, protection of Kalpathy River has been taken as a project under NREGs along with other activities. Social audit was implemented as a pilot project during 2006-07 in the Panchayat.

However, in the background of the stipulated labour material ratio very little material work was taken up in the Panchayat. Local people felt that the ratio should be changed subject to the nature of the soil. Similarly, delays in payment have occurred due to inadequacy of staff. These two features negatively affected the expectations of the workers and the Panchayat.

For the detailed analysis of the scheme in the Panchayat Kongapadam ward was selected and studied.

2. Alenallur Panchayat

Alenallur Panchayat is the second Panchayat selected for the study as the average performing Panchayat from Palakkad district. The number of families that registered for job cards showed an increasing trend during these periods. During 2009-10, the total registered families were 3219, which include 648 SCs and 38 STs. 96% of the registered families received job cards, which include 628 SCs and 36 STs. This shows rapid progress compared to previous years.

Employment generation under the scheme in the Panchayat increased from 408 to 415, 619 and 1041 respectively from 2006-07 to 2009-10 but it never reached half of the job card holders. Although ST people registered and were issued job cards, they did not get employment. The low level of employment generation with respect to job card

holders was verified. It was noted that this Panchayat is a Muslim dominated area with a large proportion of overseas migrant workers who send remittances home. Many of the households had misconceived the scheme: at the time of registration they did not know that NREGS involves manual work and they thought that it is in the nature of unemployment allowance. As far as ST people are concerned, they do not like the wage rate and work conditions of NREGS and preferred to opt for other work with higher daily wages. However, women account for more than 90% of the working days.

The Panchayat utilized approximately the entire allocation in three years except 91% during 2007-08. The material cost ranges from 12.2% to 3.3% during these periods. The major activities initiated under the Panchayat included water harvesting, renovation of canals, land development and flood control. As per the data available from the Panchayat it is seen that no work was completed in the last two years. It is also seen that no work was undertaken for SC/ST as stipulated in the Act.

From Alenallur Panchayat, Kannarkundu ward was selected and studied for analyzing the strength and weakness of the implementation of NREGS.

Phase II - Kasargod District

Kasargod District is one among the two districts selected for the implementation of NREGs from Kerala in Phase II during 2007-08. By 2009 it is estimated that the District has 199690 rural households, which include 17723 SC households and 6656 ST households.

Up to 2009-10 out of 1.99 lakh rural households 1.01 lakh were registered and job cards were issued to all of them. Year wise details of job card issue shows a short fall in registration that was accommodated in the subsequent years. 6781 SC and 6323 ST families SC families were registered and provided with job cards.

With regard to employment generation up to 2009-10, 38634 households got employment which includes 3108 SC and 2778 ST families. 3142 families benefited from 100 days of employment in the district. The total number of person days of work generated is 1725817 which include 148522 SCs and 81397 STs. Women working days constitute 88% of total person days created.

The financial performance of NREGS reveals that the District utilised 78%, 91 % and 74% of the allotment for the 3 years. During the period the amount utilised for material component is 2%, 6%, and 5% of the expenditure.

As per the provision of the Act, the district initiated all the activities stipulated but focused to flood control and protection, land development, water conservation and water harvesting, renovation of traditional water bodies. It is seen that up to 2009-10, 57% of the work was completed.

Following the performance criteria of NREGs, two Panchayats are also selected from Kasargod District for impact assessment studies.

1. Madikkai Panchayat

Madikkai Panchayat is selected as the well performing Panchayat in Kasargod District. The Panchayat is having 4537 households by 2009 NREGs started in the Panchayat during 2007-08. It is seen that Job cards issued to all the registered families. During 2009-10 a cumulative total of 3651 families registered which included 30 SC families and 236 ST families. All the registered families are issued job cards. It is observed that out of 4940 households 3651 households (74%) registered and obtained job cards to all the registered.

During 2009-10, under NREGs 2110 families got employment, which include 38 SC families and 304 ST families. During this period 366 families are benefited of 100 days of employment. The total number of man days of employment created is 120440 of which 91% is constituted by women workers, SC by .62% and 5.6% by STs.

The Panchayat utilised 80%, 99% and 98% of the allotment made during the three years of implementation of the scheme. Of the total expenditure, 92%, 86% and 90% were utilised as wages for unskilled workers respectively in three years.

Rural connectivity was the main focus under the scheme: creation of new roads as well as improvements of existing roads. Out of 447 works, 197 were completed and 250 are in various stages of implementation.

For analyzing the strength and weakness of the implementation process of NREGS Malappachery ward was selected and studied from the Panchayat. The details are consolidated at the end.

2. Chengala Panchayat

Chengala Panchayat is the second Panchayat selected for the study from Kasargod District and it is the average performing Panchayat of the District. The estimated number of households in the Panchayat by 2009 was 8598 which includes 354 SC and 2 ST households. There has been a recent change in the number of ST families, because in the

2001 census 200 families of the **Marathis** who were earlier considered as ST were changed to forward community and deducted from the census of ST families.

Out of the 354 SC families 250 families registered for the job cards and these were issued to all the registered families. In the case of Tribes, both households were registered and provided with job cards. The total registered families covered only 38% and job card issued cover 91% of the registered which include all the SCs and STs of the Panchayat.

The number of families that got 100 days of employment was nil in the first year and 177 in the second year and in the third year it was only 83 families. The number of working days also increased throughout the three years. Women accounted for 84%, 89%, and 94% working days respectively during the three years.

The fund release and utilization of the Panchayat shows 57%, 90%, and 94% respectively in the three years. In the third year the allotment was less than that of the previous year. It is observed that efforts made by the Panchayat for preparing schemes under NREGS have not strictly followed in the action plan and thereby the allotment.

The activities initiated in the Panchayat prioritized land development, flood control and protection work. The total number of works was 1956, of which 30% were completed and 70% remained to be completed till 2009-10. No SC/ST or IAY schemes were taken up under NREGS in the Panchayat.

V.K.Para (Ward No.15) of Chengala Panchayat was also studied and their views are detailed in last part.

Phase II - Idukki District

Idukki is the second district selected for NREGS in the Phase II that started during 2007-08. Agriculture is the main occupation of the people of the District and it ranks in third position in cultivation and first in rural working population (43.16%). The estimated number of rural households of the district by 2009 was 278000 which include 40507 SC and 13040 ST households. With regard to SC population it ranks in the second position in the state.

In the District 66.1% of the total households registered and job cards were issued to 97% of the registered households. Of this SC, ST people cover 25185 and 12816 numbers respectively. During 2007-08 all the registered were issued job cards but in the subsequent years 96% and 91% of the registered were issued job cards.

Employment generated under the scheme reveals an increasing trend. During 2009-10, 90821 families got employment, which included 10784 SC families and 8838 ST families. The total number of families that got 100 days of employment is 11083. The total number of man days of work generated is 4380879 of which women's share is 73%. While in general in Kerala men are reluctant to accept NREGS work due to the stipulated low wages, in Idukki District the participation of men is considerably higher than in other districts.

The financial performance also reveals that the district utilized 39%, 88%, and 92% NREGS fund in the three years respectively. The ratio of material component was 5%, 4.48% and 3%. The amount utilized for material component increased in actual terms but the ratio to allocation decreased.

The activities initiated in the District covered seven items. Top priority was given for flood, water conservation and water harvesting and irrigation canal. The rate of completed work reported is 26%. Though the district is an SC, ST concentrated area, it was observed that no work was done on the land of SCs or STs under the scheme.

1. Kanjikuzhy Panchayat

Kanjikuzhy Panchayat was selected and studied as the best performing Panchayat. By 2009, the Panchayat had 7611 households including 365 SC and 804 ST. Up to 2009-10, the cumulative achievement made in registration for job card and job card issued showed a high level of progress, such that 94% of the total households registered had got job cards in the general as well as in the SC/ST categories.

Employment generation also showed an increasing trend. The number of households that received employment up to 2009-10 was 3854 including 266 SC and 305 STs. 1174 families got 100 days of employment. The total days of employment created in the Panchayat is 238555, of which 74% were by women.

The financial performance also revealed that the scheme is widely accepted and implemented in the Panchayat. Every year there was increase in allotment and in the 2nd and 3rd year the expenditure exceeded the allotment. More than 95% of the allotment was utilized as wages. Only four activities are undertaken in the Panchayat. Of the total projects 82% were completed during 2009-10. The Panchayat did not initiate any project for SC/ST under the scheme.

For detailed analysis of implementation of NREGs, Vattompara (Ward 13) of Kanjikuzhy Panchayat was studied. The views of various levels of people associated with the scheme and implementation process are included.

2. Erattayar Panchayat

Erattayar Panchayat is the second Panchayat selected for the study from Idukki District as the average performing Panchayat. The Panchayat had 4670 house holds by 2009 which included 214 SCs and 25 STs. NREGS was introduced in the Panchayat during 2007-08. During the first two years all the registered got job cards. During 2009-10, no SC/ST members registered or obtained job cards. The proportion of those that registered who obtained job card is 99%, which includes 165 SC and 25 STs.

Up to 2009-10, 1498 families were brought under the schemes and 262 families got 100 days of employment. The person days of employment also showed an increase and the proportion of women participation also showed an increase of 48% to 78% up to 2009-10.

With regard to NREGA fund utilization, the Panchayat utilized 68%, 86% and 100% respectively up to 2009-10. The amount utilized for wages was 63%, 86% and 96% of the expenditure in these three years.

Flood control and rural connectivity are the two schemes taken up during this period. During 2009-10 6 schemes covering drought proofing, flood control, land development, rural connectivity and water conservation were implemented in the Panchayat. During these years the scheme included for SC, ST, IAY beneficiaries as stipulated in the Act were not taken up in the Panchayat. Out of 134 works, around 59% were completed.

For detailed analysis of the strength and weakness of the implementation process of NREGS, Thulasippara ward was selected and studied from the Panchayat.

Strengths and weaknesses of the scheme observed in ward surveys

Four types of questionnaires were designed and details were collected by selected investigators from the selected 8 wards and 8 Panchayats. As per **questionnaire I**, 15 people's representatives and officials associated with the implementation of NREGS from each Panchayats were contacted for their positive and negative views of the Scheme. The participants included President, Vice President, Standing Committee Chairman, Panchayat

members, Panchayat Secretary, Assistant Engineer, Overseer and Accountant connected with NREGS. In general they were very much impressed with the provisions of the Act especially project formulation, execution, monitoring, way of payment etc. However, they negatively viewed certain aspects such as material composition of 60:40, which prevents useful works. The list of permissible works was seen to be too narrow as per the Act. One time intervention in agricultural land negatively affects the number of schemes. Nearly 57% of the participants were negative about work without contractors. They also opined that shortage of technical staff delays the work and measurement checks, which in turn delays the wage payment. This negatively affects perceptions about the projects. Usually NREGS staff consists of temporary workers paid on an honorarium basis and when they get better job, they relinquish this work and this also creates lags in the scheme.

As per **questionnaire II**, 15 mates each from the selected ward were interviewed. All the mates are Kudumbasree members. They received adequate training in NREGS and were well aware of their duties and functions. The minimum qualifications of mates are SSLC and they belong to the age groups of 28 to 62 years. The majority of work sites include 25 to 40 workers. Nearly 50% of the mates worked above 80 days in the previous year. The mates suggested the issue of uniforms for NREGS workers and reducing the working time from 8 A.M to 5 P.M to 8 A.M to 4 P.M.

As per **questionnaire III**, 15 workers from each ward were interviewed which included APL and BPL categories. These workers include SC, ST and general. Out of these workers selected, only two or three workers got 100 days of work in the previous year. They appreciated the scheme very much. According to them, it is their main source of livelihood and helps their life in various ways such as reducing poverty, allowing them to repay their debts and meet the needs of children in schools, etc.

As per **questionnaire IV**, nearly 20 households from each ward were contacted and their views were collected. These households covered **registered households with job card and work, households registered with card but who had not accepted work and households not registered**. In each category women, SC, ST categories were covered. The household having works very much appreciated the scheme and stated that it is the main source of income and it helps reduce their poverty and meet the education demand of their children. It also helps them to save something for the future and provides them access to bank and postal savings accounts. Moreover the women, especially tribal women, are empowered and capable of demanding their claims and rights. It enables

them to interact with other people. However, two other categories of participants were not satisfied with the wage rate and working conditions and they felt that they would get higher daily wages daily if they opted for other work in nearby areas.

Besides, generating employment, these wage employment programmes also ensure creation of assets in rural areas, and initiatives are also taken to build and upgrade the basic rural infrastructure through various schemes. It is expected under the scheme that an expanded and renovated rural road network will lead to an increase in rural employment opportunities, better access to regulated and fair market, better access to health, education and other public services so as to accelerate the economic growth in rural areas.

The study reveals that the scheme is socially and economically beneficial and that job creation has been demand driven. However, the analysis of the overall performance shows that the progress achieved in the IInd Phase District is less than phase I District, which indicates that the interest shown by the officials and non-officials is not adequate to achieve the objective of the scheme.

Although the right based framework and demand driven approach of the NREGS marks a paradigm shift from all other previous employment programmes, certain shortcomings are observed from the study. The existing wage structure and work conditions of the NREGS are not acceptable to all workers, since there are opportunities for manual labourers (especially male workers) for higher daily wages if they are interested. In addition to this, delays in wages due to shortage of NREGS staff and delay in work due to inadequate technical staff and narrowness of work etc are features that negatively affect the objectives of the scheme. One major lacuna is the lack of work done on the lands of SC, ST and IAY beneficiaries. Had this been taken up seriously, the progress of the implementation of the scheme would have been much better.

Introduction of mandatory provision and incentives for better performance are necessary for the effective implementation of the scheme. More awareness creation about the Scheme is also necessary, particularly to persuade the panchayats, the workers and officials of the social and economic benefits of the works, which are not confined to the families of workers but extend to the entire rural society.

Box
Impact of NREGS

- ❖ Increased income
- ❖ Increased expenditure
- ❖ Improved standard of living
- ❖ Developed saving mentality
- ❖ Access to institutional finance
- ❖ Improved medical attention
- ❖ Repayment level increased
- ❖ Debt suicide declined
- ❖ People can meet the needs of children in schools
- ❖ People can live in a clean environment

Box
Effects of NREGS on women

- ❖ Generally more than 85% of NREGS workers are women.
- ❖ Improved their social relationship.
- ❖ They are well aware of their rights, duties and other eligible claims under NREGS.
- ❖ Women empowerment increased through social contacts, opening bank accounts and post office accounts.
- ❖ Women headed families are confident of their livelihood.
- ❖ Men and Women are equally paid in NREGS.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) is an unprecedented legislation passed by the Parliament of India in September 2005 to address the critical issues of unemployment and poverty in Rural India. The Act guarantees 100 days of employment in a financial year to any rural household whose adult numbers are willing to do unskilled manual work. The Act came in to force initially in 200 districts of the country in the I phase with effect from 2nd February 2006 and extended to 130 districts in the financial year 2007-08 as II phase. It was further extended to 289 districts from April 2008 onwards in Phase III.

NREGA is a paradigm shift from all other previous employment programmes. It guarantees the right to work (albeit for a limited number of days per household) with well designed employment programme which promote job creations, gender equality, enhance the power of the rural households and thereby eradicate poverty.

In the context of a number of centrally sponsored schemes that have been implemented for the welfare of the poor, NREGA is a unique experiment in India. The most important aspect is that it is more than just a scheme, since it is backed by a legal guarantee that puts the onus on the government (at both central and state levels) to deliver the right to work as defined in the Act. The scheme has tried to avoid the errors and gaps of previous schemes with the mandated involvement of Panchayats, civil society and local administration. The scheme is not targeted but universal in its approach, but since it implies difficult manual labour for wages, it tends to be self-targeting in terms of the beneficiaries. In addition, because the specific works are meant to be planned and implemented with the involvement of the local community, it can be hoped that it will generate assets that are more valued by local people and contribute to rising agricultural productivity over time as well as better conditions of life of rural residents.

NREGA is one of the largest right based social protection initiatives in the world. It guarantees wages and employment at an unprecedented manner. Because wages are increasingly paid through banks and post offices, it has also become the largest financial measure for providing poor people access to formal banking systems. It is different from

the earlier government employment schemes since it treats employment as a right and is intended to be demand driven. Since its inception the programme has benefited over 10 crore rural households and it is being recognized that NREGA has the potential to transform rural economic and social relations at many levels. It is this capacity to engender change that is a source of both strength and weakness for the implementation of the programme. The huge potential of the NREGA has already been evident particularly in the enthusiastic response of the local people, landless, the marginal farmers and women workers in particular wherever information about the programme has been properly disseminated.

The Act and guidelines anticipate substantial participation of the local people in the planning and monitoring of the specific schemes. NREGA makes it mandatory for job seekers to have a job card for which they have to apply to the Panchayat. The application for the work and dated receipt are meant to act as job trigger mechanisms. NREGA has able to provide jobs and employment to millions of rural households who tend to be the poorest. Experience shows that most workers seek employment only in the agricultural lean season or in drought prone-states.

The potential of NREGA spans a range of possibilities. The choice of works suggested in the Act addresses chronic problems like drought, deforestation and soil erosion, so that the process of employment generation is maintained on a sustainable basis. The uniqueness of this Act is in the fact that it emphasises issues like equality of wages for men and women, elimination of work contracting /middlemen, payment of wages only through bank and post office accounts to prevent corruption, creating transparency in workers Muster Rolls etc. Any individual irrespective of his or her socio-economic status can ask for employment under this scheme.

In addition to benefiting poor households in general, NREGA is a means of survival to a section of elderly unskilled labourers in rural areas. It has generated greater self-esteem amongst the poor and confidence among rural women, who are employed in digging water tanks and carrying head loads. The greater participation of women in NREGA is clearly a positive indicator that shows the inclusive potential of the programme in unanticipated ways. It has enabled them to be health conscious. The health status of the village is likely to improve through proper implementation of NREGA due to regular availability of clear drinking water, construction of drainage that improves cleanliness in the village and thereby reduce the chances of occurrence of diseases. Construction of

child care centres (anganwadis) will improve the general health of children and allow them to receive nutritious food in a clean environment.

The original NREGA was amended in 2007 to expand the scope of work, such that at present irrigation facilities, horticulture, plantation, land development work of SC/ST, BPL families and beneficiaries of land reforms are included in the scheme. IAY schemes are also included within the purview of the Act. The second amendment allowed a minimum of 10 labourers for starting a new work instead of the earlier limit of 50.

The NREGA, now renamed as “Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme/Act” has emerged as one of the important tools for rural development and for combating hunger and unemployment. By introducing NREGS India has acquired the distinction of having the world’s largest employment guarantee scheme and public works programme in place.

Objective of the Act

The basic objective of the Act is to enhance livelihood security in rural areas by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. This guarantee also serves other objectives like generating productive assets, protecting the environment, empowering rural women and reducing rural urban economic inequality.

Salient features of the Act

The Act came in to force on February 2006. The salient features of the Act are:

- i) Application by the adult members of the rural households to the local Panchayat seeking registration;
- ii) Issue of job cards by the Panchayat within 15 days from the date of application;
- iii) Written application by the job card holders to the panchayat seeking employment;
- iv) Issue of dated receipt of written application for employment;
- v) Provision of employment within 15 days of application for work, failing which payment of unemployment allowance;
- vi) Provision of work within a radius of 5 km from the village (payment of extra wages of 10 percent, if the work provided is beyond 5km);

- vii) Payment of wages as per the Minimum Wages Act;
- viii) Provision of equal wages for men and women;
- ix) Disbursement of wages on a weekly basis;
- x) Women should constitute one-third of the workers;
- xi) Provision of facilities at the work site;
- xii) Shelf of projects as recommended by the Grama Panchayat and approved by Zilla Parishad;
- xiii) Permissible works are predominantly soil and water conservation, Afforestation and land development;
- xiv) Wage to material cost ratio should be 60:40 (no room for machine and contractors);
- xv) Social audit has to be undertaken by the Grama Sabha;
- xvi) Institution of grievances redresses mechanism for ensuring responsive implementation process; and
- xvii) All accounts are subject to public scrutiny resulting in accountability and transparency of the scheme.

Implementation of the Act in Kerala (NREGA)

In Kerala, the programme was started during 2006 in the rural areas of two districts Palakkad and Wayanad as the 1st Phase. Later it extended to Idukki and Kasaragod during 2007 as the IInd phase and further continued to all districts from 2008 April onwards as the IIIrd phase. The Govt. of Kerala has issued detailed guidelines for implementing the NREGS. The responsibility of implementing the scheme is vested with local self governments and the three tier local bodies became very smooth and effective due to the introduction of decentralized planning and development system adopted in the State since 1996.

Organisational set up for the Implementation of NREGS

A number of micro level organizations are participating in the formulation and implementation of NREGS. The organizational set up in Kerala for NREGS is unique in the sense that the involvement of Kudumbasree (the organisation of women's Self Help Groups) in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of the programme has attracted much attention. Kudumbasree contacts all the households in the Panchayat through Neighbour Hood Groups (NHGs). In each ward NHGs are grouped as Area

Development Society (ADS). At the Panchayat level, Kudumbasree activities are managed by the Community Development Society (CDS), which is elected from among the ADS. The ADS is the lowest unit of the process of implementation for arranging workers and supervising the work.

Project Preparation

Every year, the Grama Panchayat is to convene a meeting of the Grama Sabha to estimate demand for labour and to propose the number and priority of works to be taken up in the next financial year. The time and date of the Grama Sabha meeting should be fixed well in advance and should be widely publicized so that people can participate in large numbers. The Grama Sabha may recommend additional works.

The recommendations formulated in the Gram Sabhas are to be forwarded to the Grama Panchayat. Based on these recommendations, the Gram Panchayat prepares an Annual Plan. The Annual Plan should contain the following

- (a) Estimated demand for unskilled manual work (in Man Days)
- (b) Works proposed in the order of priority
- (c) Estimated cost with labour and material components
- (d) Time frame.

This Annual Plan of the Grama Panchayat is forwarded to the Block Programme Officer. The Block Programme Officer scrutinises the Plan Proposals of all the Grama Panchayats according to the following criteria

- (1) That the proposals are within the parameters of the Act.
- (2) That the works are adequate in terms of likely demand
- (3) That the works are technically and financially feasible.

If the Block Programme Officer feels that the list is insufficient to meet the likely demand he should ask the Grama Panchayat for a supplementary list of works.

The Block Panchayat is to maintain the priority indicated by the Grama Panchayat by consolidating Grama Panchayat Plans and adding Block Panchayat Proposals i.e. 30% of the funds in cost terms. The Block Panchayat has to approve the Block EGS plan and forward to the District Programme Coordinator (DPC).

The District Panchayats formulate their proposals for 20% of the funds in cost terms. The District Panchayat EGS Plans are forwarded to the District Programme coordinator for approval.

List of approved activities taken up under the Scheme

Schedule I of the Act indicates the kind of works that can be taken up for the Project, as listed below:

- i) Water conservation and water harvesting;
- ii) Drought proofing, including afforestation and tree plantation;
- iii) Irrigation canals, including micro and minor irrigation works;
- iv) Provision of irrigation facility to land owned by households belonging to the SC/ST, or to land of the beneficiaries of land reforms, or to land of the beneficiaries under the Indira Awas Yojana;
- v) Renovation of traditional water bodies, including de-silting of tanks;
- vi) Land development;
- vii) Flood-control and protection works, including drainage in waterlogged areas;
- viii) Rural connectivity to provide all-weather access. The construction of roads may include culverts where ever necessary, and within the village area may be taken up along with drains;
- ix) Any other work that may be notified by the Central Government in consultation with the State Government.

In some circumstances, locations or seasons it may be difficult to guarantee employment within this initial list of works and in such circumstances the State Government can use section I(ix) of schedule I to incorporate new works on the basis of consultation between State Govt. and Central Govt.

In Kerala, NREGS mainly concentrated in activities such as (i) Water conservation and water harvesting (ii) Drought proofing, including Afforestation and tree plantation (iii) Irrigation canals, including micro and minor irrigation works, (iv) Provision of irrigation facilities, plantations, horticulture, land development on land owned by SC/ST, (v) renovation of water bodies including dissolution of lands. (vi) Land development (vii) Flood control and protection works including drainage in waterlogged areas and rural connectivity works with lower priority. The performance of each type of works initiated are shown in detail in subsequent chapters.

Implementation process of NREGS

Numerous agencies are involved in the formulation and implementation of NREGS in the State. The main implementations of activities are vested with the local bodies. The grama panchayat has an active role for 50% of the works, 30% for the Block Panchayat and 20% for the District Panchayat. The Grama Sabha is the micro level unit which recommends the work, undertakes monitoring and supervision, and conducts social audit of the implementation of the scheme. In addition, the task of ensuring transparency and accountability is also vested with the Grama Sabha.

The Grama Panchayat has a pivotal role in the implementation of NREGS. It is responsible for planning of works, registering households for job, issuing job cards, allocating employment, executing 50% of the works and monitoring the implementation of works at panchayat level.

The Block Panchayat is the intermediate organization for planning at the Block Level and also for monitoring and supervision. A programme officer is appointed at the Block level with necessary support staff for facilitating implementation of NREGS at Block level. The Programme officer may be a dedicated officer of the Department or selected from other Departments or selected through deputation. The work includes scrutinizing village plans; matching employment opportunities with the demand for work at the Block level; supervising the Implementing Agencies; safeguarding the entitlements of NREGS workers; ensuring that social audits are conducted by the Grama Sabhas; and responding to complaints. Ultimately, the chief responsibility of the Programme Officer as a coordinator of REGS at the Block level is to ensure that anyone who applies for work gets employment within 15 days. The Programme Officer will also assist the intermediate Panchayat in its functions. He/she will be answerable to the District Programme Coordinator.

Registration and Employment Generation in the State

The number of job cards issued so far is 2599453, of which SCs constitute 349864 and ST 91438. Year wise details of job cards issued are shown in Appendix 1.1.

Till date 1929127 households received employment. The number of households got 100 days of employment under NREGS is 43596. The total number of person days of employment generated is 339.71 lakh, of which the share of women is 299.61 lakh (88%),

SCs constitute 56.97 lakh (17%) and STs 18.11 lakh (5%). Year wise details of employment generation are shown in Appendix 1.2.

Financial and Physical Performance of the Scheme so far

The Scheme is being implemented as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme on a cost sharing basis between Central and State Government (10%). The Act stipulates that the share of investment in the Grama Panchayat, Block Panchayat and District Panchayat is in the ratio of 50:30:20 respectively.

The Scheme was initially introduced in Kerala during 2006-07 in the two backward Districts of Palakkad and Wayanad, with the release of an amount of Rs.4837.18 lakh which include Central Share Rs.3181.51 lakh, State Share Rs.476.4 lakh, outstanding balance of Rs.1162.05 and miscellaneous receipt of Rs.17.22 lakh. The corresponding expenditure incurred by way of wages, skilled and semiskilled wages and material cost were Rs.2789.74 which was only 58% of the funds obtained. From 2008 onwards all the Districts in Kerala have been brought under NREGS. The percentage of expenditure incurred is at the rate of 58, 84, 75, and 80 percent over the last four years respectively. It is seen from the available details that the performance of NREGS in 2007-08 was better than other years. The Act stipulates the material composition of 60:40. It is seen that ratio was not properly maintained in the implementation of NREGS. Year wise details of sector wise release and utilization are shown in Appendix 1.3.

The overall financial performance of NREGS in the state so far is that there is a release of Rs 103702.34 lakhs and expenditure of Rs 80731.54 lakhs. The numbers of Projects undertaken are 326305, with 130695 completed and 195610 are in progress. Year wise details of Work Status are shown in Appendix 1.4.

Review of Previous Study Reports

Several agencies, both Central and State Governments have conducted surveys and studies for analyzing the performance of NREGS in Kerala. Their findings and recommendations are described below.

Jose Chathukulam and Gireesan (2007) conducted studies in 37 Grama Panchayats in Wayanad and Palakkad Districts. Their survey was based on 916 beneficiaries from two Blocks of the two Districts. The major findings and recommendations of their study are the following:

- The Scheme was initiated in both the districts of the State on 5 February 2006. But the real execution in the field was delayed. Hence, no work was undertaken during 2005-06.
- 2, 13,840 households were issued with job cards in the State.
- 1, 04,927 households demanded wage employment and 99,450 households received employment (94.78%).
- Excessive registration of households was noted.
- Analysing the socio-economic profile of beneficiaries clearly indicate that they belong to the target group of the scheme.
- 70.66 percent of total funds received in the State were utilized.
- 88.71 percent of total expenditure was spent for meeting unskilled wages.
- 7871 works were initiated and 6050 works completed (76.86%).
- Flood control and protection, renovation of traditional water bodies, micro irrigation and water conservation and harvesting were the thrust areas of work. Rural connectivity was given the least priority.
- 20.5 lakh person-days of wage employment were generated.
- 13.47 lakh person-days of employment were generated for SCs.
- 2.54 lakh person-days of employment were generated for STs.
- 537 beneficiary households received more than 100 days of wage employment.
- Delay in wage payment for more than 7 days was noted in the majority of cases.
- No unemployment allowance was provided to the eligible non-beneficiaries.
- The majority of the non-beneficiaries are eligible for either work or unemployment allowance.
- Several 'regulatory measures' were taken to control the demand for jobs and avoid payment of unemployment allowance.
- The presence of vibrant Panchayat Raj Institutions, particularly the Grama Panchayats, during the scheme's execution was noted.
- Active involvement of Kudumbasree volunteers during the scheme.
- Average number of work received by an NREGS worker in the State was 39.15 days.
- Considering the improvement of annual family income, 14 percent beneficiary households in Palakkad and 13 percent in Wayanad could cross the limit of Rs.22, 000 owing to the intervention of NREGS.

- The results of NREGS on the rural poor in NREGS districts in elevating the income of beneficiary household was easily visible unlike previous wage employment programmes.
- No involvement of contractors in the implementation of the scheme.
- Less use of machinery during the work.
- Quality of work carried out under NREGS was reported to be 'Good'.
- Several positive impacts have been noted. The scheme resulted in checking migration, reducing household indebtedness, improving soil/water conservation and enhancing agricultural productivity.
- Less transparency is noted during sanction of works.
- A slight improvement in transparency during the implementation of works.
- Several systems/institutions/procedures were developed to smoothen the scheme's execution. However, adequate attempts are not made to sustain them.
- Lack of co-ordination with line departments/agencies during the plan formulation and implementation.
- No synergy with other rural development programmes.
- Preparation and use of District Perspective Plan and Work-Time-Motion study was not undertaken.
- Absence of scientific and realistic labour budgeting.
- No social audit was undertaken so far.
- A methodology has been developed for ranking the NREGS districts in the State and Wayanad District secured First Rank.
- Efforts are being initiated to implement SGRY in the non-NREGS districts in the State from the year 2007-08, which could be viewed as contagious effect of NREGS.

The Key Recommendations of the Study includes the following:

- Initiation of a 'Seasonal Calendar' at GP level, giving priority to the agricultural activities and availability of workforce at specific periods.
- Introduction of 'Wage Subsidy' to the farming community by applying NREGS workforce as a better strategy. It has two benefits - dissatisfaction among the peasantry can be addressed and this helps in the identification of more works.
- Organise capacity building sessions to elected members of various levels, officials and Kudumbasree volunteers through training sessions, exposure visits and sharing of good practices.
- Offices of BPOs and JPC should be strengthened.

- Ensure a minimum tenure for key personnel at various levels.
- Need for more integration between NREGS staff and other department staff.
- Need for establishing a better communication channel among Panchayat, Workers and Bank.
- Need for more publicity to the scheme among the rural poor.
- Need for improving supervision of works by Block/District/State.
- Documentation needs to be improved at GP/Block/District levels.
- Data handling needs to improve. Great care to be taken during updating of data in MORD websites.
- Special attention is needed to conduct Social Audit at the GP level.
- Ranking of Districts/Blocks/Grama Panchayats can be done and be made public.
- Independent studies/evaluations should be encouraged at different levels.
- District Perspective Plan should be completed and should be made available to the Panchayats.
- Need for initiating a scientific labour budgeting.
- Urgent need for initiating Work-Time-Motion Study at the Districts.

In addition to the above study Shri.K.N. Nair and T.P.Sreedharan Anoopkumar conducted impact assessment of NREGA in three Panchayats of Kasaragod District during 2009 and published a working paper. The major findings are:

1. The manifold functions of Kudumbasree members range from identification of the project to supervision of the project and submission of records for wage disbursement make them responsible and will create a capacity building initiative. But they need proper training in conceptualizing the programme.
2. The shortage of manpower to manage the activities at the Grama Panchayat level is an important limiting factor. Panchayats have hundreds of small projects to be taken up in their Annual Action Plans, sites have to be visited, detailed estimates are to be prepared, and works are to be monitored, measured and counter-measured before the preparation of the bills. There is only one engineer and one overseer at the Grama Panchayat for all of these activities. The result is that detailed estimates are made without site visits, there is only a single visit by the engineering staff to the work site and the bill preparation is delayed by a few weeks.

3. The State Government could have utilized the 6% managerial cost allowed by GOI to set up a separate unit at Grama Panchayat level as in Rajiv Gandhi Drinking Water Mission (RGDWM).
4. The right to work as guaranteed by the NREGA has been restricted to households, rather than to each individual of the household. Although there is a provision in the Act to raise the household work entitlement beyond 100 days or extend it to every adult, unfortunately this has not been given due attention.
5. Another important lacuna in the NREGS is the complete lack of integration with any other scheme for which money is available at the local level. The Panchayats are implementing each of their programmes in a discrete manner, as if in watertight compartments.
6. The quality of the works taken up is also doubtful in many cases. The Grama Panchayat lacks a long-term perspective and vision on how to utilize the NREGS funds for rejuvenating and enriching the soil, water and biomass.

Moreover the Ministry of Rural Development, Govt. of India, New Delhi has conducted a study on the performance of NREGA in Kerala funded by UNDP. Out of 14 Districts, 4 Districts were selected, based on the concentration of agricultural labourers and SC, ST population. Two blocks from each District and four panchayats from each block and 20 representatives from each panchayat were taken for the study.

The effects of NREGA as per this study are:

- Improved income
- Shift in expenditure pattern
- Improved savings
- Decline in migration
- Better social relationship
- Better education for children.

