

Chapter - 6
**Structural Mechanism and
Capacity Building**

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Provision of adequate human resources at all levels of programme implementation holds the key to the success of MGNREGS. Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) are essential for effective delivery of MGNREGS, especially at the *Gram Panchayat* level. These local governing bodies need adequate staff to manage and execute the programme's various activities. Sufficient staffing enables these grassroots democratic institutions to function to the best of their abilities, ensuring that programme activities are carried out smoothly and that the desired benefits reach the rural population. If PRIs are well staffed, they can better meet local needs, provide timely work, and contribute to the overall success of MGNREGS.

6.1 Improper functioning of State Employment Guarantee Council

Section 12 of MGNREGA, stipulates the constitution of State Employment Guarantee Council (SEGC) at State level. SEGC was to advise the State Government in all matters concerning the scheme and its implementation, review the monitoring and grievance redressal. The SEGC was also responsible to prepare an Annual Report on the implementation of the MGNREGS in the State to be presented to the State Legislature. Further, SEGC was required to meet quarterly to review the physical and financial progress of the scheme.

In Uttarakhand, the SEGC was constituted in August 2007 under the chairmanship of the Minister of Rural Development, with 17 official members and 14 non-official members. Furthermore, as per paragraph 18 (1) of the Uttarakhand MGNREGS, 2006, guidelines the tenure of non-official members of the SEGC shall be one year.

Audit noticed that the SEGC did not exist between 29 January 2019 and 22 January 2020 (approximately one year) and between 23 January 2021 and 17 January 2023 (approximately two years) during 2019-24 due to expiry of tenure of nominated non-official members. Further, SEGC was not operational from 17 January 2024 due to not appointing of non-official members. Resultantly, SEGC met only four times during 2019-24 against required 20 quarterly meetings. The annual Report on the implementation of the MGNREGS in the State was not prepared by the SEGC to present to State Legislature in any of the year during 2019-24. Thus, the effective implementation of the scheme at apex level itself was compromised.

In Exit Conference (January 2025), Secretary, RDD assured that the SEGC meetings will be held as per the prescribed norms, which was not done earlier due to covid and other compelling reasons.

6.2 Inadequate Human Resource Management

Section 18 of the MGNREGA provides that the State Government is mandated to make available to the District Programme Coordinator (DPC) and Programme Officer (PO) the necessary staff and technical support as may be necessary for the effective implementation of the scheme. Supporting staff could also be hired, on a contractual basis to provide professional services at the State level. The recruitment policy for the functionaries will be decided by the State Government.

Uttarakhand Government, through Government Order No. 118/XI/08/56(38)2005-TC dated 1st July 2009, created temporary and flexible positions at the state, district, block, and *Gram Panchayat* (GP) levels for the implementation of MGNREGS in the state.

Scrutiny of records revealed that out of the 2,195 sanctioned posts across various categories at the state, district, block, and GPs levels, only 1,242 employees were deployed. The availability of staff against the sanctioned posts are given in **Table-6.1** below:

Table-6.1: Shortage of staff at Different Level

Levels	No. of Units	Name of post	Sanctioned post	Person in position	(+) Excess/(-) Shortfall (in percentage)
State		Executive Director	1	1	-
		Programme Coordinator	1	1	-
		Executive Engineer	1	0	(-) 1 (100)
		Statistical/Research Officer	1	0	(-) 1 (100)
		Assistant Engineer	2	0	(-) 2 (100)
		Junior Engineer	2	0	(-) 2 (100)
		Senior Accountant	1	1	-
		Computer Programmer	1	1	-
		Computer Assistant	1	2	(+) 1 (100)
		Junior Assistant	1	0	(-) 1 (100)
		Attendant	2	3	+1 (50)
District	13	District Programme Coordinator	District Magistrate ex officio		
		Additional District Programme Coordinator	Chief Development Officer ex officio		
		Deputy District Programme Coordinator	District Development Officer ex officio		
		Accountant	Accountant available at district level		
		Computer Programmer	13	8	(-) 5 (38)
		Computer Assistant	13	9	(-) 4 (31)
Block	95	Programme Coordinator	Block Development officer discharge this function.		
		Block Engineer	Assistant Engineer of RES/Minor Irrigation discharge this function		
		Deputy Programme Officer	95	78	(-) 17 (18)
		Assistant Accountant	Accountant of Block discharge this function		
		Computer Assistant	95	87	(-) 8 (8)
GPs	7799	Secretary Gram Panchayat	Village Development Officer discharge this function		
		Junior Engineer	552	309	(-) 243 (44)
		<i>Gram Rojgar Sahayak</i>	1,413	742	(-) 671 (47)
Total			2,195	1242	

