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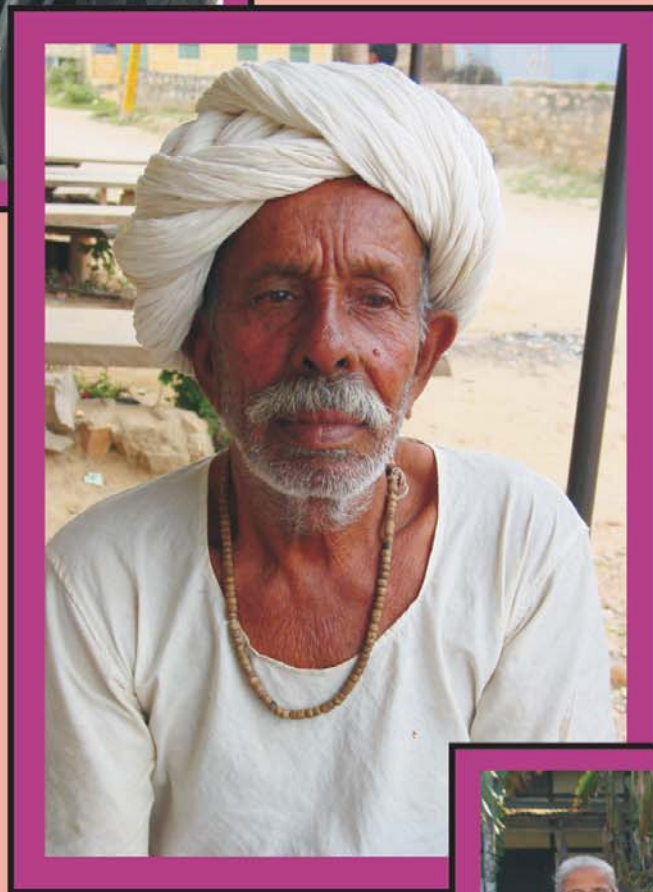
BHARAT



A monthly Newsletter of the
Ministry of Rural Development
Vol. 8 Issue 59: May 2009



National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP)



*Expanding
into New
Areas*

*Insulating
the
Vulnerable...*





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Insulating the Vulnerable

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) defines Social Security as “the security that society furnishes through appropriate organization against certain risks to which its members are perennially exposed”. These risks are essentially contingencies against which an individual of small means cannot effectively provide for by his own ability. Social security therefore consists in counteracting the injustice of nature and economic activities by rational planned justice and a touch of benevolence. Providing social safety net to citizens is widely acknowledged as one of the major achievements of the welfare state in the 20th century.

But with rapid globalization and market driven economy taking a center stage, worldwide there has been a marked erosion of this obligation of the State and the employers. Add to this, the growing breakdown of traditional institutions of social security like the extended family, community or tribe.

Contrary to this global trend, thanks to the constitutional provisions and the strong will of the government, the social security system in India is ever expanding with newer areas being brought under its fold.

Our Social security programmes as they evolved may be categorized as Preventive Schemes, Promotional Schemes and Protective Schemes. Preventive Schemes are aimed at risk prevention. The preventive approach tries to prevent poverty and helps people under below poverty line to come above poverty line.

The “protective social security” measures are largely for the organised sector, which include benefits relating to sickness, old age, maternity etc.

Promotional social security schemes are mainly of tested Social Assistance type, where to guarantee minimum standards of living to vulnerable groups of population, the Government draft schemes financed from the general revenues of the Government.

The Employment Guarantee Scheme is an excellent example of social security initiatives of the Government in our rural areas. The extension of pension benefits not only to ‘BPL’ aged but to all ‘BPL’ widows and disabled also reiterates a constitutional obligation and strong commitment on the part of the State.

We have to ensure that all eligible persons are covered and that the amount of assistance reaches the beneficiaries in time. The State governments must clearly define the responsibility of various functionaries involved in the implementation of schemes. There should be proper dissemination of information and generation of greater awareness regarding the scheme and the entitlement. Ownership of the scheme and contribution to it by the States are also necessary for the successful implementation.

We have miles to go before we can ensure complete social security safety net to the vast majority of our vulnerable population but a good beginning is half the battle won.

Nilam Sawhney
Editor-in-Chief

The Evolution of the National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP)

Sbri T.Srinivas (DS-NSAP) traces the growth and expanding scope of the NSAP, as part of the Government's constant efforts to increase the welfare measures for less privileged needy citizens.



Beneficiaries at the Launch of IGNOAPS on 19th November 2007 at New Delhi

Both the Directive Principles of State Policy and the Article 41 of the Constitution of India, enjoin the State to undertake a number of welfare measures within its means and directs the State to provide public assistance to its citizens in case of unemployment, old age, sickness and disability and in other cases of undeserved want within the limit of its economic capacity and development. It is in accordance with these noble principles that the Government of India on 15th August 1995 included the National Social Assistance Programme in the Central Budget for 1995-96.

The **National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP)** originally comprised of the **National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS)**,

National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS) and **National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBS)**. These programmes aimed to ensure minimum national standards in addition to the benefits that the States were providing. Subsequently, NMBS was transferred to the Department of Family Welfare from the financial year 2001-2002 and later on was subsumed under the Janani Suraksha Scheme.

The **Annapurna Scheme** was launched on 1st April, 2000 and aimed at providing food security to those senior citizens who had remained uncovered under the NOAPS. Under the Annapurna Scheme 10 kg. of food grains per month is provided free of cost to the beneficiary.

Transfer of NSAP and Annapurna Scheme to State Plan

NSAP and Annapurna were transferred to the State Plan from the year 2002-03. The funds for the operation of these schemes are now being released as Additional Central Assistance (ACA) to the States/UTs by the Ministry of Finance. The ACA is decided by the Planning Commission, while the State-wise allocation of ACA is made by the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) and Planning Commission. This ACA is to be utilized by the States/UTs as Welfare Schemes of NOAPS, NFBS or free food grains in accordance with their own priorities and needs. The MoRD monitors the expenditure against the ACA.

Enhancement of pension amount under NOAPS during 2006-07

During the 2006-07 Budget, the Old age pensions granted under the National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) to destitute persons above the age of 65 years at Rs.75 per month was found to be inadequate and it was enhanced to Rs.200 per month. The State Governments were urged to make an equal contribution from their resources so that a destitute pensioner would get at least Rs.400 per month.