The suggestions to take the scheme to greater heights and make it sustainable as recommended by stakeholders at different levels include:

- i) 100 days of employment per adult member per household instead of per household;
- ii) Temporary suspension of NREGS works during the peak agricultural season;

- iii) Permission to take up land improvement in private lands with the financial participation of land owners;
- iv) Upward revision of wages taking into account the local situation;
- v) Flexibility in schedule of working hours;
- vi) Region based specific plans instead of adapting blue-print type of guideline;
- vii) Permission to re-intervene based on nature of the work;
- viii) Permission to take up work involving material cost;
- ix) Delegation of responsibilities and power from the block to the Panchayat;
- x) Appointment of skilled personnel wherever required; and
- xi) Providing better infrastructure like improved tools, computers with internet connectivity, vehicles and human resources at panchayat level.

The study, though limited in its scope, brings out some important flaws in the Programme, which need immediate correction to make it more efficient and responsive to the needs of the poor.

1. The projects under NREGA are planned by LSGs in a casual manner. There is considerable necessity for meticulous planning which takes into consideration the need for creation of durable assets, conservation of water, soil and bio-mass, avoidance of conflict with farmers, synchronisation with other Governmental schemes and integrating with Panchayat plans under decentralized planning.
2. Rigorous training should be given to the Kudumbasree -ADS members in conceptualizing watershed programme for identifying innovative projects.
3. The NREGA Cell at Grama Panchayats should be strengthened by providing sufficient staff. A well-trained live-member team with enough engineering personnel as in RGDWM is suggested to take the programme to newer heights.
4. The cumbersome procedure to be followed by the Grama Panchayat in giving TS and AS to the projects could be made simpler. The practice of forwarding the projects to Block and District Panchayat for approval is not only time consuming but is also a negation of decentralization.
5. The 60:40 ratio for wage and material components insisted in NREGS could have been easily overcome if the plan grant available to the Grama Panchayat was utilized for bridging gaps, which should be made compulsory.

6. The Grama Sabha should be made more participatory and strengthened to take up social auditing.

Background of the State Planning Board Study on NREGA

In Kerala the implementation of NREGA is being carried out in a phased manner. In the 1st phase, 200 districts from various parts of the country were included. Wayanad and Palakkad are the two Districts from Kerala included in this phase. 130 Districts were included in the 2nd phase, including Kasaragod and Idukki from Kerala. Subsequently all districts of Kerala were brought under NREGS from April 2008 onwards.

Since the State Planning Board is the apex organization, which formulates approves and reviews all the State and Centrally Sponsored Schemes implemented in the State, decided to conduct an impact study of the implementation of NREGS in districts having four and three years experience. The districts of Wayanad and Palakkad of the 1st phase and Kasaragod and Idukki of the 2nd phase were selected for the study.

Objectives of the Study

The major objectives of the Study include finding answers to these questions:

1. Could the implementation of the scheme provide 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every house hold whose adult members are willing to do unskilled manual work?
2. Did the implementation of the NREGS enhance the livelihood security of rural people by reducing poverty and hunger?
3. Has it helped in generating productive assets?
4. Has the scheme protected the environment?
5. Were rural women empowered due to the project?
6. Did it reduce the rural migration and foster social equity?
7. What were the key agencies in the implementation of the Act and, and were and their respective roles performed properly?
8. What was the extent of people's involvement in the programme and their empowerment and creation of egalitarian society?
9. To what extent was transparency and public accountability created through the implementation of the Act?
10. Could it strengthen the natural resource base of rural livelihood?

Methodology

For the present Evaluation study on NREGS, the 1st phase Districts of Palakkad and Wayanad and 2nd phase Districts of Kasaragod and Idukki were taken up. Two Panchayats each from different blocks of the four districts were selected, with a total of 8 panchayats identified on the basis of population, backwardness and “better” or “less effective” performance under NREGS. With a view to conduct a micro level analysis of the process and performance of implementation of the scheme, one of the lowest units for the implementation (Ward) was selected from each Panchayat and the survey was conducted accordingly.

Primary and Secondary data collected at the following levels are used for the Study.

- a) State level information from the website.(www.nrega.nic.in)
- b) District level implementation for JPC Office concerned
- c) Panchayat level implementation from Panchayat selected.
- d) Ward level implementation collected from selected wards.

The survey was conducted with the help of selected investigators of the Panchayat concerned and selection was done on the basis of their awareness about NREGA. Along with the selected investigators, the officers of the Evaluation Division actively participated and collected the details. Questionnaire I was fully collected by the officers’ of the Division.

For conducting the survey, selected investigators were invited to the State Planning Board and one day orientation training was given to them. In the training programme the Hon’ble Vice-Chairman of the State Planning Board, Member Dr.Mridul Eapen and selected Panchayat Presidents/their representatives participated.

Tools Used

For the purpose of the survey, four types of questionnaire were designed, which reflect four levels of implementation of the scheme. Questionnaire-I was intended for people’s representatives and officials, questionnaire II was for the worksite manager /mate, questionnaire III was for labourers and questionnaire IV for households. The number of samples covered under the survey ranged from 10% to 15% of the total size. The questionnaire for households included three categories such as families registered for job card and job, having job card but not accepting job and household not registered.

Each category included SC, ST, Others, Migrant workers and Female headed families. The total samples from each ward were estimated around 85. The details of samples selected are shown in the Table 1.5 appended.

Prof. Jayati Ghosh from Jawaharlal Nehru University, who is experienced in the legislation of NREGA and has conducted field level studies of NREGA in various parts of the country, has been acting as the Honorary Advisor for the Study. Sri. Arindam Banargee, Research Associate of CDS was also included for further support of the study. Prof. Jayati Ghosh and Banerjee have supervised the design of the questionnaire for the study.

Limitations of the Study

The Evaluation study was conducted for the Ist phase and IInd phase Districts. The survey was limited to one ward from each of the selected eight Panchayats. In order to make a micro analysis of the implementation of the NREGS, the lowest unit of implementation was taken into account. The sample size of the survey ranged from 10% to 15%. The sample size and narration of the scope of the study make it incompatible for macro level conclusions.

Chapters

1. Introduction
2. National Rural Employment Guarantee Act(NREGA)
(Salient Features and Main Components)
3. Implementation of NREGS in Phase I Districts
 - I Wayanad District
 - II Palakkad District
4. Implementation of NREGS in Phase II Districts
 - I Kasaragod District
 - II Idukki District
5. Main Findings, Suggestions and Recommendations

Chapter 2

NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE ACT

(Salient features and main components)

NREGA is envisaged to enhance livelihood security of the households in rural areas of the country by providing at least one hundred days of guaranteed wage-employment in every financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto. The Act came into force from February 2006. It extends to the whole of India except the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

For the purposes of giving effect to the provisions of the Act, every State Government has had to notify, within six months from the date of commencement of this Act, a Scheme providing not less than one hundred days of guaranteed employment in a financial year to every household in the rural areas cover under the Scheme and whose adult members, by application, volunteer to do unskilled manual work subject to the conditions laid down by or under this Act and in the Scheme.

Coverage

The Act was notified in 200 districts in the first phase with effect from February 2nd 2006 and then extended to additional 130 districts in the financial year 2007-2008 (113 districts were notified with effect from April 1st 2007, and 17 districts in UP were notified with effect from May 15th 2007). The remaining districts were notified under the NREGA with effect from April 1, 2008. Thus NREGA covers the entire country with the exception of districts that have a hundred percent urban population.

Salient features of the Act

- ✚ Adult members of a rural household, willing to do unskilled manual work, may apply for registration in writing or orally to the local Grama Panchayat.
- ✚ The Grama Panchayat after due verification will issue a Job Card. The Job Card will bear the photograph of all adult members of the household willing to work under NREGA and is free of cost.

- ✚ The Job Card should be issued within 15 days of application.
- ✚ A Job Card holder may submit a written application for employment to the Grama Panchayat, stating the time and duration for which work is sought. The minimum days of employment have to be at least fourteen.
- ✚ The Grama Panchayat will issue a dated receipt of the written application for employment, against which the guarantee of providing employment within 15 days operates.
- ✚ Employment will be given within 15 days of application for work. If it is not provided, then daily unemployment allowance as per the Act has to be paid as liability. Work should ordinarily be provided within 5 km radius of the village. In case work is provided beyond 5 km, extra wages of 10% are payable to meet additional transportation and living expenses.
- ✚ Wages are to be paid according to the Minimum Wages Act 1948 for agricultural labourers in the State, unless the Centre notifies a wage rate which will not be less than Rs. 60/ per day. Equal wages will be provided to both men and women.
- ✚ Wages are to be paid according to piece rate or daily rate. Disbursement of wages has to be done on weekly basis and not beyond a fortnight in any case.
- ✚ At least one-third beneficiaries shall be women who have registered and requested work under the scheme.
- ✚ Work site facilities such as crèche, drinking water, shade have to be provided
- ✚ The shelf of projects for a village will be recommended by the *gram sabha* and approved by the *zilla panchayat*.
- ✚ At least 50% of works will be allotted to Gram Panchayats for execution
- ✚ Permissible works predominantly include water and soil conservation, afforestation and land development works.
- ✚ A 60:40 wage and material ratio has to be maintained and contractors are not allowed.
- ✚ The Central Government bears the 100 percent wage cost of unskilled manual labour and 75 percent of the material cost including the wages of skilled and semi skilled workers.
- ✚ Social Audit has to be done by the Gram Sabha.
- ✚ Grievance redressal mechanisms have to be put in place for ensuring a responsive implementation process

- ✚ All accounts and records relating to the Scheme should be available for public scrutiny

Paradigm Shift from Wage Employment Programmes

NREGA marks a paradigm shift from all precedent wage employment programmes. The significant aspects of this paradigm shift are the following

- NREGA provides a statutory guarantee of wage employment.
- It provides a right-based framework for wage employment. Employment is dependent upon the worker exercising the choice to apply for registration, obtain a Job Card, and seek employment.
- There is a 15 day time limit for fulfilling the legal guarantee of providing employment.
- The legal mandate of providing employment in a time bound manner is underpinned by the provision of Unemployment Allowance.
- The Act is designed to offer an incentive structure to the States for providing employment as ninety percent of the costs of the scheme are borne by the Centre. There is a concomitant disincentive for not providing employment, as the States then bear the double indemnity of unemployment and the cost of unemployment allowance.
- Unlike the earlier wage employment programmes that were allocation based, NREGA is demand driven. Resource transfer under NREGA is based on the demand for employment and this provides another critical incentive to States to leverage the Act to meet the employment needs of the poor.
- The public delivery system has been made accountable, as it envisages an Annual Report on the outcomes of NREGA to be presented by the Central Government to the Parliament and to the Legislature by the State Government. Specifically personnel responsible for implementing the Act have been made legally responsible for delivering the guarantee under the Act.

Stake holders

The Act describes the key stakeholders and their roles and responsibilities for effective implementation of NREGS are detailed below.

Key Stakeholders are:

- Wage seekers
- Grama Sabha

- iii) PRIs, especially the Grama Panchayat
- iv) Programme Officer at the block level
- v) District Programme Coordinator
- vi) State Government
- vii) Ministry of Rural Development

A detailed chart of the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders is presented in the Annexure of the Act.

Wage Seekers:

The wage seekers are the primary stake holders of the Act. Their exercise of choice to demand employment is the trigger of key processes. The rights of the wage seekers are:

- i) Application for registration
- ii) Obtaining a Job Card
- iii) Application for work
- iv) Choice of time and duration of the work applied for
- v) Provision of work within fifteen days of application
- vi) Provision of crèche, drinking water, first aid facilities on work site
- vii) The right to check their Muster Rolls and to get information regarding their employment entered in their Job Cards
- viii) Payment of wages within fifteen days of work done
- ix) The right to get unemployment allowance in case employment is not provided within fifteen days of submitting the application or from the date when work is sought

Gram Sabha (GS):

The Gram Sabha has been given the following rights and responsibilities under the Act

- i) It will recommend works to be taken up under NREGS
- ii) It will conduct social audits on implementation of the Scheme
- iii) In addition, it is suggested that the Gram Sabha be used extensively as a forum for sharing information about the Scheme.

Gram Panchayat (GP):

The Gram Panchayat is responsible for the following activities:

- i) Planning of works

- ii) Receiving applications for registration
- iii) Verifying registration applications
- iv) Registering households
- v) Issuing Job Cards
- vi) Receiving applications for employment
- vii) Issuing dated receipts,
- viii) Allotting employment within fifteen days of application
- ix) Executing works
- x) Maintaining records
- xi) Convening the Gram Sabha for social audit
- xii) Monitoring the implementation of the Scheme at the village level.

Intermediate Panchayat (IP):

The Intermediate Panchayat will be responsible for the consolidation of the GP plans at the Block level into a Block Plan and for monitoring and supervision.

Programme Officer (PO):

The Programme Officer essentially acts as a coordinator for NREGS at the Block level. The chief responsibility of the Programme Officer is to ensure that anyone who applies for work gets employment within 15 days. The Programme Officer is accountable to the District Programme Coordinator and their functions are:

- i) Scrutinizing the annual development plan proposed by the GPs
- ii) Including the proposals of the Intermediate Panchayat
- iii) Consolidating all proposals into the block plan and submitting it to the Intermediate Panchayat
- iv) Matching employment opportunities with the demand for work at the Block level;
- v) Monitoring and supervising implementation
- vi) Disposal of complaints
- vii) Ensuring that social audits are conducted by the Gram Sabhas and following up on them
- viii) Payment of unemployment allowance in case of employment is not provided on time

District Panchayats:

District Panchayats will be responsible for finalizing the District Plans and the Labour Budget and for monitoring and supervising the Employment Guarantee Scheme in the District.

District Programme Coordinator (DPC):

The State Government will designate a District Programme Coordinator, who can be either the Chief Executive Officer of the District Panchayat, or the District Collector, or any other District-level officer of appropriate rank. The overall responsibility for ensuring that the Scheme is implemented according to the Act belongs to the District Programme Coordinator (DPC) at the District level.

A District Programme Coordinator will be responsible for:

- i) Information dissemination
- ii) Training
- iii) Consolidating block plans into a district plan
- iv) Ensuring administrative and technical approvals to the shelf of projects has been accorded on time
- v) Release and utilization of funds
- vi) Ensuring hundred percent monitoring of works, Muster Roll Verifications,
- vii) Submission of Monthly Progress Reports.

State Employment Guarantee Council (SEGC):

A State Employment Guarantee Council (or 'State Council') is to be set up by every State Government under Section 12 of NREGA. The SEGC shall advise the State Government on the implementation of the Scheme, and evaluate and monitor it. Other roles of the State Council include deciding on the 'preferred works' to be implemented under NREGS, and recommending the proposals of works to be submitted to the Central Government under Schedule I Section 1 (ix) of the Act.

The State Council will prepare an Annual Report on the implementation of the NREGS in the State to be presented to the State Legislature.

The State Government will be responsible for:

- a) Wide communication of the Scheme
- b) Setting up the SEGC
- c) Establishing a State Employment Guarantee Fund
- d) Ensuring that full time dedicated personnel are in place for implementing NREGA, specially the Gram Panchayat assistant (Gram Rozgar Sahayak) and the Programme Officer, and the technical staff
- e) Ensuring that the State share of the NREGS budget is released on time
- f) Delegation of financial and administrative powers to the District Programme Coordinator and the Programme Officer, as is deemed necessary for the effective implementation of the Scheme
- g) Training
- h) Establishing a network of professional agencies for technical support and for quality-control measures
- i) Regular review, monitoring and evaluation of NREGS processes and outcomes.
- j) Ensuring accountability and transparency in the Scheme at all levels.

Central Employment Guarantee Council (CEGC):

A Central Employment Guarantee Council (or ‘Central Council’) has been set up under the chairmanship of the Minister of Rural development. The Central Council is responsible for advising the Central Government on NREGA-related matters, and for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Act. It will prepare Annual Reports on the implementation of NREGA for submission to Parliament.

Capacity Building

The Act makes it mandatory for the State Government to make available to the District Programme Coordinator and the Programme Officer, necessary staff and technical support as may be necessary for the effective implementation of the scheme.

Ministry of Rural Development has suggested an administrative pattern that may be adapted by States according to their contexts. There shall be full funding by Government of India for management support at the District, Block and Gram Panchayat level.

Communication of NREGS

Awareness generation through Information, Education and Communication (IEC) for people to know their rights under the Act, effective communication of information about the Act and Scheme is essential.

For awareness generation every State Government will undertake an intensive Information Education Communication (IEC) exercise to publicise the key provisions of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) and procedures to be followed like the process of registration, demand for employment, unemployment allowance, grievance redressal and social audit.

This IEC should target workers, rural households, PRIs and pay special attention to deprived areas and marginalized communities. The State Government should draw up an IEC Plan and develop communication material designed to help people articulate their demand and claim their entitlements.

Information should be widely disseminated, especially in remote areas, SC/ST hamlets through TV, radios, films, print media including vernacular newspapers, pamphlets, brochures.

While intensive communication should precede the introduction of the Act, communication is also an integral part of the implementation process, aimed at making this legislation a 'People's Act'. The effectiveness of this communication process will be evident in the extent to which people who need work under this Act register and apply for work. Other signs of successful communication include the active involvement of local communities at every stage; prompt grievance redressal, vigilant social audits by the Gram Sabhas and wide use of the right to information.

Training of Key Agencies and Institutions

All key agencies will need to be trained in discharging their responsibilities under the Act. This will include Gram Panchayats, other PRIs, District and State-level department personnel involved in implementing NREGS, as well as local committees, groups formed for the purpose of vigilance, monitoring and social audit.

In addition helping various agencies in performing their duties under the Act, training Programmes should give priority to the competencies required for effective planning, work measurement, public disclosure, social audits and use of the Right to Information Act, 2005.

Planning

Development Plan

Section 16 (3) (4) of the Act states that every Gram panchayat shall prepare a development plan and maintain a shelf of works and forward it to the Programme Officer for scrutiny and preliminary approval prior to the commencement of the year in which it is proposed.

The Development Plan will include the following components:

- Assessment of labour demand
- Identification of works to meet the estimated labour demand
- Estimated Cost of works and wages
- Benefits expected in terms of employment generated and physical improvements (water conservation, land productivity),

PRI Planning Process

Section 13 of NREGA makes the Panchayats at district, intermediate and village levels are the principal authorities for planning. The process of planning as laid down under the Act gives under Section 16 of the Act, the power to make recommendations on the works to be taken up under NREGA to the Gram Sabha and the power to prepare a development plan comprising a shelf of projects on the basis of these recommendations of the Gram Sabha to the Grama Panchayat.

The DPC will have overall responsibility for ensuring that the process of identification of works, their consolidation, and final approval of the shelf of projects is completed by December of the year preceding the financial year in which the shelf of works are to be executed. The works so finalised will be accorded technical and administrative approval and will constitute the shelf of projects for the next financial year.

Once all the Gram Panchayat Plans have been received, the PO will scrutinize the GP's Development Plan for its technical feasibility. The Programme Officer will not reject

a work proposed by the Gram Panchayat. If the proposal is not within the parameters of the Act, or appears technically unfeasible, the Programme Officer will return it to the Gram Panchayat and replace it with a valid proposal. The PO will consolidate all GP proposals into a Block plan and submit it to the Intermediate Panchayat. The entire process of scrutiny, re-reference to GP, if necessary, and consolidation and submission to the Intermediate Panchayat will be completed by the PO by November 15th.

The DPC will be responsible for consolidating the Block plans within a month of receiving all the Block Plans. The DPC will also formulate the Labour Budget on the basis of the district plan to indicate the amount of funds required to implement the Scheme in the next financial year. The DPC will submit the Block wise shelf of Projects and the Labour Budget based on it to the District Panchayat by 15th December. The District Panchayat will approve the Block wise shelf of Projects and the Labour Budget by December 31st.

The DPC will forward the Labour Budget to the State Government which will in turn, forward it with its recommendation to the Ministry of Rural Development by 31st January to enable it to release the Central share of funds for implementing the NREGS.

The Development Plan will provide the basis of the district's annual Labour Budget.

District Perspective Plan

The need to integrate work priorities with a longer-term development strategy is reflected in Schedule I of the Act, which states that the 'creation of durable assets and strengthening the livelihood resource base of the rural poor shall be an important objective of the Scheme'.

The Annual Development Plan will be the working plan that identifies the activities to be taken up in a year. The Perspective Plan will provide the framework for facilitating this identification. If new activities need to be taken up, their justification should be indicated in terms of needs and outcomes.

Registration and Employment Eligibility

All adult members of the household who register may apply for work. To register, they have to:

- a) Be local residents: 'Local' implies residing within the Gram Panchayat. This includes those that may have migrated some time ago but may return

- b) Be willing to do unskilled manual work
- c) Apply as a household at the local Gram Panchayat

‘Household’ will mean a nuclear family comprising mother, father, and their children, and may include any person wholly or substantially dependent on the head of the family. Household will also mean a single-member family.

The application for registration may be given on plain paper to the local Gram Panchayat. It should contain the names of those adult members of the household who are willing to do unskilled manual work, and particulars such as age, sex and SC/ST status. The State Government may make a printed form available, but a printed form will not be insisted upon.

The Gram Panchayat will issue Job Cards to every registered household. The timely issue of well-designed Job Cards is essential; this is a critical legal document, which also helps to ensure transparency and protect labourers against fraud.

The Job Card should be issued immediately after verification, i.e. within a fortnight of the application for registration. Job cards should be issued in the presence of the local community and it will be in the custody of the household to whom it is issued.

Applications for work should generally be submitted to the Gram Panchayat. In addition, as prescribed by the Act (Schedule II, Section 9), workers should have the option of submitting an application directly to the Programme Officer, but this should be treated as a ‘fallback’ option only.

Applications should be given in writing and should include:

- a) the registration number of the Job Card;
- b) the date from which employment is required; and
- c) the number of days of employment required.

Works and Their Execution

Permissible Works

The intention of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) is to provide a basic employment guarantee in rural areas. The Act indicates the kinds of works that may be taken up for this purpose. As per Schedule I of the Act, the focus of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) shall be on the following works:

- (i) water conservation and water harvesting;
- (ii) drought proofing, including afforestation and tree plantation;

- (iii) irrigation canals, including micro and minor irrigation works;
- (iv) provision of irrigation facility, plantation, horticulture, land development to land owned by households belonging to the SC/ST, or to land of the beneficiaries of land reforms, or to land of the beneficiaries under the Indira Awas Yojana/BPL families
- (v) renovation of traditional water bodies, including de-silting of tanks;
- (vi) land development;
- (vii) flood-control and protection works, including drainage in waterlogged areas;
- (viii) rural connectivity to provide all-weather access. The construction of roads may include culverts where necessary, and within the village area may be taken up along with drains. Care should be taken not to take up roads included in the PMGSY network under NREGA. No cement concrete roads should be taken up under NREGA. Priority should be given to roads that give access to SC/ST habitations;
- (ix) Any other work that may be notified by the Central Government in consultation with the State Government.

The Wage-Material Ratio

The ratio of wage costs to material costs should be no less than the minimum norm of 60:40 stipulated in the Act. This ratio should be applied preferably at the Gram Panchayat, Block and District levels. Tools and implements may be procured to enable the workers to execute the work. The cost of tools and implements may be booked under the material component of the Project. State Governments should devise a mechanism for transparent method of procurement of materials to be used under NREGA.

To avoid duplication, a unique identity number should be given to each work.

Implementing Agencies

The Gram Panchayat is the single most important agency for executing works as the Act mandates earmarking a minimum of 50 per cent of the works in terms of costs to be executed by the Gram Panchayat. This statutory minimum, upto hundred percent of the work may be allotted to the Gram Panchayat (GP) in the annual Shelf of Projects.

The other Implementing Agencies can be Intermediate and District Panchayats, line departments of the Government, Public Sector Undertakings of the Central and State Governments, Cooperative Societies with a majority shareholding by the Central and State

Governments, and reputed NGOs having a proven track record of performance. Self-Help Groups may also be considered as possible Implementing Agencies.

Role of Line Departments

The role of the Line Department is to give technical support in the nature of estimates, measurement and supervision of the works executed. Works will be executed by Job Card holders. Muster Rolls will be maintained.

Mates

For supervision of work and recording attendance of worksite, Mate may be designated for each work. Mates should be selected through a fair, transparent and participatory process. Adequate representation of women among mates should be ensured. The educational requirements should be not higher than what is required for effective discharging of the mate's responsibilities. An adequate number of mates should be trained in each village to ensure that there is an adequate "pool" of trained mates at all times. The ratio of mates to labourers at a given worksite should be at least 1:50. Suitable norms in this regard may be specified by the State Government in consultation with the State Employment Guarantee Council. Mates should be rotated for a work on a fortnightly basis when the muster is usually closed.

Measurement of Work and Schedule of Rates

States may evolve norms for measurement of work. The factors underlying this may include a set of the following key considerations:

- i) The first is to ensure that all tasks required for undertaking the works under NREGS are identified clearly and that nothing remains invisible and underpaid in piece-rate work. Clubbing/bundling of separable tasks (e.g. digging and lifting) should be avoided.
- ii) The second is to devise productivity norms for all the tasks listed under piece-rate works for the different local conditions of soil, slope and geology types in such a way that normal work for the prescribed duration of work results in earnings at least equal to the wage rate
- iii) The third is to devise measurement norms (individual versus collective), time lag between execution and measurement, in order to reduce corruption and underpayment.

Worksite Facilities

Worksite facilities are to be ensured by the Implementing Agency. Medical aid, drinking water, shade, and crèche if there are more than five children below the age of six years will have to be provided (NREGA, Schedule II, Sections 27 and 28)

Project Completion Report (PCR)

On completion of every project, a Project Completion Report (PCR) should be prepared as per the prescribed format in the Works Register and the details entered therein should be verified by a senior officer. A photograph of the completed work should be taken as a record of the work and attached to PCR. PCR should be placed in the file pertaining to the work in the office of the Implementing Agency. This would serve as a record of verification of completion of work.

Payment of Wages

Every person working under the Scheme shall be entitled to wages at the minimum wage rate fixed by the State Government (or the competent authority concerned) for agricultural labourers under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948, unless the wages have been notified by the Central Government under Section 6(1) of the Act.

Equal wages shall be paid to both men and women workers, and the provisions of the Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 shall be complied with. The State Government may provide for a portion of the wages to be paid to the labourers on a daily basis during the period of employment. It is recommended that wages should be paid on a weekly basis on a pre-specified day of the week in each Gram Panchayat. Details of wages paid through the banks/Post Office network should be made public.

Unemployment Allowance

If a worker who has applied for work under NREGA is not provided employment within 15 days from the date on which work is requested, an unemployment allowance shall be payable by the State Government at the rate prescribed in the Act. This entitlement comes into effect as soon as the Act is notified in a particular District or area.

The Programme Officer shall be responsible for the prompt payment of unemployment allowances throughout the Block. The payment of unemployment allowances should follow the same pattern as the payment of wages. In particular, it is

recommended that unemployment allowances should be paid on a weekly basis at the Gram Panchayat level, on 'employment guarantee day'.

The payment of unemployment allowance shall be made no later than 15 days from the date on which it becomes due for payment (NREGA, Section 7(5)). In the event of any delay, the recipients shall be entitled to compensation based on the same principles as wage compensation under the Payment of Wages Act, 1936. Compensation costs shall be borne by the State Government.

Financing NREGS and Labour Budget

Financing Pattern

The Central Government will bear the following costs:

- i) The entire cost of wages for unskilled manual workers
- ii) 75 percent of the cost of material and wages for skilled and semi-skilled workers.
- iii) Administrative expenses as may be determined by the Central Government. These will include, inter alia, the salary and allowances of Programme Officers and their support staff and work site facilities
- iv) Administrative expenses of the Central Employment Guarantee Council.

The State Government will bear the following costs:

- i) 25 percent of the cost of material and wages for skilled and semi-skilled workers.
- ii) Unemployment allowance payable in case the State Government cannot provide wage employment within 15 days of application.
- iii) Administrative expenses of the State Employment Guarantee Council.

Release of Funds

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme release funds based on State proposals rather than on predetermined allocations.

The first release to a district when it is notified under NREGA as seed money to the District NREGS account will be, made as determined by the Ministry of Rural Development. Subsequent releases will be made upon the submission of a Labour Budget. Funds may flow from the district to the Gram Panchayat directly under intimation to the Programme Officer. The fund transfer from the Ministry, States and Districts may be entered online on <http://nrega.nic.in> by going to the data entry option.

Labour Budget

Chapter IV, Para 14, sub section (6) of the NREG Act says that the District Programme Coordinator shall prepare in the month of December every year a labour budget for the next financial year containing the details of anticipated demand for unskilled manual work in the district and the plan for engagement of labourers in the works covered under the Scheme. The Ministry of Rural Development will estimate the requirement of funds on the basis of projections made in the Labour Budget. Central funds will be sanctioned after examining these Labour Budgets and taking into account utilization of funds previously released.

The Labour Budget will be based on a realistic estimate for the number and kind of works to be taken up, as derived from the annual shelf of projects in the Development Plan.

Panchayats and Other Implementing Agencies

Proper maintenance of records is one of the critical success factors in the implementation of NREGA. Information on critical inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes have to be meticulously recorded in prescribed registers at the levels of District Programme Coordinator, Programme Officer, Gram Panchayat and other Implementing Agencies. The computer based Management Information System will also capture the same information electronically. In order to facilitate systematic collection of information at various levels, following records are to be maintained under NREGA :

- i) Muster Roll Issue Register
- ii) Muster Roll Receipt Register for Gram Panchayats
- iii) Muster Roll Receipt Register for Other Implementing Agencies
- iv) Job Card Application Register
- v) Job Card Register
- vi) Employment Register
- vii) Works Register
- viii) Assets Register
- ix) Complaints Register.
- x) Monthly Allotment and Utilization Certificate Watch Register

Monitoring at Various Levels

The Gram Sabha will monitor all the works at the village level as well as the employment provided to each person who has applied for work. It will also monitor the registration and issue of job cards and the timely payment of wages.

Vigilance and Monitoring Committees

For every work sanctioned under the Scheme, there should be a local Vigilance and Monitoring Committee, (VMC) composed of members of the locality or village where the work is undertaken, to monitor the progress and quality of work while it is in progress. The VMC will comprise nine members. The Gram Sabha will elect the members of this Committee and ensure that SC/STs and women are represented on it. It should have at least 50% of members from among NREGA workers. The VMC should be elected for the period of one year by the Gram Sabha.

The following aspects of the Programme will be monitored at all levels:

- i) Effectiveness and outreach of IEC activities specially among the Job Card holders
- ii) Application for Registration and verification process for registration
- iii) Time taken to issue Job Cards
- iv) Application for Demand
- v) Issue of dated receipts
- vi) Allocation of employment within fifteen days
- vii) Maintenance of authentic updated Muster Rolls on work sites
- viii) Quality of work executed
- ix) Measurement of work done and maintenance of measurement books
- x) Timely and correct payment
- xi) Entries in the Job Cards
- xii) Maintenance of records prescribed under the Guidelines
- xi) Grievance redressal
- xii) Fund utilization
- xiii) Organisation of social audits

Monitoring Methods

The following targets are fixed for internal verification of works at the field level by the official functionaries to be achieved within a quarter.

100% of works at the Block level

10% of works at the District level

2% at the State level.

➤ **Transparency:**

Complete transparency in the process of administration and decision making, with an obligation on the government to suo moto give people full access to all relevant information. The information about works should be displayed in the local language in prescribed proforma at the worksite and at a prominent place in Gram Panchyat.

➤ **Participation:**

An entitlement for all the affected persons (and not just their representatives) to participate in the process of decision making and validation.

➤ **Consultation and Consent:**

In cases where options are predetermined out of necessity, the right of the affected persons to give informed consent, as a group or as individuals, as appropriate.

➤ **Accountability:**

The responsibility of elected representatives and government functionaries to answer questions and provide explanations about relevant action and inaction to concerned and affected people.

➤ **Redressal:**

A set of norms through which the findings of social audits and other public investigations receive official sanction, have necessary outcomes, and are reported back to the people, along with information on action taken in response to complaints.

Social Audit as a Continuous Process

In the context of NREGA, the process of social audit should include public vigilance and verification of the following 11 stages of implementation:

- ❖ Registration of families
- ❖ Distribution of job cards
- ❖ Receipt of work applications and issue of dated receipts
- ❖ Preparation of shelf of projects and selection of sites
- ❖ Development and approval of technical estimates and issuance of work order
- ❖ Allotment of work to applicants
- ❖ Execution of works and maintenance of muster rolls
- ❖ Payment of wages
- ❖ Evaluation of work
- ❖ Payment of unemployment allowance
- ❖ Mandatory social audit in the Gram Sabha (Social Audit Forum)

Convergence/Dovetailing with other Programmes

Convergence of the NREGA funds with funds from other sources for the creation of durable assets is permissible. However, care must be taken to ensure that NREGA funds do not substitute for resources from other sectors or schemes. NREGA funds are intended to create additional employment; this will not happen if the employment currently generated by other Programmes is displaced by the NREGS.

Funds available with PRIs from other sources (such as the National Finance Commission, State Finance Commission, State Departments) and other Central or Centrally Sponsored Schemes (such as the Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana[SGSY], Drought Prone Areas Programme [DPAP], Desert Development Programme[DDP], Backward Area Grant, etc.) can also be dovetailed with NREGA funds for the construction of durable community assets/works permissible under NREGA. However, NREGA funds should not be used as a substitute for Departmental Plan funds of different departments and agencies. Funds from other Programmes for the works permissible under NREGA can be dovetailed with NREGA funds but not vice versa. These aspects should be taken care of in the Perspective Plan.

Convergence with Social Sector Programmes

Social sector Programmes such as literacy and health missions must be converged with the NREGS to extend the benefits of these Programmes to NREGS workers and beneficiaries. For example, information on NREGA, and workers' entitlements under the Act, can be introduced in the Literacy Primers and Continuing Education Materials since a large proportion of the NREGS workforce may consist of non-literate or semi-literate persons. This will serve the double purpose of making them literate and giving them information about their rights under the Act.

Box

Rights/Entitlements under the Act/Scheme

- Right to get registration
- Every household is entitled to a separate job card
- Entitled to apply for work at any time
- Applicants are entitled to get a dated and signed receipt
- A receipt holder is entitled to get employment within 15 days
- If employment is not provided within 15 days, entitled to get unemployment allowance
- A worker is eligible to get the statutory minimum wage
- Men and women should be paid equally
- Wages should be paid within two weeks or 15 days at most
- If payment of wages is not made within the period , the worker is eligible to receive payment of compensation
- If worker live more than 5 Km away from the site, is entitled to travel and subsistence allowance(10% of the minimum wage)
- There is a muster roll maintained at work site. You are entitled to check and sign it.
- Worksite facilities like shades, drinking water and first aid should be available made available
- If more than 5 children under the age of six years are present at work site, child care facilities are to be provided.
- If any personal injury is caused in the course of employment, worker entitled to free of charge medical treatment.
- If a person employed under a scheme dies or become permanently disabled by accident he/his heir shall be paid Rs. @25000.