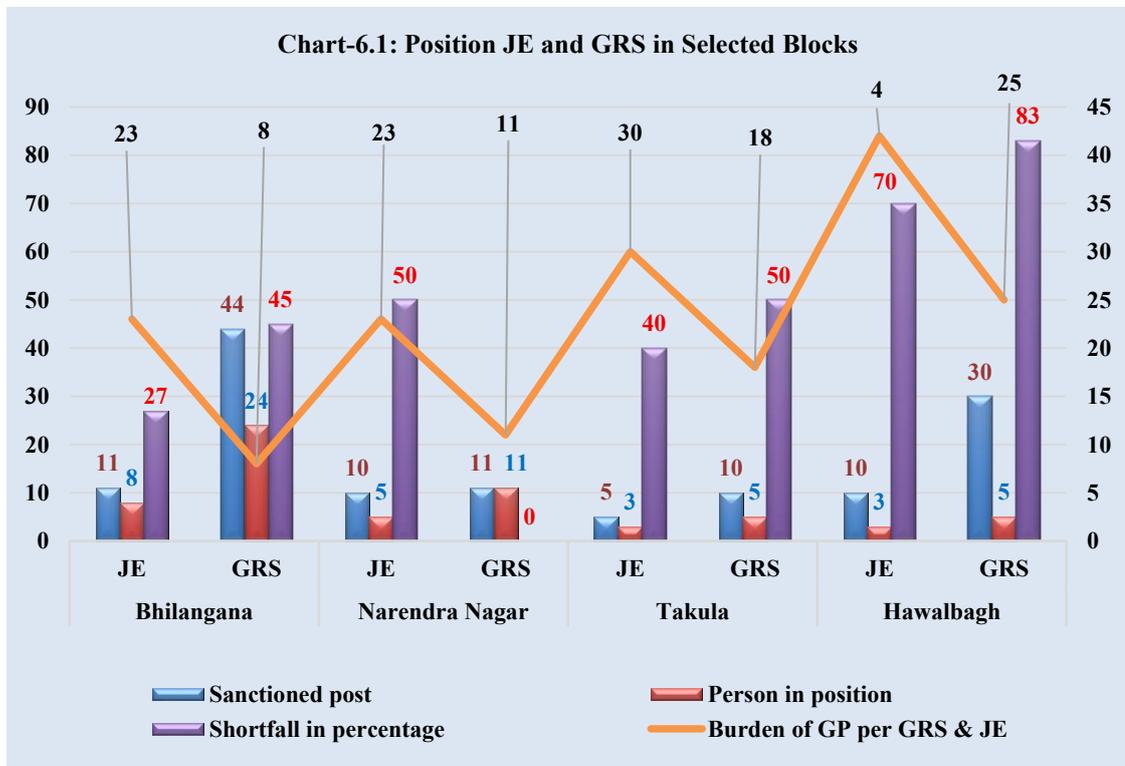
The above table reveals significant staff shortages in key positions at state, district, block and GP levels.