State Contribution at present (per month)

Fifteen States/UTs providing pension > Rs.400

Goa, Delhi (Rs 1000), Puducherry (600), A&N, Chandigarh, Maharashtra (Rs. 500) Punjab (Rs. 450), Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Sikkim, TN , Uttarakhand, W.B.(Rs. 400).

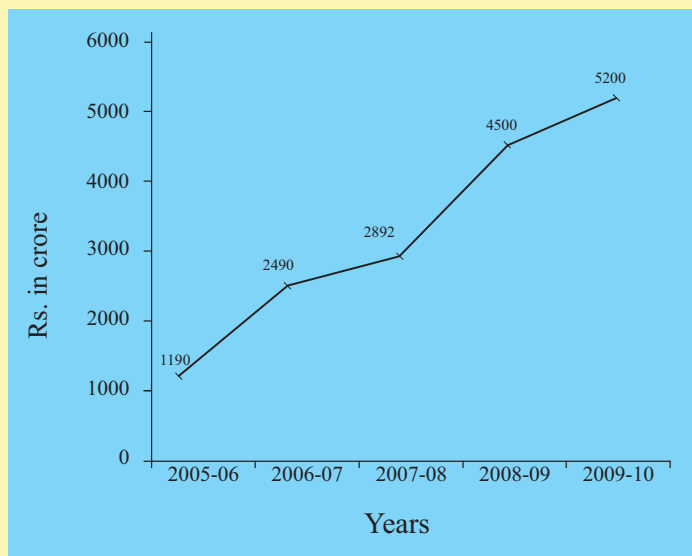
Ten States / UTs providing pension between Rs.200 – Rs.400

Himachal Pradesh (Rs.330), Chhattisgarh, Haryana,, UP, Lakshadweep, Tripura (Rs.300) MP (Rs. 275) Kerala, Mizoram, Assam (Rs. 250).

Ten States providing pension of Rs.200 only

Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, J&K, Orissa, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, D&N Haveli, Daman & Diu.

Allocation for NSAP (in Rs. Crore):



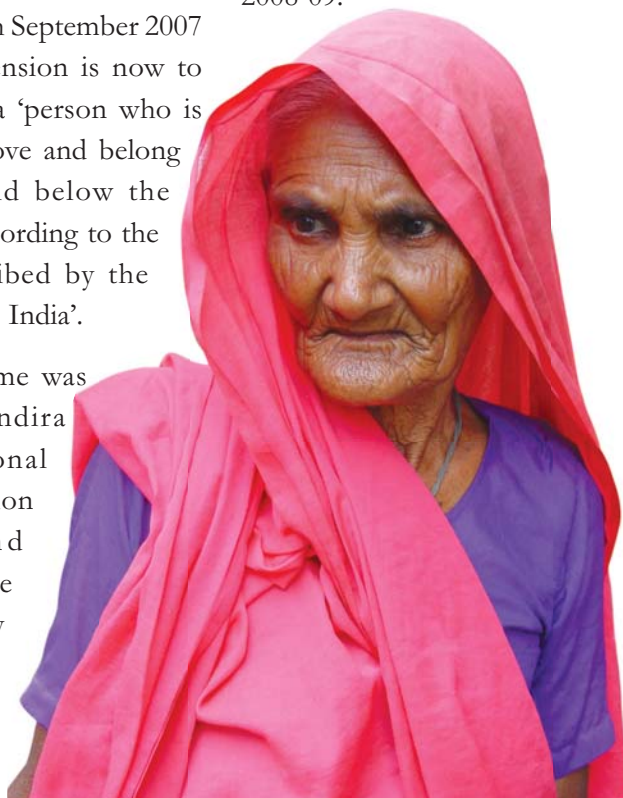
Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS)

The modification of the eligibility criteria for Central Assistance under the National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS) was approved by the Government of India on 13th September 2007 and old age pension is now to be granted to a 'person who is 65 years or above and belong to a household below the poverty line according to the criteria prescribed by the Government of India'.

The scheme was named the 'Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme' and the States were asked to certify that all eligible persons under the revised criteria had

been covered; and the pension was to be credited where feasible, into a post office or public sector bank account of the beneficiary.

The number of beneficiaries increased from 87 lakh during 2006-07 to 153 lakh during 2008-09.