Box

Significance of fortnight/15 days in NREGA

- The process of verification of the application for registration shall be completed within a fortnight.
- The job card should be issued within 15 days of application.
- Application for work must be for at least 14 days of continuous work.
- A period of employment shall usually be at least 14 days continuously.
- Provide wage employment within 15 days of the receipt of application.
- In case the applicant fails to report to work within 15 days of the receipt of work allotment letter he/she shall not be eligible to claim the unemployment allowance.
- Payment within 15 days of completion of work
- Unemployment allowance shall be made or offered not later than 15 days
- The state share will be released within 15 days of the release of the central funds.
- The intermediate Panchayat will approve the Block plan within 15 days of the submission by the PO.
- The disposal of the grievance against the non-issuance of a job card shall be done within 15 days.
- The implementing Agency (including a Grama Panchayat) executes the works allotted within 15 days.
- Mates should be rotated for a work on a fortnightly basis.
- The PO should attempt to arrange to collect data on labour employed and material received on a fortnightly basis.
- Presentation of all the relevant documents including complete files of the works or copies of them should be made available for inspection at the Grama Panchayat office at least 15 days in advance of the social audit forum.
- Summaries of muster roll and bills must be prepared in advance for presentation at the Social Audit Forum. If possible, these summaries should be displayed on charts on the day of the forum and at the Grama Panchayat office during the preceding 15 days.

Chapter 3

IMPLEMENTATION OF NREGS IN PHASE I DISTRICTS

I. WAYANAD DISTRICT

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme was launched in Wayanad District during February 2006 and it is one among the two Districts selected from Kerala for the study of implementation of NREGA in the 1st phase.

Profile of Wayanad District

Wayanad district was created on 1 November 1980 as the 12th District of Kerala. The name Wayanad is derived from “Vayal Nadu” which means the land of paddy fields. It is a picturesque plateau, situated at a height between 700 meters and 2100 meters above the mean sea level nested among the mountains of the Western Ghats on the eastern portion of North Kerala, bordering both Tamil Nadu and Karnataka States. About 885.92 Sq. of Km area of the District is under forest. The social composition is dominantly tribal, which has also determined the culture of Wayanad.

Wayanad is the least populated district in the state and it ranks first in Scheduled Tribe population. The district occupies the 2nd position in the State in the percentage of cultivators and agricultural labourers to total workers. It ranks first in terms of pepper cultivation and coffee plantations in the state. Wayanad has no railway line and no sea coast. The main river in the district is the east flowing Kabani River.

Location/Area

The district is bounded on the north by Kodagu district of Karnataka State, on the east by Mysore district of Karnataka State and Nilgiri district of Tamil Nadu State, on the South by Eranad Taluk of Malappuram district and Kozhikode Taluk of Kozhikode district, on the West by Quilandy and Vada kara Taluks of Kozhikode district and Thalassery Taluk of Kannur district. The total area of the district is 2131 Sq. Km i.e. 5.48 percent of the total geographic area of the State. The urban area is only 40.74 Sq. Km (1.9%) and the rural area is 2090.26 Sq. Km (98.1%).

Wayanad has a salubrious climate. The mean annual temperature is 23.8°C and the mean average rainfall is 2322 mm. Agriculture is the principal occupation of the people, and the area is suitable for all varieties of cultivation. The most important crops which are cultivated in the district are pepper and paddy. The major plantation crops are coffee, tea pepper, cardamom and rubber.

There are no major irrigation projects in the district. The area now irrigated in Wayanad is under minor irrigation. The Karappuzha project and Banasurasagar Project are the irrigation projects of the District. Animal husbandry activities include cattle development, milk products, egg production, meat production, milk collection, milk distribution, cattle health, cattle fodder etc. Cows are the main domesticated animals in the district. Wayanad district is industrially backward and there are no major modern industries. The traditional industry of the district is handicraft.

As in the rest of the state, there are two types of administration: Revenue and Local Self Government. Under the Revenue system, a district is divided into revenue divisions, taluks and villages. There is only one revenue division in this district, named Mananthavady Division, which consists of 3 taluks and 49 revenue villages. Kalpetta Municipality is the only statutory town. The district has three development blocks: Mananthavady, Kalpetta and Sultan Bathery; and 23 panchayats. The district headquarters is located at Kalpetta.

Population

As per 2001 census, the total population of the District was 780619, which was equal to 2.45% of total population in the State. Out of the rural population of 751007 men constituted 376424 (50.12%) and women were 374583 (49.88%). The rural SC population was 31101, with 15595 men (50.14%) and 15506 (49.86%) women. The rural ST population was 132934, composed of 5916 (49.59%) men and 67018 (50.41%) women.

For purposes of this study, an estimation of population by 2009 is made by estimating 10% increase over 2001 census. Accordingly, the rural population of the District is estimated to be 826108, of which 414066 are men and 412041 are women. It is also estimated that the rural population of SC increased to 34211, of which 17056 are women. The rural population of ST increased to 146227, of which 73720 are women.

According to the 2001 census the number of rural households was 160398, of which 7489 were SC households and 28306 were ST house holds. For the conduct of survey, the

number of rural households in 2009 was estimated at 179438, with 8238 SC households and 34136 ST households.

Over all Performance of NREGS in the District

NREGA was initially introduced in the rural areas of Wayanad during 2006. The responsibility of implementing the programme was entrusted to the three tier local bodies of grama panchayat, block panchayat and district panchayat, which were strengthened in 1996 due to the emergence of decentralized planning in the State. The grama panchayats hold a pivotal role in the implementation of the programme, sharing 50% of the expenditure, followed by block panchayats with 30% and district panchayats with 20%.

Numerous micro level organizations are involved in the formulation and implementation of NREGA. The grama sabha is the lowest unit for the formulation and finalisation of the programme. Awareness about NREGA is sought to be ensured by means of processions, distribution of pamphlets, awareness classes and arranging grama sabha meetings.

Registration for Job card

As per the details collected from the District office of NREGA (JPC) it is seen that the number of households that have registered for job cards and been issued job cards has shown a cumulative increase for the last two years, which reflects the scope, usefulness, expectations and mass acceptance of this unprecedented livelihood programme. Out of the total estimated number of 179438 rural households, 99600 (51%) registered for job cards, of which 74156 households (74% of applicants) obtained them during 2006-07. During 2007-08, the proportion of rural households that registered for job cards increased to 83%, of which the proportion of issued cards increased to nearly 95%. While there was a tapering off in the next two years, nevertheless, there was a cumulative increase in issue of job cards to 99% of applicant households. It is currently estimated that 74% of all rural households in the district have received job cards, with much higher proportions for SC households (99%) and ST households (98%). This suggests near universal coverage for the latter two categories. The details of job card registration and issue by category are indicated in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Year Wise Details of No. Families Registered & Job Card Issued

Year	No. of Families Registered				Total No. of Families Issued Job Cards			
	SC	ST	General	Total	SC	ST	General	Total
2006-07	5659	20357	73584	99600	5017	13299	55840	74156
2007-08	7056	32374	80534	119964	6710	32177	76121	115008
2008-09	7282	33128	84914	125324	7111	33002	83358	123471
2009-10	7672	33872	92258	133802	7617	33748	91496	132861

Source: JPC Office, Wayanad

Employment Generated

However, 2007-08 appears to have been a peak year for NREGS in this district in other respects. The number of households that were provided employment showed an increase from 43957 in 2006-07 to 63068 during 2007-08, but decreased to 57087 during 2008-09 and again increased to 58436 in 2009-2010. The number of families that completed 100 days of employment also increased from 282 to 5235, but then declined to 4102 and increased to 7123 respectively during 2006-07, 07-08, 08-09 and 2009-10. The total number of workers who were provided employment, the number of women workers and the total person days of employment provide also showed similar trends, as indicated in Table 3.2.

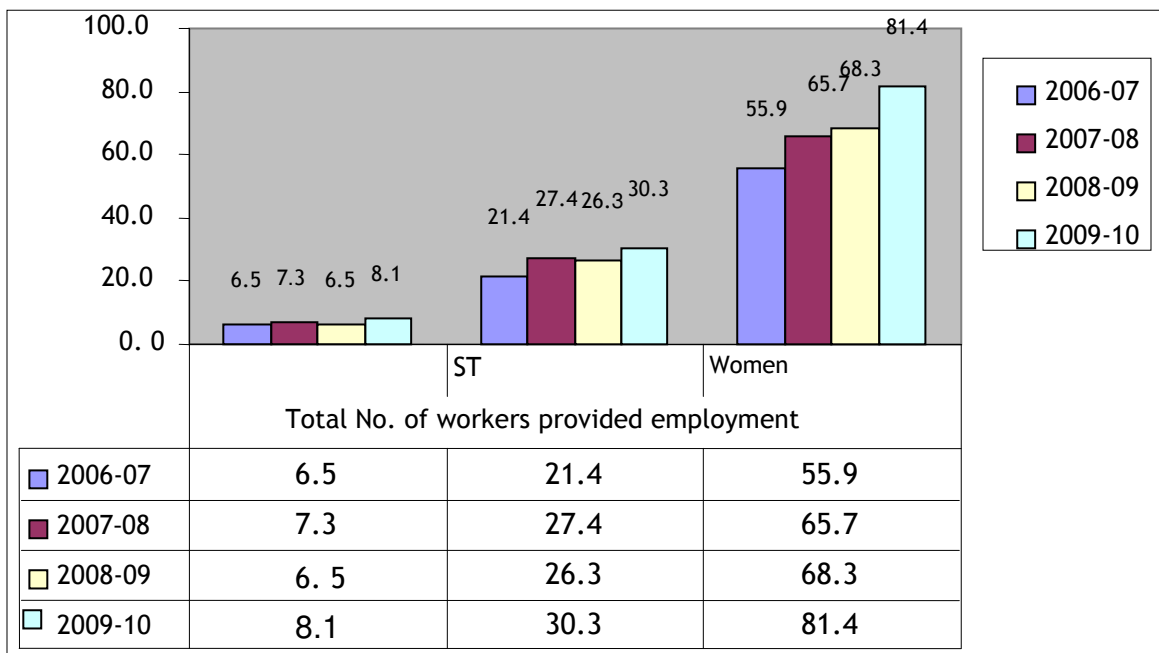
Table 3.2: Year Wise Details of Employment Generated (House Holds & Labour Days)

Year	Total HHs who got emp.	No. of HHs. comptd. of emp	Total No. of workers provided employment					Person Days Generated				
			SC	ST	Gen	Total	Women	SC	ST	General	Total	Women
2006-07	43957	282	3536	11670	39212	54418	30428	72208	205093	616180	893481	452000
2007-08	63068	5235	6210	23469	55848	85527	56160	204341	746963	1849405	2800709	1658535
2008-09	57087	4102	4485	18100	46280	68865	47062	161400	716600	1795000	2673000	2047400
2009-10	58436	7123	5955	22229	45286	73470	59810	202472	866938	2116870	3186280	2531273

Source: JPC. Wayanad

From Table 3.2 it is evident that the implementation of NREGS during 2007-08 was very effective, with panchayats, the people and associated facilitators supporting the programme with great enthusiasm. Unfortunately the subsequent year show deterioration in most indicators, such as number of workers and days of employment generated. During 2009-10 all indicators achieved the peak level progress. This may be surprising since it had been anticipated that the implementation would be less effective in the early stages and would gather momentum and come up with all positive possibilities during 2009-10 but significant is that of 2007-08 in certain indicators. The apparent reversal suggests that there are other factors operating to reduce the levels of commitment required to make the programme a continued success. One possible reason that has been advanced is that the panchayats and other connected agencies see this as a scheme that is solely intended to benefit the NREGS workers and their families. Since they see no other benefits, they have no incentive to take on additional responsibilities and risks to ensure the effective implementation of NREGS. It may be necessary to show to such local agencies how they and the district as a whole can benefit from this programme, through creation of infrastructure and provision of other important services that would positively impact upon the entire population. The limited nature of permissible works is therefore a possible impediment to effective implementation.

Chart 3.1: Proportion of SC, ST and Women in total NREGs workers in Wayanad (per cent)



From Chart 3.1 it is evident that the proportion of SC workers increased in the first two years and declined in the third year (6.5%) and again increased to 8.17 during 2009-10. The SC population in the district is estimated to be around 4 per cent, and since they are likely to be disproportionately represented among rural labour, landless groups and in the NREGS. Similarly, the ST population is estimated to be around 17 per cent of total population in the district (and an even higher percentage of rural population) but their proportion of NREGS workers has increased in the first two years and decreased in the third year and increased significantly during 2009-10.

The increase and decrease of the number of workers in NREGA in the District is occurred due to the predominance of agriculture and rearrangement of agricultural labours with NREGA workers.

The case of women workers is more interesting and complex. The proportion of women workers in total NREGS workers has been around 27 per cent, which is around the same as the rural work participation rate of women. This makes Wayanad different from Kerala as a whole, since the participation of women in the NREGS in the average of all districts has been double their work participation rate in the state. However, in terms of person days of work, the share of women workers is much higher and has been increasing, going up from 50.6 per cent in 2006-07 to 59.2 per cent in 2007-08 to 79 per cent in 2009-10. So, while the proportion of women workers in the NREGS in Wayanad are less than the statutory requirement of 30 per cent of work in terms of numbers, they account for the majority of NREGS work days in the district, up to nearly four-fifths in the latest year. The average woman worker in a household with a job card in the district is therefore more likely than a male member, to take up NREGS work. This probably reflects the significant gender wage differential in most paid employment in rural Kerala, which provides women workers with greater motivation to go to NREGS work than their male counterparts.

Release & Utilization of NREGA Fund

The financial performance under NREGS in Wayanad district is shown in Table 3 below. From 2006-07 to 2009-10, expenditure on NREGS increased from 47% to 89% of allocation. Since NREGS is an unprecedented programme and the district administration had to develop many aspects for initiating the programme in the first year, they could utilize only 47% percent of the released amount during 2006-07. However, in subsequent years they have spent 87% to 89% of the amount released. Expenditure on the material component has been significant. The highest amount is utilized for wages which was equal

to 44%, 84%, and 68% and 70% respectively for the last four years. It is worth noting that the amount spent on wages has increased even though the days worked have fallen in total, reflecting the changed work norms in the state, which have led to increase in the wages actually received by workers at the sites.

The year wise release and component wise utilization of fund is also shown in Table 3.3 below:

Table 3.3: Year Wise Details of Financial Performance

Year	O.B as on 1st April of the year	Release during current year		Misc. receipt	Total	Cumulative Expenditure(Rs.in Lakhs)					Total
		Central	State			On Wages	On Semi-Skilled and Skilled Wages	On Material	Administrative Expenses		
									Recurring	Non Recurring	
2006-07	627.05	1,437.32	227.3	218	2,509.28	1,100.83	1.19	18.84	49.02	0	1,169.88
2007-08	1,339.40	2,400.00	266.2	137	4,142.66	3,483.60	15.75	367.9	63.3	0	3,930.52
2008-09	212.14	4,118.27	457.6	109	4,897.07	3,309.43	135.4	709.2	86.83	3.76	4,244.57
2009-10	652.5	4289.54	519.69	144.33	5606.10	3949.44	120.63	793.51	106.60	9.90	4980.09

Source: JPC. Wayanad

Works taken up under NREGS

The details of work taken up and completed and ongoing are shown in the following table. During 2007-08, 904 works were completed. They were mainly focused on rural connectivity, land development, minor irrigation works and other activities. Though there is an increase in the number of works sanctioned, during 2009-10, the number of works completed showed a decrease.

Table 3.4: Year Wise Details of Work Status of Wayanad District (three years)

	2007-08			2008-09			2009-10		
	Completed(Nos.)	Ongoing / Suspended(Nos.)	Total (Nos.)	Completed (Nos.)	Ongoing/ Suspended (Nos.)	Total (Nos.)	Completed (Nos.)	Ongoing/ Suspended (Nos.)	Total (Nos.)
Rural Connectivity	703	19	722	364	25	389	161	1198	1359
Flood Control and Protection	2032	14	2046	1464	12	1476	54	1018	2796
Water Conservation and Water Harvesting	2485	50	2535	1877	34	1911	572	2250	2958
Drought Proofing	67	0	67	726	36	762	97	1445	1434
Minor Irrigation Works	283	0	283	104	3	107	194	1099	388
Provision of Irrigation facility to Land Owned by SC/ST/IAY/LR	24	0	24	55	0	55	17	322	23
Renovation of Traditional Water bodies	379	2	381	256	5	261	1	22	1259
Land Development	1679	11	1690	1779	47	1826	205	3778	4522
Any Other activity Approved by MRD	0	0	0	0	0	0	33	91	101
Total	7652	96	7748	6625	162	6787	1302	12370	14840

Source: JPC. Office, Wayanad

Selection of Panchayats for the Study

For the study of NREGS in Wayanad District, two panchayats were selected from two different blocks. The two Panchayats were selected on the basis of being the “best” performing and “worst” performing with respect to implementation of NREGS. The best performing Panchayat was **Edavaka** from Mananthavady Block and **Kaniyambetta** Panchayat from Kalpatta block was selected for its lagging performance, in order to assess and understand the positive and negative aspects of the implementation process.

1. EDAVAKA PANCHAYAT

The Panchayat was formed in 1962 having an area of 47.26 sq. km. The Panchayat consists of two villages Nellurnadu and Edavaka, located in Mananthavady Block. It is a first grade Panchayat having 18 wards. The total number of house holds are 6388, with a total population of 31168 (2001 census) of which 15309 are women and 15859 are men. The Panchayat is surrounded by Panamaram Grama Panchayat in the east; Thondernadu Grama Panchayat is west, Vellamunda Grama Panchayat in the south and Mananthavady River in the north.

Edavaka Panchayat got the first position in the District for the performance of NREGS during 2006-07. The panchayat proved that NREGS can involve a paradigm shift from all other centrally sponsored employment and income generating programmes. The initiative and enthusiasm shown for the effective implementation of NREGS in the Panchayat is really worth appreciating. Since the panchayat is agriculturally oriented, the panchayat extended the scope of the scheme to cultivation in addition to the usual priority works like rural connectivity, watershed development, land development, water harvesting and soil conservation, drought proofing including afforestation and tree plantation.

Registration for Job card

The number of families who registered for job cards and those who were issued job cards are stated in Table 5 below. The percentage of job cards issued from 2006-07 to 2009-10 increased from 92% to 98% of those who registered. It is evident that issuance of job cards is near universal among those who have formally registered for them. However, even in this best-performing panchayat, the actual provision of work has been less complete and has actually fallen off over this period, as will be evident in table below.

Table 3.5: Edavaka Panchayat Families Registered & Job Cards Issued

Year	No. of Families Registered				Total No. of Families Issued Job Cards			
	SC	ST	General	Total	SC	ST	General	Total
2006-07	141	666	3353	4160	140	538	3139	3817
2007-08	210	1066	3640	4916	210	1066	3520	4796
2008-09	225	1128	3963	5316	225	1128	3804	5157
2009-10	230	1230	4541	6001	230	1222	4417	5869

Source: JPC. Wayanad

Employment Generated

The details of employment generated show significant variations in the number of households and workers affected and the person days generated. In this panchayat the proportion of STs in the total days of employment has increased from 21% to more than 25%, and the share of women in the total work days has gone up from 60% to 78%. Overall the person days of employment have increased.

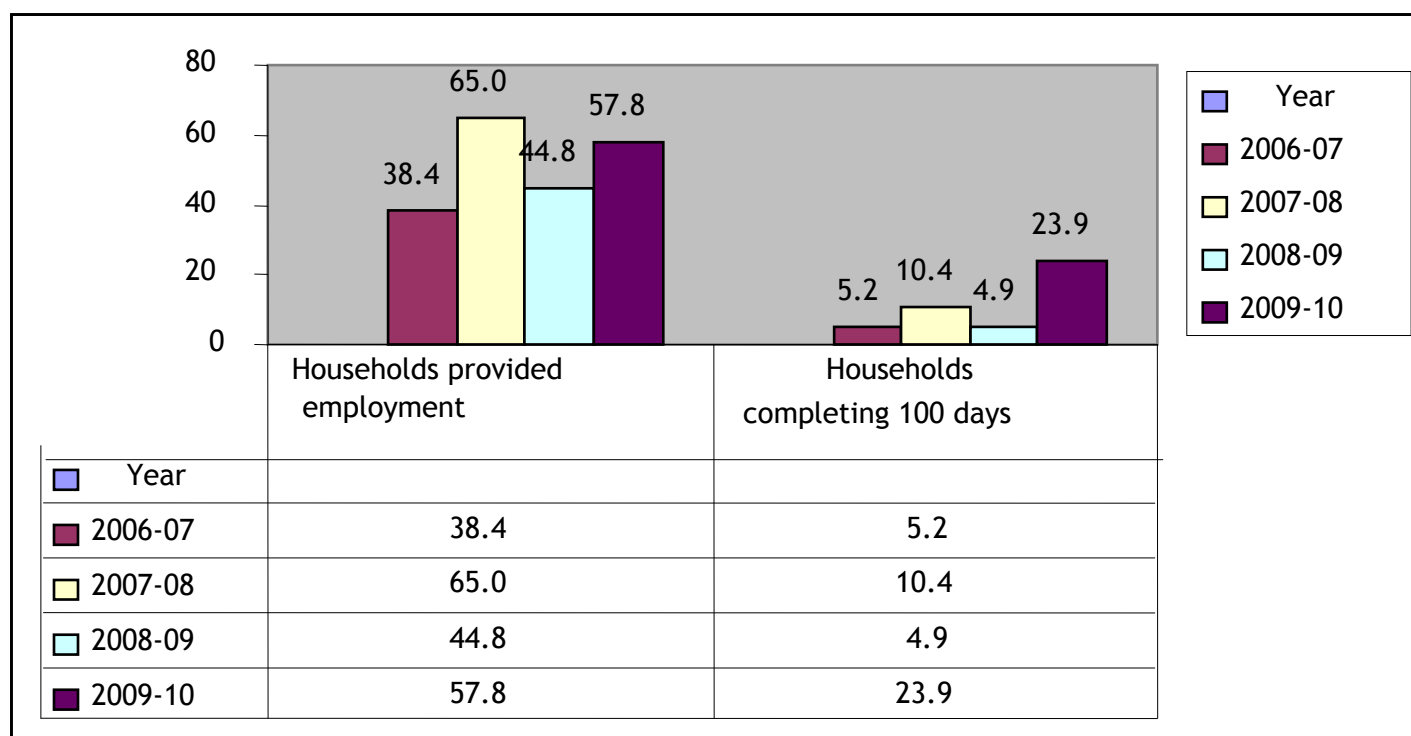
The year 2007-08 had the highest level of performance. Even so, the proportion of households who received employment did not cover all of those who had been issued with job cards, and only around one-tenth of households who did get some employment managed to get the full quota of 100 days of work (Chart 3.2). In the next year there was a significant reduction in these achievements, and the increase in 2009-10 it reached the peak level. The increased performance in the subsequent years suggests that all the efforts made for the implementation of NREGS in the first year were reflected and the impacts are highly appreciable. Details are provided in Table 3.6.

Table 3.6: Year Wise Details of Employment Generated (House Holds & Labour Days)

Year	Total House Holds provided employment	No. of House Holds completed 100 days of employment	Total No of Workers Provided Employment					Person Days Generated				
			SC	ST	General	Total	Women	SC	ST	General	Total	Women
2006-07	1467	76	28	467	1714	2209	1246	1780	16924	61108	79812	48236
2007-08	3118	325	90	739	3409	4238	3015	4643	36382	118230	159255	111350
2008-09	2308	113	150	700	2165	3015	2111	2601	35207	89963	127771	95816
2009-10	3392	814	240	1310	3094	4644	2951	9634	52432	151066	213132	165854

Source: JPC. Wayanad

Chart 3.2: Edavaka Panchayat



Despite large gaps in terms of employment generation relative to implicit demand, unemployment allowance does not have to be paid in any instance. Several discrepancies need to be noted, even in this best performing Panchayat:

1. Employment has to be provided after a formal demand for work, but it is not clear whether workers are aware of this and demand work on their own, or whether the administration simply makes workers fill up the demand for work form when projects have been identified and are to be implemented.
2. The large gap between job card issuance and work provided to households suggests that officials do not make sure that workers know they can demand work according to their own requirement.
3. The inability to provide work for the full 100 days to most households points to a major gap in implementation.
4. Unemployment benefit is a legal requirement of the NREGA if work is not provided within 15 days of demand, yet there is no record of it being paid despite the large apparent gaps in work provision. This suggests that workers are not aware of their rights in this regard and officials are implementing in a manner that would prevent the demand for unemployment benefit.

Release & Utilization of NREGA Fund

In terms of financial performance, the situation appears to be much better. The panchayat had nearly 95% to 110% achievement in terms of utilization of funds relative to allocation, as shown in Table 3.7. One special feature of the utilization of NREGA funds in the panchayat is the low spending on material cost, in the first three years later showed increase which ranged from 04% to 35% for the last four years against the stipulated maximum rate of 40% in the Act.

Table 3.7: Year Wise Details of Financial Performance

Year	O.B as on 1st April of the year	Release during current year		Misc. receipt	Total	Cumulative Expenditure(Rs.in Lakhs)					Total
		Central	State			On Wages	On Semi-Skilled and Skilled Wages	On Material	Administrative Expenses		
									Recurring	Non Recurring	
2006-07		101.65	11.29	0	112.94	99.74	0	6.16	0.88	0	106.78
2007-08	6.16	203.92	22.66	0.35	233.09	199.68	0	18.36	0.69	0	218.73
2008-09	14.36	268.19	29.8	0.6	312.95	249.03	22.58	37.68	2.8	0.12	312.21
2009 -10	0.71	376.80		0.256	377.77	244.36	17.86	100.50	3.098	3.02	368.846

Source: JPC. Wayanad

Works taken up under NREGS

The activities taken up during the last three years (2007-08 to 2009-10) under NREGS are detailed in the Table 8 below. Of the total projects, 47% were for rural connectivity, although only 65% of these were completed. Land development activities constituted 27%, of which 70% were completed. Other focused programmes are minor irrigation works and renovation of traditional water bodies. One notable feature of the evidence provided here is that **no programme has been taken up for land held by SC/ST farmers under NREGS in the Panchayat**. In the next two years the panchayat focused on land development (36% of projects), rural connectivity (27%) and then drought management and flood control and protection. The very same programmes are prioritized during 2009-10 as well, as shown in Table 3.8 below:-

Table 3.8: Details of Works taken up and completed in Edavaka Panchayat.

Works/Activities	2007-08			2008-09			2009-10		
	Completed (Nos.)	Ongoing/suspended (nos.)	Total (Nos.)	Completed (Nos.)	Ongoing/suspended (Nos.)	Total (Nos.)	Completed (Nos.)	Ongoing/suspended (Nos.)	Total (Nos.)
Rural Connectivity	139	76	215	88	87	175	0	198	198
Flood control and protection	1	63	64	12	70	82	0	154	154
Water Conservation and Water	2	6	8	15	8	23	0	48	48
Drought Proofing	0	7	7	58	33	91	0	55	55
Micro Irrigation works	20	7	27	11	9	20	1	25	26
Provision of irrigation facility to land owned by SC/ST/IAY/LR	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Renovation of Traditional Water bodies	9	18	27	38	36	74	0	38	38
Land Development	76	32	108	152	113	265	0	464	464
Any other activity approved by MRD	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	247	209	456	374	356	730	1	982	983

Source: JPC. Wayanad

Thonichal Ward

For detailed analysis of the implementation procedure and achievements of the scheme, the lowest unit of project formulation and implementation, i.e. the ward, is considered in detail from the selected Panchayat. Four types of questionnaire were designed for collecting the details and observing the arrangements for planning and implementation of the scheme and its strength and weakness of implementation.

Questionnaire - I: Response of People's Representatives and Officials

This was intended to record the opinion of the representatives including President, Vice President, standing Committee Chairman and ward members and officials like Panchayat Secretary, Asst. Engineer, Overseer and accountant of the panchayat connected with the implementation of the scheme. This questionnaire was filled in by the officials of the State Planning Board, Evaluation Division, who contacted 11 people's representatives and 4 officials of the panchayat and recorded their views.

On the basis of the interviews, the people's representatives and the officials agreed with and followed the provision of the Act in the following aspects:

- i) With regard to project formulation all the 15 members fully agreed with the provision of the NREGA which stipulates convening meetings of the Grama Sabhas and preparation of the project by the Ward Development Committee after necessary consultation with ADS members of the ward.
- ii) All the members agreed to arrange the material work through quotation but some insisted on following local rates with permission to purchase obtained through purchase committees.
- iii) Since NREGA is an unprecedented programme focusing mainly on unskilled labourers, raising awareness is very significant. All the non-officials and officials agreed with the awareness programmes stipulated in the Act but they recommended that this should be continuous in nature and not just for the initial years.
- iv) It was felt that registration and issue of job cards and demand for work by workers etc., are done strictly in accordance with the provision of the Act and special efforts are made for ensuring SC/ST, women headed/disabled to get job cards. However, it is clear that this perception is not compatible with the evidence on provision of work and unemployment insurance.

- v) It was agreed that there should be display of muster rolls at the work site.
- vi) Officials and non-officials fully agreed with the existing method of payment through banks, but they pointed out that delayed payment negatively affects the objectives of the scheme. Out of 15 members 11 members agreed delayed payment has occurred, and is mainly due to the lack of adequate NREGA staff. Several suggestions were made on the issue of timely payment of wages, for which many suggestions were made, as elaborated in the concluding section.

There were also some different views expressed by officials and non-officials, as follows:

- i. The range of permissible works is too narrow and it is difficult to access the technical people who can change this. Some respondents felt that the focus on one-time intervention on agricultural land could negatively affect the aim of the scheme by reducing the number of projects to be taken up every year.
- ii. With regard to work arrangements, officials and representatives responded differently. Out of 11 members, 7 non-officials agreed work should be arranged without contractors and 4 members felt it was necessary to use contractors.
- iii. The response of the members towards the labour to material ratio was also different. 6 members agreed with the 60:40 ratio, and 7 were against this and recommended a 50:50 ratio. 8 members felt that the 60:40 ratio imposition prevents useful work in the panchayat, while 4 members disagreed with this view
- iv. 4 members reported that the lists of job cards are displayed on the public places while 8 members responded that they are not displayed in public places but recorded in the panchayat register.

Questionnaire - II: Response of work Site Manager/Mate

This questionnaire was intended for the worksite manager or mate. From the selected ward 15 mates were identified and interviewed. Kudumbasree members hold significant positions in NREGA implementation and typically work site manager/mates are CDS/ADS members/Kudumasree Secretary/Presidents. They have sufficient knowledge about NREGA. The process of implementation starts from panchayats and ADS becomes the lowest unit to mobilize the workers and supervise the workers. In terms of educational qualification of these 15 mates, 11 had SSLC, 2 were above SSLC and 2 below SSLC. The number of days they worked as mates in the previous sites were 75 to 100 days for 12 mates, 50-75 for one and 25-50 for 2 mates. No one worked less than 25 days in the year.

The details of workers in the work site include 30-40 workers in 6 sites and 40-50 workers in 9 sites. Their main duties were: to organize self help groups, to arrange the labours in the site, to make available working implements, to provide facilities in the work site, to supervise the work, to prepare the muster roll of each work and submit to the panchayat for payment after completion of the particular work, etc.

The interviewed mates made demands that their status should be raised to that of skilled labours and their working hours should be reduced. Other suggestions are included in suggestions and recommendations.

Questionnaire III: Response of Labourers

Questionnaire III was designed for NREGA workers. 22 workers were contacted for the purpose. 14 workers belong to the age group of 25-45 and 8 workers belong to the age group of 45-65. The majority of the workers were found to prefer the NREGS for maintaining their livelihood. There is no social class prioritisation in NREGA works, as all those who are willing and capable of doing the manual work are provided the job card.

In the survey, out of 22 workers 18 belonged to BPL category and 11 were APL. 21 were married and one was widow. 17 workers had land below 25 cents. One worker had 5 members in the household and 2 workers had more than 5 members, while the rest had less than 5 members. In terms of the number of NREGS working days the workers got in the previous year, 7 workers got 75 to 100 days, 5 workers got 50 to 75 days, 3 workers got 25 to 50 days and 7 workers got 25 days.

It was found that the charge for taking photos of workers were met through NREGA funds as per the Act, but in the panchayat the cost of only SC/ST workers were met by the panchayat and not for general category workers. The number of projects undertaken generates estimates of the participation of workers but the mate has to collect the applicants from the panchayat and distribute the work among the workers at the time of implementation.

Questionnaire -IV: Response of Households

This questionnaire was designed for the house holds. Various categories of households were taken for the study: (i) those that had registered and obtained job cards and work (ii) those that had registered and obtained job card but not taken work (iii) those not registered (iv) female headed households. In each category available SC/ST

house holds were included in the survey. All household respondents agreed that the procedures are followed in accordance with the Act. Households who registered for job cards but did not take up work said they did not demand work because they did not realise earlier that the NREGS would involve manual work, and they do not prefer such work.

Procedures followed for implementation of NREGS in Edavaka Panchayat

a. Communication and awareness measures

The message of NREGS is conveyed through grama sabhas, meeting of neighbourhood groups of Kudumbasree, posters, banners, cinema slides and other media. A door to door survey was under taken to identify persons willing to register for employment. The survey was conducted by a team headed by the President of Grama Panchayat ward members, Government functionaries and grama panchayat Secretary. The team members are given orientation training at Block and District level. In Edavaka panchayat, awareness creation was done through grama sabha, kudumbasree mission self help groups and news papers. In SC/ST house holds, special attempts were made to ensure the effectiveness of awareness through home to home campaign and Oorukuttom.

b. Plan formulation

The list of projects is prepared and presented before the grama sabha by the ward development committee or ADS. Any additional work suggested by the grama sabha is also included if feasible. The projects of different wards are consolidated and presented before the panchayat governing body. After estimates are made by engineers, the plan is submitted to the block and again to DPC. Once it is approved they agreed that it will be final.

c. Registration for job card.