State is required to appoint one *Gram Rozgar Sahayak* (GRS) for every four GPs in hilly regions and for every six GPs in plain areas. GRS is responsible for overseeing the process for registration, distribution of job cards, ensuring smooth and timely flow of information between the Gram Panchayat and the Programme Officer. Additionally, the state may deploy one JE to each of the 557 *Nyay Panchayats* in hilly regions and

one JE to every two Nyaya Panchayats in the remaining 113 Nyaya Panchayats of plain areas.

The scrutiny of records related to staff positions in the selected districts revealed a significant shortage of essential staff at the GP level. 67 per cent posts of GRS in the selected districts were unfilled, with only 178 appointed out of the required 545 across 2,195 GPs. The situation was similar for JE, where 55 per cent of the positions were vacant, with just 74 out of the required 165 filled (*Appendix-6.1*).

Further, the shortfall of essential staff at the selected Blocks level was a critical issue (*Appendix-6.2*). The shortage of JE ranged from 27 per cent to 70 per cent, with each JE being responsible for an average of 23 to 42 GPs. Similarly, the shortfall¹ for GRS ranged from 45 per cent to 83 per cent with each GRS managing between eight GPs and 25 GPs as given in **Chart-6.1** below. The most significant shortage of GRS and JE was in Hawalbagh Block, where the shortage was 83 per cent and 70 per cent respectively.



This shortage of staff could seriously disrupt the effective implementation and monitoring of MGNREGS projects and hinder the quality and timely completion of the work, especially in hilly areas where geographical challenges further compound the impact of staff shortages. This shortfall of staff could also increase the workload on existing staff, leading to further inefficiencies.

During the Exit Conference (January 2025), the Secretary, RDD explained that due to lack of adequate fund released by GoI for administrative expenditure, less staff were deployed.

¹ Except in Narendra Nagar Block wherein sanctioned post of GRS was fulfilled.

6.3 District Level Technical Committee not formed

Paragraph 4.4.3 of the Operational Guidelines, 2013 stipulates the formation of a District-Level Technical Committee (DTC) to oversee the implementation of the Act. This Committee is expected to include district officers from relevant technical departments, as well as representatives from NGOs and the academic community. The DTC is responsible for examining the project shelf, preparing district-specific schedules of rates for common tasks under the MGNREGS, determining rates, establishing quality parameters and listing suppliers for materials. Additionally, the Committee was also tasked with setting norms to ensure the quality of assets created under MGNREGS.

It was found that the DTC had not been established in either of the selected districts to provide guidance for the implementation of MGNREGS. As a result, the *Gram Panchayat* and Block Development Plans could not be evaluated based on technical considerations or district-level development priorities. Moreover, in the absence of DTC, the technical soundness of the assets created under the scheme could not be assured as discussed in *Paragraphs-5.3.4, 5.4.2.1 & 5.4.2.2 of Chapter-5*.

On being pointed out, Deputy District Project Coordinators (Dy. DPC) of test checked districts accepted the audit observation.

In Exit Conference (January 2025), Secretary, RDD assured that the committee will be formed.

6.4 Capacity building

To achieve the objectives envisioned under MGNREGS, it is essential to prioritize the development of human capacities. These capacities must be equipped with the necessary skills and capabilities to fulfil their mandated responsibilities effectively. Furthermore, these human resources need to be supported by robust institutional frameworks that function as decision-support systems, facilitating real-time monitoring of outcomes and ensuring efficient management of the schemes implemented under MGNREGS.

Paragraph 5.2.2 of Operational Guidelines, 2013 provide that each State will set up an MGNREGA Human Resource Development and Capacity Building Division (HRDCBD) to identify and mobilize institutions that play the role of training institutions of MGNREGS.

Audit observed that the HRDCBD had not been established at the state level as mandated. Instead, training was conducted by the Uttarakhand Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (UIRDPR), Rudrapur. Based on the information provided by UIRDPR Rudrapur, a total of 24 MGNREGS related training sessions were organized during 2019-24, with 764 personnel participating. Of these, 22 sessions were dedicated to training staff from the Uttarakhand Social Audit Accountability and Transparency Agency (USAATA), while only two sessions specifically targeted MGNREGS field functionaries responsible for implementing the scheme, with a total of 36 attendees.