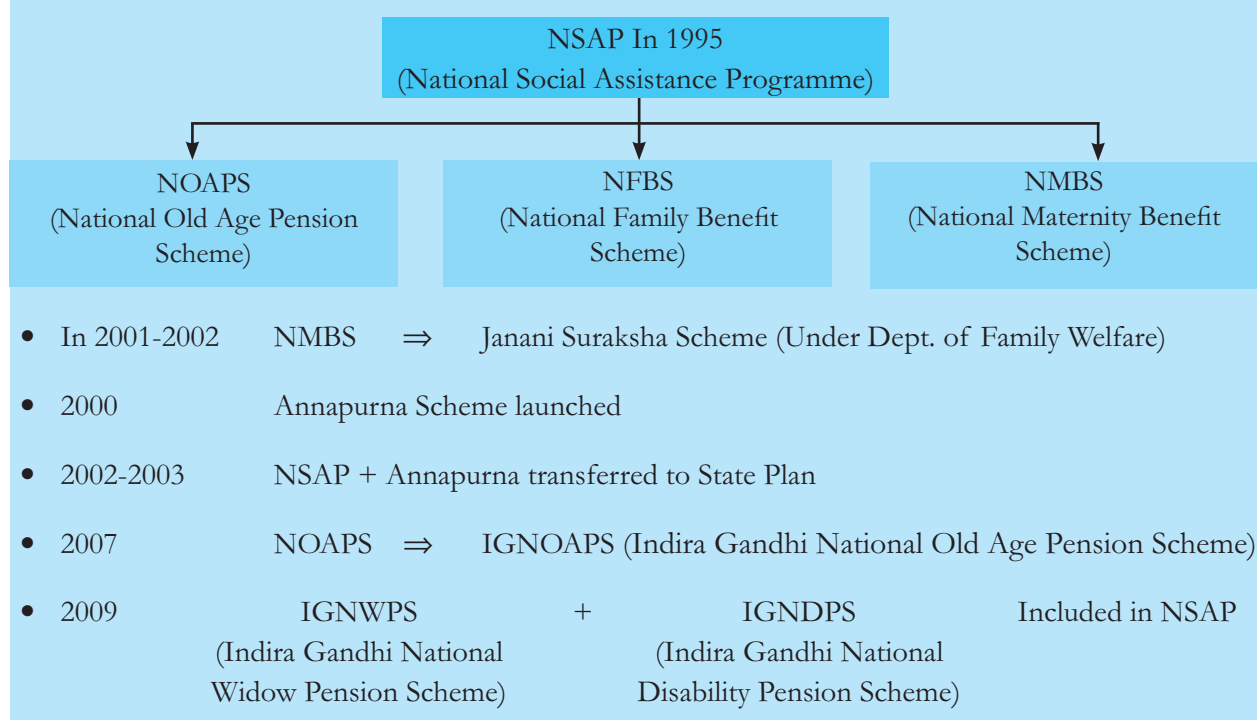


In February 2009, GOI approved the expansion of NSAP by including two new pension schemes namely **Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme** (IGNWPS) for BPL widows in the age group of 40-64 years and **Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme** (IGNDPS) for BPL

persons with severe or multiple disabilities in the age group of 18-64 years. The estimated number of beneficiaries under IGNWPS is 45 lakhs and under IGNDPS is 15 lakh. These pension schemes are to be operationalised by the State after fulfilling the following conditions: -

- (i) identifying all eligible beneficiaries as per the eligibility criteria
- (ii) placing the database of eligible beneficiaries in the public domain/website
- (iii) opening Bank/Post Office accounts for the beneficiaries for transfer of pension amount

Evolution of NSAP at a Glance



Monitoring

Implementation of NSAP is monitored through Monthly Progress Reports received from the States. Nodal Officers of NSAP for each State are appointed and a meeting of the Nodal Officers is held regularly to review the progress. The mechanism of National Level Monitors (NLM) is utilized to get field level inspection reports. NSAP has also been made part of the programmes reviewed by Vigilance and Monitoring Committee formed by Ministry

of Rural Development for each District.

Computerisation

Computerisation has been undertaken to improve transparency, accountability and monitoring. IGNOAPS-MIS is at an advanced stage of completion. National Workshop on IGNOAPS-MIS was held on 19-20th February 2009. New Software is being developed to cater to new schemes also with modifications. The Software includes modules

for application, identification, sanction, disbursement and verification. States were requested to provide Legacy Data of existing beneficiaries in the format developed by NIC. SIOs and Department were asked to work closely and to effectively use NSAP-MIS. NSAP website domain name has been registered and will be opened shortly after receiving the requisite security clearance. State level workshops are planned to impart training to State and District level functionaries.



Improvements & Innovations

A Journey towards a Transparent, Prompt and Citizen-Friendly Service

*A joint initiative of the National Informatics Centre (NIC) and the Finance Department, Government of West Bengal used computerization to improve its Registration Service in West Bengal. **Sbri P.K.Pramanik**, Senior Technical Director, (NIC, West Bengal) sends us the details.*



Dr A. Dasgupta, Finance Minister (WB), handing over a Deed through Computerised Registration process.

Registration provides the legal sanctity of the written agreement made privately by parties and is one of the basic services provided by the Government to its citizens. West Bengal registers 12 lakh property documents annually on an average. Till recently such an essential, popular service was in poor shape. There were no citizen charters in place. Registrant people were subjected to uncertainties about delivery time, duties, fees payable to Government and above all whom to be trusted. But now the situation has improved for the 208 offices out of the 237 registration offices of the State and the rest will be completed within June 2009, as per the Government mandate.

Attaining this level of improved service, built on the 150 year-old legacy system was a challenge. The State Department moved very carefully to adopt the Computerised System.

Information Technology was introduced in one Registration Office of the State as a pilot in end 1999. Gradually it was scaled-up and by 2003 another 10 offices, that contribute 60% of the revenue, were computerised.

Steps taken:

- ❖ Introduction of a help-desk service, where citizens can get to know the market value of the property to be transacted, the amount of stamp duty and registration fees payable.
- ❖ Computer-generated, market value assessment slips detailing all the payables under various heads.
- ❖ Use of finger prints, photos of the executants to provide more authenticity.
- ❖ Automation of the internal business processes, whereby registration could be completed in half an hour. Registered Deeds could be delivered within the same day. It adds to the modern ambience of the new look of registration offices.
- ❖ Prompt post registration services, e.g. a certified copy is available within 20 minutes

The smooth running of the computerised offices for the last three and a half years helped to build confidence regarding the computerised system. Employees became adaptive to machines. The CORD software was custom-made for the West Bengal Registration offices with inputs from the field. The underlining application software- CORD, follows the Indian Stamps Act and Indian Registration Act. CORD was developed by the scientists of National Informatics Center, West Bengal. Amendments are made by the State on the basis of constructive inputs from the registering officers at the 208 registration offices.

The confidence gained on the computerised system emboldened the Department to broaden the scope of IT in order to provide greater benefits to the citizens. A new business process

to determine the market value of property that is linked with the Government Revenue was worked out. It was mandated that Registration shall be cleared the same day and one can get his/her registered document delivered within the same day.

The digitization of the Market Value of the 4.20 crore plots of the entire State was initiated in 2004. Data entry centers were set up across 103 locations across State. It was closely monitored and the work was completed within 2006.

A detailed project report put the cost of the project at Rs.82.5 crores. The State decided to adopt the Public Private Partnership (PPP) model for sharing the huge cost of the project with the private sector. Private partners were selected through open tenders and the project was pressed in to service in 2007.

Convergence with Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY)

Smt.S.H.Khurana (Dir.-RH) explains the Convergence of various Centrally Sponsored Schemes with IAY, to provide more relief to the beneficiaries.

Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY) is a flagship programme of the Ministry of Rural Development which was launched in the year 1985-86 and implemented as an independent scheme since 1st January 1996. This scheme aims at providing financial assistance to rural households below the poverty-line for construction of dwelling units. The focus of allotment of the houses is usually on the female members of the households. A minimum of 60 percent of the funds is to be utilized for construction of houses for SC/ST. In conjunction with the Total Sanitation Campaign a separate sanitary latrine could be constructed for IAY houses. The ceiling on assistance for construction of new houses is Rs. 35,000/- per unit for the plain areas and Rs. 38,500/- per unit for the hilly/difficult areas. The upper limit in respect of conversion of kutcha house into *pucca*/semi-*pucca* house (upgradation) is Rs. 15,000/- per unit. In addition to the unit assistance availed under IAY, a beneficiary can also borrow a top-up loan upto Rs. 20,000/- from any nationalized Bank at 4% interest per annum

under Differential Rate of Interest (DRI) Scheme.

Convergence of various Centrally Sponsored Schemes with IAY

Convergence of various Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) with IAY is to be implemented by the DRDAs. IAY beneficiaries can get the benefits available under Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana (RGGVY), Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC), Janshree and Aam Aadmi Bima Yojana and Differential Rate of Interest (DRI) Scheme, etc.

Under RGGVY each IAY beneficiary can get a free electricity connection to his house, while under TSC an IAY beneficiary who will construct a sanitary latrine will get an amount of Rs. 2200/- from TSC funds in addition to the unit assistance he has got under IAY. All willing IAY beneficiaries can get the benefits available under Janshree Bima and Aam Aadmi Bima policies, under DRI, an IAY beneficiary can borrow up to Rs. 20,000/- from any

Nationalized Bank at 4% interest per annum to top up the unit assistance he has got under IAY.

Performance during the year 2008-09

During financial year 2008-09, Rs. 8800 crore were allocated including economic stimulus package to the States/UTs under IAY for construction of 21.27 lakh houses under normal IAY and 18.01 lakh houses under economic stimulus package, out of which Rs. 8795.79 crore was released to various DRDAs.

Ministry has also devised a new MPR called MPR-III for the purpose of collecting data on convergence of other centrally sponsored schemes with IAY. All DRDAs have been requested to furnish requisite data online in the prescribed new format every month. A copy of MPR-III is reproduced below.

Similarly, to compile complete IAY beneficiaries' data base, an MIS data sheet has also been prepared and circulated to all States/DRDAs to upload information on the site.

Format of MPR - III

Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY) Monthly Progress Report-3 Convergence During The Year

| Sl. No | Name of the District | Benefit availed under DRI | Sanitary latrines constructed | Smokeless Chullah constructed | Bio Gas Installed | Benefit availed under Rajiv Gandhi Gramin Vidyutikaran Yojana | Kitchen Garden taken-up | Enrolled under Life Insurance Scheme | | | | Enrolled under Health Insurance Scheme | | | Membership Acquired under SHG | Job Cards issued under NREGA | Works taken up under NREGA on beneficiaries land |
|--------|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|---|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------|--------|-------|--|--------|-------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| | | | | | | | | Janshree | Aam Aadmi | Others | Total | Arogya Raksha | Others | Total | | | |
| 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |



Release Positions

Department of Land Resources

Status of Release Funds & Balance of Funds under Plan Schemes with respect to Budget Estimates 2008-09 (Rs.2400cr) and revised estimates (Rs.1800cr)

During 2008-2009 as on 31.03.2009

(Rs. in crores)

| Sl. No. | Schemes (Plan) | Budget Estimates | Revised Estimates | Funds Released 31.03.2009 | Release % on R.E. | Balance yet to be released as per R.E. |
|---------|-------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|--|
| 1. | IWMP | 1825.00 | | | | |
| | (a) IWDP | | 858.10 | 670.83 | 78.18 | 187.27 |
| | (b) DPAP | | 386.00 | 448.30 | 116.14 | -62.30 |
| | (c) DDP | | 271.00 | 395.96 | 146.11 | -124.96 |
| | (d) Prof Support & others | | 29.00 | 28.35 | 97.76 | 0.65 |
| | (e) Other Schemes IWMP | | 0.90 | 0.96 | 106.22 | -0.06 |
| | Total : | 1825.00 | 1545.00 | 1544.40 | 99.96 | 0.80 |
| | Externally Aided Projects (EAPs) | 50.00 | 50.00 | 50.00 | 100.00 | 0.00 |
| | Grand Total : IWMP | 1875.00 | 1595.00 | 1594.00 | 99.96 | 0.96 |
| 2. | NPCLRM | 473.00 | 202.90 | 191.48 | 94.37 | 11.42 |
| 3. | Bio-fuels | 50.00 | 0.10 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.10 |
| 4. | Others Schemes | | | | | |
| | Rehabitation Policy | 2.00 | 2.00 | 2.00 | 100.00 | 0.00 |
| | Grand Total : Land Resources | 2400.00 | 1800.00 | 1787.87 | 99.33 | 12.13 |

State-wise amount sanctioned by the Project Sanctioning and Monitoring Committee under the National Land Records Modernization Programme (NLRMP) and funds released in the year 2008-2009.

As on 31.03.2009 (Rs. in lakh)

| Sl. No. | States/UTs | Sanctioned amount towards Central share | Funds released towards Central share as 1st instalment (75% of the total sanctioned amount) |
|---------|---------------------------|---|---|
| 1 | Andhra Pradesh | 4475.465 | 3356.60 |
| 2 | Bihar | 997.965 | 748.48 |
| 3 | Gujarat | 953.925 | 715.445 |
| 4 | Haryana | 380.075 | 285.06 |
| 5 | Himachal Pradesh | 957.78 | 488.95 |
| 6 | Jammu & Kashmir | 87.50 | 65.625 |
| 7 | Madhya Pradesh | 1688.445 | 1266.33 |
| 8 | Maharashtra | 4924.025 | 3693.01 |
| 9 | Manipur | 224.705 | 168.53 |
| 10 | Meghalaya | 575.238 | 431.43 |
| 11 | Nagaland | 78.63 | 58.97 |
| 12 | Orissa | 1232.363 | 924.27225 |
| 13 | Punjab | 1085.5505 | 814.17 |
| 14 | Sikkim | 12.48 | 9.36 |
| 15 | Tripura | 362.2345 | 271.68 |
| 16. | Uttar Pradesh | 1795.33 | 1346.50 |
| 17 | West Bengal | 5322.0595 | 3991.55 |
| 18 | Andaman & Nicobar Islands | 72.13 | 25.71 |
| 19 | Dadra & Nagar Haveli | | 24.29 |
| 20 | Dadra & Nagar Haveli | 44.90 | |
| 21 | Puducherry | 302.57 | 190.00 |
| | Grand Total | 25573.3705 | 18875.96225 |