For registration of works, ward level grama sabha is convened and registration forms for job cards are circulated. A ward level survey is conducted for registering the job seekers. Before the execution of the work, a project meeting is arranged for receiving the application for obtaining the willingness of the workers.

d. Approved works, execution and agencies involved

ADS/CDS members function as the mates of the work sites. They receive training from the panchayat about NREGA. In every work site there are about 42-50 workers. The

mates provide all the facilities for work, prepare Muster Rolls and submit to them the panchayat for payment when the work is completed.

e. Payment of wages

NREGS payments are made through bank accounts/post office accounts of workers. In Edavaka panchayat, payments are made every 14 days through banks. But in the case of SC /ST workers an amount of Rs.50/- is paid as daily wages from the account of ADS. In the absence of adequate NREGS staff, **payments are delayed more than 14 days. This is a serious problem affecting the performance of the scheme.**

f) Fund release

Central Government releases NREGA funds to the State on the basis of the annual approved projects submitted by the State Government. The State Government release the fund to the District programme coordinator further it is distributed to District panchayat/Block Panchayat/Grama panchayat according to their approved projects or reimburse the amount incurred for the NREGA project, when submit the details of expenditure.

g) Monitoring and Evaluation methods.

The grama sabhas select the audit members, who monitor and evaluate the completed project work with reference to 19 factors as stipulated in the Act. The audit report is published every six months.

h) Transparency and accountability systems followed

Full transparency was maintained in the panchayat by displaying all relevant information about the works taken up each year.

From the Survey it is generally observed that the scheme was successfully implemented in the Panchayat, and has contributed to raising the levels of income and employment of rural households. It also indirectly and substantially increased credit availability and also developed a saving mentality among women. The earnings of NREGA tend to be utilised for partly for food purchase and partly for clearing debts, education and health expenses.

2. KANIYAMBETTA PANCHAYAT

The second Panchayat chosen for detailed study is Kaniyambetta from Kalpetta block. The location of the Panchayat is Vythiri, Sulthan Bathery Taluk including Kaniyambetta and Naduvinjal villages having an area of 37.865 sq. km. The density of population is 780 per sq. km. The annual rain fall rate is 2800 mm per year and average rain fall is 110 days. The Panchayat is surrounded on the north by Panamaram and Poothady Grama Panchayats, on the south by Muttil and Kottathara Panchayats, on the west by Panamaram and Kottathara Panchayats, and on the east by Meengangadi and Mittil Panchayats.

As per 2001 census, the population of the Panchayat is 29516, of which 14755 are male and 14761 are female. SC population is 766 and ST 6305. The main occupation of the Panchayat is agriculture. Paddy, coffee, pepper, ginger and areca nut are the main crops of the Panchayat.

Performance of NREGS in Kaniyambetta Panchayat

Kaniyambetta Panchayat was considered for the study as the average performing panchayat. The Panchayat includes 17 wards and as per the projected number of households, the Panchayat at present includes 6620 households.

Registration for Job card

Details of job card registration and issue are shown in Table 3.9.

Table 3.9: Year Wise Details of No. Families Registered & Job Card Issued

Year	No. of Families Registered				Total No. of Families Issued Job Cards			
	SC	ST	General	Total	SC	ST	General	Total
2006-07	373	812	2575	3760	259	812	2527	3598
2007-08	376	1025	2768	4169	376	1021	2751	4148
2008-09	376	1095	3042	4513	376	1082	3034	4492
2009-10	277	1166	3392	4835	267	1141	3198	4606

Source: JPC Office, Wayanad

Employment Generated

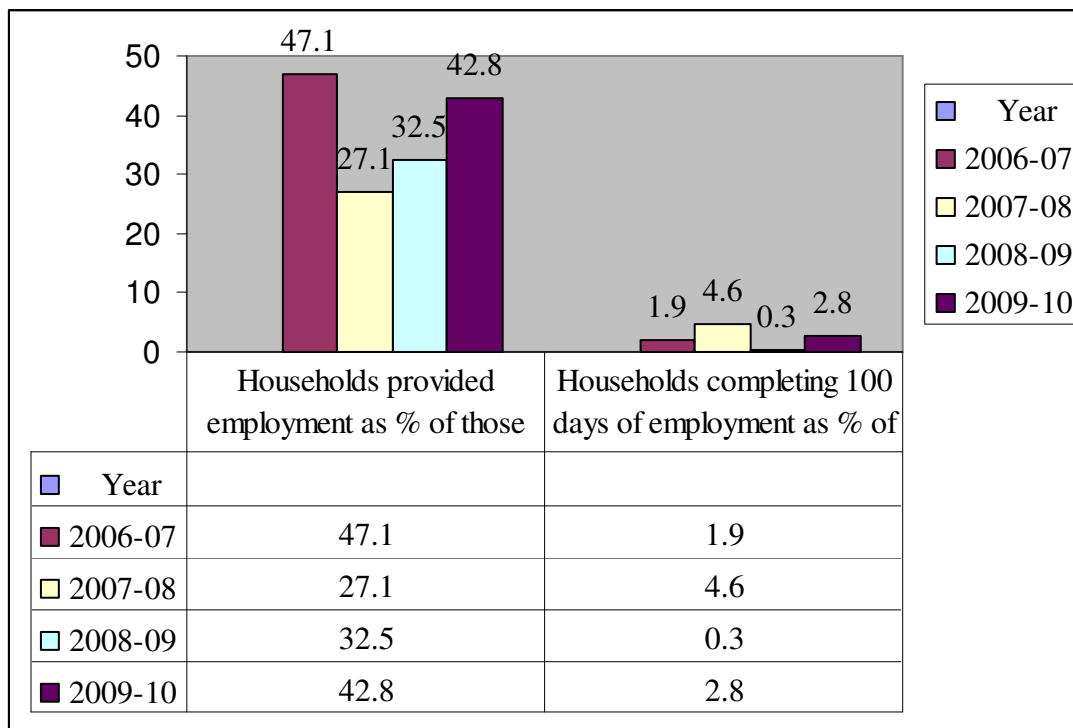
As evident from Chart 3, this performance shows a relatively less effective performance in terms of NREGS as compared with Edavaka Panchayat. While job card distribution has been adequate, as shown in the earlier table, the proportion of households that have been provided with employment as per cent of those with job cards has never reached half. However, 2007-08 does not appear to be the year of peak performance; instead, this proportion has increased progressively since 2007-08. This suggests that matters are improving in this Panchayat. (The high percentage recorded in the first year reflects the fact that fewer job cards had been distributed in the first year at the start of the programme.) However, the proportion of households that received the full quota of 100 days of employment has been extremely low, and has fallen significantly since 2007-08. The details are provided in Table 3.10.

Table 3.10: Year Wise Details of Employment Generated (House Holds & Labour Days)

Year	Total House Holds provided employment	No. of House Holds completed 100 days of employment	Total No of Workers Provided Employment					Person Days Generated				
			SC	ST	General	Total	Women	SC	ST	General	Total	Women
2006-07	1695	32	155	565	991	1711	924	1986	4757	8150	14893	9162
2007-08	1123	52	151	277	709	1137	726	4299	12988	52021	69308	22041
2008-09	1459	4	117	105 7	1459	2633	1579	1342	22325	42333	66000	38970
2009-10	1973	56	209	807	1360	2376	2005	8130	32559	54562	95251	79258

Source: JPC Office, Wayanad

Chart 3.3: Kaniyambetta Panchayat



Release & Utilization of NREGA Fund

Financial indicators suggest improving performance over time: in the first year the panchayat spent 66% of the funds released, while in the subsequent years it has spent more than 95% of the release.

Interviews and discussions conducted in the Panchayat suggested that the low level of employment generation was related to the reduction in the fund release. The Panchayat authorities approved schemes and job card holders but they could not meet the job demand due to lack of funds. According to them, they can provide employment to nearly 50% of the job card holders and it is the lack of funds that is affecting their performance in NREGA. It is also evident from Table 3.11 that they utilised more than 96% of the funds released in the past three years. **Panchayat officials stated that they repeatedly requested funds but no release was made.** It should be noted that, if this is true, it is contrary to the provisions of the Act, which specifies that funds will be released as per the demand of project and labour demand.

Table 3.11: Year Wise Details of Financial Performance

Year	O.B as on 1st April of the year	Release during current year		Misc. receipt	Total	Cumulative Expenditure(Rs.in Lakhs)					Total
		Central	State			On Wages	On Semi-Skilled and Skilled Wages	On Material	Administrative Expenses		
									Recurri ng	Non Recurri ng	
2006-07		26.4	2.93	0	29.33	18.5	0	0.09	0.83	0	19.42
2007-08	9.91	77.62	8.62	0.47	96.62	87.28	0	4.6	1	0	92.88
2008-09	3.74	132.44	14.72	0.27	151.17	115.14	3.13	16.65	2.96	0.48	138.36
2009 -10	12.81	150.7		0.37	163.88	119.15	0	37.88	2.24	0	158.78

Source: JPC Office, Wayanad

Works taken up under NREGS

The major activities of the panchayat under NREGS, as shown in Table 12, are mainly focused on land development with 36%, water conservation and water harvesting 32% and land development 30%. Similar programmes are also prioritized in the coming year. During 2007-08 there was no activity for rural connectivity. **There was no programme for SC/ST or Indira Awas Yojana during the three years.** Panchayat officials informed that all the schemes are implemented but that is not shown in the site of NREGS.

Table 3.12: Year wise Details of Works Status

Works/Activities	2007-08			2008-09			2009-10		
	Completed (Nos.)	Ongoing/suspended (Nos.)	Total (Nos.)	Completed (Nos.)	Ongoing/suspended (Nos.)	Total (Nos.)	Completed (Nos.)	Ongoing/suspended (Nos.)	Total (Nos.)
Rural Connectivity	0	0	0	0	18	18	0	27	27
Flood control and protection	0	43	43	0	130	130	0	135	135
Water Conservation and Water	0	39	39	0	125	125	0	130	130
Drought Proofing	0	1	1	0	18	18	0	130	130
Micro Irrigation works	0	2	2		2	2	0	2	2
Provision of irrigation facility to land owned by SC/ST/IAY/LR	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Renovation of Traditional Water bodies	0	1	1	0	46	46	0	49	49
Land Development	1	34	35	0	218	218	0	289	289
Any other activity approved by MRD	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1	120	121	0	557	557	0	762	762

Source: JPC Office, Wayanad

Kozhinchangad Ward

Questionnaire - I: Response of People's Representatives and Officials

12 non-official members of the panchayat (including president, vice president, standing committee chairperson and members) and 3 officers were interviewed. All the 15 members unanimously agreed that projects are prepared based on the need of the area,

determined through neighbourhood group meetings and consultation in grama sabha. These projects are approved in the grama sabha and submitted to the Panchayat council. The estimates are then prepared and submitted to the Block for technical sanction and then submitted to DPC for approval. Thereafter, the muster roll of all works and project is given to Kudumbasree workers for work.

All the members interviewed felt that the range of work permitted under NREGA is too narrow. 43% of the members agreed that it is possible to arrange without contractors, while 57 support allowing contractors. Materials arranged through quotations are agreed by all and the labour ratio is either by 50:50 or 40:60. According to the respondent, the panchayat is following strictly the awareness programme as per the Act and 60% are satisfied with the existing system of awareness about NREGA.

With regard to job card issue, all 15 members fully supported the guidelines of the Act. 85% of the members stated that special attempts were made for issuing job card to women and disabled persons. They all agreed that muster rolls are displayed at the work site. However, there was difference of opinion regarding the display of job card in public places, with 53% agreeing and 47% disagreeing. The practice of paying wages for NREGS through bank accounts is appreciated by all the members. 55% reported delays in payment, while 45% disagreed. It was reported that delays are mainly due to lack of sufficient NREGA staff. It was posited that social audit, monitoring and evaluation are done subject to the Act

Questionnaire - II: Response of work Site Manager/Mate

15 work site managers (all women) were interviewed. 11 hold positions of ADS President/Secretaries in Kudumbasree missions and other 4 are ADS members. 5 members are educated above SSLC and 10 have SSLC. In the previous year, 4 mates worked between 25-50 days, 3 mates between 50-75 days, and 8 mates between 75-100 days. 11 mates managed 30-40 workers, 2 managed 40-50 workers and one mate managed 50-60 workers.

The mates are well aware of NREGA and their own duties and functions. They put forward some recommendations like providing uniform to workers and mates, and changing the working hours to be from 8 am to 4 pm.

Questionnaire III: Response of Labourers

15 workers were selected of which 53% are females and 47% are men. 10 workers are in the age range of 25-45 years and 5 are 45-65 years. 7 workers are ST and 8 from

general group; and 3 workers are from APL and 12 are from BPL category. 11 workers are married, 2 unmarried and 2 are widowed/separated. Out of 15 workers, 9 have land less than 25 cents, 5 have less than 50 cents, and 1 above 1 acre. 14 workers have 5 member families, while one worker has 8 family members. The details of NREGA workers in the identified ward show that 4 families have one worker, 9 families have 2 workers each and 4 families have four workers each. In terms of days of employment in the year, one worker got below 25 days, 6 workers got 25-50 days, 5 families got 50-75 working days and one worker got 75-100 days.

Questionnaire -IV: Response of Households

Four categories of households were selected: 11 who have job cards and work and 4 with job cards but no work. Another category is households without job cards, and 5 families are considered under this category.

It was generally observed by the respondents that NREGA is a good scheme in its meaning, objective and its implementation to help the poor to maintain their daily life without poverty. It has helped them to clear debts and is particularly helpful to the women workers to build confidence so that they get recognition in the society. Women now have bank accounts and savings that they never thought to have in their lives.

They stated that the weakness of the scheme is that in Kerala Rs.125/- is not a sufficient amount as daily wage. Men are not interested in the work mainly due to the low wages. Further, the works stipulated as per the Act is too narrow. They suggested greater flexibility in works, which will make the scheme more effective and useful. Further, asset creation in NREGS is very low, so it was suggested to introduce a different labour to material ratio of 50:50.

NREGA envisages 100 days of work to members of rural family in a year, but this is rarely provided. It was recommended to generate 100 days of work per worker in a year. Due to the inadequacy of NREGA staff, wage payments are delayed and this tends to reduce the confidence of the workers. Allowing adequate staff is required to ensure that payments are made in time.

Procedures followed for implementation of NREGS in Kaniyambetta Panchayat

NREGS awareness in the Panchayats was created through seminars, Grama Sabha meetings, ward development samitis and Kudumbasree. ST households came to know

about NREGS through Oorukuttom. Kudumbasree and Ayalkuttam functioned as facilitators in creating awareness.

Plan formulation

Special grama sabhas were conducted for identifying works. Through Kudumbasree and Ayalkuttom, the types of work were discussed. NREGS advisory committee, farmers, CDS members, ward development committees are also participated in planning work, and the planned works projects are formulated with the help of experts, Resident association members, padasekhara samithis etc.

Registration and employment details

After creating awareness, application forms are distributed in the panchayat. After collecting the applications, registration numbers and job cards were distributed through the panchayat office and grama sabhas for applicants. At first, many people did not agree to collect job cards. Details of the work were published through notice boards of the panchayat, ADS and CDS members. Workers who had no work in their ward obtained work in the near ward.

Approved works execution and agencies involved

After the Grama sabha identifies required works, those among them that can be executed as per the guidance of the NREGS Act are taken and projects are formulated. Details of work, estimates, running cost, materials, labour and funds are put on the notice board. Materials are arranged by purchase committee. Very little material work is done in the Panchayat because of the labour material ratio. However, this ratio is not acceptable to the Panchayat, which feels it should be changed according to the nature of soil and area. A 'technical samithi' was created and it works effectively in the Panchayat. An advisory samithy undertakes discussion under the chairmanship of the president. A vigilance and monitoring committee has been constituted in each ward to check all the work and give necessary guidelines.

Payment of wages

Payment of wages is done after 15 days of work and completion of the supervisor's report. In the Panchayat, payments are through the bank by opening individual bank account. Delays in payments occur due to poor staff strength under NREGA.

Release of funds and utilization

In the first two years of implementation, funds from the central government were received as re-imbusement to the Panchayat. From November 2008 onwards the funds have been received in advance. About 80% of expenditure is for wages. 18-19% of expenditure is for material cost. Similarly semi skilled and skilled wages are less compared to other expenditure.

Monitoring and Evaluation methods

Labourers meetings ward members, Vigilance and monitoring committee and social audit team presence make the scheme more effective. Providing drinking water, first aid box, site board, shelter in the work site are monitored by staff of the scheme. Ward wise meeting conducted in prescribed interval of time. Vigilance and monitoring committee constituted in each ward check all the work and give necessary guidelines. Agriculture members in vigilance and monitoring committee help evaluation.

Transparency and accountability systems followed

Since the scheme is more people oriented, labourers' meetings, involvement of the ward member, the vigilance and monitoring committee and social audit team make the scheme more corruption free. Ward wise meetings are conducted. Mates keep the work site diary, which is open to all. However, some mates are not doing this properly. Muster Rolls are maintained by ADS.

II. PHASE I -PALAKKAD DISTRICT

Palakkad District is the second district selected for the study of the Phase I implementation of NREGS in Kerala. The scheme was introduced in the district during February 2006.

Profile of Palakkad District

Palakkad District (known as Palaghat in English) came into existence on 1 January 1957. It has the lowest literacy rate in the State. Forest land accounts for about 30 per cent of the total area of the district. The district ranks first in terms of the proportion of scheduled caste population and the percentage of agricultural labourers. The female work participation rate is very high in the district.

Palakkad District is bounded on the northwest by Malappuram District, on the east by Coimbatore district of Tamil Nadu, and on the south and south west by Trichur District. The total geographical area of Palaghat is 4480 square km. The district has 5 Taluks, 13 Blocks 91 Grama Panchayats, 156 Revenue villages and 4 municipalities. The total number of households is 5, 30,216, consisting of 23, 63,558 persons including SC population of 4, 04,995 and ST population of 39,361. The number of BPL rural households is 2, 44,662.

The climate is very hot from March to June. Hot winds blows through the Palakkad gap from Coimbatore District of Tamil Nadu, and the temperature varies from 20 c to 45 c.

There are five forest divisions - Mannarkkad, Silent Valley National Park, Palakkad, Parambikulam Wild Life Sanctuary and Nenmara. The Bharathapuzha, the largest river in Kerala (also known as Ponnani River or Nila Nadi), flows through Palakkad District, passing through Palakkad and Ottappalam Taluks.

Palakkad District is called the rice bowl of Kerala on account of the sown area under paddy cultivation. Palakkad has good irrigation facilities. Dams have been constructed across almost all the important tributaries of the Bharathapuzha. There are six completed irrigation projects in the District.

Land use pattern

A record of present land use pattern followed by the farmers is essential for further planning and reorganization of land use to generate appropriate NREGA work. Half of the land other than forest is under cultivation. Cultivable waste land accounts for 5 per cent of the total land area. About 3 percent remains fallow. The intensity of cultivation is high. Next to paddy, coconut is the important crop in the District. Groundnut, tapioca and cotton are the other crops cultivated in the district.

This district has below 10% units of small scale industrial units. Palakkad is less industrialized with very few workers finding employment in manufacturing. Labour force participation is high among both men and women, and workers are distributed as indicated in Table 3.13

**Table 3.13 Distribution of total workers (Main & Marginal)
in Palakkad as per 2001 census**

Category	Total (Nos.)	Male (Nos.)	Female (Nos.)
Cultivators	85638 (9.08%)	65126 (9.89%)	20512 (7.17%)
Agricultural labourers	317192 (33.6%)	156290 (23.72%)	160902 (56.20)
Workers in H.H. industry	32832 (3.48%)	22056 (3.35)	10776 (3.76%)
Other workers	509390 (53.9%)	415293 (63.0%)	94097 (32.9%)

Source: Census 2001.

Palakkad District lags behind in most other development indicators. It occupies the 1st position among districts in the percentage of agricultural labourers (33.6%). Similarly female work participation rate is 21.2% occupies 3rd rank in the state.

Overall performance of NREGS in the district

NREGS started in Palakkad District in the 1st phase of the programme in 2006-07. The scheme included water conservation, drought proofing, micro irrigation works, provision of irrigation facility to land owned by SC and ST, BPL etc., renovation of traditional water bodies, land development, flood control and poverty and rural connectivity.

The implementation of NREGS enhanced the livelihood security of rural poor by reducing poverty and hunger. The programme failed in generating productive assets. Projects for environment protection have been carried out in many Panchayats of the District. Many rural poor women of all castes and ages have been empowered, and at least some rural and urban migration has been prevented by implementation of the scheme.

Registration for Job card

Job cards were issued to all households who registered for it. However, as shown in Chart 3.4, less than half of these households actually received employment. The point to be noted here is that usually BPL rural people are coming for NREGS work and the District covers 244662 BPL rural house hold and hence the registered and job card holders included 95% of the rural house hold. Moreover the District is known as the rice bowl of Kerala in respect of paddy cultivation and 33.6% workers are agricultural workers and a good proportion of workers are diverted to agriculture. It may be that not all those who register for job cards have actually sought for or wanted work under NREGS, given the wage rate paid under the scheme. The proportion of households who have actually received work under NREGS has increased from 10% in 2006-07 to 14% and 18% in subsequent years.

Table 3.14: Year Wise Details of No. Families Registered & Job Card Issued

Year	No. of Families Registered				Total No. of families Issued Job Card			
	SC	ST	Others	Total	SC	ST	Others	Total
2006-07	13299	5017	55840	74156	13299	5017	55840	74156
2007-08	40165	13076	137184	190425	40165	13076	137184	190425
2008-09	44485	13639	150468	208592	44485	13639	150468	208592
2009-10	48154	13885	169469	231508	48154	13885	169469	231508

Source: JPC office

Employment Generated

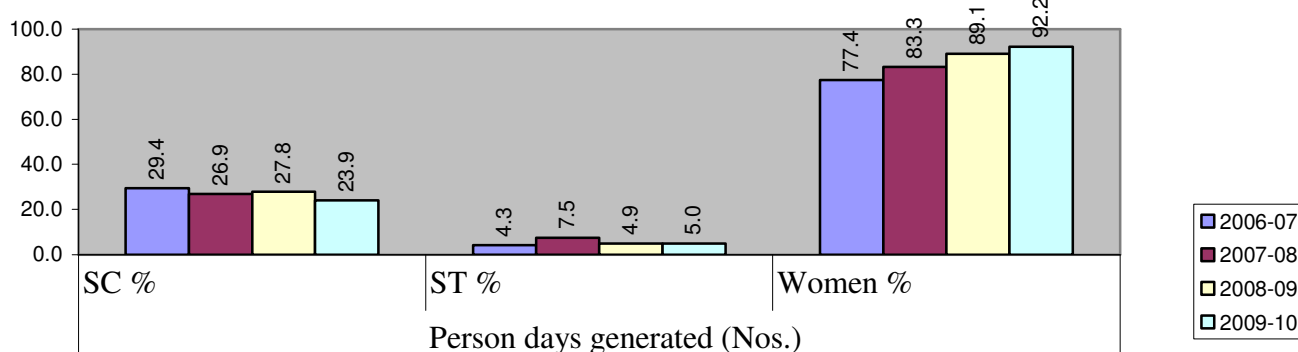
The number of days of employment generated for women showed a cumulative increase in the three years, by 40% and 67% over the previous years 2006-07 and 2007-08, suggesting that the scheme is increasingly attractive to women. Chart 1 shows that women dominate in the scheme, accounting for the overwhelming majority of work days generated. The share of SC person days in the scheme is higher than the SC share of population. (The break up of SC and ST women workers is not available for this district.)

Table 3.15: Year Wise Details of Employment Generated(House Holds & Labour Days)

Year	Total House Holds provided employment	No. of House Holds completed 100 days of employment	Total No. of House Holds Provided Employment				Person Days Generated				
			SC	ST	General	Total	SC	ST	General	Total	Women
2006-07	43957	282	16800	2300	36500	55600	340000	49000	766000	1155000	894000
2007-08	76180	3255	22066	5064	49050	76180	718000	200000	1754000	2672000	2225000
2008-09	93330	5103	25339	4759	63232	93330	1041497	184373	2514715	3740585	3331787
2009-10	108250	6970	28559	5128	74563	108250	1106037	230739	3281008	4617784	4258186

Source: JPC Office

Chart 3.4: Proportion of SC,ST and women person days in Palakkad (per cent)



	Person days generated (Nos.)		
2006-07	29.4	4.3	77.4
2007-08	26.9	7.5	83.3
2008-09	27.8	4.9	89.1
2009-10	23.9	5.0	92.2

Table 3.16 gives data on the total fund availability during each year and corresponding cumulative expenditures. It is while the proportion of expenditure was reasonably good in the first year of the scheme, in the second year substantial efforts were made for effective implementation of the scheme, reflected in the increase in proportion spent to 87 per cent of the available funds. However, in subsequent years, while the absolute amounts spent increased, they decreased in relation to allocation the possible reason is that the allocation was double to that of previous year and it was given on advance. The same tempo of increased expenditure was maintained in the scheme through out the years.

The programme did result in increasing financial inclusion because of the method of payment. The number of individual bank accounts generated is 122984 and 114 joint accounts have been opened in the district. Similarly, 404 individual post office accounts were also opened in the district under the scheme.

Table 3.16: Year Wise Details of Financial Performance

Year	O.B as on 1st April of the year	Release during current year		Misc. receipt	Total	Cumulative Expenditure (Rs.in Lakhs)					Total
		Central	State			On Wages	On Semi-Skilled and Skilled Wages	On Material	Administrative Expenses		
									Recurring	Non Recurring	
2006-07	627.05	1742.19	227.27	17.22	2613.73	1100.84	1.19	18.83	49.02		1169.88
2007-08	1321.93	2968.37	329.86	24	4644.16	2995.9	146.74	293.54	178		3614.18
2008-09	496.9	6955.98	713.33	64.94	8231.15	4637.13	164.94	495.72	224.07	18.93	5540.79
2009-10	2309.99	4375.74	480.09	138.1	7303.93	5532.01	175.82	902	280.72	3.63	6894.17

Source: JPC Office

Activities taken up under NREGS in Palakkad District

The major works taken up in the district up to March 2010 are water conservation and water harvesting, drought proofing, micro irrigation works, provision of minor irrigation facilities to land owned by SC, ST, IAY etc., renovation of traditional water bodies, land development, flood control and protection and rural connectivity

Table: 3.17 Year wise Details of Work status of Palakkad District

Name of Works	Completed works				Ongoing works			
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Water conservation and water harvesting	207	319	483	729	166	264	228	1746
Drought proofing	10	75	39	175	49	88	51	691
Micro Irrigation works	1012	1359	2483	1192	242	626	341	4020
Provision of irrigation facility to land varied by SC,ST,IAY etc.,	148	69	48	56	83	33	32	201
Renovation of traditional water bodies	915	1107	1874	1634	471	870	731	3706
Land Development	56	201	784	823	31	150	222	1764
Flood control & Poverty	917	1189	2481	1782	461	523	637	5821
Rural Connectivity	59	152	319	233	33	129	141	923
Any other activity approved by MRD				104				82
Total	3324	4471	8511	6728	1536	2683	2383	18954

Source: JPC Office

Major programmes have been focused on micro irrigation, renovation of traditional water bodies and flood control and poverty. Water conservation and rural connectivity were also focused on in previous years. While the district has the highest proportion of SC population of all districts in the state, the schemes were initiated for SC, ST and IAY throughout the years. Clearly there is need to increase the focus on land improvement on SC farms in particular.

Selected Panchayats

The District has the largest number of local bodies, including 90 grama panchayats, all of which are implementing NREGS. For the study, two panchayats were selected based on their performance.

1. AKATHETHARA PANCHAYAT

Akathethara Grama Panchayat is located in Malampuzha Block Panchayat. It covers an area of 19.84 square km with 6230 houses comprising total population of 25,458 persons. Out of this, 12459 are males and 12999 are females. There are 16 wards with density of population of 1283 (sq.km). The overall literacy rate is 96 percent. The SC household is 1225 and ST 145. The total number of workers in the Panchayat is 5470, of which 3850 are males and 1620 are females.

The Panchayat is bounded on the East Malampuzha Panchayat, West Puthuppariyaram Panchayat, North Palakkad Municipality and South Western Ghat.

Akatherara is the best Panchayat in Palakkad District in terms of NREGS performance. The major work done in the Panchayat related to conservation of the Kalpathy River, and about 60 households benefited from the programme. Afforestation in Chenkuzhi forest area and conversion of fallow land to useful agricultural land are the other two major works.

2284 families registered under NREGS in the Panchayat and were issued job cards up to the year 2009-10. Out of this SC households are 297, ST families are 22 and 1965 are general. Year wise details are given below.

Table: 3.18 Year Wise Details of No. Families Registered & Job Card Issued

Year	No. of Families Registered				Total No. of Families Issued Job Cards			
	SC	ST	General	Total	SC	ST	General	Total
2006-07	223	2	1093	1318	223	2	1093	1318
2007-08	221	28	1649	1898	221	28	1649	1898
2008-09	300	28	1729	2057	300	28	1729	2057
2009-10	297	22	1965	2284	297	22	1965	2284

Source: Panchayat

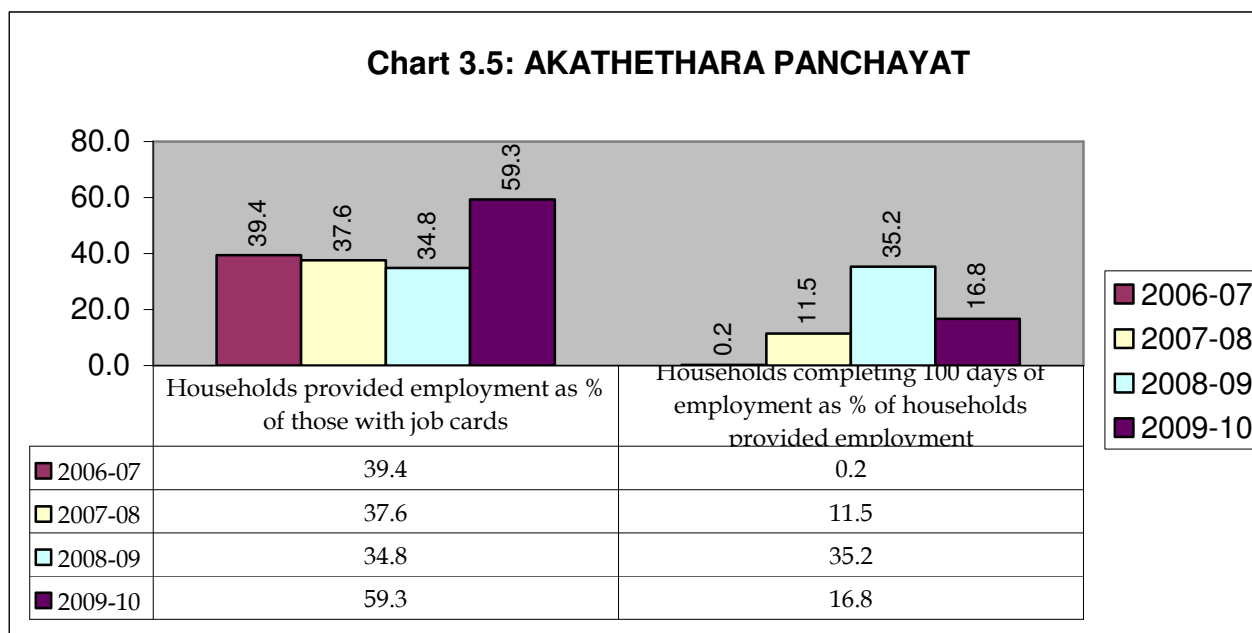
Total workers that were provided employment during 2009-10 is 1349, and the number has increased every year. However, as is evident from Table 3.19 and the subsequent chart, the proportion of SC/ST families and number of job card issued were remained more or less the same in the last two years. The details are collected from the Panchayat records hence it is not clear whether the remaining households did not wish to take up employment or were not offered it.

In the Panchayat the person days of employment has generally been increasing, with the maximum of 60225 in 2008-09 and 63388 person days during 2009-10. Similarly, the participation of women has been increasing through at the four years. Women account for the vast bulk of NREGS employment, with only a limited number of men doing NREGS work. Details of employment generated are given below.

Table: 3.19 Year Wise Details of Employment Generated

Year	No. of HHS comptd. 100 days of empt.	No. of workers provided employment				Person days generated(Nos.)				
		SC	ST	Genl.	Total	SC	ST	Genl.	Total	Women
2006-07	1	139	6	374	519	2049	162	11893	14104	12339
2007-08	82	203	4	506	713	11764	219	20713	32695	32005
2008-09	252	197	3	516	716	16617	219	43389	60225	55403
2009-10	226	291	4	1054	1349	8456	307	54625	63388	58801

Source: Panchayat



Release and Utilisation of NREGA Fund

In the initial two years, the Panchayat received funds as reimbursement, while in the subsequent years prior allotment was obtained. The allotment and expenditure positions are detailed in Table below. The Panchayat utilized 6% to 21% as material component for the last four years. The total expenditure position revealed that first two years cent the expenditure equalled allocation (because it was taken retrospectively), in

the third year it spent up to 92% of allocation and in the last year expenditure exceeded allotment.

Table 3.20: Year Wise Details of Financial Performance

Year	Release from Central Govt.	Cumulative Expenditure				
		Wages unskilled	Semi skilled and skilled wages	Materials	Admi.Exp. (Recurring)	Total
2006-07	2385810	2175125	-	133485(6%)	77200	2385810
2007-08	7138013	5747000	48330	1209149(17%)	133534	7138013
2008-09	10896488	7528125	269613	2036512(19%)	170984	10005234
2009-10	9800000	7827300	95988	2123380(21%)	170906	10217574

Source: JPC. Palakkad.

Activities taken up under NREGS

Physical achievements of NREGS in the panchayat show that a greater amount is utilized for renovation of traditional water bodies. The provision of irrigation facilities to land held by SC, ST and IAY has not been done by the Panchayat for the four years. During the years 2007-08 and 2008-09 all the categories of works except provision of minor irrigation facilities and drought proofing were carried out in the Panchayat. Details of physical achievement are given in Table 3.21 below.

