

10 Convergence with Other Programmes

10.1 Prescribed Procedures

MoRD has issued detailed guidelines for convergence between MGNREGA and various other programmes; e.g.

- **Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP)** - This was identified as an important scheme for convergence with MGNREGA, as more than 50 *per cent* of MGNREGA works relate to soil and water conservation. Almost all watershed development activities are permitted under MGNREGA. Convergence is subject to the cost of material component of projects (including skilled/semi-skilled wages) of not more than 40 *per cent*, non-engagement of contractors, and use of manual labour and not machines (as far as practicable).
- **Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)** – Convergence under MGNREGA would involve coverage of habitations not covered under PMGSY thresholds, multiple connectivity beyond the PMGSY core network, construction/improvement of village internal roads or lanes, planting fruit and other trees on PMGSY roads etc.
- **Schemes of Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR)** – These involve seven categories of MoWR works – Command Area Development & Water Management; Repair, Renovation and Restoration of Water Bodies; Dug well recharge Scheme; Ground water management and regulation scheme; Flood control and river management scheme; Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme; and Farmer’s Participation Action Research Programme. The convergence would involve gap filling and value addition through MGNREGA, dovetailing inputs into a common scheme; area approach; and technical support for MGNREGA works.
- **Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) of ICAR³²** – Convergence with various programmes of MoA viz., National Food Security Mission, Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, National Horticulture Mission, etc., was encouraged, subject to MGNREGA parameters (viz., material cost limit of 40 *per cent*, non-engagement of contractors, and use of manual labour). Further, appropriate technological backstopping to MGNREGA would be provided by the KVKs of ICAR at the ground level.
- **Bharat Nirman Rajiv Gandhi Sewa Kendra (BNRGSK)** – This involves construction of BNRGSK buildings at GP and Block levels to accommodate MGNREGA offices, subject to wage-material ratio of 60:40, transparent procurement process and without use of machinery and contractors. For BRGF³³

³² ICAR: Indian Council for Agricultural Research

³³ Backward Regions Grant Fund, a programme funded by GoI for supplementing and converging existing developmental inflows for 250 identified districts

districts, material component would be from BRGF while for other districts, MGNREGA would be the main source of funding.

10.2 Audit Findings

10.2.1 Horticulture Department

From February 2010³⁴, the State Government initiated convergence with the Horticulture Department. The horticulture component of MGNREGA would be implemented only through Horticulture Department. This was closed with effect from 30 April 2012.

Audit scrutiny in Anantapur district revealed that

- During the year 2010-11, PD DWMA sought for 1.49 crore seedlings of various species. However, 84.22 lakh seedlings were raised by DFO and out of which only 8.50 lakh seedlings (10 *per cent*) were lifted by DWMA. This resulted in utilisation of seedlings to the extent of only 10 *per cent* of the total seedlings raised.
- Similarly during 2011-12, of 1.40 crore seedlings of teak and red sanders sought for by PD DWMA, DFOs (SF and Territorial) raised 11.90 lakh seedlings and of which only one lakh seedlings (8.43 *per cent*) were lifted (August 2012) by DWMA. Resultantly, only 580.10 acres (5 *per cent*) out of the proposed 11574.39 acres of land could be covered by DWMA.

Government stated (February 2013) that the seedlings could not be utilised due to scanty rainfall. The reply is not acceptable in view of the fact that the DWMA could not utilise the seedlings despite their availability indicating incorrect/unrealistic assessment of requirement.

10.2.2 Rural Connectivity Projects (RCPs) and BNRGSK Works

State Government initiated MGNREGA works under ‘Rural Connectivity Projects’ from July 2009, covering roads under two components – Zilla Praja Parishad (ZPP) and Mandal Praja Parishad (MPP). ZPP road works involved roads upto WBM Grade-II Surfaces, including Cross Drainage Works, to be executed with PMGSY specifications; MPP works would involve internal roads upto WBM Grade-II. The implementing agencies would be the Panchayat Raj Engineering Department (PRED) and the Tribal Welfare Engineering Department (only in tribal areas). Similarly, construction of GP Buildings and Mandal Buildings (MGNREGA/Mandal Samakhya) under BNRGSK has been entrusted to PRED as the implementing agency.

The entrustment and execution of RCP and BNRGSK works by the State Government, with PRED as the Implementing Agency, was not in conformity with the requirements of MGNREGA, and the Convergence Guidelines issued by MoRD, for the reasons stated below.

³⁴ GO No.51 dated 1 February 2010

- Instead of funding only the unskilled wage component from MGNREGA (with the material payment from other sources), the entire cost of such works was funded from MGNREGA. Most of these projects involved very high material costs percentages, exceeding 90 *per cent* in many cases, which went against the letter and spirit of the Act.

For example, as seen from AP MGNREGS website (R 9.1), a total expenditure of ₹1899.62 crore was incurred by the PR Department on MGNREGA to end of June 2012, of which, wage component was for ₹171.68 crore and material component valuing ₹1727.94 crore i.e., 91 *per cent* of the total expenditure.

State Government replied (August 2012) that necessary guidelines were issued to ensure the material ratio limit within 40 *per cent* at GP level.

- While works were executed by PRED as the implementing agency, a concept of ‘Work Executing Member’ (WEM), who would be nominated by the Gram Panchayat was evolved. MoUs were signed by PRED with the WEMs. A perusal of the contents of the MoU indicate that these were essentially in the nature of conventional works contracts, with the WEM being responsible for engaging skilled labour, maintaining MRs, records and bills, supervision and monitoring of work, and ensuring work being carried out in accordance with specifications and approved rates and quantities in the sanctioned estimate. The MoUs also involved withholding of Further Security Deposit (FSD) on the lines of normal work contracts. Further, payments for material supplies were made not to the suppliers’ account, but to the WEM’s account on the basis of MB measurements (and not on the basis of purchase invoices).

The above clearly demonstrates the contractual nature of the engagement of WEMs by PRED. However, subsequent to GoI’s order of May 2012 enforcing wage-material ratio of 60:40 at the GP level, the State Government has, in June 2012, dispensed with the system of engaging WEMs for Rural Connectivity Project (RCP) works with immediate effect.

State Government replied (August 2012) that in place of WEMs, now the GPs were made responsible for maintaining muster rolls at work site, procurement of material, skilled and semi-skilled labour, supervising and monitoring the works.