Release Positions

State-Wise Release of Funds under Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) During 2008-09

(Rs. in crores)

| States | IWDP | DPAP | DDP | EAP | Total |
|-------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|
| Andhra Pradesh | 44.43 | 55.87 | 35.02 | | 135.32 |
| Arunachal Pradesh | 32.27 | 0 | 0 | | 32.27 |
| Assam | 38.93 | 0 | 0 | | 38.93 |
| Bihar | 7.32 | 0 | 0 | | 7.32 |
| Chhattisgarh | 30.44 | 24.38 | 0 | | 54.82 |
| Goa | 0 | 0 | 0 | | 0 |
| Gujarat | 31.87 | 39.33 | 75.13 | | 146.33 |
| Haryana | 4.28 | 0 | 10.26 | | 14.54 |
| Himachal Pradesh | 23.48 | 8.59 | 6.45 | | 38.52 |
| Jammu & Kashmir | 4.55 | 6.40 | 2.76 | | 13.71 |
| Jharkhand | 8.41 | 2.90 | 0 | | 11.31 |
| Karnataka | 46.02 | 57.76 | 49.47 | | 153.25 |
| Kerala | 11.46 | 0 | 0 | | 11.46 |
| Maharashtra | 28.76 | 64.03 | 0 | | 92.79 |
| Madhya Pradesh | 60.44 | 56.97 | 0 | | 117.41 |
| Manipur | 11.18 | 0 | 0 | | 11.18 |
| Meghalaya | 9.42 | 0 | 0 | | 9.42 |
| Mizoram | 26.50 | 0 | 0 | | 26.50 |
| Nagaland | 27.53 | 0 | 0 | | 27.53 |
| Orissa | 33.54 | 25.13 | 0 | 50.00 | 108.67 |
| Punjab | 3.60 | 0 | 0 | | 3.60 |
| Rajasthan | 45.26 | 18.10 | 216.87 | | 280.23 |
| Sikkim | 2.60 | 0 | 0 | | 2.60 |
| Tamilnadu | 34.60 | 35.49 | 0 | | 70.09 |
| Tripura | 1.58 | 0 | 0 | | 1.58 |
| Uttar Pradesh | 70.58 | 39.72 | 0 | | 110.30 |
| Uttarakhand | 24.64 | 7.07 | 0 | | 31.71 |
| West Bengal | 7.14 | 6.57 | 0 | | 13.71 |
| Total | 670.83 | 448.31 | 395.96 | 50.00 | 1565.10 |

Statement Showing The Release Position Under Plan & Non-Plan of NIRDs, SIRDs/ETCs and OTCs for the Year 2008-2009 (Upto 31.03.2009)

(Rs. In lakh)

| PLAN | | | | | |
|----------|--------------------|--------------|--------------|----------|--------|
| Sl. No. | Name of the Scheme | B.E. 2008-09 | R.E. 2008-09 | Release | %age |
| 1 | NIRD | 1,500.00 | 1,681.00 | 1,681.00 | 100.00 |
| 2 | SIRD/ETC | 3,800.00 | 3,970.84 | 3,970.84 | 100.00 |
| 3 | OTC | 50.00 | 61.51 | 61.51 | 100.00 |
| | Total | 5,350.00 | 5,713.35 | 5,713.35 | 100.00 |
| NON-PLAN | | | | | |
| Sl. No. | Name of Scheme | B.E. 2007-08 | R.E. 2008-09 | Release | %age |
| 1 | NIRD | 910.00 | 1,153.00 | 1,153.00 | 100 |



Every month we focus on a significant aspect of the Ministry of Rural Development's flagship programme, NREGA. We have already featured articles on 'Job Cards', 'Social Audits', 'Muster Roll', 'Financial Inclusion' and Phases of Implementation. In this issue, Mr Ritesh Saxena, Consultant NREGA tells us about ICT in NREGA.

NREGA-ICT

Successful implementation of NREGA critically depends on the establishment and operationalization of a proper computer-based Management Information System(MIS), through an ICT network interconnecting all the blocks, districts, States and the Union Ministry.

Taking forward the onus of crafting an efficient implementation of the NREGS, the NREGA soft captures the information right from the registration of the worker. The various modules of the software are:

1. Worker Management Module
2. Fund Management Module
3. Works Management Module
4. Grievance Redressal System
5. Staffing Position Module
6. Cost Estimation Module
7. Knowledge Network / Solution Exchange

⊙ Benefits availed through NREGA MIS

- E-Governance for the Masses:
- Assists Gram Panchayat in NREGA Implementation
- Assists Programme Officers and Administrators

⊙ Technology to meet the challenges

- NREGAsoft is available in online as well as in offline mode and hence overcomes the barrier of connectivity.
- It is Unicode enabled and supports all local languages to overcome the language barrier.
- Software is available in Microsoft technologies as well as open source technologies.
- Available in online as well as offline mode. Both versions work in a synchronous mode.
- Minimum requirement and support to technologies
 - o Offline version is available on Microsoft technologies as well as on open source technologies.
 - o Online version is available in Microsoft technologies but can be accessed from any browser (e.g. Microsoft Internet Explorer, Netscape, and Mozilla).



⊙ Outcomes

NREGA MIS provides information to citizens in compliance with the right to information Act (RTI Act). All Job cards and Muster Rolls are being uploaded on the NREGA website. 7.34 Crore Job Cards and more than 1.50 Crore Muster Rolls have been made available so far. For the remaining, the work is in progress.

⊙ Pushing Ict Frontiers: For Real Time Transactions and Strengthening Transparency.

- For enforcing rights based framework of law using best technology options available for using ICT.
- To enable all transactions real time by use of State-of-Art Technologies
- Thus developing People's Information System (PIS) Using Smart Cards, Hand Held Devices, Biometrics, Mobile Telephony & GIS

Ongoing ICT Projects

- ❑ Low cost ATM for Wage Disbursement with finger print authentication and local language interface.