Table: 3.21 Year Wise Details of Work Status in the Panchayat

Works	Completed Works				On going works			
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
	Unit	Unit	Unit	Unit	Unit	Unit	Unit	Unit
Water conservation and water harvesting	5200	12740	20140	0	1040			35
Drought proofing	-	1	.4	7				28
Micro Irrigation works	5	6.8	23	0				119
Provision of irrigation facility to land varied by SC,ST,IAY etc.,	-	-	-	0				0
Renovation of traditional water bodies	-	8118	15000	0		15600	23889	38
Land Development	-	-	.2	0		200		24
Flood control & Poverty	34	53.4	54	14	4.5	17.8		109
Rural Connectivity	1.8	3.4	2.9	0				35

Source: JPC. Palakkad.

The major focus has been on water conservation and water harvesting, flood control and poverty, renovation works and rural connectivity, as is evident from the table above. **There has been no work on SC/ST land in the Panchayat.**

A special feature of Akathethara Grama Panchayat is the social audit implemented as a pilot project in 2006-07. The “Green the Gap” programme was inaugurated by the Honourable Finance Minister in Cheelakuzhi valley, as protection of Kalpathy river is the main project under NREGS.

Kongapadom Ward

Kongapadom Ward was selected from Akathethra Panchayat for detailed analysis of the performance of NREGS. It is the twelfth ward of the panchayat. The total number of households in the ward is 615, with population of 2800. Ward wise details of NREGS workers are detailed below.

Table 3.22: Kongapadam ward- details under NREGS

Sl.No.	Item/Year	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
1	No. of H.Hs Registered	194	206	304
2	No. of H.Hs engaged in Job	86	109	109
3	No. of H.Hs completed 100 days of work		13	32
4	Total Expenditure (in Rupees)	165331	598415	910347
	a. Un skilled labour	153375	564000	692625
	b. ADS wages	4125	12750	9875
	c. Implements rent	6760	20354	11740
	d. Material cost	971	1320	191180
5	(Man days) generated	1260	4614	4927
6	No. of works in action plan	13	7	13
7	No. of works started	5	5	5
8	No. of works completed	5	5	5

The table indicates that greater awareness about NREGS has been created among the people in the ward. In the first year only 194 households registered under this programme but in the last year it was 324. Households engaged in the work are significantly lower than the households registered. During the first year nobody in the ward completed 100 days of work. In the second year 13 and third year 32 households completed 100 days work. Expenditure details of the ward shows that there was a five-fold increase in the second year in the unskilled wage expenditure; in fact such spending is the highest of all items of expenditure, as material usage is much less in the ward. The

ward was not able to complete all the works in the action plan. All the works started have been completed in each year up to March 2009.

Questionnaire - I: Response of People's Representatives/Officials

NREGS works are planned and projects are formulated in the grama sabha meeting and NREGS advisory committee and with farmers' involvement. All the 15 members and officials agreed with this. The planned works are changed in certain cases. 47% of people's response was that there are not enough engineers and other technical staff. 87% felt that the range of permissible works under NREGS is too narrow. Technical people are necessary in doing the work. Labour laziness and delay in getting materials were noted in the panchayat. Skilled labourers are essential in certain works. All the respondents agreed that work can be managed without contractors. Materials are arranged for work through quotation. No one agreed with the 60:40 labour material ratio, which it was argued prevents some useful works. People are requesting that the ratio be changed at the panchayat/ward level, because soil and working conditions are different in each panchayat.

NREGS awareness creation is being done as per guidelines. People are satisfied with awareness creation done in the panchayat and ward levels. Job card distribution is also done as per guidelines in the panchayat. Similarly special attempts were made to ensure SC/ST/Women-headed households, migrants and disabled workers received the job card. The lists of job card holders are displayed in public places and Muster Rolls kept at the work site. In the Akathethara panchayat payments to the workers are through banks. Some problems were raised with respect to payments due to wrong account number, lack of adequate staff. The social audit was conducted as per guidelines. No difficulties were identified in conducting it and there is no complaint about the social audit.

Questionnaire - II: Response of Work Site Manager/Mate

Mates are in the age group of 29-52 in the panchayat. The majority of them have above SSLC qualification, while a few are below SSLC. Mates are selected from Kudumbasree, where they work as ADS. In 2009-10 year they worked above 50 days. Generally 32-40 workers are in the work site. In some works like pond renovation more than 40 workers are involved. The majority of the workers are women, while in some work places 2-4 men are doing work. Male workers expect more wages than women workers. Workers walk to the work site. The team of workers is decided by mates, and

they keep the work site diary. The diary is available for public inspection. The current work norms are acceptable to the workers. Work site facilities are provided to the workers. In the Panchayat no crèche facilities are needed because the workers do not take their children to the work site. About 95% of workers are women. The implementation of the scheme has contributed to very high level of women empowerment. Women are comfortable working along with their neighbours. Equal wages are paid and this has boosted the earnings of women. Elderly and handicapped persons are given less work load. There are no handicapped persons working under these 15 mates. All the works done in the panchayat were felt to be useful.

Questionnaire - III: Response of Labourers

Labourers were in the age group of 24-72 years. The opinions of 19 labourers were collected from the ward. Out of these 19 labourers 2 were male labourers. Majority of them belong to OBC category. 12 are in the APL list and 7 are in BPL, 15 are married, one unmarried, one separated and one widow. The labourers have 2-12 family members. Minimum 2 persons per family are working as labourers. All of them live in their own houses. The area of land owned varies 4-21 cents.

None of the workers paid money for the job card but the photographs were taken with their own money. This is against the NREGA Act, which specifies that the photograph should be taken by the concerned Panchayat. Labourers are aware of the need for written application for work but not aware of dated receipt. The Panchayat does not provide a receipt for the work application. Labourers worked for between 5 and 100 days during the last year. Wages received ranged from Rs.625 to Rs.12500. Every labourer in the Panchayat received the payment through a bank. Any type of harassment is reported by the labourers in the work site. Workers are satisfied with approach of the Mate/Panchayat member. Twenty one percent of labourers have withdrawn the entire amount. Some fake entries are noted in labour's job card. Nobody is paying money for insurance.

Questionnaire - IV: Response of Households

From the ward 32 households were contacted and their opinion about NREGA was collected. Out of the 32 families 21 families were registered and obtained job cards. Their family members included 3 to 6 and one and two persons (women) from each families obtained job card and are working under the scheme. Of the 21 families 11 families

belong to SC category and 10 under general. There is no ST family. APL family constitute 12 and BPL 9.

All the 21 families positively remarked about the scheme. The scheme help them to make their house hold expenses ,meet the need of the children in Schools and help them to save some thing for tomorrow and it is a good scheme to the poor and dependant women.

Another category of the house holds interviewed are having job card but not demanded work. Five families were interviewed which included 2 SCs and 3 general and are also under APL -4 and BPL-1.The reason for why they are not accept work under NREGA is that they have other oppportunities which they got high wages than that of NREGA.

In the category of house hold without registration and job card, contacted 6 families, 3 APL and 3 BPL which include 4 SCs and 2 general. They viewed that the working conditions and wages are not attractive. They opted other works they got more wages than the NREGs.

Procedures followed for implementation of NREGS in Akathethara Panchayat

NREGS awareness in the Panchayats was created through seminars, Grama Sabha meetings, ward development samitis and Kudumbasree. ST households came to know about NREGS through Oorukuttom. Kudumbasree and Ayalkuttam functioned as facilitators in creating awareness.

Plan formulation

Special grama sabhas were conducted for identifying works. Through Kudumbasree and Ayalkuttom, the types of work were discussed. NREGS advisory committee, farmers, CDS members, ward development committees are also participated in planning work, and the planned works projects are formulated with the help of experts, Resident Association members, Padasekhara Samithis etc.,

During 2006-07, in the Akathethara Panchayat, water conservation and water harvesting, drought proofing, micro irrigation works, flood control and protection, and rural connectivity are the works executed. In the subsequent years, in addition to the above, drought proofing and renovation of water bodies were the two more works executed. In the third and fourth years almost all types of works were executed in the Panchayat.

Registration and employment details

After creating awareness, application forms are distributed in the panchayat. After collecting the applications, registration numbers and job cards were distributed through the Panchayat office and Grama Sabhas for applicants. At first, many people did not agree to collect job cards. Details of the work were published through notice boards of the Panchayat, ADS and CDS members. Workers who had no work in their ward obtained work in the near ward. Large works such as Kalpathy river bank conservation were done by using workers from several wards.

Approved works execution and agencies involved

After the Grama sabha identifies required works, those among them that can be executed as per the guidance of the NREGS Act are taken and projects are formulated. Details of work, estimates, running cost, materials, labour and funds are put on the notice board. Materials are arranged by purchase committee. Very little material work is done in the Panchayat because of the labour material ratio. However, this ratio is not acceptable to the Panchayat, which feels it should be changed according to the nature of soil and area. A 'technical samithi' was created and it works effectively in the Panchayat. An advisory samithy undertakes discussion under the chairmanship of the president. A vigilance and monitoring committee has been constituted in each ward to check all the work and give necessary guidelines.

Payment of wages

Payment of wages is done after 15 days of work and completion of the supervisor's report. In the Panchayat, payments are through the bank by opening individual bank account. Delays in payments occur due to poor staff strength under NREGA.

Release of funds and utilization

In the first two years of implementation, funds from the central government were received as re-imbusement to the Panchayat. From November 2008 onwards the funds have been received in advance. About 80% of expenditure is for wages. 18-19% of expenditure is for material cost. Similarly semi skilled and skilled wages are less compared to other expenditure.

Monitoring and Evaluation methods

Labourers meetings, meeting of ward members, Vigilance and monitoring committee and social audit team make the scheme more effective. Providing drinking water, first aid box, site board, shelter in the work site are monitored by staff of the scheme. Ward wise meeting conducted in prescribed interval of time. Vigilance and monitoring committee constituted in each ward check all the work and give necessary guidelines. Agriculture members in vigilance and monitoring committee help evaluation of the scheme.

Transparency and accountability systems followed

Since the scheme is more people oriented, labourers' meetings, involvement of the ward member, the vigilance and monitoring committee and social audit team make the scheme more corruption free. Ward wise meetings are conducted. Mates keep the work site diary, which is open to all. However, some mates are not doing this properly. Muster Rolls are maintained by ADS.

2. ALANALLUR PANCHAYAT

Alanallur Panchayat is the second panchayat selected for the study from Palakkad District. The panchayat is located in Mannarkad Block and it is selected on the basis of less effective performance in NREGA compared to good performing panchayat. It has an area of 58.24 sq. km. The population is 47078 as per 2001 census, of which 22873 (48.58%) are males and 24205 (51.42%) females. The panchayat has 22 wards, of which Kannamkundu (ward 13) was selected for the study. The panchayat is bordered by Kottappadam panchayat in the East, Thazhekkad Panchayat in the North, Melattur and Vettathoor Panchayat (Malappuram District) in west and Karuvakunda, Edappatta Panchayat (Malappuram District) in the south. The panchayat has the largest forest area and the Velliya River. Rice cultivation is less because of lower rainfall. Agriculture is the main occupation of the panchayat and there are very few industries. Many educational institutions are functioning in the panchayat including a B.Ed. training centre. SC population is 5500 (Males 2747 and females 2753) and ST population is 87 (Males 55 and 32 females).

As per 2001 census total number of workers in the panchayat is 13090, consisting of 10322 males and 2768 females. The following table give details of workers in the Panchayat.

Table 3.23: Details of workers in the Panchayat

Category	Total	Males	Female
Total Workers	13090	10322	2768
Main workers	11134	9168	1966
Cultivators	1276	1149	127
Agricultural labourers	3291	2423	868
House hold industry workers	293	192	101
Other workers	6277	5407	870

Source: 2001 Census

Performance of NREGS in Alanallur Panchayat

Registration for Job card

NREGS started in the Panchayat during 2006-07. The number of families that registered during 2006-07 was 2238 which consisted of 391 SC, 16 ST and 1831 General. Out of these, 1328 families got job cards covering 155 SC, 1 ST, and 1172 general. During 2009-10, 3219 families registered and all 3098 have received job cards. It is seen that job cards were issued to all registered persons for the last three years. In the first year 2006-07, 72% of those who registered got job cards, with major shortfalls in the case of SC and ST households. Details are given in the table below:-

Table 3.24: Year wise details of families registered and job card issued

Year	No. of families registered				No. of families issued job card			
	SC	ST	General	Total	SC	ST	General	Total
2006-07	391	16	1831	2238	155	1	1172	1328
2007-08	473	21	2069	2563	473	21	2069	2563
2008-09	473	21	2087	2581	473	21	2087	2581
2009-10	648	38	2533	3219	628	36	2434	3098

Source: JPC Office

Employment Generated

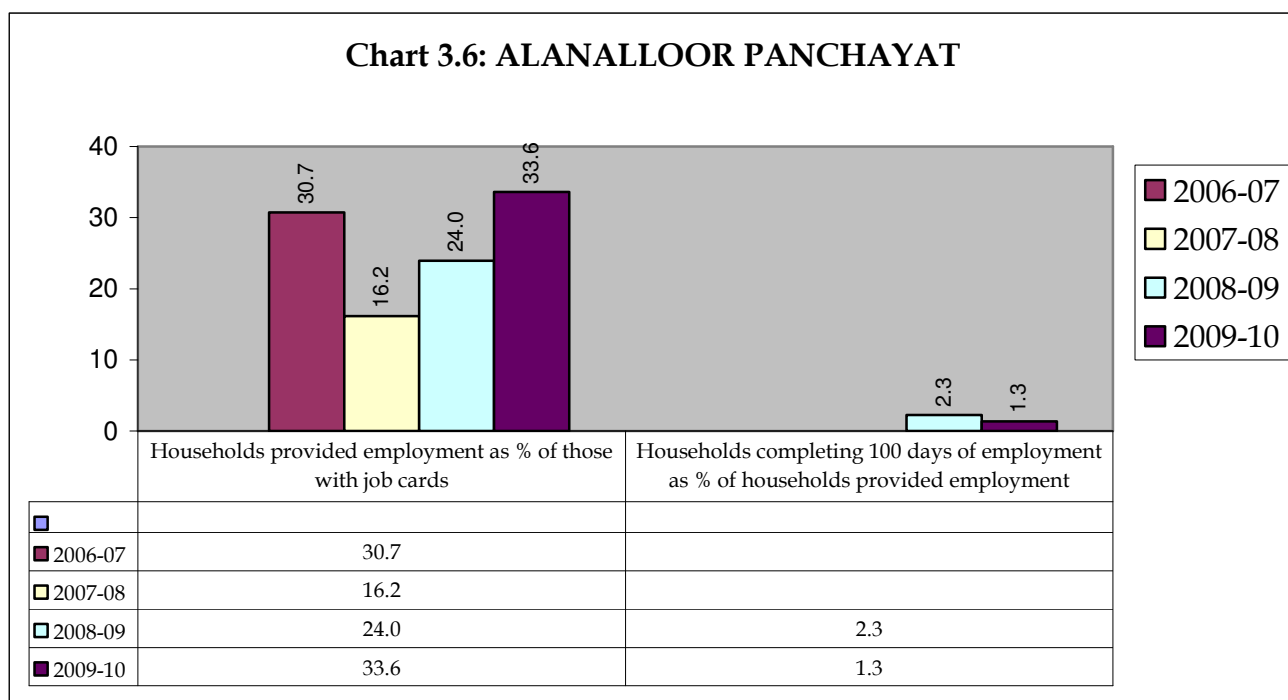
With regard to employment generation, 408, 415, 619 and 1041 households were provided employment from 2006-07 to 2009-10 respectively. The number of households that completed 100 days of work during 2006-07 and 2007-08 was nil, 14 households completed 100 days of employment during 2008-09 and 2009-10. Similarly during 2009-10, 38496 person days were generated with 11405 (SC), 170 ST and 26921 general. The employment status of all the four years reflects an increasing trend in women's

employment. It is seen that there is ST population registered for job card but no employment was provided as per details. Year wise Details of employment generated are given in Table below:-

Table 3.25: Year wise details of employment generated

Year	HHs completed 100 days of empt.	No.of families provided empt.				Person days generated				
		SC	ST	Genl.	Total	SC	ST	Genl.	Total	Women
2006-07	-	82	-	326	408	1176	-	5412	6588	5741
2007-08	-	123	-	292	415	2098	-	5829	7927	7300
2008-09	14	209	-	410	619	7855	-	18867	26722	24683
2009-10	14	-	-	-	1041	11405	170	26921	38496	36872

Source: JPC Office



Release and Utilisation of NREGS Fund

The amount released and utilised are shown in the table below. During 2006-07 the panchayat received Rs.9.31 lakhs and utilised Rs.9.30 lakh for the year. In the subsequent years the panchayat expenditure status was 91%, 99% and 99% respectively. The amount utilized as material cost is seen as 4.2%, 12.2%, 3.3% & 35.5% respectively in

the last four years. Expenditure on semi skilled and skilled incurred only in two years. Details included in the Table 3.26.

Table 3.26: Year wise details of financial performance

Year	Release from Central Govt.	Cumulative Expenditure				Total
		Wages unskilled	Semi skilled and skilled wages	Materials	Admi.Exp. (Recurring)	
2006-07	931014	819890	-	39085 (4.2%)	71735	930710 (99)
2007-08	1300945	957414	57125	158980 (12.2%)	11499	1185018(91)
2008-09	3774827	3516447	-	124475 (3.3%)	105983	3746905(99)
2009-10	4400000	4141013	3000	156911 (35.5%)	19944	4420868(99)

Source: JPC Office

Activities taken up under NREGS

The activities initiated under NREGS in the Panchayat included water conservation and water harvesting, improvement of irrigation canals, land development, flood control, draught proofing, and rural connectivity. Water conservation and water harvesting, renovation of canals, land development and flood control are focused in the four years scheme. Year wise details of four years are given below. As per the records available at the Panchayat all the works initiated in the Panchayat not completed till 2009-10.

Table 3.27: Year wise Details of work status in the Panchayat

Name of Works	Completed works			Ongoing works		
	2008-09	2009-10	Total	2008-09	2009-10	Total
Water conservation and water harvesting	0	0	0	14	14	28
Drought proofing	0	0	0	3	5	8
Micro Irrigation works	0	0	0	0	0	0
Provision of irrigation facility to land varied by SC,ST,IAY etc.,	0	0	0	0	0	0
Renovation of traditional water bodies	0	0	0	29	42	71
Land Development	0	0	0	23	57	80
Flood control & Poverty	0	0	0	62	113	175
Rural Connectivity	0	0	0	1	11	12
Total	0	0	0	132	242	374

Source: JPC Office

Kannamkundu Ward

For detailed analysis of the performance and assessing the attitude of the different categories of people regarding NREGA, Ward-13 from the panchayat was selected and studied. The name of the ward is **Kannamkundu Ward**.

Kannamkundu is the 13th ward in Alanallur Grama Panchayat. Boundaries are palakkuzhi, Nalukandam, Malikunnu, Alanallur and Vazhangalli ward. The ward has 344 house holds comprising total populations of 1813 persons. Total no. of workers in the ward is 1017. Out of this 747 are agricultural workers, 117 coolies, 130 are working abroad and 23 are Government servants. There are 122 NREGS workers in the ward and 2 work site managers. Total no. of registered households in the ward is 102. Out of this 25 are SC and 77 others. The number of registered persons are 210 (Males 94 and 116 females including 53 SCs and 157 others).

Questionnaire -I: Response of People's Representatives/Officials

NREGS works are planned and projects are formulated in the grama sabha meeting with NREGS advisory committee and farmers' involvement. All the 15 members and officials agree with this method of plan formulation. Planned works are changed in certain cases. 27% of people's response was that there are not enough engineers and other technical staff. The range of permissible works under NREGS is too narrow was the response of 33% of people. Technical people are necessary in doing the work. Labour laziness and delay in getting materials are noted in the Panchayat. Some new works farmers are essential. Skilled labourers are essential in certain works. All the respondents agreed that work can be managed without contractors. Materials are arranged for work through quotation. Nobody agreed with the 60:40 labour material ratio, which prevents some useful works. People would like to change the ratio at the Panchayat/ward level, because of different soil and working conditions in different Panchayat. NREGS awareness creation is done as per guidelines. People are satisfied with awareness creation done in the Panchayat and ward level. Job card distribution is also done as per guidelines in the Panchayat. Similarly a special attempt was made to ensure SC/ST/Women headed migrants and disabled to get the job card. List of job card holders are displayed in public places and Muster Roll kept in the work site. In the Alanallur Panchayat payments to the workers are done through banks. Some problems happened in payments due to wrong account number, lack of adequate staff. Social audits are

conducted as per guide lines. No difficulties are identified in conducting it and there is no complaint about social audit.

Nevertheless, it was observed in the course of the survey that this Panchayat had not performed so well in terms of the number of workers, etc. The reasons were found to be related to the fact that unskilled work was not preferred by most of the workers. Also there was some evidence of lack of complete commitment on the part of the NREGA office staff.

It is observed from the Panchayat that the main reason for the low level of household employment is that lack of unskilled work within the area of 5 km. The work requires skilled work (like pond renovation and minor irrigation) and the lack of technical people/ engineers in the Panchayat creates difficulties in taking up useful work. Even if there is an Assistant Engineer or Overseer, they are also in charge of other Panchayats as well.

Another function to be highlighted regarding the low performance of the Panchayat is that the NREGA office staffs are paid on only daily wage or honorarium basis. As a result, they have no commitment towards the scheme, and tend to go elsewhere for work when higher wages are available. Frequent staff changes have affected the smooth functioning of the scheme badly. For example, the details of works and records are not maintained in the Panchayat. A permanent solution is sought in this aspect.

Questionnaire -II: Response of Work Site Manager/Mate

Mates are in the age group 32-53 in the Panchayat. The majority of them have above SSLC qualification. Few are below SSLC. Mates are selected from Kudumbasree, where they work as ADS. Last year they worked above 50 days. Generally 32-40 workers are in the work site. In some works like pond renovation more than 40 workers are involved. The majority of the workers are women. Male workers expect more wages than women workers. Workers coming to the work site walking. Teams of workers are decided by mates and Mates keep the work site diary. The diary is available for public instruction. Current work norms are acceptable to the workers. Work site facilities are provided to the workers. In the Panchayat no crèche facilities are needed because the workers do not take their children to the work site. The implementation of the scheme contributed to very high level of women empowerment. Women are comfortable working along with their neighbours. Equal wages are paid and this boosted earnings of women.

Elderly and handicapped persons are given less work load. All the works done in the Panchayats are very useful.

Questionnaire - III: Response of Labourers

Labourers are in the age group of 30-51 years. The opinions of 15 labourers were contacted from the ward. All the 15 labourers were female labourers. The majority of them belong to OBC category. 13 are in the APL list and 2 are in BPL, 14 are married and one unmarried. The labourers have 2-7 family members. Minimum 2 persons per family are working as labourers. All of them live in their own houses. The area of land owned is 4-26 cents. Nobody paid money for job cards but the photograph was taken for their own money, which is against the NREGS Act. Labourers are aware of the need for a written application for work, but not aware of dated receipts. The surveyed labourers worked from 15-100 days during last year. Wages received ranged from Rs.1875 to Rs.12500. Every labourer in the Panchayat received payment through bank. No type of harassment is faced by labourers in the work site. Workers are satisfied with the approach of mate/Panchayat member. No worker has joined in the insurance scheme.

Questionnaire - IV: Response of Households

Details were collected from 15 family members, from 5 households with job card, 5 households with job card and no work and 5 households without job card. Households with job card and work have 2 to 5 members in the family. One person from each family is working under NREGS. 60% are in SC category and 40% in BPL category.

Households without job cards have not submitted application for registration. Households with job card and no work are registered persons under NREGS but nobody is working in the scheme. Out of these families 60% are under APL category. Households without job card are not registered under the scheme. 40% of them are under SC category only 20% are under BPL. All the above three category households are aware of NREGS. Nobody paid money for job card. Majority of them participated in Grama Sabhas. All of these households felt that the works are useful, but the low participation suggests that they were not interested in getting employment in it.

At the beginning of the scheme many people came and registered with great enthusiasm, largely because of misconceptions about the scheme. They thought that it is essentially an unemployment programme. But once they came to know about the nature of work, a significant number of job card holders, including SC/STs, were not willing to

participate in the work. The main reason is that under NREGA, the daily wage is only Rs.125/- whereas in agriculture they receive Rs.175/- per day and in masonry work they receive Rs.225/-per day. Another reason that the APL/BPL families are not willing to participate in NREGA that under the scheme after work they would have to wait for two or three weeks for wages whereas in other works they received the wages on the very same day.

Process of Implementation of NREGS in Alanallur Panchayat

Communication measures introduced for the awareness of NREGS

In Alanallur Panchayat Kudumbasree meetings were conducted for NREGS and ADS are aware of the NREGS. ADS supervisors reach every household and make them aware of it. Ward meeting of Kudumbasree, ADS meeting, and grama sabhas are some other ways awareness is generated. Notice regarding NREGS is also issued in the Panchayat for awareness. The panchayat arranges training to the members for awareness creation. Local news papers, TV and Radio make aware of NREGS. Special grama sabhas were conducted for awareness work and ward wise supervisory committees are trained to create awareness for SC/ST people.

Plan formulation

Effective planning is necessary for successful implementation of the NREGS, especially to ensure the timely generation of employment within 15 days. The need to act within the time limit requires advance planning.

In Alanallur Panchayat from the year 2006-07, an action plan has been formulated for each ward. There are 22 wards in the panchayat. Abstract for panchayat showing types of work taken up is also prepared in addition to detailed ward wise details of work. Ward wise details of each ward contain name of work, amount proposed for the work, wage component, other component, man days proposed, number of labours required, month of executions etc.,

In each ward Kudumbasree meeting were conducted and details of works, planned by the people in the area, discussed with expert technical group. Grama sabha meeting discussed the works monitoring committee formulated the projects. Engineer Agriculture workers, women, SC category people etc., are included in the committee special grama sabhas are formed for finding out shelf of projects according to the norm of NREGA.

Registration and employment details

Grama Panchayat registers the household after making enquiries and issues a job card affixing their photographs. Public have the facility to verify their own details. A primary survey is conducted by the panchayat to enumerate all the families and their adult members. Grama sabha arranged a hearing of the complaints on registration if any. The final list is put up in the board of panchayat office and updated. The process of registration is opened at the panchayat. After distribution of job card, receipt of work application is executed. Individuals may give the application to the panchayat and the panchayat will give dated receipt.

Approved works, execution and agencies involved

In Alanallur Panchayat a shelf of works is selected in the Panchayat and some are selected for implementation. Some planned works are changed because of execution difficulties. In the Panchayat no difficulty is faced for planning work. Enough engineers and technical people are in the Panchayat. People would like to include some more work other than permissible works. Material works are rarely included in the executed work. Lack of co-ordination was reported by some members in the Panchayat. Materials are arranged by purchase committee. The labour material ratio 60:40 is not acceptable in the Panchayat, which feels it should be free to choose the ratio.

Payment of wages

In Alanallur Panchayat, bank accounts are opened simultaneously with the job card distribution. Mates keep the muster roll and mark the daily attendance. Details of each worker's working days are provided to the bank. Workers draw their wages themselves through their bank account. Wages are delayed due to lack of officers in the Panchayat (NREGA Cell). There is a minimum of two weeks delay in the Panchayat for payment. Insurance scheme has not been opened in the Panchayat. No workers are aware of the insurance scheme.

Monitoring and Evaluation Method

The State has evolved norms for measurement of works. These are recorded in the measurement books maintained by qualified technical personal in charge of the work site. Verification should be done by qualified personnel a week before payment of wages. Measurement should be done on a daily basis and in a transparent fashion, but the extent to which this is actually followed was not clear.

In Alanallur Panchayat, ADS supervisors (mate) monitor the daily work. In addition to this, the overseer also visits the work place three times: at the start of the work, in the middle and at completion. The ward member and officer in charge of NREGA also visit the work place.

Transparency and Accountability

NREGA Act gives a central role to social audits as a means of continuous public vigilance. The basic objective of social audit is to ensure public accountability in the implementations of projects laws and policies. In the social audit all details of project are scrutinized. The purpose is to ensure complete transparency in the process of administrative and decision making process for all affected persons. There is great accountability of elected representatives and government functionaries to answer questions and provide explanations. Social audit is a continuous process, and includes public vigilance and verification in different stages of implementation i.e. upto the evaluation of completed work.

This Panchayat was selected for the study based on their low performance. It is observed from the table on employment that less than half of the households with job cards were provided employment, and only 28 households received 100 days of employment in four years of NREGS implementation. It is understood from the Panchayat authorities that the Panchayat is a Muslim belt area and the majority of the families include migrants with foreign employers. Although they have registered for and obtained job cards, they do not intend to work as NREGA workers. At the time of registration they thought that the work would be in the form of white collar jobs, and this misconception led to the higher level of registration for job cards.

Chapter 4

IMPLEMENTATION OF NREGS IN PHASE II DISTRICTS

I. KASARAGOD DISTRICT

The II Phase implementation of NREGA was started during 2007-08. Across the country 113 Districts were selected for II Phase, Kasaragod and Idukki were identified from Kerala under the scheme.

Profile of Kasaragod District

Kasaragod District was formed on the 24th May 1984. The District ranks 13th in area (1992 Sq.Km). Among the costal Districts of Kerala, Kasaragod ranks 8th in Area. In Kasaragod there are 12 west flowing rivers besides back waters and canals. The District stands first in area under cashew plantation in the State.

The District had a population of 12, 04,078 persons as per 2001 Census. There were 2, 24,647 house holds in the District. Out of this, 16832 are SC house holds and 6060 are ST house holds.

To make a realistic assessment of the implementation of NREGA in the District, estimated figures for 2009 has been taken in to account. Accordingly, by 2009 the population of Kasaragod District increased to 13.24 lakh, out of which 0.99 lakh are SCs and 0.33 lakh are STs.

Overall Performance of NREGS in the District

There are 39 Grama Panchayats and 2 Municipalities in the District. NREGS has its relevance only in the Grama Panchayats and it was strengthened in the background of decentralized planning. In 2001 the rural population was 9, 70,378. It is also estimated that by 2009 the number of rural house holds increased to 2.23 lakh. Out of which SC house holds are 17723 and ST house holds 6656.

Registration for Job card

It is found that out of 2.23 rural house holds in the District, 1.01 lakh house holds were registered and issued job cards. Out of this, 6781 are SC house holds and 6323 are ST

house holds. It is seen that job cards were issued to all the families registered. It is observed that the yearly short fall in issuing job card is accommodated in the subsequent years. Details are given in Table No.4.1

Table: 4.1 Year Wise Details of No. Families Registered & Job Card Issued

Year	No. of Families Registered				Total No. of Families Issued Job Cards			
	SC	ST	General	Total	SC	ST	General	Total
2007-08	5415	5322	84830	95567	5411	4553	68222	78186
2008-09	1004	814	2827	4645	1032	1133	9106	11271
2009-10	362	187	269	818	338	637	10598	11573
Cumulative Total	6781	6323	87926	101030	6781	6323	87926	101030

Source: JPC

Employment Generated

During the year 2007-08, 18271 families were given employment. Out of which 1670 were SC house holds and 1402 were ST house holds. A total of 3, 87,406 person days were generated of which women constitute 86%, 8.62% SC and ST 5%. During the year an average, 21 days of employment was provided to every house holds and no families got 100 days of employment.

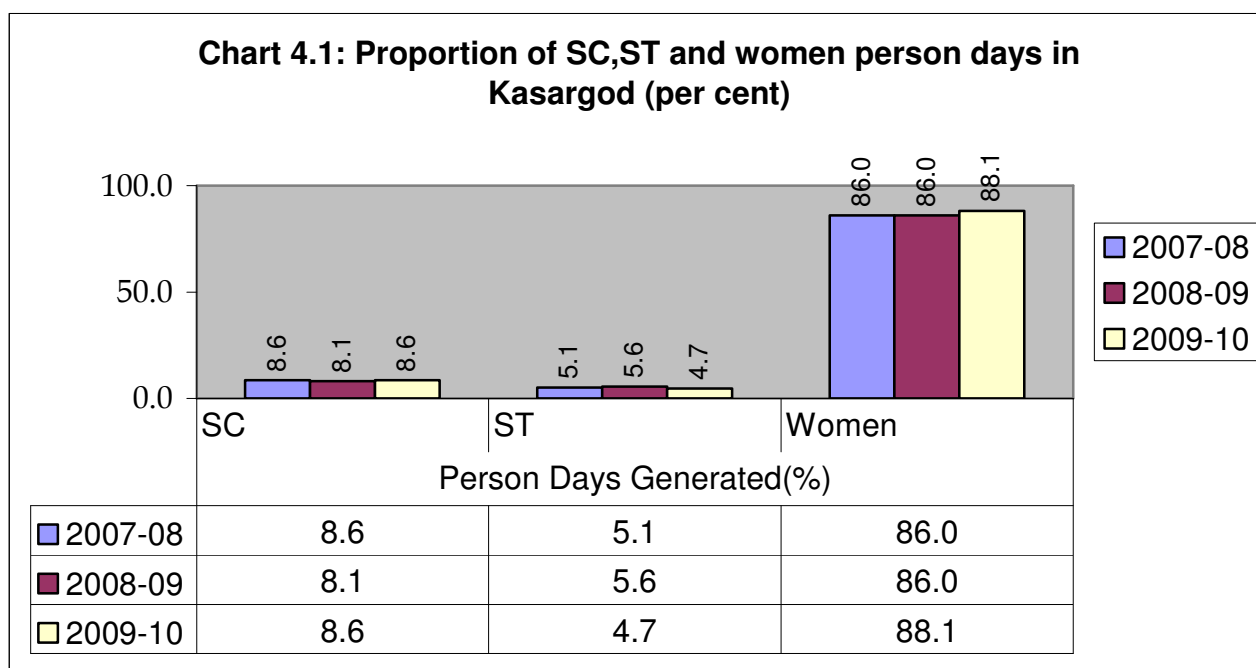
During 2008-09, 30,113 house holds were given employment. Out of which 2,621 were SC house holds and 1,844 were ST house holds. A total of 13, 09,983 persons days generated. Out of which 1, 06,430 were SCs and 73,770 were STs. Out of the total person days generated 11, 26,339 were women (86%). 1791 house holds were provided 100 days of employment. During the year an average of 43 days of employment were generated per house hold.

During 2009-10, 38, 634 house holds were given employment. Among this 3,108 were SCs and 2,778 were STs. A total of 17, 25,817 person days were generated. Out of which 1, 48,522 were for SCs and 81,397 were for STs. Out of the total person days generated 15, 22,420 (88%) were women. An average of 45 person days were generated per family and 3142 families got 100 days of employment. Details are given in Table 4.2.

