

3 Structural Mechanisms and Capacity Building Measures

3.1 Prescribed Procedures

- Every State Government is required to formulate a State Employment Guarantee Scheme (EGS), conforming to the legally non-negotiable parameters laid down in the Act. The State Government is also required to constitute a State Employment Guarantee Council (SEGC) for regular monitoring and reviewing implementation at the State level, and preparing an Annual Report to be laid before the State Legislature.
- State Government has to designate the State Rural Employment Guarantee Commissioner, District Programme Co-ordinators (DPCs) at the District level, and Programme Officers (POs) at the Block level. The Act also makes it mandatory for the State Government to make available to the DPC and PO, necessary staff and technical support for the effective implementation of the Scheme.
- The Operational Guidelines issued by MoRD also stipulate that every State Government will undertake an intensive Information Education and Communication (IEC) exercise to publicise the key provisions of the Act and procedures to be followed, since effective communication of such information is essential for people to know their rights under the Act. Further, all key agencies are needed to be trained in discharging their responsibilities under the Act.

The audit findings in respect of structural mechanisms and capacity building measures are summarised below:

3.2 Formulation of Scheme, Rules and other structural mechanisms

- State Government formulated the AP Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (APREGS) in January 2006. In May 2006, State Government set up the State Employment Guarantee Council (SEGC) and also designated the Commissioner, Rural Development as the State Employment Guarantee Commissioner (Commissioner), assisted by the Director, Employment Guarantee Scheme (Director, EGS). The roles and responsibilities of different functionaries at each level were also spelt out.
- The SEGC, headed by the Chief Minister and consisting of 32 members (17 official and 15 non-official members), was expected to advice State Government on all matters concerning the Scheme, determining the preferred works, reviewing the monitoring and redressal mechanism, promoting the widest possible dissemination of information about the Act and monitoring its implementation. However, the SEGC has been practically non-functional. Against the stipulated

frequency of meetings i.e., at least once every two months¹¹, only eight meetings were held from August 2006 to August 2012. State Government did not clarify or indicate whether any Annual Reports were prepared by SEGC and tabled in the State Legislature¹². In response (August 2012), State Government stated that it had been decided that the SEGC meetings would be held regularly henceforth.

3.3 AP MGNREGS MIS

State Government has developed AP MGNREGS MIS IT System, based on a customised application software - RAGAS¹³ - in partnership with Tata Consultancy Services (TCS). This is not merely an MIS system but also an EGS transaction processing system, thus avoiding post facto/post-payment of EGS transactions. Some of the main functional modules of the MIS are described below:

Module	Scope/Coverage
Wage-seeker	Registration of households by the GP and issue of job cards by the Mandal Computer Centre (MCC); addition/deletion of members
Work Estimates	Registration of works; preparation of detailed designs and estimates; technical and administrative approvals
Work Execution and Payment	Issue of work commencement letters; data entry of Muster Roll and Work Progress Data at the MCC; issue of wage pay orders and pay slips; generation of material supply and payment orders
Material Management	Enrolling of material suppliers and skilled wage seekers
Fund and Accounts	Payments for wages and material supplies
Administration	System/application administration
Reporting and Analysis	A variety of reports are generated from the MIS on all aspects of implementation of MGNREGA. In addition, a set of analytical tools for household wage earning analysis, gender/caste/SHG and disabled work and wage analysis, work category/execution agency/jurisdiction analysis, and expenditure analysis are also available.

State Government has also introduced, in a phased manner, an Electronic Muster and Measurement System (eMMS) in order to address distortions like muster fudging, delays in payments, benami wage-seekers, fake measurements and work duplication.

The main features of eMMS, which is synchronised/integrated with the main MIS, are summarised hereafter:

- All implementing functionaries¹⁴ have been provided with GPS-enabled mobile phones under 'Own Your Mobile' scheme, and have also been provided with CUG¹⁵ SIM cards with GPRS-Internet connectivity.