Moreover, between 2019-20 and 2023-24, in Tehri Garhwal district only three officials of *Bhilangana* block participated in the training, while no personnel from the Narendra Nagar block attended. In Almora district, seven personnel from the *Hawalbagh* block and eight from the Takula block took part in the training sessions during the same period.

Due to insufficient and inadequate training, multiple implementation deficiencies were observed during the audit of the scheme. These included delays in preparing the labour budget, delayed execution of approved works, updating of Job cards and other operational shortcomings as discussed in *various Paragraphs of this report*. This lack of effective capacity building highlights the need for a robust training infrastructure to empower MGNREGS personnel, as envisioned under the scheme's operational guidelines.

In the Exit Conference (January 2025), the Secretary, RDD accepted the audit observation.

6.5 Information, Education and Communication Plan not prepared

Paragraph 5.4.2 of the Operational Guidelines, 2013 stipulates that all States must develop an Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) plan for the scheme, targeting registered workers and other potential beneficiaries. The IEC plan should detail activities at the State, District, Block, and local levels.

However, scrutiny of records revealed that no IEC plan was formulated at the State, selected District, or Block levels for the period 2019 to 2024. PO from the selected Blocks acknowledged that the IEC plan was not formalized, though some IEC activities, such as *Rozgar Diwas* and wall paintings at Government offices/Panchayat Bhawan, were conducted. In the absence of a structured IEC plan, the following significant gaps in awareness were noticed in the survey of 200 beneficiaries:

- 147 beneficiaries (73.5 per cent) did not know about the payment timelines for wages.
- 46 beneficiaries (23 per cent) were not informed about the minimum requirement of 100 days of employment per financial year.
- 21 beneficiaries (10.5 per cent) were unaware of their entitlement to wages.
- 184 beneficiaries (92 per cent) did not know about the payment of unemployment allowances.
- 194 beneficiaries (97 per cent) did not know about the Ombudsman.

The lack of a formal IEC plan left many stakeholders uninformed about critical aspects of the programme impacting the scheme's effectiveness.

During the Exit Conference (January 2025), the Secretary, RDD accepted the audit observation.

6.6 Shortfall in conducting *Rozgar Diwas*

Paragraph 3.3 (i) of the Operational Guidelines, 2013 mandates that every GP must hold a *Rozgar Diwas* monthly to invite work applications, process these applications and handle related tasks such as work allocation and wage payments. Further, Paragraph 4.5.1 of Annual Master Circular, issued by GoI, requires the DPC to submit report to the State on a regular basis.

The audit identified several issues from 2019-24:

- There was a significant shortfall in the organising of *Rozgar Diwas* among the selected GPs², with deficiencies ranging from 73 per cent to 92 per cent.
- District and Block officials were often unaware of *Rozgar Diwas* events, with inadequate data management at both levels.
- The DPC failed to send the required reports to the State regularly.

The above highlights lapses in the implementation and reporting of *Rozgar Diwas*, indicating a need for improved awareness, data management, adherence to guidelines and consistent reporting to ensure effective employment generation and wage payment processes.

The Department stated that directions will be issued to districts for conducting *Rozgar diwas*.

6.7 Conclusion

The improper functioning of the SEGC and inadequate human resource management have impeded oversight and operational efficiency. The absence of DTC has compromised technical evaluations and asset quality, while inadequate capacity building and the lack of an IEC plan have left key stakeholders undertrained and uninformed. Furthermore, significant lapses in the organization of *Rozgar Diwas* reflect gaps in compliance with operational guidelines.

6.8 Recommendation

The Department should ensure timely appointment of the SEGC and DTC to prevent gaps in functioning. Adherence to the scheduled quarterly meetings, and awareness and capacity building mechanism should be strengthened.

² Selected GPs of Bhilangana block have not provided with the required information regarding the conducting of *Rozgar Diwas*.