Table: 4.2 Year Wise Details of Employment Generated(HouseHolds & Labour Days)

Year	Total House Holds provided employment	No. of House Holds completed 100 days of employment	Total No. of House Holds Provided Employment				Person Days Generated				
			SC	ST	General	Total	SC	ST	General	Total	Women
2007-08	18271	0	1670	1402	15199	18271	33400	19628	334378	387406	333169
2008-09	30113	1791	2621	1844	25648	30113	106430	73770	1129783	1309983	1126399
2009-10	38634	3142	3108	2778	32748	38634	148522	81397	1495898	1725817	1522420

Source: JPC Office.



Release & Utilization of NREGS Fund

With reference to the financial performance, the District received Rs.1164.90 lakh during 2007-08 against which the total expenditure was Rs.916.10 lakh (79%). Out of the total expenditure, the share of wages for unskilled labour was Rs.834.25 lakh, Rs.9.04 lakh was utilized under skilled and semi skilled wages. The share of material component was RS.14.80 lakh (2%). The total administrative expenditure was Rs.57.01 lakh.

During the year 2008-09 the total availability of fund was Rs.2011.45 lakh against which the total expenditure was Rs.1830.78 lakh which estimates 91%. It constitutes the share of wages for unskilled labour was Rs.1639.81 lakh, Rs. 11.38 lakh for semi skilled and skilled wages. The share of material component was Rs.113.03 lakhs (6%). The total administrative expense was to the tune of Rs.66.56 lakh.

During 2009-10, the total availability of fund was Rs.3242.59 lakh. The total expenditure was Rs.2419.67 lakh (74%). Out of this, the share of wage for unskilled labour was Rs.2155.89 lakh and Rs.42.73 lakh was utilized under semiskilled and skilled wages. The share of material component was Rs.114.12 lakh (5%). The total administrative expenditure was Rs.56.45 lakhs. Details are given in Table 4.3.

Table: 4.3 Year Wise Details of Financial Performance

Year	O.B as on 1st April of the year	Release during current year		Misc. receipt	Total	Cumulative Expenditure (Rs.in Lakhs)					Total
		Central	State			On Wages	On Semi-Skilled and Skilled Wages	On Material	Administrative Expenses		
									Recurr ing	Non Recurr ing	
2007-08	0.00	1091.99	72.71	0.20	1164.90	834.25	9.04	14.80	56.41	1.60	916.10
2008-09	248.80	1606.87	146.48	9.30	2011.45	1639.81	11.38	113.03	66.56	0.00	1830.78
2009 -10	350.78	2587.63	287.51	16.66	3242.59	2155.89	42.73	114.12	101.43	5.47	2419.67

Source: JPC.

Works taken up under NREGS

The major activities taken up in the District under NREGS during the last three years are focused on rural connectivity, flood control, water conservation, micro irrigation, land development, renovation of traditional water bodies and irrigation facilities to land of SC/ST which can be seen in the following Table 4.4.

Table: 4.4 The details of the activities and achievements made in the last three years are detailed below:

Sl.No.	Name of Project	Completed (Nos.)	Ongoing (Nos.)
1	Rural Connectivity	357	515
2	Flood Control and Protection	2886	3087
3	Water conservation and Water harvesting	512	1000
4	Drought Proofing	107	91
5	Micro Irrigation works	168	261
6	Provision of Irrigation facility to land owned by SC/ST	92	159
7	Renovation of Traditional water bodies	269	395
8	Land Development	1923	2764
9	Any other activity approved by MRD	8	15
	Total	6322	8287

Source: Grama Panchayat

The overall progresses achieved during the last three years are, out of 14609 works taken up, 6322 were completed and 8287 are under various stages of implementation. It is evident that District has completed only 57% of the project during the last three years.

In general, though the scheme is socially and economically beneficial and demands driven with legal binding, the progress and performance reveals that the Panchayats are not much interested to achieve the desired objective of the scheme. It was also understood that the Panchayat staff members keep a safe distance from NREGS. The contractor lobby is against this programme. Some of the Panchayat Members/Husbands of Panchayat Members are supporters of contractors.

The above are the major issues experienced in Kasaragod District. Reasonable effort had been taken by few officers and members in Kasaragod District to achieve the above level status. The officers and elected representatives in the District should have to change their mind set up and initiate adequate steps for making the programme beneficial to the targeted groups.

Selection of Panchayats for the Study

Two Panchayats from two different Blocks of the District were selected and studied to make an assessment of achievements made by the Panchayats in NREGS. Their comparative performances in job card issue, employment generation, activities taken up and amount utilized etc were taken in to account for analysis and impact assessment.

Among the two Panchayats selected, one is a well performing Panchayat and another is an average or less than average performing Panchayat. To facilitate the study details in respect of Registrations, Job card issue, Plan formulation, Implementation, work execution, person days generation, Fund utilization, Monitoring and Social Audit were collected. A preliminary study was also conducted to get a clear picture of the Panchayats performance. In the process of finalising the selection of Panchayats the authorities of Panchayats were consulted.

It was decided to select Madikkai from Kanhangad Block as the well performing Panchayat and Chengala from Kasaragod Block as the average performing Panchayat from Kasaragod District.

In consultation with the respective Grama Panchayat, a ward was also selected from each Panchayat and analysed their performance by taking into account various components of NREGS. .

The following are the Wards and Panchayats selected for the study.

Table 4.5

Sl. No.	Name of District	Name of Block	Name of Panchayat	Name of the Ward	Ward No.
1	Kasaragod	Kanhangad	Madikkai	Malappacheri	6
2	Kasaragod	Kasargod	Chengala	V.K.Para	15

1. MADIKKAI GRAMA PANCHAYAT

In Kasaragod District there are 2 Municipalities, 4 Community Development Blocks and 39 Grama Panchayat and from this, Madikkai Grama Panchayat was selected for the study. Madikkai Grama Panchayat has an area of 5183 hectares. As per 2001 Census the Panchayat had 11 wards with 4537 house holds. It had a population of 20584. Out of this 9734 were males and 10850 females. There were 1415 SC people in the Panchayat. Out of this 691 were males and 724 females. The ST population was 11, which included 5 males and 6 females. It is found that there were 8565 workers in the Panchayat. Out of this, 5163 were male workers and 3402 female workers. The total number of cultivators were 454. Out of this 362 were males and 62 females. The numbers of Agricultural Labourers were 915. Out of this 635 were males and 280 were females and 3090 persons were in the category of other workers.

Over all performance of NREGS in Madikkai Panchayat

Registration for Job cards

As per 2001 census, the population of Madikkai included 20584 which included SC population of 1415 and ST of population of 11. But the figure furnished by the Grama Panchayat for the year 2009 shows that there are 282 SC people living in 62 house holds and 1200 ST people living in 313 house holds.

To facilitate the study it is estimated the population of Panchayat by 2009 increased to 22642 from the 2001 census figure of 20584. It has an area of 51.83 Sq.Km and there are 15 numbers of wards in the Panchayat. By 2009 the number of total house holds increased to 4990 which included 62 SC house holds and 313 ST house holds (estimated figure).

Table: 4.6 Year Wise Details of No. Families Registered & Job Card Issued

Year	No. of Families Registered				Total No. of Families Issued Job Cards			
	SC	ST	General	Total	SC	ST	General	Total
2007-08	6	102	2435	2543	6	102	2435	2543
2008-09	20	113	640	773	20	113	640	773
2009-10	4	21	310	335	4	21	310	335
Cumulative Total	30	236	3385	3651	30	236	3385	3651

Source: JPC Office

During 2007-08, 2543 house holds were given job cards. Out of this 6 were SCs and 102 were ST house holds. During the year 2008-09, a total of 773 House holds were given job cards out of this 20 included SC house holds and 113 ST house holds. During the year 2009-10, 3651 house holds were given job cards cumulatively. Out of this 30 are SC house holds and 236 are ST house holds. It is observed that out of 4940 house holds, 3651 house holds (74 %).registered and obtained job card to all the registered.

Employment Generation

In Madikkai Panchayat, during 2007-08, 847 numbers of families were given employment, which included 18 SC and 118 ST house holds. A total of 18405 person days were generated during this period out of which 396 SCs and 2596 were STs. Out of the total person days generated women constitute 92%. On an average 22 persons days were generated for a house hold in the Madikkai Panchayat during 2007-08

During 2008-09, 1601 number of families were given employment. Out of which 12 were SC and 102 were ST house holds. A total of 84672 person days were generated. Out of which 365 were SCs and 4242 were STs. Out of the total person days generated, 77518 (91%) person days were generated for women and 143 house holds completed 100 days of employment during this year.

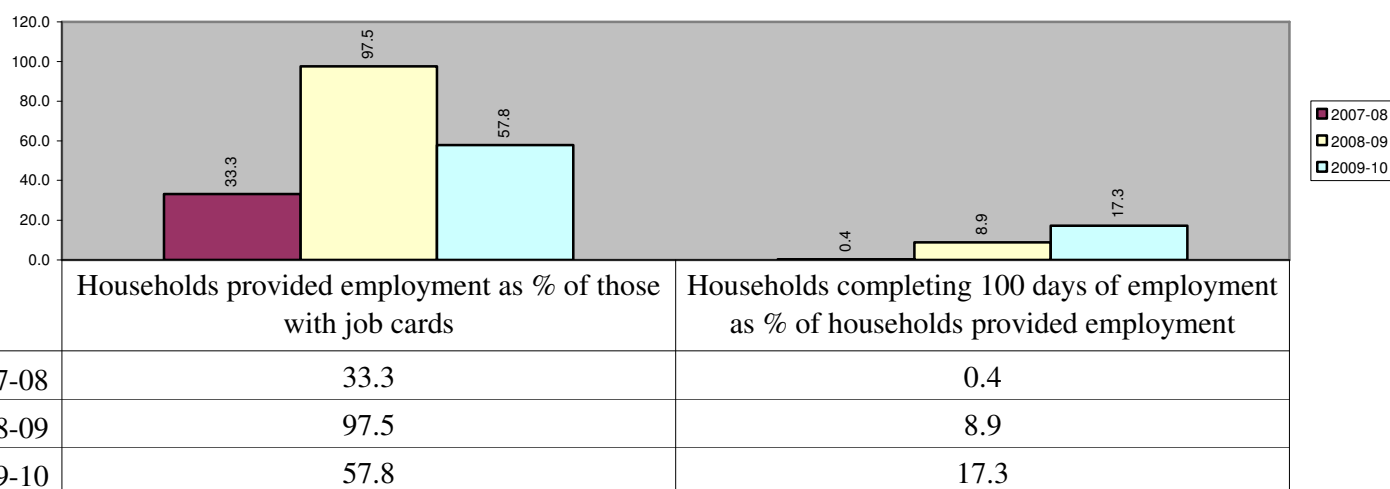
During the year 2009-10, 2110 house holds were given employment. Out of which 38 were SCs and 304 were ST house holds. A total of 120440 person days were generated. Out of this, 746 were SCs & 6749 were STs. Out of the total person days generated women days constituted 110005(91%). On an average 57 person days of employment was given to a house hold. Details are given in Table 4.7.

Table: 4.7 Year Wise Details of Employment Generated (House Holds & Labour Days)

Year	Total House Holds provided employment	No. of House Holds completed 100 days of employment	Total No. of House Holds Provided Employment				Person Days Generated				
			SC	ST	General	Total	SC	ST	General	Total	Women
2007-08	847	3	18	118	711	847	396	2596	15413	18405	16871
2008-09	1601	143	12	102	1487	1601	365	4242	80065	84672	77518
2009-10	2110	366	38	304	1768	2110	746	6749	112945	120440	110005

Source: JPC Office

Chart 4.2: Madikkai Panchayat



Release of funds & utilization in the Panchayat

During the year 2007-08 the total receipt of the Panchayat was Rs.30.77 lakhs against which total expenditure was Rs.24.84 lakhs. Out of this, the share of wages for unskilled labourer constituted Rs.23 lakhs and the share of materials component was Rs.0.86 lakhs. The total administrative expenses accounted as Rs.0.98 lakhs.

During the year 2008-09 the total fund availability was Rs.120.66 lakhs against which the total expenditure was Rs.120.40 lakhs. Out of this the share of unskilled labour wage was Rs.104.40 lakhs. The share of material component was Rs.11.73 lakhs and the total administrative expenses accounted as Rs 4.26 lakhs.

During the year 2009-10, the total fund received was Rs.105.93 lakhs. Out of this the total expenditure was Rs.104.12 lakhs of which the share of un skilled wages was Rs.94.39 lakhs and Rs 1.56 lakhs was utilized under semi skilled and skilled wages. The share of material component was Rs.4.55 lakhs. During the period the total administrative expense was Rs.3.37 lakhs. The utilization of material component to wages was 11.2% during 2008-09 and in the next two years the amount is very negligible. The details are included in Table 4.8

Table: 4.8 Year Wise Details of Financial Performance

Year	O.B as on 1st April of the year	Release during current year		Misc. receipt	Total	Cumulative Expenditure(Rs.in Lakhs)					Total
		Central	State			On Wages	On Semi-Skilled and Skilled Wages	On Material	Administrative Expenses		
									Recurri ng	Non Recur ring	
2007-08		30.77		0.003	30.77	23		0.86	0.98		24.84
2008-09	5.93	114.58		0.15	120.66	104.4		11.73	4.26		120.4
2009 -10	0.26	105.5		0.17	105.93	94.39	1.56	4.55	3.37	0.25	104.12

Source: JPC Office

Works undertaken under NREGS in the Panchayat

A large number of projects were included under the category of land development. Land belonging to public authorities and land of SC/ST and BPL category were not taken up in the Panchayat.

With regard to the activities initiated in the Panchayat certain priorities were fixed. Majority of the projects were formulated for water conservation and water harvesting. The Panchayat has included projects for afforestation and tree planting. In the development plan, projects for flood control and protection works and drainage were included.

Rural connectivity was the major focused item under the scheme. Formulation of roads and improvements were carried out throughout the Panchayat. Year wise status and achievements are shown in Table 4.9.

Rural connectivity was the most important item that the rural people welcome. The Panchayat has shown realistic approach towards this direction. Formulation of new roads as well as improvements of the existing roads were given due priority and projects were prepared with this end in view.

Table: 4.9 Activities initiated in the Panchayat under NREGS

Sl.No.	Name of Project	Completed (Nos.)	Ongoing (Nos.)	Total (Nos.)
1	Rural Connectivity	0	3	3
2	Flood Control and Protection	0	6	6
3	Water conservation and Water harvesting	39	48	87
4	Drought Proofing	5	3	8
5	Micro Irrigation works	0	0	0
6	Provision of Irrigation facility to land owned by SC/ST	0	0	0
7	Renovation of Traditional water bodies	11	5	16
8	Land Development	142	185	327
9	Any other activity approved by MRD	0	0	0
Total		197	250	447

Source: JPC Office

Malappachery (Ward No.VI) - Madikai Panchayat

For the detailed analysis of the plan formulation procedure, implementation method, monitoring system introduced for the scheme, Malappachery ward was selected from the Madikai Panchayat. Four types of questionnaires were designed to collect details on the strength and weakness of NREGS implementation in the Panchayat.

Questionnaire - I: Response of People's Representatives and Officials

This questionnaire was designed to record the opinion of the people's representatives such as the President, Standing Committee Chairmen and members of the Grama Panchayat and officials like the Panchayat Secretary, the section clerk concerned, the VEO, the LSGD AE, the Accredited AE, Over seer and accountant under NREGS. From Madikai Grama Panchayat 9 people's representatives and 6 numbers of officials were interviewed and elicited their views.

On the basis of the interview, the Peoples representatives and officials agreed with and followed the provision of the Act in the following manner:-

- ❖ With regard to project formulation, all the 15 respondents agreed with the provision of the NREGA which stipulates convening meetings of the Grama Sabha. They also informed that there were pre-consultation among the NHGs and ADS under the guidance of the ward member concerned.
- ❖ Out of the 15 respondents 7 have agreed that there is shortage of engineers/technical peoples in the Panchayat which negatively affected the implementation of the NREGS.
- ❖ All the 15 respondents agreed that they could manage the implementation of NREGS without contractor.
- ❖ As regards works involving material component in Madikai Panchayat it was reported that they have limited role. Madikai Panchayat used material component in almost all works. There is the provision of a purchase committee under NREGS and the committee is functioning under the Chairmanship of the Grama Panchayat President. All of them agreed that materials can be arranged for the work through quotations.
- ❖ All the 15 respondents are aware of 60:40 ratio with respect to labour and material component and all of them agreed with the prevailing ratio.
- ❖ All the 15 respondents agreed that awareness generation was done to propagate the NREGS in the panchyat. All of them agreed that there were no shortage of funds. 14 of them are fully satisfied with the existing level of awareness

- generation. But requested for continuous awareness generation among Officials, mates, and people's representatives and labours to make them familiar with the changes in the mode of implementation.
- ❖ All of them agreed that job cards were distributed in the Panchyat as per the true spirit of NREGS. They also informed that special attempts were made to ensure SC/ST women/migrant headed/disabilities get job cards.
 - ❖ All of the respondents are fully aware of the fact that after getting job cards, one needs to apply for work separately
 - ❖ All of the respondents agreed that there is display of Muster Rolls at the work site.
 - ❖ All the respondents agreed that there is wage payment through the Banks and there is delay in payment.

There were also some different views expressed by the officials and non officials as detailed below.

Four of the respondents opined that narrowness of the permissible works under the Act deter them to find suitable projects

- They agreed that M.R. is displayed publically but list of job card holders do not display in public.
- Two of the respondents opined that, there is change of planned works from the original at the time of implementation.

Questionnaire - II: Response of work Site Manager/Mate

This questionnaire was designed for interviewing the work site managers or mates. Accordingly 15 mates were interviewed with priority to mates from the ward selected. All the mates are females and they are Kudumbashree members. They are trained under NREGS for preparation, formulation and implementation of programmes and they are aware of their role in the scheme.

With respect to age, all of them are in the category of 26-43. Out of the 15 mates, 9 had SSLC level qualification, 4 had PDC, and one is a degree holder. Only one member has less than SSLC level qualification. 11 mates are ADS members, one is an ADS secretary, 2 are ADS Presidents and another one is a CDS member. During the previous year (2008-09), out of the 15 mates, 3 mates worked for less than 40 days. 3 mates worked for 40 to 60 days. One mate worked for 61 to 80 days and 8 worked for more than 80 days.

The mates informed that the number of workers in the work site ranges between 25 to 90. They said that there were 25 to 40 workers in 9 sites and 41 to 80 workers in 5 sites and 90 workers in 1 site. Their main duties are:-

1. To identify works in consultation with the ward member
2. To ensure that the works get T.S
3. To collect M.R. from the concerned office
4. Inform the workers about the work
5. Arrange the project initiation meeting
6. To arrange the workers in the work site
7. To make available implements
8. To arrange work site facilities
9. To supervise the work
10. Prepare worksite diary and M.R.
11. Submit the Muster Roll after the completion of 15 days of work

Questionnaire III: Response of Labourers

It is designed for NREGS workers. From the ward 22 workers were interviewed, of which 9 workers belong to the age group of 29-40 and 12 workers belong to the age group of 41 to 60. One worker is 66 years old.

It was found that out of the 22 workers, 9 belonged to BPL category and 13 were APL. 18 were married and 3 were widows and one was an unmarried woman. There were 62 adult members in the 22 house holds. Out of this 35 members had got registration under NREGS. Out of the 22 HHs 12 houses were electrified. All the families had their own houses.

Out of the 22 workers interviewed, 3 are not aware of the fact that they have to submit separate application for work, 3 of the workers opinioned that there is no formal submission of work application and no dated receipts. The prevailing practice is that mates received the work application in terms of working days during the previous year 10 workers got less than 50 days work 2 workers got 51 to 75 days work. 10 workers got work above 80 days. Among them, 7 completed 100 days of work. All the 22 workers agreed that they were provided work site facilities and they are satisfied with the approach of the mates and Panchayats member.

Questionnaire -IV: Response of Households

It is designed for the house holds. Various categories of house holds were taken for the study

- (i) Those registered and obtained job cards and work
- (ii) Those registered and obtained job cards but not taken work
- (iii) Those not registered

In each category available SC/ST and women headed house holds were included in the survey.

Out of 23 families were selected, 13 families had job cards and worked under NREGS. They opined that Grama Sabhas were convened for the purpose of plan formulation and 12 of them attended the Grama Sabhas. They believed that the works done are useful to the community.

House holds registered for job cards but not taken up work stated that they did not demand work because they did not realize that that NREGS involve manual works and they do not prefer such work.

Those who do not register for job cards said that the prevailing wage rate and conditions are not acceptable to them.

Procedures followed for the implementation of NREGs in Madikkai Panchayat

(a) Communication and awareness measures

As a part of awareness generation the Panchayat resorted to intensive information, education and communication exercise to publish the key provisions of NREGA and arranged the process of registration, demand for employment, unemployment allowance, grievance redressal and social audit.

They arranged mike announcements throughout the Panchayat. The Panchayat published bit notices and distributed brochures. Wall posters and wall writings were arranged in the Panchayat. Trainings were conducted at Panchayat and Block level. Rallies were also arranged in the Panchayat to popularize the Act. Discussions were held at NHG, ADS and CDS level and at Panchayat level.

Special meetings and Grama Sabhas were convened. House visits by members and ADS functionaries were also arranged. Promoters visited the colonies. Oorukootams were convened to convey the message of NREGA among the tribal people.

(b) Plan Formulation

Under the guidance of ADS Neighbourhood Group assembled and discussed the developmental problems facing their locality and arrive at possible solutions. Each locality within a ward may vary in the level of development. After detailed deliberations in each NHGs, the proposals are consolidated at ADS level. The ward member concerned is the responsible person to guide the units (NHGs). The ADS members also take active role in the entire process. Grama sabhas has the power to make recommendations on the work to be taken up under NREGS. The Grama Panchayat thereafter forwards the development plan with its priorities to the Programme Office for preliminary scrutiny and approval.

(c) Registration for job card

In the panchayat special effort was taken to enable the people to apply for registration. Special sittings were held at Anganawadi centres, Meetings were held to help the people. Grama sabhas were also convened to enable people to apply for registration. Forms were made available at door steps to assist those who could not attend the grama sabha. Special meetings were convened for SC, ST and Oorukootams.

After due verification with respect to residential status, social category, the households were given registration and subsequently issued job card to each family.

(d) Approval of works, execution and Agencies involved

The Kudumbasree movement is actively involved in the process of works execution. Mates play a key role in the implementation of the projects. With the active involvement of the ward member concerned, the mate identifies the work suitable for implementation. The mate supervises the work. She keeps the work site diary and maintains the muster roll.

(e) Payment of wages

Though each family has a job card the family members have separate Bank Accounts and wage is released to the account of those who actually worked under NREGA.

There is delay in submitting the Muster Roll by the mates after the completion of 14 days work and that resulted in delayed payment. Usually an M.R is issued for 14 days work and this 14 days work was completed within 20 days, and between these 20 days

Sundays and Holidays are included. Usually it will take 2 to 3 days and it will delay payments.

(f) Monitoring and Evaluation Method

Grama Sabha monitored all the works. It monitored the employment provided to each person who has applied for work. It also monitored the registration and issue of job cards and timely payment of wages.

(g) Transparency and accountability systems followed

Through social audit, public accountability in the implementation of projects, was ensured. One simple form of a social audit was a public assembly, where all the details of a project were scrutinized.

Complete transparency in the process of administration and decision making was an obligation on the part of the Government to give people full access to all relevant information. The information about works was displayed in the local language at the work site and at a prominent place in Grama Panchayat.

2. CHENGALA PANCHAYAT

Profile of Chengala Panchayat

Chengala Panchayat was the 2nd panchayat selected from Kasargode District for the study. The Panchayat is located in the Kasaragod Community Development Block and has an area of 5373 hectares and 7818 Nos. of house holds with a total population of 47967 as per 2001 Census. Out of this, 23999 were males and 23968 were females. There were 1973 SC people in the Panchayat. Out of this 1020 were males and 953 were females. The population of ST were 1129, out of which 578 were males and 551 were females. 33933 persons were literates and 14034 were illiterates. It is found that there were 3411 workers. Out of this, 10481 were male workers and 2930 were female workers.

Overall Performance of NREGS in the Panchayat

Registration for job cards

In the Panchayat special efforts were taken to enable the people to apply for registration of job cards. Special sitting and meetings were held at Anganawadi centres to help the people. Grama Sabhas were also convened to enable people to apply for registration. Forms were made available at door steps to assist those who could not attend the Grama Sabhas. House visits were arranged and photos of the adult members were taken at that time.

After due verification with respect to residential status, social category, the house holds are given registration facilities and subsequently issued job card to each family.

In the Panchayat by September 2007 the process of issuing job cards were started. To allow maximum opportunities to families, registration is open through out the year at the Grama Panchayat office during working hours.

To facilitate the study it is estimated that by 2009 the population of the Panchayat is estimated to 52762 from the 2001 census figure of 47969. There are 22 wards in the Panchayat. By 2009, the number of total house holds increased to 8598. Out of which 354 are SC house holds and 2 are ST house holds. The Census 2001 included 202 ST families which covered 200 Maratis who were treated as Tribes but later these Maratis are included in the forward caste. Hence the total families of Tribes are only 2. The details of families registered for job cards and job card issued are shown in Table 4.10.

Table: 4.10 Year Wise Details of No. Families Registered & Job Card Issued

Year	No. of Families Registered for job card				Total No. of Families Issued Job Cards			
	SC	ST	General	Total	SC	ST	General	Total
2007-08	230	2	1849	2081	230	2	1849	2081
2008-09	37	0	993	1030	37	0	993	1030
2009-10	18	0	151	169	18	0	149	167
Cumulative Total	285	2	2993	3280	285	2	2991	3278

Source: JPC Office

During 2007-08, 2081 house holds were given job cards, which included 230 SC and 2 ST house holds. During 2008-09 a total of 1030 house holds were given job cards out of this 37 were SC house holds and seen that no families registered from ST house holds because the Panchayat had only 2 ST families and they were registered already. Cumulatively during 2009-10, 3278 house holds were given job cards. Out of this 285 were SC house holds and 2 were ST house holds. It is seen from the table that all the registered families got job cards.

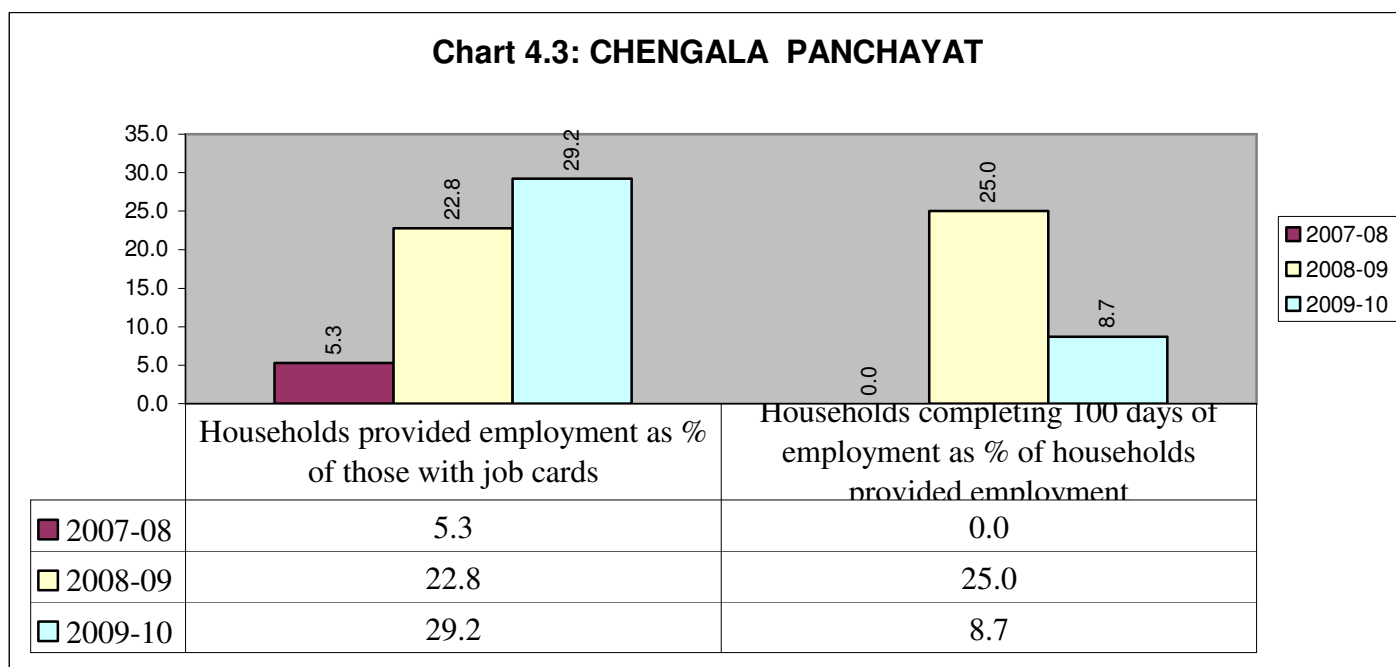
Employment Generation

With regard to employment generation under the scheme during the last three years are shown in Table 4.11.

Table: 4.11 Year Wise Details of Employment Generated (House Holds & Labour Days)

Year	Total House Holds provided employment	No. of House Holds completed 100 days of employment	Total No. of House Holds Provided Employment				Person Days Generated					
			SC	ST	General	Total	Women	SC	ST	General	Total	Women
2007-08	111	0	7		104	111	93	90		1103	1193	1002
2008-09	709	177	91	0	618	709	567	6365	0	36718	43083	38168
2009-10	958	83	87	2	869	958	900	8455	77	49104	57636	54351

Source: JPC Office



As per the details available 100 days of employment was provided to 177 house holds during 2008-09 and no families got 100 days of job during 2007-08 and 830 house holds during 2009-10. The number of families got employment is showing an increasing trend for the three years. Similarly the persons days of employment generated are also increased is a notable feature.

During the year 2007-08, 111 families were given employment. Out of which 7 were SC house holds and none from ST house holds. A total of 1193 person days were generated, out of which 90 were for SCs. Out of the total person days generated 1002 (84%) person days were constituted by women. On an average 63 person days was generated for a house holds in the Chengala Panchayat during this period.

The total person days of employment generated during 2009-10 was 57636, of which 94% were constituted by women. On an average 60 person days of employment was given to a house hold. The Act stipulates that 1/3 of the employment generated must be given to woman. But in the ward it was found that the women working days was 95%, 91%, and 89% respectively for the last 3 years which revealed that the scheme is a great support to the poor women.

Release of funds & utilization

The Panchayat implemented NREGS during December 2007. As the fag end of the year, the Panchayat could not utilize the entire release.

During the year 2007-08 the total receipt was Rs.4.50 lakhs against which total expenditure was Rs.2.58 lakhs. Out of this, the share of wages for unskilled labourer was Rs.1.34 lakhs and the amount utilized under semi skilled and skilled wages was nil. The share of materials component was Rs.0.64 lakhs. The total administrative expense was Rs.0.60 lakhs.

During the year 2008-09, the total fund availability was Rs.59.92 lakhs against which the total expenditure was Rs.57.80 lakhs. Out of this the share of unskilled labour wage was Rs.52.24 lakhs. No amount was utilized under semiskilled and skilled wages. The share of material component was Rs.3.83 lakhs. During the year total administrative expense recorded as Rs.1.72 lakhs.

During the year 2009-10, the total fund availability was Rs.37.12 lakhs. Out of this the total expenditure was Rs.34.2 lakhs in which the share of wages was Rs.32.08 lakhs. No amount was utilized under semi skilled and skilled wages. The share

of material component was Rs.0.55 lakhs. During the period, total administrative expense was Rs.1.57 lakhs. The Details of allotment and expenditure is shown in Table 4.12

Table: 4.12 Year Wise Details of Financial Performance

Year	O.B as on 1st April of the year	Release during current year		Misc. receipt	Total	Cumulative Expenditure(Rs.in Lakhs)				Total	
		Central	State			On Wages	On Semi-Skilled and Skilled Wages	On Material	Administrative Expenses		
									Recurring		Non Recurring
2007-08		4.5			4.5	1.34		0.64	0.6		2.58
2008-09	1.92	58			59.92	52.24		3.83	1.72		57.8
2009 - 10	2.12	35			37.12	32.08		0.55	1.57		34.2

Source: JPC Office

It is seen from the table that the allotment and expenditures are comparatively lower than other Panchayat. It is observed that the efforts made by the Panchayat for preparing schemes under NREGS and its implementation are not strictly following the provisions of the Act.

Activities initiated under NREGS in Chengala Panchayat

The activities take up in the Panchayat under NREGA is shown in Table 4.13. The table revealed the fact that NREGA activities prioritized for land development, Flood control and protection works, rural connectivity and micro irrigation work. Total No. of works are 1956 out of which the rate of focused work constituted land development 39% flood control and land protection works 28% and rural connectivity 11%. The status of completed works are 30% and 70% works are to be completed. It is also observed from the table that there is no work for SC/ST or IAY schemes under NREGA in the Panchayat though there are SC/ST people in the Panchayat,

Table: 4.13 Activities initiated in the Panchayat under NREGS

Sl.No.	Name of Project	Completed (Nos.)	Ongoing (Nos.)	Total (Nos.)
1	Rural Connectivity	100	121	221
2	Flood Control and Protection	110	434	544
3	Water conservation and Water harvesting	59	13	72
4	Drought Proofing	29	83	112
5	Micro Irrigation works	37	112	149
6	Provision of Irrigation facility to land owned by SC/ST	0	0	0
7	Renovation of Traditional water bodies	6	81	87
8	Land Development	237	532	769
9	Any other activity approved by MRD	0	2	2
Total		578	1378	1956

Source: JPC Office

V.K.Para - Ward No.15 - in Chengala Panchayat

For the detailed analysis of the plan formulation procedure, implementation Method, Monitoring system, introduced for NREGS in the panchayat, the ward No.15 was selected from the Panchayat. Four types of questionnaires were designed to collect details of the strength and weakness of NREGS implementation in the Panchayat.