¹¹ As stipulated in the GO of 9 May 2006, constituting the SEGC

¹² Only one Annual Report (for 2006-07) on the implementation of MGNREGA in the State was available on the State MGNREGA website. There was no indication in the Annual Report as to the involvement of the SEGC, if any, in its preparation

¹³ RAGAS - Rashtra Grameena Abhivruddi Samacharam

¹⁴ Except Field Assistants, who have been given non-GPS enabled mobile phones

¹⁵ CUG: Closed User Group

- Mobile-based applications have been developed for:
 - ❖ **e-Muster** – Taking of group-wise, work-wise attendance at the worksite by the FA on his/her mobile phone, and immediate uploading of MRs;
 - ❖ **e-Measurement** – Taking of group-wise work measurements at the worksite by the TA on his/her mobile phone, and immediate uploading of measurements (including date and time of measurement, GPS co-ordinates and photograph of work), and immediate uploading of measurements;
 - ❖ **e-Muster Verification** – Verification of muster data (generated randomly on a day to day basis) by designated Muster Verification Officers on their mobile phones by taking attendance group-wise at the works site, and immediate uploading of verification data; and
 - ❖ **e-Check Measurement** – Verification of works measurement (allotted automatically on a day to day basis) by designated Check Measurement Officers on their mobile phones from the worksite, and immediate uploading (as well as generation of exception report for discrepancies between Measurement and Check Measurement Reports).
- A set of valid reasons for non-uploading of data – to be submitted by the APO/MPDO have been specified.

In addition, a fingerprint-based bio-metric and GPS based eMMS has been implemented in Nizamabad district, whereby muster attendance data is captured through fingerprint enabled POS devices, instead of mobile phone.

3.4 Technical Resource Support System

The Technical Resource Support System for planning of works involves a combination of both manual and automated systems. The MIS software (RAGAS) has a separate, comprehensive module for work estimation, which covers about 170 different types of works executed under MGNREGA. Each work, depending on its nature and type, is broken down into a set of tasks. All details for a particular work are estimated task-wise, and the total estimated effort (viz., persondays) and material requirements for that work are captured in the MIS.

As regards the associated manual processes, the technical inputs required for preparation of detailed estimates are collected by the Technical Assistants in input data sheets, and estimates are prepared using the MIS software (RAGAS) based on these inputs. The Engineering Consultant scrutinises these estimates and accords technical approvals upto ₹2 lakh; for higher amounts, technical approvals are accorded by the Additional Project Director at the District level.

3.5 Information Education and Communication (IEC) and Training

While no formal plan for IEC about MGNREGA was made available to Audit, the State Government had developed nine films on a variety of topics (enrolment for job

cards, basic rights of beneficiaries, selection of works, awareness of measurements, mates, etc.) as well as two films for field assistants and technical assistants. In addition, the State Government also deployed Community Resource Persons towards creating awareness about the scheme.

As regards training, the State Government had, in association with the AMR Andhra Pradesh Academy of Rural Development (APARD), also developed several training modules/material in the form of brochures, booklets, pamphlets, etc., on capacity building of different levels of functionaries at Mandal and GP level; in particular, the technical trainees guide covered the basics for collection of inputs and measurements of tasks for common works executed by GPs under MGNREGA.

Activities undertaken by the State Government for IEC about MGNREGA, development of training modules/material and conduct of training were largely adequate.

3.6 Beneficiary Survey Findings – Awareness about MGNREGA

Summary of findings from the beneficiary survey relating to awareness about the provisions of the scheme is as follows:

Criteria	Level of awareness
Entitlement to at least 100 days per household per annum	61 per cent indicated their entitlement as 100 days or more ¹⁶ ; 5 per cent indicated their entitlement as 80-99 days; and 34 per cent indicated other figures.
Minimum wage rate	30 per cent indicated the minimum wage rate as ₹120 or higher; 35 per cent indicated the wage rate as ₹100 to ₹119, and 35 per cent indicated other rates. 87 per cent indicated that payment was on piece rate, 11 per cent indicated payment on daily rate, and 2 per cent did not respond. 76 per cent beneficiaries did not know how much to dig in soft soil in order to earn the minimum wage rate.
Time for payment of wages	68 per cent indicated that they were entitled to payment of wages within 15 days; 10 per cent indicated the timeframe as 16 to 30 days; and 22 per cent indicated other timeframes.
Awareness of the minimum amount of work for earning minimum wage rate	53 per cent indicated that they were aware of the minimum amount of work for earning the minimum wage rate, while 47 per cent were not aware.

While it would be easy to conclude that beneficiaries were not fully aware of their entitlements, it is also possible that they were aware of ground realities. For example, payment on piece rate may result in daily minimum wage rate not being paid (due to shortfall in group outturn), while the actual experience in delayed payment of wages may also have influenced the above beneficiary responses.

State Government replied (August 2012) that training modules for each functionary had been formulated to improve awareness.

¹⁶ State Government allows households belonging to SC/ST/OBC to get more than 100 days of work; this is also extended to Mandals which are declared as drought-hit areas