



Tuesday, July 4, 2006, Bhopal



## PACS NREGA WEEK

JULY 3 TO JULY 9, 2006

## PACS NREGA Week Campaign Picks Up Momentum in Various Districts

Bhopal, July 4, 2006: The NREGA (National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) Week awareness campaign being organized by Poorest Areas Civil Society (PACS) Programme in Madhya Pradesh & Chhatisgarh is beginning to pick up momentum in various districts of the two states of Madhya Pradesh & Chhatisgarh.

## CARD, Ghughri

Centre for Advanced Research & Development (CARD) organised 2 Samooh Sammelan's at Salwaha & Baniya villages of Ghughri block of Mandla district.

The Samooh Sammelan at Salwaha was attended by 8-10 people, who nevertheless discussed various aspects of implementing NREGA in their area, and the difficulties involved therein. The Samooh Sammelan at Baniya was attended by almost 90 people, comprising 59 women and 31 male participants. People came from villages like Baniya, Sureli, Tilande and Saijal. Discussions on NREGA went on for about 5-hours, and most people said they were not aware of the various components of the scheme they can access. Participants from Baniya said they received a total of 1-week's work. In conclusion, all participants sat together and worked out a strategy plan on how apply for work under the scheme.

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## Chhattisgarh Cluster Orientation for CGREGS

Venue: Raipur

Date: 01.07.06

Objective: The orientation objective was preparing CG CSO partners for creating NREGS (CGRES) awareness and understanding its progress vis-à-vis expectations. NREGS was launched in 200 districts in 27 states in February, 2006, and PACS has aggressively pursued building awareness in villages. This awareness building would help assessing programme implementation progress, benefits accruing to the rural poor and checking rural migration, as well as building rural infrastructure. PACS is working in 3 districts in CG: Rajnandgaon, Kawardha and Surguja.

The larger objectives of this campaign are:

- ☞ To understand issues and concerns in implementation of CGREGS.
- ☞ To know actual number of beneficiaries.
- ☞ To gain insight into perceptions about modalities where communities are involved and...
- ☞ To contextualize this pro-poor policy.



In Ghatbarrah, out of a total of 40 participants, 29 were male and 11 were female participants. In Rajnandgaon, the 1st days' inauguration drew appreciable response from Sangathan members in 3 clusters in 3 blocks of Mohalla, Manpur and Chouki.

In 2 clusters, nearly 55 persons attended Day One of the Sammelan, and out of this, 40 were women participants. Likewise, in Kawardha district, the local CSO in Pandaria block initiated the awareness building process in 2 clusters: Chitadabri and Damgada. In Chitadabri, total participants were 55, and a majority of them were female.

**List of Participants**

A total of 9 participants took part in the workshop.

**Participants' List**

Organization	Operational District
JSS	Rajnandgaon
LSS	Rajnandgaon
VARDAN	Rajnandgaon
PARIVARTAN	Kawardha
MSS	Surguja
RIDE	Surguja
MDS	Surguja
SGSS	Surguja
Prabhas	Surguja

**Content of discussion**

In the light of the above objective, PACS partners in CG decided to celebrate the NREGA Week to pursue awareness building on the various aspects of the scheme in their operational areas. Because the scheme is in its nascent stages, emphasis needs to be given to awareness generation and understanding popular perception: how many have understood the scheme, how many want to benefit from the scheme, and what is the role of government officials and Panchayatiraj functionaries in accommodating the issues, and so on. Besides, it was suggested that the partners need to support the government initiative by educating the people and opening a line of communication between government officials and village communities. The prime points of discussion were modalities, purposes and processes in completing the activities.

In the meeting it was decided that:

☞ Depending on the field situation, locations would be finalized for Panch and Sarpanch Sammelans. However, it was up to the CSOs to decide the cluster approach or individual approach to conduct the meeting at Panchayat level.

☞ The CSOs agreed on their tentative time slots for Nukad Nataks, which have been forwarded to the SBCA.

☞ Depending on availability of Nukad Natak teams or the CSO staff itself managing the activity, it was decided that the best way to resolve the impasse would be at the CSO level, and where they can prepone or post pone some activity like data collection with Nukad Natak, so that there is enough time for preparation.

☞ A tentative activity schedule (village wise) to be submitted to SBCA.

**ACTIVITY REPORT**

In Surguja, the NREGA Week began with Sangathan Sammelan in 2 clusters: Kantarolli and Ghatbarrah. People's response was very good, considering their attendance in such Sameelan's. In Kantarolli alone, 53 people participated, out of which 20 were women and 33 men. Likewise, in Ghatbarrah, out of a total of 40 participants, 29 were male and 11 were female participants. In Rajnandgaon, the 1st days' inauguration drew appreciable response from Sangathan members in 3 clusters in 3 blocks of Mohalla, Manpur and Chouki. In 2 clusters, nearly 55 persons attended Day One of the Sammelan, and out of this, 40 were women participants. Likewise, in Kawardha district, the local CSO in Pandaria block initiated the awareness building process in 2 clusters: Chitadabri and Damgada. In Chitadabri, total participants were 55, and a majority of them were female. On the contrary, Damgada had more participation number-wise, and 65 people attended the Day 1 sammelan. Here male participation was higher.



**Preliminary Issues**

Across all cross sections, people have many issues associated with the implementation process of CGREGS. For example, when people ask their Sarpanch about issues like when work will start, how to get job cards, and so on, the Sarpanch passes the buck to Government officials and says that the delay is because of the apathy of government officials. When people ask the government officials, they find fault with the scheme one way or the other. In the end, people leave frustrated and confused.



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In Kawardha, participants in one cluster said that work is yet to start in their village and job cards have been given at random; only to 4 to 5 people. In Damgarh cluster, work has started in village Dehamtola only, while in other villages, "photo are yet to be made!"

## Mahila Samiti, Chhatarpur.

Samooch meetings were held in three panchayats of Gathewara, Brijpura and Chandrapura.

In Gathewara block, the following findings came to the fore:

1. Job cards have not been made
2. Money is being demanded for making job cards
3. There are no photos on a majority of job cards made
4. Applications for jobs are not being made
5. Of the applications being made demanding jobs, women are being neglected on purpose
6. Women are being given difficult and arduous work when they demand work
7. Most communities still do not have a clear idea about how to write applications and where to submit them

In Chandrapura block, the following findings came to the fore:

1. Only a few applicants have cards
2. Job cards made continue to be with the Panchayat Secretary- they are not being handed over to the applicants
3. The printing of job cards has been given on contract; the contracted party is still to make the job cards available for distribution

In Brijpura block, the following findings came to the fore:

1. There is little or no information available at the panchayat level about the both the type of work available nor its time frame
2. There are no entries being made on job cards about type of work done, period, etc.
3. The job cards do not have the signature of the sarpanch, nor do they have any photograph of the applicant
4. Job cards are most often found lying at the secretary's residence
5. While the minimum wages are to be equal for men and women, the women are being paid at the rate of Rs 50 per day!

Compiled by Write Solutions, Bhopal, Communication Resource Organisation for PACS.

For more information about the PACS programme in MP & CG, please write to us at E4/185, Arera Colony, Bhopal-462003 (MP) or mail us at pacsindia@devalt.org. You can also call +91 755 4202234 .

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**POOREST AREAS CIVIL SOCIETY (PACS) PROGRAMME**

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★ Development Alternatives

PWC PricewaterhouseCoopers (P) Ltd.