Questionnaire - I: Response of People's Representatives and Officials

This questionnaire was designed to record the opinion of the people's representatives such as the President, Standing Committee Chairmen and members of the Grama Panchayat and officials like the Panchayat Secretary, the section clerk concerned, the VEO, the LSGD AE, the Accredited AE, Overseer and Accountant under NREGS. In Chengala Grama Panchayat 11 number of people's representatives and 4 numbers of officials were interviewed and elicited their views.

On the basis of the interview, the peoples representatives and officials agreed with and followed the provision of the Act in the following manner:-

- With regard to project formulation, all the 15 respondents agreed with the provision of the NREGA which stipulates convening meetings of the Grama Sabha. They also informed that there were pre-consultation among the NHGs and ADS under the guidance of the ward member concerned.

- Out of the 15 respondents 12 have agreed that there is shortage of engineers/technical peoples in the Panchayat which is negatively affected the implementation of the NREGS.
- All the 15 representatives agreed that they could manage the implementation of NREGS without contractor.
- As regards works involving material component in Chengala Panchayat they have nothing to do. It is understood that wages for unskilled workers and administrative expenses are booked under material cost. In Chengala Panchayat, there is no material component in its true sense and it is seen that they constructed road only with rural. They were unknown about material component hence the question of arranging material for construction activity did not arise. Even if, it arises there was the provision of a purchase committee under NREGS
- All the 15 respondents are aware of 60:40 ratio with respect to labour and material component ratio. 14 of the respondents agreed with the prevailing ratio
- All the 15 representatives agreed that awareness generation was done to propagate the NREGS in the Panchyat. All of them agreed that there were no shortage of funds. 14 of them are fully satisfied with the existing level of awareness generation. But requested for making it as a continuous programme so as to enable the Officials, mates, and people's representatives and labours to familiar with the changes in the mode of implementation.
- All of them agreed that job cards were distributed in the Panchyat as per the true spirit of NREGS. They also informed that special attempts were made to ensure SC/ST women/migrant headed/disabilities get job cards.
- All the respondents are fully aware of the fact that after getting job cards, one needs to apply for work separately
- 14 of the respondents agreed that there is display of Muster Rolls at the work site.
- All the respondents agreed that there is wage payment through the Banks. In fact there is delayed payment but only 7 respondents agreed with this.

There were also some different views expressed by the officials and non officials as follows:-

- Four of the respondents opined that narrowness of the permissible works under the Act deter them to find suitable projects
- They agreed that M.R. is displayed publically but list of job card holders do not display in public.

Questionnaire - II: Response of work Site Manager/Mate

This questionnaire was designed for collecting the information from the work site managers or mates. From the panchayat 15 mates were interviewed giving priority to mates from the ward selected/ all the mates are females and they are Kudumbashree members. They are trained under NREGS.

With respect to age, all of them are in the category of 29-46 age brackets. Out of the 15 mates, 8 had SSLC level qualification, 5 had PDC, and one is a degree holder. Only 1 member has less than SSLC level qualification. 10 mates are ADS members, 3 are ADS secretaries. One is an ADS President and another one is a CDS member. During the previous year (2008-09), out of 15 mates, 4 number of mates worked for 40 to 60 days. 3 numbers worked for 61 to 80 days even 8 number worked for more than 80 days.

The mates informed that the number of workers in the work site range in between 22 to 53. They said that there were 22 to 30 workers in 6 sites and 31 to 40 workers in 5 sites and 41 to 53 workers in 4 sites. They are well aware of their works that are listed below.

1. To identify works in consultation with the ward member
2. To ensure that the works get T.S
3. To collect M.R. from the concerned office
4. Inform the workers about the work
5. Arrange the project initiation meeting
6. To arrange the workers in the work site
7. To make available implements
8. To arrange work site facilities
9. To supervise the work
10. Prepare worksite diary and M.R.
11. Submit the Muster Roll after the completion of 15 days of work

The mates had genuine grievances and they wanted remedial measures which are given in the report in the recommendation part.

Questionnaire III: Response of Labourers

It is designed for NREGS workers. In the ward 17 workers were interviewed. 9 workers belong to the age group of 33-40 and 8 workers belong to the age group of 41 to 62.

It is found that out of the 17 workers, 14 belonged to BPL category and 3 were APL. 15 were married and 2 were widows, 7 workers had land below 20 cents. There were 58 adult members in the 17 house holds. Out of this 26 members had got registration under NREGS. Out of the 17 house holds 16 houses were electrified. All the families are living in their own houses.

It was found that the charge for taking photos of workers were met through NREGA fund.

Out of the 17 workers interviewed, 4 workers are not aware of the fact that they have to submit separate application for work, 13 of the workers opined that there was no formal submission of work application and no dated receipts. In terms of working days, during the previous year 6 workers got works less than 50 days and 3 workers got 51 to 75 days work, 6 workers got above 80 days work and 2 workers were new persons.

The workers are satisfied with the work site facilities and the approach of the mates and Panchayat member.

Questionnaire -IV: Response of Households

It is designed for the house holds. Various categories of house holds were taken for the study

- (i) those that had registered and obtained job cards and work
- (ii) those that had registered and obtained job cards but not taken work
- (iii) those not registered

In each category available SC/ST, women headed and migrant house holds were included in the survey.

Out of 17 house holds were selected, 14 house holds have job cards and worked under NREGS. They opined that Grama Sabhas were convened for the purpose of plan formulation and 13 of them attended the Grama Sabhas. They believed that the works done are useful to the community.

Procedures followed for the implementation of NREGS in Chengala Panchayat

(a) Communication Measures and Awareness Programme

As a part of awareness generation the Panchayat resorted to intensive information, education and communication exercise to publish the key provisions of NREGA and procedures to be followed, like the process of registration, demand for employment, unemployment allowance, grievance redressal and social audit.

They arranged mike announcements through out the panchayat, published bit notices and brochures. Wall posters and wall writings were arranged in the panchayat. Training were conducted at Panchayat level and block level. Discussions were held at NHG, ADS, CDS level and at panchayat level. Cultural programmes were arranged in the panchayat as part of awareness.

Special meetings and Grama Sabhas were convened. House visits by members and ADS functionaries were also arranged. Promoters visited the colonies. Anganwadi workers also cooperated with the introduction of NREGS in Chengala.

(b) Plan Formulation

The Act states that every Grama panchayat shall prepare a development plan and maintain a shelf of works which will generate employment opportunities on demand.

In the Panchayat various stake holders were discussed prior to the finalization of the plan.

Under the guidance of ADS each NHG assembled and discussed the developmental problems facing their locality and arrived at possible proposals. Each locality within a ward may vary in the level of development. After detailed deliberations in each NHGs, the proposals are consolidated at ADS level. The ADS members also take active role in the entire process.

Grama sabhas has the power to make recommendations on the work to be taken up under NREGA. The panchayat prepare the development plan comprising a shelf of projects, on the basis of the recommendations of the Grama sabha. There after the Grama Panchayat forwarded the development plan with its priorities to the Programme Officer for preliminary scrutiny and approval.

The approved project reflects the developmental requirement of the locality as well as it has a bearing on the possible labour demand.

(c) Registration for job card

In the panchayat special effort was taken to enable the people to apply for registration. Special sitting were held at Anganawadi centres, Meetings were held to help the people. Grama sabhas were also convened to enable people to apply for registration. Forms were made available at door steps to assist those who could not attend the grama sabha. House visits were arranged and photos of the adult members were taken at that time.

After due verification with respect to residential status, social category, the house holds were given registration and subsequently a job card to each family.

(d) Approval of works, execution and Agencies involved

The approved works shows the local wards of the Panchayat and the number of jobs that can be created out of the workers. ADS/CDS play a key role in the execution of these works.

(e) Payment of wages

Timely receipt of wage is an entitlement of a labour. Payments should be effected within 15 days from the date of execution of the work. Payment are released through Banks. Each worker has a job card and separate Bank Accounts and wage is released to the account of those who actually worked under NREGA. Payments are not paid in every fortnight. Delay in payment is the usual experience in every Panchayat.

(f) Monitoring and Evaluation Method

The Grama Sabha monitor all the works. It will monitored the employment provided to each person who has applied for work. It also monitor the registration and issue of job cards and timely payment of wages.

(g) Transparency and accountability systems followed

The basic objective of a social audit is to ensure public accountability in the implementation of projects, law and policies of NREGS. The information about works should be displayed in the local language at the work site and at a prominent place in Grama Panchayat as part of maintaining transparency.

2. PHASE II - IDUKKI DISTRICT

The National Rural Employment Guarantee (NREGS) Scheme was launched in Idukki District in the II phase during April 2007 and it is the second District selected for the study of implementation of NREGS.

Profile of Idukki District

Idukki district was formed in 26th January 1972 as the 11th District of Kerala. The name Idukki is derived from “Idukku” which means a gorge. It has a plateau like structures situated at a height between 107 meters and 2695 meters above the mean sea level nested among the mountains of the Western Ghats on the eastern portion of middle Kerala and on the sides of Tamil Nadu. About 41.1% area of the District is under forest. The Culture of Idukki is mainly central Kerala & tribal oriented.

Idukki ranks the 2nd position in the State in area (4358 Sq. Km) and it is the last but one District in the State in Scheduled caste population. The District occupies the 1st position in the State in the percentage of Cultivators and 3rd positions in the area of Agricultural labours to total workers. The District stands the 1st in rural work population rate (43.16%) in the State. The District has no Railway Line and no Sea Coast. The Pamper River in the District is one of the East Flowing Rivers of Kerala.

Location/Area

The District is bounded on the North by Mukundapuram Taluk of Trissur District of Kerala State, on the East by Madurai District of Tamil Nadu State and on the South by Pathanamthitta District, on the West by Kanjirappally Taluk of Kottayam District and Kunnathu nadu Taluk of Ernakulam District. The total area of the District is 4358 Sq.Km an urban area of 67.43 Sq.Km (1.55%) and rural area of 4291 Sq.Km (98.45%).

Agriculture is the principal occupation of the people of this District. The District is suitable for all varieties of cultivation. The most important crop which is cultivated in the District is Pepper and Tea. The major plantation crops are Coffee, Tea, Pepper, Cardamom and Rubber. People cultivate Orange, Coconut, Tapioca, Rice, and Sugar cane, Potato, Ginger, Lemon and Vegetables.

There is no major irrigation projects in the District. The area now irrigated in Idukki is under rainfall and the tail waters of Hydro-Electric Projects. Animal Husbandry includes cattle Development, Milk products, Egg production, Meat production Milk

Collection, Milk Distribution, Cattle Health, Cattle Fodder etc. Cows are the main domesticated animal in the District.

Idukki is industrially backward and there is no major industry in the District

Administrative Set Up

The District is following two type of administration. Revenue and Local Self Government. Under the Revenue system, a District is divided into Revenue Divisions, Taluks and Villages. There are two Revenue Divisions in this District named Devikulam and Thodupuzha Divisions. It consists of 4 Taluks and 64 Revenue Villages. Thodupuzha Municipality is the only Statutory Town in the District. The District has 8 Development Blocks and 32 Panchayats. The District Head quarter is located at Painav where as the Taluk Headquarters are Devikulam, Nedumkandam, Perumade and Thodupuzha respectively.

Population as per Census 2001

As per 2001 census, the total population of the District was 1129221, which covered a rural population of 1071628 of which men constituted 538064 (50.21%) and 533564 (49.79%) were women. The rural SC population was 157241. Out of which 78368 were men (49.84%) and 78873 (50.16%) were women. The rural ST population was 50620, which constituted 25335 (50.05%) men and 25285 (49.95%) women.

For the purpose of the study an estimation of population by 2009 is taken into account. Accordingly, the rural population of the District is estimated as 1178790 which include 591870 men and 586919 women. It is also estimated the rural population of SC increased to 172965. Out of which 86759 are SC Women. The rural population of ST also increased to 55682. Out of which 27813 are women.

House holds Details

According to the 2001 census the number of rural house holds was 252256. Out of which 36825 are SC house holds and 11855 are ST house holds. For the conduct of survey, the population was estimated for 2009 and the number of rural house holds increased to 278000. Out of which 40507 are SC house holds and 13040 are ST house holds.

Overall Performance of NREGS in the District

Registration and Job card Issue

During 2009-2010, there were 182681 house holds with job cards which is 66.1% of the total rural house holds in Idukki District and the number of individuals covered under the scheme increased to 362000. Out of this, 25,185 were SC and 12,816 were ST house holds. Details are included in the Table 4.14. The table reveals that in the first year 2007-08, all the registered families got job card but in the subsequent two years 96% and 91% of the registered persons got job card which means that the initiative or interest towards NREGS from Panchayat or people was not effective as in the previous year.

Table: 4.14 Year Wise Details of No. Families Registered & Job Card Issued

Year	No. of Families Registered				Total No. of Families Issued Job Cards			
	SC	ST	General	Total	SC	ST	General	Total
2007-08	18418	10943	66000	95361	18418	10943	66000	95361
2008-09	4911	1789	50564	57264	4911	1789	48429	55129
2009-10	2956	280	32132	35368	1856	84	30251	32191
Cumulative Total	26285	13012	148696	187993	25185	12816	144680	182681

Source: JPC, Idukki

Employment Generated

The NREGA was started in the District during 2007-08. 24,079 house holds were given employment including 3,919 SC house holds and 2,087 ST house holds. The remaining 18,073 house holds belong to general category. 73570 persons days were created for SC and 22,883 persons days for ST people. During 2007-08 only 5 families got 100 days of employment.

Women out numbered men and the share of women among the work force constitute 2, 03,732 persons days (79%) during 2007-08. During 2008-09, 56,911 house holds were given employment. Among this 6,891 are SC house holds and 5,184 are ST house holds. A total of 16.54 lakhs persons days were created in the year which included 3.36 lakhs SCs and 2.95 lakhs STs. During the year on an average of 29 persons days of employment were created per family and the women were provided 14.4 lakhs persons

days of employment, out of the total of 16.54 lakhs persons days created in the District, which constituted 87% of the total. 90,821 house holds were given employment during 2009-10. Out of this 10,784 were SC house holds and 8,838 were ST house holds. A total of 43, 80,879 person days were created in the District during the year. Out of this 4, 80,393 SC and 3, 86,728 ST persons.

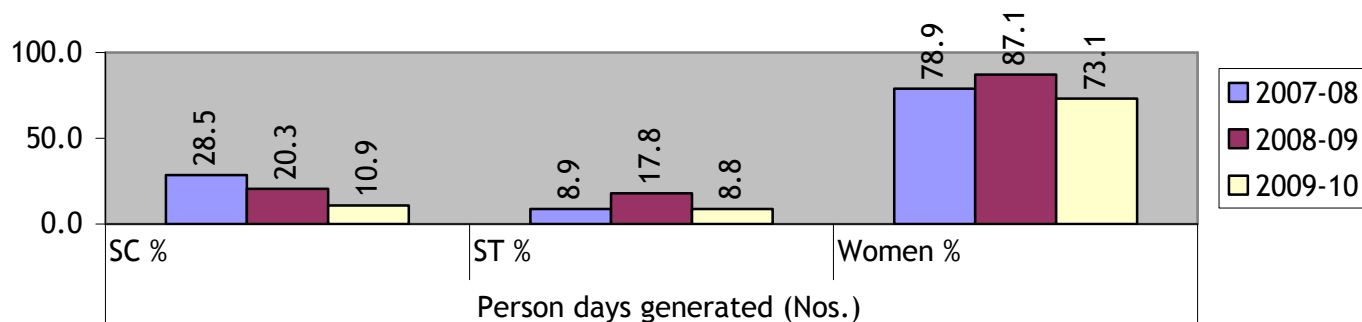
As per the details furnished the employment generated through NREGS in all categories of house hold and individual level reflected cumulative increase but the ratio of increase is showing a decreasing trend. Details are shown in Table 4.15.

Table: 4.15 Year Wise Details of Employment Generated (House Holds & Labour Days)

Year	Total House Holds provided employment	No. of House Holds completed 100 days of employment	Total No. of house holds provided employment				Person Days Generated				
			SC	ST	General	Total	SC	ST	General	Total	Women
2007-08	24079	5	3919	2087	18073	24079	73570	22883	161739	258192	203722
2008-09	56911	1801	6891	5184	44836	56911	336000	295000	1023000	1654000	1440000
2009-10	90821	11083	10784	8838	71199	90821	480393	386728	3513758	4380879	3202028

Source: JPC, Idukki

Chart 4.4: PROPORTION OF SC, ST AND WOMEN PERSON DAYS IN IDUKKI (PER CENT)



	Person days generated (Nos.)		
2007-08	28.5	8.9	78.9
2008-09	20.3	17.8	87.1
2009-10	10.9	8.8	73.1

Release & Utilization of NREGS Fund

The financial performance of the scheme showed unstable situations of achievement of 39%, 88% and 75% respectively for the last three years. The utilization of NREGA fund on wages showed an increasing trend which means more workers were interested in the scheme. In the case of material component there was ups and downs in utilizations in these years. Wages on semi skilled was also showed increasing trend.

Details are shown in Table 4.16.

Year	O.B as on 1st April of the year	Release during current year		Misc. receipt	Total	Cumulative Expenditure(Rs.in Lakhs)					Total
		Central	State			On Wages	On Semi-Skilled and Skilled Wages	On Material	Administrative Expenses		
									Recurring	Non Recurring	
2007-08		838.00	93.00	0.65	931.65	286.94	0.02	18.53	53.12		358.61
2008-09	573.04	1863.50	151.50	20.55	2608.59	2052.60	57.73	103.43	91.71	1.14	2306.61
2009 -10	429.36	6954.87	553.98	1.02	7939.24	5526.14	95.75	196.46	142.92	5.09	5966.36

Source: JPC Office.

Activities taken up under NREGS in Idukki District

The activities initiated under NREGS in the panchayat is detailed in Table 4.17. It was seen that top priority was given to flood control, water conservation and water harvesting. The total number of work was 10178 out of which 26% completed, 56% are in progress and 18% works are not yet started.

Table: 4.17 Status of activities taken up under NREGS in Idukki District

Sl.No.	Name of activities	Total sanctioned works	Works Completed	Works in Progress	Work in progress
1	Flood Control	5869	1452	3531	886
2	Rural Connectivity	259	30	190	39
3	Water Conservation and Water Harvesting	2977	818	1450	709
4	Renovation of Traditional Water Bodies	427	215	115	97
5	Drought Proofing	178	80	56	42
6	Irrigation Canals	468	54	326	88
Total		10178	2649	5668	1861

Source: JPC

Selection of Panchayat for the Study

From Idukki District two Panchayats such as Kanjikuzhi from Idukki Block and Erattayar from Kattapana Block were selected and studied. The selection of the Panchayat was done primarily on the basis of better performance and average performance. Kanjikuzhi is the better performing and Erattayar is the average performing Panchayat.

Table 4.18

Sl.No.	Name of District	Name of Block	Name of Panchayat	Name of the Ward	Ward No.
1	Idukki	Idukki	Kanjikuzhi	Vattompara	13
2	Idukki	Kattapana	Erattayar	Thulasippara	10

1. KANJIKUZHI PANCHAYAT

Profile of Kanjikuzhi Grama Panchayat

In Idukki District there are 8 Community Development Blocks. Kanjikuzhi Grama Panchayat is located in the Idukki Block. As per 2001 Census Kanjikuzhi Grama panchayat has an area of 22688 hectares with 6919 house holds. It had a population of 28504. Out of this 14426 were males and 14078 were females which included 1365 SC people. Out of this 694 were males and 671 were females. The population of ST were 3006, out of which 1501 were males and 1505 were females. It is found that 11695 were workers. Out of this 8601 were male workers and 3094 were female workers. The number of male workers were 7498. There were 1203 Agricultural labourers. As per 2001 census there were 17 wards in the Panchayat.

Over all performance of NREGs in the Panchayat

Registration and Job cards Issue.

To facilitate the study it was estimated by 2009, the population of the Panchayat increased to 31353 from 2001 census figure of 28504. By 2009 the number of total house holds increased to 7611, out of which 365 are SC house holds and 804 are ST house holds (estimated figure).

During 2007-08, 2000 house holds were given job cards, which included 68 SC house holds and 14 ST house holds. During 2008-09, 1078 house holds were given job cards out of this 97 were SC house holds and 11 were ST house holds. During 2009-10, 4084 house holds registered and given job cards. Out of this, 133 are SC and 485 are ST house holds. Details are given in Table 4.19.

It is observed that the Panchayat has a total of 7611 families and the cumulative number of families registered for job card for the three years was 7162 (94 %) and issued job card to 6888. Similarly there was 365 SC families 298 families (82 %) registered and obtained job card to 286 and also 804 ST families 510 families (63 %)

Table: 4.19 Year wise details of No. of families Registered & Job Card

Year	No. of Families Registered				Total No. of Families Issued Job Cards			
	SC	ST	General	Total	SC	ST	General	Total
2007-08	68	14	1918	2000	68	14	1918	2000
2008-09	97	11	970	1078	97	11	970	1078
2009-10	133	485	3466	4084	119	467	3222	3810
Cumulative Total	298	510	6354	7162	286	492	6110	6888

registered and obtained job card to 492. It reveals that the over all participation of the people in NREGS is increasing.

Source: JPC

Employment generated in the Panchayat

During 2007-08, 1481 families were given employment, which included 24 SC house holds and 35 ST house holds and no families got 100 days of work under the scheme. A total of 11137 person days were generated during this period which covered 1800 SCs and 2625 STs. Out of the total person days generated, 8909 (80%) person days were generated for women.

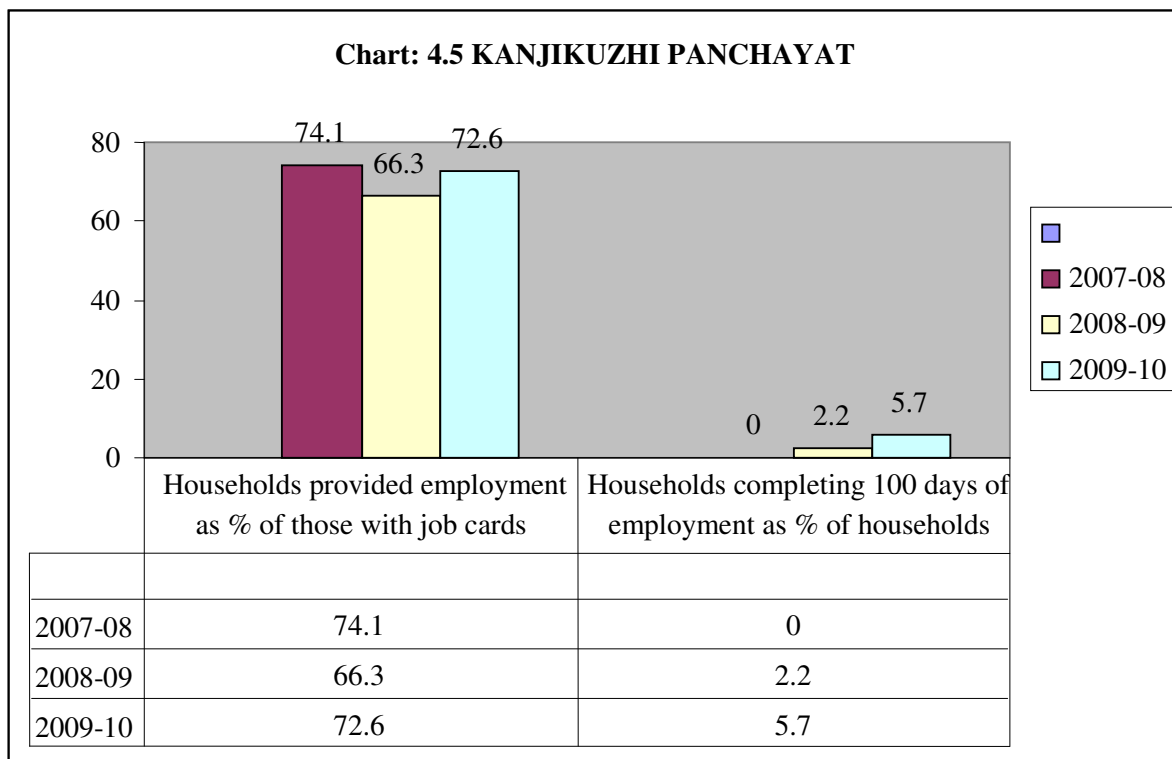
During 2008-09, 1980 families were given employment including 28 SC and 49 ST house holds. Out of the total of 56342 person days were generated, 365 were SCs and 4242 STs. Out of the total person days generated, 45074 (80%) person days were contributed by women and 45 families got 100 days of employment during this year. On an average 28 person days were generated during 2008-09.

During the year 2009-10, 3854 house holds were given employment covering 266 SC house holds and 305 ST house holds. A total of 238555 persons days were generated which included 12095 for SCs and 20610 STs and 177097 (74 %) for women. On an average 62 person days of employment was given to a family. Year wise employment details are given in Table 4.20.

Table: 4.20 Year Wise Details of Employment Generated (House Holds & Labour Days)

Year	Total House Holds provided employment	No. of House Holds completed 100 days of employment	Total No. of House Holds Provided Employment				Person Days Generated				
			SC	ST	General	Total	SC	ST	General	Total	Women
2007-08	1481	0	24	35	1422	1481	1800	2625	6712	11137	8909
2008-09	2040	45	28	49	1963	2040	840	1470	54032	56342	45074
2009-10	3854	1174	266	305	3283	3854	12095	20610	205850	238555	177097

Source: JPC



It is observed from the overall achievement in employment generation for the last three years is showing an increasing trend except the creation of person days of works to SC/ST during 2008-09. It reflected a decline whereas the general category showed high progress. The reason for the decline in person days of employment to SC/ST is understood that the low income group especially SC/ST groups are coming for NREGS in a situation where they have no other works which earn more wages than NREGS.

Release & Utilization of NREGA Fund

NREGA fund to the Panchayat is based on their proposal and flow from the District to the Grama Panchayat directly under intimation to the Block Programme Officer. The Implementation of NREGA was started in the Panchayat by February 2008; as a result they could not utilize the entire release during 2007-08. During 2007-08, the total receipt was Rs.17.49 lakhs against which total expenditure was Rs.15.62 lakhs. Out of this, the share of wages for unskilled labourer was Rs 13.92 lakhs. No amount was utilized under semi skilled and skilled wages. The share of material component was Rs.0.54 lakhs. The total administrative expenditure was Rs.1.16 lakhs.

During 2008-09 the total fund availability was Rs.75.10 lakhs and utilized the entire release. Out of this, the share of unskilled labour wage was Rs.70.43 lakhs and no amount was utilized under semi skilled and skilled wages. The share of material component was Rs.3.35 lakhs and administrative expense was as Rs 1.32 lakhs.

During the year 2009-10, the total fund availability was Rs.195 lakhs. Out of this, the total expenditure was Rs.177.22 lakhs in which the share of wages was Rs.171.90 lakhs. No amount was utilized under semi skilled and skilled wages. The share of material component was Rs.4.10 lakhs. During the period the total administrative expense was Rs.1.20 lakhs. The year wise details of financial performance are given in Table 4.21

Table: 4.21 Year Wise Details of Financial Performance

Year	O.B as on 1st April of the year	Release during current year		Misc. receipt	Total	Cumulative Expenditure (Rs.in Lakhs)					Total
		Central	State			On Wages	On Semi-Skilled and Skilled Wages	On Material	Administrative Expenses		
									Recurring	Non Recurring	
2007-08		17.49			17.49	13.92		0.54	1.16		15.62
2008-09	1.87	73.15		0.08	75.1	70.43		3.35	1.32		75.1
2009-10	0.06	301.52	0	0	301.58	298.37	0.02	7.1	2.46	0	307.94

Source: JPC Office

Activities initiated in the Panchayat under NREGS

Though there are 9 activities approved under NREGS, the Panchayat have prioritized 4 activities which included Flood Control and Protection, water conservation and water harvesting, drought proofing and land development. Prioritisation of the work was based on the scope and importance of the scheme in the particular area. It is generally seen in all Panchayat that though there was scheme for SC/ST, no Panchayat have under taken programme for the category. This was also happened in this Panchayat which is detailed in Table 4.22.

Table: 4.22 Activities initiated in the Panchayat under NREGS

Sl.No.	Name of Project	Completed (Nos.)	Ongoing (Nos.)	Total (Nos.)
1	Rural Connectivity	0	0	0
2	Flood Control and Protection	219	79	298
3	Water conservation and Water harvesting	82	18	90
4	Drought Proofing	5	0	5
5	Micro Irrigation works	0	0	0
6	Provision of Irrigation facility to land owned by SC/ST	0	0	0
7	Renovation of Traditional water bodies	0	0	0
8	Land Development	129	1	130
9	Any other activity approved by MRD	0	0	0
Total		435	98	533

Source: JPC Office

Ward Selected for the Study

Vatton Para Ward of Kanjikuzhi Panchayat.

For the detailed analysis of the implementation ward No.13 of the Panchayat was selected and studied. Four types of questionnaires were designed to collect details of the strength and weakness of NREGS implementation in the Panchayat.

Questionnaire - I: Response of People's Representatives and Officials

This questionnaire was designed to record the opinion of the people's representatives such as the President, Standing Committee Chairman and members of the Grama Panchayat and officials like the Panchayat Secretary, the section clerk concerned, the VEO, the LSGD AE, the Accredited AE, Overseer and accountant under NREGS. In Kanjikuzhi Grama Panchayat 10 number of people's representatives and 5 numbers of officials were interviewed and recorded their views.

On the basis of the interview, the people representatives and officials agreed with and followed the provision of the Act in the following manner:-

- ❖ With regard to project formulation, all the 15 respondents agreed with the provision of the NREGA which stipulates that Project was prepared by convening meetings of the Grama Sabha. They also informed that there were pre-consultation among the NHGs and ADS under the guidance of the ward member concerned.
- ❖ Out of the 15 respondents 10 have agreed that there was shortage of engineers/technical peoples in the Panchayat which lagged the implementation of the NREGS.
- ❖ All the 15 respondents agreed that they could manage the implementation of NREGS without contractor.
- ❖ As regards works involving material component in the Panchayat they have limited role. It was understood that all the expenses except that of wages for unskilled workers and administrative expenses were booked under material cost. In Kanjikuzhy there is a purchase committee under NREGS and the committee is functioning under the Chairmanship of the Grama Panchayat

President. All of them agreed that materials could be arranged for the work through quotations.

- ❖ All the 15 respondents were aware of 60:40 ratio with respect to labour and material component and agreed with the prevailing ratio.
- ❖ All the 15 respondents agreed that awareness generation was done to propagate the NREGS in the Panchyat and are fully satisfied with the existing level of awareness generation. But requested for continuous awareness generation among Officials, mates, and people's representatives and labours to make them familiar with the changes in the mode of implementation.
- ❖ All of them agreed that job cards were distributed in the Panchyat as per the true spirit of NREGS. They also informed that special attempts were made to ensure SC/ST women/ disabled to get job cards.
- ❖ All of the respondents are fully aware of the fact that after getting job cards, one has to apply for work separately
- ❖ All of the respondents agreed that there was display of Muster Rolls at the work site.
- ❖ All the respondents agreed that there is wage payment through the Banks which is a good aspect.

There were also some different views expressed by the officials and non officials in the following:-

- 6 of the respondents opined that narrowness of the permissible works under the Act deter them to find suitable projects.
- They agreed that M.R. is displayed publicly but list of job card holders do not display in public.
- While 13 of the respondents said that there was no change of planned works from the original at the time of implementation, two disagreed with this.
- 4 of the respondents said that there was shortage of technical hands
- 4 of the respondents said that there was shortage of funds for awareness generation programme

Questionnaire -II: Response of Work Site Manager/Mate

This questionnaire was intended for interviewing the work site managers or mates. From the Panchayat 15 mates were interviewed giving priority to mates from the ward selected and all the mates are females and they are Kudumbashree members. They are

trained the process of plan formulation and implementation of NREGs start from NHGs and ADS become the lowest unit to mobilize workers

With respect to age, all of them were in the category of 27-54 age. Out of the 15 mates, 10 had SSLC level qualification, 5 had PDC 5 mates were ADS members. Their status in the Kudumbashree included 3 ADS secretaries, 4 ADS Presidents, one ADS Vice President, 2 CDS members. During the previous year (2008-09), out of the 15 mates, 5 mates worked for less than 25-60 days. One mate worked for 72 days even 8 numbers worked for more than 80 days. One was a new comer.

The mates informed that the number of workers in the work site range in between 45-58. There were 45-50 workers in 5 sites and 50-58 workers in 10 sites. They are well aware of their duties as detailed below:-

1. To identify works in consultation with the ward member
2. To ensure that the works get T.S
3. To collect M.R. from the concerned office
4. Inform the workers about the work
5. Arrange the project initiation meeting
6. To arrange the workers in the work site
7. To make available implements
8. To arrange work site facilities
9. To supervise the work
10. Prepare worksite diary and Muster Roll.
11. Submit the Muster Roll after the completion of 15 days of work

Questionnaire III: Response of Labourers

It was designed for NREGS workers. In the ward 15, workers were interviewed. 6 number of workers belong to the age group of 26-40 and 9 workers belong to the age group of 41 to 56.

It is found that out of the 15 workers, 14 belonged to BPL category. All the 15 were married 4 workers had land below 20 cents. There were 33 adult members in the 15 house holds. Out of this 27 members had got registration under NREGS. Out of the 15 HHs 11 houses were electrified. 14 families are living in their own houses.

It was found that the charge for taking photos of workers were met through NREGA fund, as per the Act.

Out of the 15 workers interviewed, all of them are aware of the fact that they have to submit separate application for work and formal submission of work application and dated receipts. The prevailing practice was that mates receive the work application. With regard to working days, during the previous year they got works in such a way that 3 workers got less than 50 days of work 2 workers got 51-75 days work. 4 workers got above 80 days work and 6 workers were new comers.

All of them agreed that they were provided work site facilities and they were satisfied by the approach of the mates and Panchayats member.

Questionnaire -IV: Response of Households

It is designed for the house holds. Various categories of house holds were taken for the study which included those registered and obtained job cards and work (ii) those that had registered and obtained job cards but not taken work (iii) those not registered. Female headed house holds, SC/ST categories were included in the above three categories.

33 house holds were selected for the Survey. Out of this, 21 house holds had job cards and worked under NREGS. They opined that Grama Sabhas were convened for the purpose of plan formulation and 11 of them attended the grama sabhas. They believed that the works done were useful to the community.

House holds registered for job cards but not taken up work said they did not demand work because they did not realize earlier that NREGS would involve manual works and they do not prefer such work.