This pilot is to field test the technology for low-cost ATMs with finger print authentication and local language interface in 5 villages in Tamil Nadu.

- ❑ Smart Cards, Biometric scanning for signatures and Handheld Devices.

Use of Smart Card

- To reduce human interface
- To overcome the literacy barrier at villages
- To make real time transactions

A project on a pilot basis has been started in five States (Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Kerala, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh). Integration of following NREGA processes in Smart Cards or Hand held Devices with biometric identification:

- Registration & Job Cards
- Demand of work & Recording of attendance at worksite
- Payment of wages through business correspondence model or ATMs.

New ICT Projects / Modules Envisaged

⊙ Help Line:

Department of Rural Development (DRD), Government of India, is undertaking a project to establish a network of Helplines under NREGA at the National, State, District and Block levels for facilitating the redressal of grievances in relation to the implementation of the NREG Scheme. The Helpline consists of a toll free number (1800110707) that will be used by the NREGA households and other individuals and groups to raise their questions, submit their grievances and complaints and seek guidance from the Department of Rural Development.

The operations will run with the use of latest information and communication technology (ICT) to provide solutions to complainants on a real time basis.

⊙ Geographic Information System (GIS), Remote Sensing.

- GIS for effective management and assessment of Natural Resources through GIS-based Asset Management System. GIS to evolve appropriate methodology for collection, collation, storage and processing of data on natural resources in a given region and in totality.



Total Sanitation Drive in 'Sain ki Sair'

The DRDA of Sirmaur has sent in an exemplary story of a Gram Panchayat 'Sain ki Sair' in Himachal Pradesh, which undertook the Total Sanitation Drive in all earnestness and went on to win the President's Award and the Nirmal Gram Puraskar in 2009.

The Total Sanitation drive was launched in the Gram Panchayat, Sain Ki Sair (Sirmaur district), in April 2006. 'Sain ki Sair' has a total of about 256 families and five wards. In the beginning, panchayat heads, ward members and panchayat secretaries were given training at the district level. This was imparted through the Rural Development Department of the Sirmaur district and an associate institution called Himachal Gyan Vigyan Samiti. Following the training, the cleanliness drive was launched in this panchayat under the Travelling Artists' programme.



Traveling Artists' programme held at the Government Primary School

In two locations, namely the Government Secondary School of 'Sain ki Sair' and the Government Primary School of Talon, the artists' team through their performance encouraged the people to maintain total cleanliness. After the performers' visit, meetings were organised at the Panchayat and ward levels.

Along with programmes, continuous efforts were also made at the block and district level and the local District Development Agency (DDA) adopted this village. During the drive, under the chairmanship of the Project officer, Shri Ravindra Sharma, several administrative officers made regular visits to the Gram Panchayat, generating awareness among the

villagers about the importance of cleanliness. A single-day drive was also launched to clean the water bodies, where the district and block-level officers and employees participated. In the meantime, the block cleanliness in-charge of the block development office (BDO), Smt. Soorti Chauhan and both the block co-coordinators, Pankaj Sharma and Rajesh Kumar made use of CLTS tool in the secondary school. The Mahila Mandals and School children also took part in the effort.

After this demonstration, all the people present there felt that the practice of open defecation was a serious problem in their Panchayat. But, in spite of the wide publicity, the cleanliness drive had not picked up momentum. This was attributed to various reasons such as the indifference of the panchayat representative's towards the drive, people's non-participation and the other departments and institutions like Mahila Mandal, Nav Yuvak Mandal, Self-Help Groups, etc. not giving whole-hearted support and co-operation. The efforts and labour of a full year were not yielding results. At that juncture, the Additional Project officer (Women's Programme) working in the DRDA, Ms. Revati Sharma joined. When she was given the charge of Total Cleanliness Drive, she convinced the Panchayat head, Smt. Leela Thakur and enlisted her support for the campaign. The campaign got a fresh lease of life and results were apparent within 19 days.

On 3rd August, 2007, a meeting was organised in Ward No.1 and a 10-day deadline was fixed for the target. Meetings were organised on similar lines in each ward and the deadlines were fixed. All the members of the team, such as the block co-coordinator, LSEO, LVDC and the officers such as the project economist, APO (Watershed) and the BDO gave whole-hearted support and co-operation and created awareness among the common people. The entire panchayat, the anganwadi workers, Mahila Mandal, etc. also gave their full support and helped in giving momentum to the campaign. Some of the

Success Stories



Katcha toilet in the Panchayat

Mahila Mandals distributed money among them and helped each other. During this period, people mostly constructed mud-brick toilets.

But, now toilet-seats have been installed in all the toilets and they are concrete and are being used regularly.



Concrete toilet in the panchayat

On 22nd August 2007, after being inspected at Block level and District level, the Panchayat sent its proposal to the BDO. The inspection of the Panchayat was done many a times and finally after the inspection of the State-level inspection team, during the State's Independence Function, the Hon'ble

Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh awarded the "Maharishi Valmiki Total Cleanliness Award" on 15th August 2008. Sain ki Sair stood first in its block.



Smt. Leela Thakur, Pradhan, Sain ki Sair panchayat, Block-Nahan, Sirmaur receiving the block level 1st prize of Rs. 1 lakh

After the inspection of the National level team, the Panchayat head received the "Nirmal Gram Puraskar" from His Excellency, the President on 17th October 2008 at Hisar. 'Sain ki Sair' is listed among those eight panchayats that have been selected by the Government of India for the President's Award. Congratulations to all the villagers for this great achievement!

NREGA and Convergence

Ms. Yasmeen Akhtar, Consultant to NREGA (MoRD) explains the potential of NREGA for strengthening the livelihood resource base and elaborates on the need to identify its linkages with other development initiatives whereby their coordinated energies can be leveraged for sustainable development.

Significant emerging trends in three years of implementation of NREGA have been evident in the increase in employment opportunities compared with earlier wage employment programmes, increase in minimum wages, stemming of distress migration, implementation of a large number of works related to soil and water conservation, afforestation and plantation resulting in increased productivity. One of the spin off benefits of the Act has been the financial inclusion of NREGA workers.

