

**Note on implementation of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment
Guarantee Scheme in Barmer, Rajasthan**

Barmer is a border desert district spread over 28387 sq km area. District is divided in 8 development blocks. Eight development blocks are further divided into 380 gram panchayats under 3-tier panchayati raj system. Population as per census 2001 was 19.65 lac, including 47.15% females. MG Nrega scheme was launched on 2nd may 2007 in entire district. There are 4.76 lac households registered under the scheme, including more than 91 thousand SC households and more than 39 thousand ST households. 3.6 lac households were provided employment and 277 lac mandays were generated in the preceding financial year. Out of 277 lac mandays, 184.71 lac mandays were completed by female workers, which works out as 66.67 % of the total mandays generated.

Intensive IEC activities are being done to educate and empower people about their rights. Public representatives, voluntary organizations and common men are actively involved in planning, execution, monitoring, control and social audit of the scheme. Annual action plan of the works to be executed next year is prepared right in time through decentralized bottom up approach beginning from gram sabha. Women and men getting employment under the scheme are actively involved in the scheme. Each and every household has a job card with unique number. Awareness programs are organized round the year. Work site board is displayed on every work site. Every person is provided employment within 15 days of application. Not even a single rupee has been paid as unemployment allowance. Training of personnel and panchayat raj representatives are conducted round the year effectively. Adequately trained human resources have been deployed for successful implementation of the scheme. Not even a single rupee is paid in cash and entire labour and material payment is done through banks and post offices. Annual CA audit is conducted well in time.

E-muster rolls system has been successfully started in all blocks. Along with e-issue, detailed tracking of muster rolls is done through an efficient muster roll tracking system. Executing agencies keep proper record of various activities. 13 types of records are maintained in every gram panchayat. One MG Nrega worksite book is maintained at every worksite. It is effectively ensured that every worksite has facilities of drinking water, shade, first aid medical kit and crèche. Officers and technical staff conduct intensive inspections regularly. Social audit of every gram panchayat is done twice a year. Information about labour and material is openly displayed in every panchayat through wall writings. Various mechanisms have been put in place for effective disposal of public grievances. 100% grievances received last year and 83% grievances received this year have been disposed. Average time taken for disposal has come down from two months to less than a month now. Exemplary criminal and disciplinary actions are taken against culprits. The rights based network is successfully implemented with accountability and transparency.

The scheme has enhanced livelihood security and living standard of rural masses by providing guaranteed employment and by construction of sustainable assets. People regard the scheme as a blessing. Single biggest hardship of desert district is scarcity of

water. The scheme has changed face of the district by construction and renovation of more than 50000 water harvesting structures. Single biggest successful story has been construction of more than 45000 individual water tanks (locally known as 'taanka'). Each of these tanks has adequate size pucca catchment (aagor) and can store 30000lt rainwater. After good monsoons in year 2010, 1343.3 million liter rainwater was conserved and saved in 45000 MG Nrega taankas belonging to SC, ST and BPL families. Rural connectivity has been tremendously improved by construction of around 5000 km long gravel roads under the scheme. A large number of traditional water harvesting ponds have been renovated and revived. Along with water harvesting structures and roads, flood protection and plantation works have been successfully executed under the scheme.

On the basis of overall performance, Barmer district was selected for making presentation as a candidate for MG Nrega excellence award. A presentation was made by District Program Coordinator on 29th Dec 2010 in Delhi. A team from Government of India visited Barmer on 15-16 Jan 2011. The 6 member team inspected more than 100 works and evaluated implementation of the scheme at grassroots level.

Gaurav Goyal, IAS
(DPC-MG NREGS and Collector Barmer)

Dated January 27, 2011