Those who do not register for job cards said that the prevailing wage rate and conditions of work are not acceptable to them.

Procedures followed for the implementation of NREGS in the Panchayat

a) Communication measures introduced for the awareness of implementation of NREGS

The District Administration along with the Panchayat authorities initiated the following steps to propagate the scheme and Act among the people. They arranged mike announcements throughout the Panchayat. The Panchayat published notices and distributed brochures. Wall posters and wall writings were arranged in the Panchayat. Trainings were conducted at Panchayat and block level. Rallies were also arranged in the Panchayat to popularize the Act. Discussions were held at NHG, ADS and CDS level and at

Panchayat level. Meetings of Agro clinics (a forum to discuss the issues relevant to agriculture) were convened. Their views were elicited.

Special meetings and Grama Sabhas were convened. House visits by members and ADS functionaries were also arranged. Promoters visited the colonies. Oorukootams were convened to convey the message of NREGA among the tribal people. Door to door campaigns were arranged and cutouts were displayed. The church had also co-operated with the campaign. Announcements were made in the churches.

All key agencies were given training in discharging their responsibilities such as People's Representatives, officials, Kudumbasree members, ADS/CDS functionaries, groups formed for the purpose of vigilance, Monitoring and social Audit.

b) Plan formulation

Grama sabha has the power to make recommendations on the work to be taken up under NREGS. The power to prepare a development plan comprising a shelf of projects, on the basis of the recommendations of the Grama Sabha with the Grama Panchayat finalise the project. The project proposals are based on the developmental requirement of the locality as well as it has a bearing on the possible labour demand. The projects were identified at Panchayat level to meet the estimated labour demand.

The Grama Panchayat there after forwarded the development plan with its priorities to the Programme Office for preliminary scrutiny and approval.

c) Registration for job cards

In the panchayat special efforts were taken to enable the people to apply for registration. Special sittings were held at Anganawadi centres. Meetings were held to help the people. Grama sabhas were also convened to enable people to apply for registration. Forms were made available at door steps to assist those who could not attend the Grama Sabha. Special meetings were convened for SC, ST and Oorukootams. After due verification with respect to residential status, social category, the house holds were given registration and subsequently a job card to each family.

d) Approval of works, Execution and Agencies Involved

It is found that while preparing the development plan, the panchayat kept in mind the priorities visualized in the schedule. The majority of the projects were formulated for water conservation and water harvesting.

The Kudumbasree movements were actively involved in the process of execution of works. Mates play a key role in the implementation of the projects. With the active involvement of the ward member concerned, the mate identified the work suitable for implementation and mate supervised the work. She ensures the provision of worksite facilities such as provision of shelter, drinking water and medicine kit. She deals with emergencies and accidents at the worksite.

e) Payment of wages

Payments are effected within 15 days from the date of execution of the work. Payments are released through Banks. Unskilled wage payment is given @ Rs.125 per day.

There was wide spread complaint against delayed payment. Delayed payment was the result of delay in submitting the Muster Roll by the mates after the completion of 14 days work. Usually this 14 days works was completed within 20 days, naturally 2 Sundays and Holidays of various kinds will occur within these days.

f) Monitoring and Evaluation Method

Vigilance and monitoring committees was set up for monitoring the scheme. For every work sanctioned under the scheme, there is a local VMC. It composed of 9 members of the locality or village where the work was under taken and elected for a period of one year. The VMC was elected for one year by the Grama sabha. The Grama Panchayat apprised the committee of estimates regarding the works, time frame and quality parameters.

g) Transparency and Accountability systems followed under NREGs in the Panchayat

The Panchayat conduct social audits for maintaining public accountability in the implementation of projects, law and policies under NREGS.

It is an ongoing process through which the potential beneficiaries and other stakeholders of an activity or project were involved at every stage, from the planning to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation. This process help in ensuring that the activity or project was designed and implemented in a manner that was most suited to the prevailing local conditions approximately reflected the priorities and preferences of those affected by it, and most effectively served public interest. Social audits can be seen as a means of promoting some basic norms in public matters.

2. ERATTAYAR PANCHAYAT

Erattayar Grama Panchayat is the second panchayat selected from Idukki District for the conduct of the study and it is the average performing panchayat.

Profile of Erattayar Grama Panchayat

Erattayar Grama Panchayat is located in the Kattapana Community Development Block. As per 2001 census the Panchayat has an area of 3237 hectares with 4247 house holds. It had a population of 19097 including 9695 males and 9402 females. There were 876 SC people in the Panchayat which consisted of 436 males and 440 females. The population of ST were 46, of which 21 were males and 25 were females. There were 7844 workers. The number of male workers were 6112 and female workers were 2184. The total number of cultivators were 3218. The number of Agricultural Labourers were 1175. During 2001, there were 11 wards in the Panchayat.

Overall performance of NREGA in the Panchayat

Implementation of NREGA was started in the Panchayat during 2007-08. The estimated population by 2009 was increased to 21006 and the house holds increased to 4670 which included 214 SC and 25 ST from 2001 census.

Registration and Job card issue

During the first two years all the families registered were issued job cards. During 2009-10 there was no SC/ST members registered and obtained job cards. In the Panchayat there is a cumulative of 3909 persons registered for job cards and issued cards to 3886 persons which showed 99% of the registered which included 165 SC persons and 25 ST persons. Year wise details are shown in Table 4.23.

Table: 4.23 Year Wise Details of No. Families Registered & Job Card Issued

THE PERFORMANCE OF NREGS IN PHASE I & PHASE II DISTRICTS IN KERALA

Year	No. of Families Registered				Total No. of Families Issued Job Cards			
	SC	ST	General	Total	SC	ST	General	Total
2007-08	68	14	1918	2000	68	14	1918	2000
2008-09	97	11	970	1078	97	11	970	1078
2009-10	0	0	831	831	0	0	808	808
Cumulative Total	165	25	3719	3909	165	25	3696	3886

Source: JPC. Office

Employment generated in the Panchayat

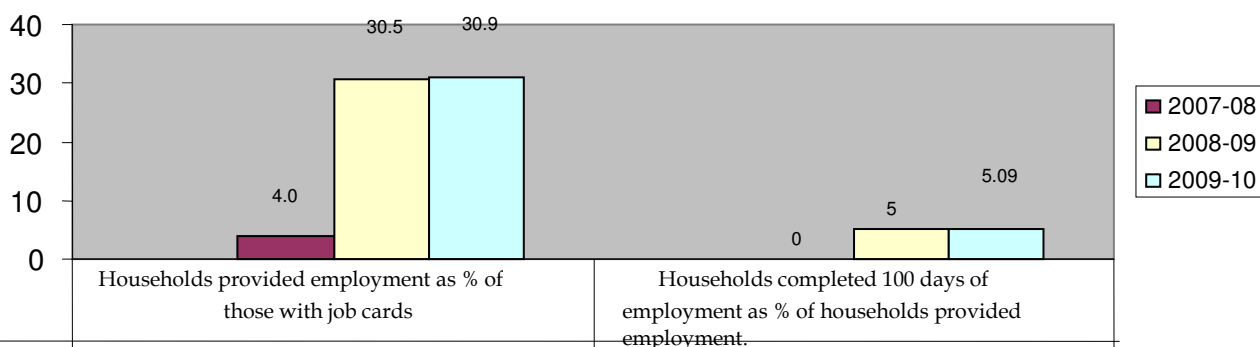
The number of families provided employment showed an increasing trend for the last three years. The families got 100 days of work in the first year was nil and in the subsequent two years it was 47 families and 262 families respectively. Similarly, the person days of employment created was also showed a tremendous increase in all the three years. In the case of women days of employment also showed increase but the percentage of women days was 48%, 67%, and 78% respectively for the last three years. Here it is observed that in NREGS works, men are more or less equally participated in the work whereas in other studied Panchayats more than 80% of the workers are women. Year wise details of employment generated are shown in Table 4.24.

Table: 4.24 Year Wise Details of Employment Generated

Year	Total House Holds provided employment	No. of House Holds completed 100 days of employment	Total No. of House Holds Provided Employment				Person Days Generated				
			SC	ST	General	Total	SC	ST	General	Total	Women
2007-08	79	0	3	0	76	79	16		5709	5709	2718
2008-09	940	47	26	4	910	940	1199	254	33205	34658	23200
2009-10	1498	262	58	6	1434	1498	3393	393	76623	80409	62865

Source: JPC. Office

Chart 4.6: ERATTAYAR PANCHAYAT



Year	Households provided employment as % of those with job cards	Households completed 100 days of employment as % of households provided employment.
2007-08	4.0	0
2008-09	30.5	5
2009-10	30.9	5.09

Utilization of NREGA fund in the Panchayat

The fund sanctioned and utilized revealed an increasing trend for the last three years. The fund utilization rate was at the rate of 68%, 86% and 100% respectively in these years. The percentage of amount utilized for wages are 63%, 86% and 96% respectively for the last three years. The expenditure on material component was less than one percent of the fund allotted. Details are furnished in Table 4.25.

Table: 4.25 Year Wise Details of Financial Performance

Year	O.B as on 1st April of the year	Release during current year		Misc. receipt	Total	Cumulative Expenditure(in lakhs)					Total
		Central	State			On Wages	On Semi-Skilled and Skilled Wages	On Material	Administrative Expenses		
									Recurring	Non Recurring	
2007-08	0.63	10.00	0	0	10.63	7.02	0	0	0.21	0	7.23
2008-09	3.62	53.00	0	0.07	56.69	47.57	1.57	0.55	1.08	0	50.77
2009 -10	0.59	98.00	6.00	0.14	104.73	100.41	1.22	1.47	1.43	0.02	104.55

Source: JPC. Office

Activities Initiated in the Panchayat.

NREGA was implemented in the Panchayat during 2007-08. Flood control and rural connectivity were the two schemes taken up during this period. During 2008-09 also the same type of schemes including flood control, Land development, rural connectivity, water conservation were taken up under the scheme. During 2009-10, 6 schemes covering Drought proofing, flood control, land development, rural connectivity and water conservation etc., were implemented in the Panchayat. It is observed that during these years the Panchayat has not initiated any schemes for SC, ST, IAY included in the Act. The details of works taken up are furnished in Table 4.26

Table: 4.26 Activities initiated in the Panchayat under NREGS

Sl.No.	Name of Project	Completed (Nos.)	Ongoing (Nos.)	Total (Nos.)
1	Rural Connectivity	4	1	5
2	Flood Control and Protection	56	19	75
3	Water conservation and Water harvesting	2	4	6
4	Drought Proofing	8	0	8
5	Micro Irrigation works	0	0	0
6	Provision of Irrigation facility to land owned by SC/ST	4	17	21
7	Renovation of Traditional water bodies	5	1	6
8	Land Development	0	13	13
9	Any other activity approved by MRD	0	0	0
Total		79	55	134

Source: JPC Office

Ward selected for the study

Thulasipara (Ward X)- Erattayar Panchayat

For the detailed analysis of the plan formulation procedure, implementation Method, Monitoring system followed for NREGA in the Panchayat, Thulasipara (Ward X) was selected from the Erattayar Panchayat. There were 560 house holds in the Panchayat. Out of these 300 House Holds involving 735 members were issued job cards. Four types of questionnaires were designed to collect details on the strength and weakness of NREGS implementation in the Panchayat.

Questionnaire - I: Response of People's Representatives and Officials

As per the questionnaire opinion of the people's representatives such as the President, Standing Committee Chairmen and members of the Grama Panchayat and

officials like the Panchayat Secretary, the section clerk concerned, the VEO, the LSGD AE, the Accredited AE, Overseer and accountant under NREGs were collected. This questionnaire was filled in by the officials of the Evaluation Division of State Planning Board. In Erattayar Grama panchayat 9 number of people's representatives and 6 number of officials were interviewed and elicited their views.

On the basis of the interview, the Peoples representatives and officials agreed with and followed the provision of the Act in the following aspect.

- ✚ With regard to project formulation, all the 15 respondents agreed with the provision of the NREGA which stipulates convening meetings of the Grama Sabha and pre-consultation among the NHGs and ADS were made under the guidance of the ward member concerned.
- ✚ Out of the 15 respondents 10 have agreed that there is shortage of engineers/technical peoples in the Panchayat which slow down the implementation of the NREGS.
- ✚ All the 15 respondents agreed that they could manage the implementation of NREGS without contractor.
- ✚ As regards works involving material component in Erattayar Panchayat they have limited role. There is the provision of a purchase committee under NREGS and the committee is functioning under the Chairmanship of the Grama Panchayat President. All of them agreed that materials can be arranged for the work through quotations.
- ✚ All the 15 respondents are aware of 60:40 ratio with respect to labour and material component. 15 of the respondents agreed with the prevailing ratio
- ✚ All the 15 respondents agreed that awareness generation was done to propagate NREGS in the Panchayat. All of them agreed that there were no shortage of funds. 14 of them are fully satisfied with the existing level of awareness generation. But requested for continuous awareness generation among officials, mates, and people's representatives and labourers to make them familiar with the changes made in the process of implementation.
- ✚ All of them agreed that job cards were distributed in the panchyat as per the true spirit of NREGS. They also informed that special attempts were made to ensure SC/ST women/ disabled to get job cards.

- ✚ All of the respondents are fully aware of the fact that after getting job cards, one needs to apply for work separately
- ✚ All of the respondents agreed that there is display of Muster Rolls at the work site.
- ✚ All the respondents agreed that there is wage payment through the Banks. All the respondents agreed with the fact that there is delayed payment. There were also some different views expressed by the officials and non officials stated as follows:-
 - One of the respondents opined that narrowness of the permissible works under the Act deter them to find suitable projects.
 - They agreed that M.R. is displayed publically but list of job card holders are not display in public.

Questionnaire - II: Response of work Site Manager/Mate

As per this questionnaire 15 mates of the Panchayat were interviewed giving priority to mates from the ward selected/ all the mates were females and they were Kudumbashree members. They were trained under NREGS in plan formulation and implementation which started from Panchayat and NHGs and ADS become the lowest unit to mobilize workers

With respect to age, all of them were in the age category of 36-55. Out of the 15 mates interviewed 9 had SSLC , 3 had PDC, 2 were degree holder and only 1 member below SSLC. Their position in the Kudumbasree were 3 ADS members, 3 ADS secretaries 2 ADS Presidents and 2 ADS vice presidents, and 4 CDS members and one is a CDS Chair Person. The number of days they worked in the previous year (2008-09) included 3 mates was between 30-60 days, 3 mates between 61 to 80 days and 9 worked for more than 80 days.

It is stated that there were 24 to 30 workers in 3 sites and 31 to 40 workers in 3 sites and 41-60 workers in 3 sites. Above 61 workers in 6 sites. The assigned works of the mate are 11 and are detailed below.

1. To identify works in consultation with the ward member
2. To ensure that the works get T.S
3. To collect M.R. from the concerned office
4. Inform the workers about the work
5. Arrange the project initiation meeting

6. To arrange the workers in the work site

7. To make available implements

8. To arrange work site facilities

9. To supervise the work

10. Prepare worksite diary and M.R.

11. Submit the Muster Roll after the completion of 15 days of work

Questionnaire III: Response of Labourers

It is designed for NREGS workers. In the ward 15 workers were interviewed of which 6 workers belong to the age group of 30-40 and 8 workers belong to the age group of 41 to 62 and one worker was 69 years old.

It was found that out of the 15 workers, 8 belonged to BPL category and 7 were APL. With regard to land possession, 2 workers had land below 20 cents, 7 workers had land holding of above 1 acre. There were 40 adult members in the 15 house holds. Out of this 31 members got registration under NREGS. Out of the 15 house holds 14 houses were electrified and 14 families are living in their own houses.

Out of the 15 workers interviewed, all of them were not aware of the fact that they had to submit separate application for work and dated receipts. The prevailing practice is that mates received the work application. In terms of working days, during the previous year 6 workers got less than 50 days of work, 1 worker got 60 days of work, 8 workers got above 80 days of work. Among these 7 workers completed 100 days of work.

All of them agreed that, they were provided work site facilities and are satisfied by the approach of the mates and Panchayat member.

Questionnaire -IV: Response of Households

As per this questionnaire designed for the house holds various categories of house holds selected the ward for the study which included.

- (i) Those registered and obtained job cards and work
- (ii) Those that had registered and obtained job cards but not taken work
- (iii) Those not registered. In each category available SC/ST house holds and women headed house holds were included in the survey.

Out of 25 house holds selected, 21 house holds had job cards and worked under NREGS. They opined that Grama Sabhas were convened for plan formulation and all of them attended the Grama Sabhas. They believed that the works done are useful to the community.

House holds registered for job cards but not taken up work stated that they did not demand work because NREGS involved manual works and they did not prefer such work mainly due to the prevailing wage rate and conditions for work.

The procedures followed for the Implementation of NREGA in the Panchayat

a) Awareness creation and job card issue.

The Panchayat initiated wide publicity about NREGS through posters, banners, cinema sliders. With the help of NHG, ADS, CDS, special meetings and grama sabhas were convened to enable people to study more about the scheme. In each ward, special sittings were conducted to receive application for registration. Due to these efforts, people began to submit application for registration and after due verification, the panchayat issuing job cards.

b) Plan formulation

The NHGs discussed the local needs and developmental possibilities and ADS consolidated the ward plan in association with the ward member concerned. After this process, details were submitted to the Grama sabha and there the project priorities were determined. Then the Grama sabha proposals were placed before the Panchayat committee for consolidation at Panchayat level and finally approved. The approved plan, subsequently submitted to the BPO and the BPO along the Block Panchayat proposal, submit the same to the DPC for final approval.

Later the Panchayat started implementation of the approved plan.. From the approved Action Plan, suitable project was identified for the ward and detailed estimate was prepared by the Over seer.

c) Approved works, Execution and A involved

Kudumbashree movements are actively involved in the process of work execution. In Kudumbashree ADS is the main agency, mates involved in the works. ADS play key role in the implementation of projects. Mates identify the work suitable for implementation and supervises the work. Mates also keep work site diary and maintained Muster Rolls. After the completion of the work the technical engineering

wing arranged to check measure the works done under the schemes and payment was made after this measurement.

d) Payment of wages

The Act insisted payment should be made to the workers after 15 days of works. But in the panchayat it was observed that there was inordinate delay in effecting wage payments. Some times it exceeded more than one month. The poor workers could not afford it. The delay in payment discourage them to come forward to work again Delayed payment was the result of delay in submitting the Muster Roll.

e) Monitoring and Evaluation Method

The Grama sabha was entitled to monitor the registration of workers, issue of job card and timely payment of wages. Vigilance and monitoring committee was set up at the local level for the purpose. Field visit, inspection and sample checks were initiated as part of evaluating the NREGA works. Investments made under NREGA were expected to generate employment and purchasing power, economic productivity, promote women's participation in the work force, strengthen the rural infra structure, reduce distress migration and contribute the regeneration of natural resources. Therefore regular evaluation has conducted to get the benefits.

f) Transparency and Accountability systems followed in the Panchayat

Full information about the work done was displayed in the local language at work site and prominent places in the panchayat to ensure the transparency of the scheme.

Chapter 5

MAIN FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Evaluation Study on NREGS is concerned with the performance analysis of NREGS implementation in 1st phase and 2nd phase Districts in Kerala. In the 1st phase, Wayanad and Palakkad and 2nd phase, Kasargod and Idukki Districts were taken up for implementation of NREGS in the State. Two Panchayats and one ward from each District were selected, surveyed and studied. Performance analysis was done by analysing the data on number of families registered and obtained employment, the

The main findings of the study are the following

- ❖ NREGS was introduced in Palakkad and Wayanad Districts in the 1st phase during Feb 2006 and in Idukki and Kasargod Districts in the 2nd phase during April 2007.
- ❖ The Scheme was implemented through the three tier local bodies which are well organized in the back ground of decentralized planning process.
- ❖ Projects are formulated in the Grama Sabha, and this is generally recognised to be a positive process.
- ❖ Both the 1st phase districts of Wayanad and Palakkad showed high rates of registration for job cards. However, a smaller proportion of families actually worked in the scheme, largely because not all those who took job cards found the scheme to be appealing in practice, given the nature of the heavy manual work involved. In Wayanad the average number of days worked appears to have peaked in 2007-08, while in Palakkad it has kept increasing.

In the 2nd phase districts, the rates of job card application and distribution are lower, though they have been increasing over time. In both districts the average number of days worked has been increasing and a growing number of households has received 100 days of work, though this still constitutes a small minority.

- ❖ Women workers have dominated in the number of days of employment provided. The proportion of days work given to women has achieved 81% in Wayanad, 92% in Palakkad, 80% in Idukki, and 88% in Kasaragod during 2009-10. This is significantly related to the positive role played by the involvement of Kudumbashree and the Self Help Groups. All the mates are women. The greater involvement of women may also be related to the fact that in most other work there are large gender wage gaps whereas NREGA promises equal wages to men and women.
- ❖ In Wayanad, which is an ST concentrated district, the percentage of working days of ST has been broadly consistent with their share of population. However, in Kasaragod there was a significant gap between the share of STs in the population and their job card registration. It is observed that these ST workers need wages in the same day. As per the scheme payment are usually made after two weeks.

- ❖ The share of SC households and workdays of SCs has generally been lower than their share of population. It may be that this is because such workers can access higher daily wages in other activities, although this was not verified. A general problem is that the poorest workers often require daily payment of wages, which leads them to other activities even at lower wage rates.
- ❖ Average number of days of work to households ranges from 30 to 45 days, which is well below the proposed 100 days. However, in general this has been increasing over time (except in Wayanad, where it peaked in 2007-08).
- ❖ NREGA funds were utilized 50% by Grama Panchayat, 30% by Block Panchayat and 20% by Zilla Panchayat. Fund utilisation has generally been good, although there were some complaints of late delivery of funds in some Panchayats. In the "least performing" Panchayat of Wayanad, it was claimed that funds for NREGS have been repeatedly requested but not received, which is the cause of poor implementation. The average fund utilization was 80% in the 1st phase districts, while in the 2nd phase districts the utilization was 74%. 1st phase Districts utilised 75% of the expenditure as wages and in 2nd phase Districts wages constitute 70%.
- ❖ Most of the works in all districts are related to land development and rural connectivity. Certain Panchayats focused on micro irrigation, renovation of traditional water bodies and flood control. Majority of works that were undertaken have been completed, although a lot of variation was observed across panchayats on this matter.
- ❖ There appears to have been very little or least attention given to the land development of SC/ST and IAY beneficiaries in Wayanad District whereas in Palakkad (an SC dominated district) some attention was given to such schemes. The 2nd phase districts have less of such land, but even so there was no attention to work on such land.
- ❖ A major concern relates to delays in payments, which have been observed in all Panchayats studied here.
- ❖ Work measurement has not been done in time in certain areas due to inadequate technical staff.
- ❖ The scheme helps to develop and renovate the natural resources.
- ❖ The absence of Contractors is a unique and positive feature of the scheme.
- ❖ The performance of mates was generally seen to be good. However there were some complaints expressed by workers in certain areas, including bias of mates

- in giving more works to relatives and friends; malpractices in keeping the work site diary and attendance; some mates collect Rs.10/- from their labourers.
- ❖ There is an inadequate office staffs to do the routine work of NREGS. In addition, it was frequently felt that the single overseer and single accountant are not able to finish their work in the required time. In some Panchayats, the overseer and the accountant change frequently. This also affects timely completion of the work. In some Panchayats payments are made without a measurement book.
 - ❖ Some Panchayat representatives and officials are not too interested in NREGS work because there they do not perceive any wider social benefit - they generally see it as a welfare scheme benefiting just the workers.
 - ❖ Majority of the people representatives and officials did not agree with the stipulated labour material ratio of 60:40. According to them it prevents useful works.
 - ❖ One time intervention in agriculture sector limits the scope of the scheme.
 - ❖ In several cases it was found that money was taken from workers for taking photographs for the job cards.
 - ❖ Some planned works are changed because of difficulties in execution. The implements provided are sometimes not enough to do the work.
 - ❖ There is often a time lag in starting work due to a lag in identifying the work. All registered workers are not interested in taking up the work once it is provided, because of different prior expectations about the work and resistance of some to manual work.
 - ❖ The Programme is boosting the purchasing power of the rural poor and it led to a more stable income for the section of rural population who are participating in it. It thereby helps reduction in poverty.
 - ❖ Financial inclusion is a major bonus of the scheme - payments are made through bank accounts, so very poor people learn to open bank accounts and do transactions, use ATM cards and save money.
 - ❖ The transparency and accountability features of the Programme discourage corruption both at political and administrative level
 - ❖ There is no focus on guaranteeing a minimum quality of assets that are sought to be created through the Programme. Village roads that are built by unskilled workers under the scheme are often washed away during rainy season.

- ❖ NREGS would do well to encourage saving and investing among the households and tie it with education - related and health care benefits.
- ❖ Panchayats have not taken any interest in the disbursement of unemployment allowance. There were no cases found of payment of unemployment allowance, nor had workers demanded it.
- ❖ Low level of awareness and absence of work site facilities especially toilets and crèches in the sites, has been observed.
- ❖ While social audit enhances the quality of performance, minimizes corruption and eliminates contractors and middlemen, it did not emerge clearly from the survey how effective the social audits had been in practice.
- ❖ Lack of daily payment of wages is a major deterrent to those who live on daily earnings. SC and ST Labourers are unwilling to work in NREGS because they want to get wages daily.
- ❖ During peak harvest season, districts like Wayanad and Palakkad face labour problems, as the labourers prefer to go for NREGS, where the wages are higher than in agriculture.
- ❖ NREGS prevents distress migration, is breaking down social hierarchies and generally has proved to be a boom to the rural poor
- ❖ Job card holders list are displayed in the public places and muster rolls are kept in work site. However, the records and registers relating to workers are not always maintained in a timely and proper manner.
- ❖ The material component of 60:40 ratios is not followed in all the Panchayats because it prevents useful work.

Suggestions and Recommendations

- ✚ NREGA employment of 100 days to one family in a year should be modified to 100 days of work for each worker in a year, to enable them to make their livelihood in a financial year.
- ✚ It is important to develop a labour strategy of seasonal work so as to make available workers both for NREGS and agricultural activities.
- ✚ In order to enhance the working days, most of the activities seen in the Panchayat can be integrated with NREGA activities with additional funding from the concerned area of development or by introducing watershed Programme covering almost all development sectors.
- ✚ There is a strong case for expanding the range of permissible works over time.

- ✚ In order to retain the workers in the scheme enhancement in wages is needed by considering the local situation. In additional daily payment may be considered.
- ✚ Delay in payment can be avoided by providing additional staff to the NREGA cell with specific purpose.
- ✚ Work measurement should be done in the very same day of completion of work by giving power of authentication to the Assistant Executive Engineer of the Block Panchayat.
- ✚ Dedicated and fully trained full time professionals may be posted for the effective implementation of the scheme.
- ✚ Qualified and experienced persons may be posted under NREGA for maintaining the records and details of the scheme properly.
- ✚ To maintain transparency, accountability and quality of performance of the scheme, social audits need to be carried out in time with care and seriousness.
- ✚ Payment of unemployment allowance is a requirement under the Act, but it is generally being avoided by merging the demand for work and the provision of work. Workers need to be made aware of this provision and local authorities need to fulfil their responsibility to provide work in time or pay the unemployment allowance.
- ✚ Training should be given to all the non-officials and officials of the Panchayat for better implementation of the scheme. Such training should be carried out as continuously.
- ✚ Efforts should be made to introduce more flexibility in the labour to material ratio, so as to ensure more useful work.
- ✚ Efforts should be made for asset creation in the Panchayat through the scheme.
- ✚ Proper Monitoring and Evaluation should be needed to prevent biased distribution of work to certain workers.
- ✚ With the participation of officials of Planning Department arrange capacity building Programmes in Grama Sabha for project preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of NREGS.

Conclusion

NREGA is an unprecedented Programme envisaged to provide guaranteed employment to rural households who are willing to do unskilled manual work. The

impact of the scheme is already quite encouraging in terms of improved wages, income, living standards, infrastructure creation and so on. It has created a confidence in the minds of the poor and provided a more positive livelihood environment to deprived and dependent people especially women. In the process of implementation, the scheme faces certain problems and short comings which have been noted here. However, despite these relatively minor shortcomings, the scheme is unique in its objectives and proposed manner of implementation, and dominates all other centrally sponsored schemes with its merits.

Though the state is facing a serious problem of educated unemployment, the unemployment of the rural poor and deprived sections may be even more serious in its implications for survival. The studies conducted in the four districts reveal that the scheme has influenced greatly the livelihood of the rural mass and it is an encouragement and support to them. All the shortcomings observed from the analysis of performance of NREGS can be rectified by linking the Programme with local body projects and dovetailing of NREGS funds. In order to retain the workers in the scheme, considering the local situation an enhancement in wage rate is highly required and it will enable to attract more workers in to this area. Since Panchayats are the basic unit for all development activities, adequate staff support to NREGS with systematic arrangement for maintaining transparency and accountability of the scheme will ensure the objectives and sustainability of livelihood of the scheme in future.

APPENDICES

Appendix. 1.1

Year Wise Details of No. of Families Registered & Job Card Issued

Year	No. of Families Registered				Total No. of Families Issued Job Cards			
	SC	ST	General	Total	SC	ST	General	Total
2006-07	18958	25374	129424	173756	18316	18316	111680	148312
2007-08	71054	61715	368548	501317	70704	60749	347527	478980
2008-09	298596	85875	1574116	1958587	280915	82703	1534095	1897713
2009-10	358749	93796	2205318	2657863	349864	91438	2158151	2599453

Appendix 1.2

Year Wise Details of Employment Generated(House Holds & Labour Days)

Year	Total House Holds provided employment	No. of House Holds completed 100 days of employment	Total No of Families Provided Employment					Person Days Generated (In Lakhs)				
			SC	ST	General	Total	Women	SC	ST	General	Total	Women
2006-07	99107	537	19212	12564	67331	99107	81198	4.12	2.55	13.83	20.50	13.46
2007-08	182029	8518	43688	14562	123779	182029	145623	10.29	9.89	25.20	45.38	44.20
2008-09	692015	14344	176049	45396	470570	692015	567452	29.93	14.23	109.57	153.73	130.70
2009-10	955976	43596	210315	76478	669183	955976	812579	56.97	18.11	264.63	339.71	299.61
Total	1929127	66995	449264	149000	1330863	1929127	1606852	101.31	44.78	413.23	559.32	487.97

Source: Nrega.nic

Appendix 1.3

Year Wise Details of Financial Performance

Year	O.B as on 1st April of the year	Release during current year		Misc. receipt	Total	Cumulative Expenditure(Rs.in Lakhs)					Total
		Central	State			On Wages	On Semi-Skilled and Skilled Wages	On Material	Administrative Expenses		
									Recurring	Non Recurring	
2006-07	1162.05	3181.51	476.4	17.22	4837.18	2474.64	42.6	96.43	176.07		2789.74
2007-08	2661.33	6810.55	329.86	172.21	9973.95	7139.51	174.51	696.36	326.45		8336.83
2008-09	1557.04	20387.32	2303.92	5523.48	29771.76	18459.6	463.36	1737.6	1640.18	152.91	22453.64
2009 -10	7086.29	47026.98	4033.33	972.85	59119.45	40954.19	539.51	3228.3	2298.41	130.92	47151.33

Source: Nrega.nic

Appendix.1.4

Year wise Details of Work Status

	2007-08			2008-09			2009-10		
	Completed(Nos.)	Ongoing / Suspend ed(Nos.)	Total (Nos.)	Completed(Nos.)	Ongoing/ Suspende d(Nos.)	Total (Nos.)	Comple t (Nos.)	Ongoing/ Suspende d (Nos.)	Total (Nos.)
Rural Connectivity	971	195	1166	1355	265	1620	2618	3769	6387
Flood Control and Protection	4660	842	5502	20609	2418	23027	28033	22454	50487
Water Conservation and Water Harvesting	2847	343	3190	4810	527	5337	6778	7989	14767
Drought Proofing	200	123	323	1123	99	1222	3040	2531	5571
Minor Irrigation Works	1697	632	2329	6625	826	7451	9356	8637	17993
Provision of Irrigation facility to Land Owned by SC/ST/IAY/LR	112	36	148	529	60	589	3008	1278	4286
Renovation of Traditional Water bodies	1557	912	2469	7856	1674	9530	12696	12281	24977
Land Development	1941	197	2138	5222	507	5729	10585	12870	23455
Any Other activity Approved by MRD	0	0	0	0	0	0	709	476	1185
Total	13985	3280	17265	20545	37810	58355	96165	154520	250685

Source: Nrega.nic

THE PERFORMANCE OF NREGS IN PHASE I & PHASE II DISTRICTS IN KERALA
Appendix. 1.5

EVALUATION STUDY ON NREGA - LIST OF IDENTIFIED WARD LEVEL SAMPLES

DISTRICT	IDUKKI		PALAKKAD		WAYANAD		KASARGOD	
PANCHAYAT	ERATTA YAR	KANJIK UZHI	AKATHE THARA	ALANAL LOOR	EDAVAK A	KANIYAM PETTA	MADIKKAI	CHENGAL A
WARD	THULASI PPARA (X)	VATTON PARA (XIII)	(XII)	KUNNA NKOD (XIII)	THONICH AL (XIII)	KOZHINC HANGAD (V)	(VI)	VEEKAYPA RA (XV)
<u>Questionnaire I</u>								
No of Panchayat Representatives and Local officials	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
<u>Questionnaire II</u>								
No of Mates	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
<u>Questionnaire III-Labourer</u>								
Male	5	5	5	5	8	5	9	5
Female	5	5	5	5	9	5	9	5
Female worker with small children	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Elderly worker	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Worker with disability	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total	15	15	15	15	22	15	23	15
<u>Questionnaire IV-House hold</u>								
House hold with job card								
SC	4	6	5	1	6	3	6	4
ST	4	6	5	1	6	3	6	4
Others	4	6	5	1	6	3	6	4
House hold with migrant worker	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Female headed house hold	2	2	2	1	2	1	2	1
House hold with job card and no work								
SC	1	2	2	1	2	1	2	1
ST	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Others	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
House hold with migrant worker	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Female headed house hold	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
House hold without job card								
SC	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1

THE PERFORMANCE OF NREGS IN PHASE I & PHASE II DISTRICTS IN KERALA

ST	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Others	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
House hold with migrant worker	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Female headed house hold	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total	25	33	30	15	32	21	32	24
Grand Total	70	78	75	60	84	66	85	69