Need for Convergence

Substantial public investments are being made for strengthening of the rural economy and the livelihood base of the poor, especially the marginalized groups like Scheduled Castes / Scheduled Tribes (SC/STs) and women. To effectively address the issue of poverty alleviation, there is a need to optimize efforts towards inter-sectoral strategies. Convergence of different programmes like, Watershed Programmes, National Agriculture Development Programme (Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana) NADP/(RKVY), National Horticulture Mission (NHM), Scheme of Artificial Recharge of Ground Water through Dug Well (ARGW), Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP), Command Area Development and Water Management Programme (CAD & WM) and Scheme of Repair Renovation and Restoration of Water Bodies (RRR), Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF), National Afforestation Programme (NAP) with NREGA will enable better planning and effective investment in rural areas.

NREGA and Convergence

In view of the inter-sectoral nature of NREGA, the need to create durable assets and the fact that NREGA workforce constitutes the target group of most development programmes, a Task Force was set up to explore comprehensive and effective possibilities of convergence, latent in NREGA. The Task Force worked through two sub groups. One

sub group examined the possibility of convergence through planning; the other examined the possibility of convergence through activities. The two sub groups reviewed ongoing development programmes in detail, examining their guidelines, holding several rounds of discussion with concerned Ministries in order to identify possibilities of convergent action. The Task Force discussed the draft report of the sub groups in its meetings. The draft report has also been uploaded on the NREGA website for wider discussion and response.

Why NREGA acts as an entry point for Convergence

Convergence through NREGA will have the advantage of:

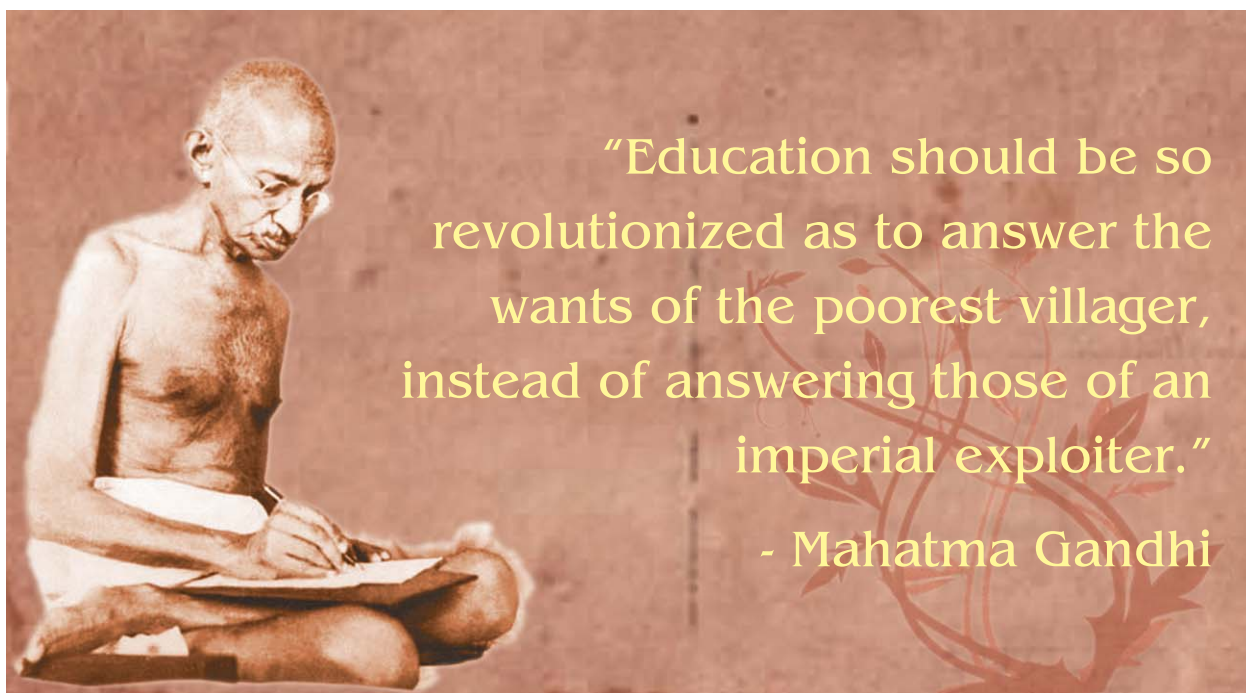
- Guaranteed resource support because NREGA is a statute
- Legal safeguards through Act
- The provision of decentralized planning, which enables comprehensive need assessment at grassroots and greater ownership of projects
- Untied funds for local area planning
- Self-targeting in nature
- Facilitating effective targeting and development of human and physical capital through institutional linkages
- A wide range of works; almost all works required for watershed development in rain-fed area, for command area development in irrigated areas and fair weather road for rural area connectivity
- Facilitating sustainable development through investment in natural resource management



Perceived Outputs of convergence with NREGA: Convergence through NREGA will

- **Increase in Social Capital:** Collective planning and implementation among different stakeholders will enhance social capital. This will also improve management and work output.
- **Increase in Physical Capital:** The process will aid in creating durable assets and will also improve land productivity.
- **Facilitation of Ecological Synergies:** Natural resource base regeneration through different activities such as, afforestation, drought proofing, flood proofing and watershed will lead to the effective use of resources.

- **Mitigate effect of Climate Change:** NREGA works help in addressing issues such as CO2 emissions and industrial pollution.
- **Enhance Economic Opportunities:** Income opportunities, savings and investments may be generated through activities such as pisci-culture, floriculture, etc.
- **Strengthen Democratic Processes:** Convergence awareness and planning at the grass root level will lead to greater ownership of projects.
- **Facilitate Sustainable Development:** Convergence efforts through creation of durable assets, rural connectivity, productivity enhancement and capacity development will lead to sustainable development.



गांवों में बरसेंगे रोजगार

अमिताभ पाराशर नई दिल्ली

सरकार द्वारा राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर गांवों में करवाए गए सर्वेक्षण के बाद यह लगभग तय हो गया है कि इस साल गांवों में रोजगार सृजन के मद में दी जाने वाली रकम में काफी बढ़ोतरी होगी। उम्मीद की जा रही है कि वित्तीय वर्ष 2009-10 में राष्ट्रीय ग्रामीण रोजगार गारंटी योजना को 48,000 से 49,000 करोड़ रुपये की भारीभरकम रकम उपलब्ध कराई जाएगी। इससे ग्रामीण स्तर पर रोजगार सृजन के अलावा अर्थव्यवस्था को भारी समर्थन मिलने की उम्मीद है।

पिछले वित्तीय वर्ष में रोजगार गारंटी योजना के लिए 34,000 करोड़ रुपये आवंटित किए गए थे। इसमें से केवल 24,000 करोड़ रुपये ही खर्च हो पाए। इस वित्तीय वर्ष के शुरू में ही इस योजना को पिछली योजना की बची 10,000 करोड़ रुपये की राशि आवंटित हो गई। सरकार ने जो अंतरिम बजट की घोषणा की, उसमें रोजगार गारंटी योजना के लिए इस वित्तीय वर्ष में 30,100 करोड़ रुपये आवंटित किए हैं। योजना आयोग के सूत्रों के अनुसार, जब नई सरकार अपने आम बजट की घोषणा

इस साल ग्रामीण रोजगार के लिए करीब 49,000 करोड़ खर्च करेगी सरकार

करेगी तो इस योजना की राशि को बढ़ाकर करीब 38,000-39,000 कर देगी।

आयोग के उक्त अधिकारी के मुताबिक, 2009-10 में इस योजना को करीब 49,000 करोड़ रुपये (पिछले वित्तीय वर्ष की बची 10,000 करोड़ की राशि को मिला कर) आवंटित होने की पूरी उम्मीद है। ग्रामीण पंचायतों और स्थानीय निकायों द्वारा खर्च होने वाली इस बड़ी रकम से ग्रामीण इलाकों में सड़कों, पुलों और अन्य बुनियादी ढांचों का निर्माण होगा।

विशेषज्ञ मानते हैं कि मंदी के इस दौर में इन इलाकों में सीमेंट, लोहे और उपभोग्य वस्तुओं की बिक्री बढ़ना तय है। गरीबी रेखा से नीचे रहने वाले हर ग्रामीण परिवार के एक व्यक्ति को साल में न्यूनतम 100 दिन का रोजगार दिया जाना इस योजना का मूल उद्देश्य है। राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर किए गए नए सर्वेक्षण के तहत वह पता लगाने की कोशिश की गई थी कि रोजगार गारंटी योजना के तहत अब तक कैसा काम हुआ है।

Hindustan, Delhi
Thursday, 30th April 2009

Job guarantee



Finding succour: Rural women going for desilting work of ponds at Maripalle, about 70 km from Visakhapatnam, on Friday. With the region receiving hardly any rain since last September, agricultural activity has come to a standstill. Thanks to the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme, the villagers earn about Rs 50 to Rs 70 a day. - K.R. Deepak

Business Line, Delhi
Saturday, 11th April 2009,

'Open defecation' to end by 2010

SHIMLA, APRIL 1

The unhealthy practice of 'open defecation' will be eradicated from all 3243 panchayats of the hill state by the end of 2010.

Stating this while formally launching the 'Swachhta' week as part of total sanitation campaign here today, secretary, rural development, Srikant Baldi said that already 267 panchayats had been declared 'nirmal' panchayats. The weeklong programme had been designed to focus on various sections of society directly connected with sanitation. He said about 70 per cent diseases were water borne and caused by its viral or bacteriological contamination due to open defecation.

He lamented that even after 62 years of independence people were still defecating in the open. Earlier, a policy was framed to construct a toilet in every household in 1986 through subsidy but it was observed that though the people constructed toilets, they did not use them. He said that this thinking could be changed through active participation of panchayati raj institutions, NGOs, government departments, schools and people in general. He said that if a single family did not use toilet the whole village could be affected. Only 3 or 4 per cent families were having toilets when the state came into existence but today about 70 per cent people were using toilets.

Baldi also flagged off the 'Swachhta Rath' which will move around the state visiting schools, panchayats, anganwaris and other rural institutions to highlight the ills of open defecation. He also declared Basantpur block as ODF (open defecation-free).

On the opening day of the campaign the focus was on schools where parents and teachers associations were involved for ensuring that the members played an effective role in improving personal hygiene of the children.

The Tribune, Delhi
Thursday, 2nd April 2009

Look inward for growth, Services Can Catalyse Rural Economy

HERO Honda's motorcycle sales grew 10.3% in March and 11% for the entire 2008-09 fiscal against 1.9% sales growth for the industry. Maruti's managed to add 15% to its volumes in March 2009, having sold a record 70,625 cars in February. There is a common thread between the two. Rural sales accounted for 8.5% of Maruti's total sales in 2008-09 against 3.5% in 2007-08. Hero Honda's distribution strength in the rural markets is largely being seen as the reason for the company managing to do well in these conditions. Hindustan Unilever has recorded over 16% topline growth in recent months. At least 50% of HUL sales are in rural India. These are cases that point to the robustness of the rural economy and give hope India will grow at a decent clip in 2009-10. Much of the increase in rural incomes is because of four straight good monsoons, high support prices even as inputs prices have remained unchanged through larger subsidies. Also, income transfers through schemes like NREGS and farm loan waiver has added to rural demand. Fiscally strained government may, however, find it difficult to provide such large subsidies or transfers in the future. And monsoons could always fail.

The rural economy, therefore, needs to be de-risked and strengthened. The solutions for increasing farm sector productivity are well known. What is more urgent is to dovetail a strong services industry into the rural economy. This has a huge potential as services account for over 28% of rural GDP. The share of industry in rural areas has grown at a faster rate to over 30%. However, capital intensive manufacturing, largely a response to cheap capital and inflexible labour laws, would not be as equitable as labour intensive services in distributing the gains of growth. Provision of financial services alone would create so much more economic activity. Only about 30% of farm households have access to formal banking. Financial services are currently available mostly through money lenders. A modern financial system would lower cost of services, and create a lot more stakeholders in the gains. Then there is healthcare, education, broadband and whole host of other services. An 8% growth is achievable on our own steam.

The Economic Times, Delhi
Monday, 6th April 2009

