

A Study on the Performance of MGNREGA in Manipur

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ABSTRACT

Being premised on the planks of inclusive growth, livelihood security and democratic empowerment as envisaged in the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), the state of Manipur is implementing the scheme with the mandate to provide at least 100 days of demand based guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work and creation of durable social assets in the process. In this backdrop, the present study examined the performance of the scheme in that state with respect to extent of employment generation, efficiency in work completion rate and efficiency in fund utilization through analyzing official records of 7 years between 2008-09 and 2014-15. During the period under study, a total of 3228861 number of job cards were issued of which the share of backward communities (ST and SC) was 53.83 per cent. In terms of social category wise employment generation, the shares of backward communities and women were 69.58 per cent and 42.37 per cent respectively. However, there remained a gap of around 5.39 per cent in the matter of employment provisioning as against actual number of job card holding households deserving the benefit of employment. The shabbiest parts of the scheme were detected in the forms of provisioning of 100 days employment to only 7.39 per cent of job card holders and failure to complete 95.55 per cent of the undertaken works by scheduled time. This calls for playing of more responsive role by the state authority so that very purpose of MGNREGA is not defeated.

Keywords: MGNREGA, manipur, performance, employment generation, work completion rate.

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Even as India continues to record impressive growth rates, poverty remains widespread and disparities deeply entrenched. Poverty has been explained as the failure to achieve certain minimal or basic capabilities, where 'basic capabilities' are the ability to satisfy certain crucially important functions up to certain minimally adequate levels (Sen,1993). Chronic poorness in India is due to sustained experiencing of significant capability

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deprivations and thus the poor often pass on their poverty to subsequent generations (Hulme and Shepherd, 2003). Ever since the inception of planning in India, the policies and the programmes have been designed and redesigned to formulate one or the other poverty alleviation programmes to usher economic betterment of poor people for their greater social transformation. And one such vital one was the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) that came into being on September 7, 2005 and subsequently renamed as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) since October 2, 2009. It was proclaimed that unlike any other wage employment programme, this distinct and unprecedented bottom-up, people-centred, demand-driven, self-selecting as well as rights-based design has given rise to the largest employment programme in human history in terms of its scale, architecture and thrust (Anonymous, 2005). The genesis of National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) may be traced back from the policy of creating guaranteed employment through public works by the Maharashtra government which introduced Employment Guarantee Scheme under the aegis of Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Act, 1977 to offer statutory support to the right to work for the rural poor. The programme was made effective since January 26, 1979 with the principal aim to provide gainful and productive employment to the people ready to offer unskilled manual work in the rural areas. The guarantee to provide work was restricted to unskilled manual work only. The delineation of the scheme suggested that on completion of the works undertaken, some durable community assets should be created and the wages paid to the workers should be linked with the quantity of work done. Another feature of the scheme was to ban contractors. It was also treated as a powerful tool for drought management and drought proofing (Singh, 2012). The MGNREGA was made effective in the form of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS). The basic purpose of introducing MGNREGA was to enhance livelihood security in rural areas by way of mandatorily providing at least 100 days demand based guaranteed wage employment in a year to every deserving rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. Creation of durable assets at local levels based

upon people's consensus and strengthening livelihood resource base of the rural poor were also constituted to be its vital objectives. In other way to say that inclusive growth through ensuring social protection, livelihood security, democratic empowerment and sustainable community development are the all important planks on which the MGNREGA has been premised.

Manipur, one of the eight states of the North-East India, is inhabited by 7 Scheduled Caste (SC) communities and 33 Scheduled Tribe (ST) communities (Economic Survey, 2008-09). About 90 per cent of the total area of Manipur is covered by hills which comprise five of its nine constituent districts viz., Senapati, Tamenglong, Churachandpur, Chandel and Ukhrul. The remaining 10 per cent is a valley constituting four districts viz., Imphal East, Imphal West, Bishnupur and Thoubal. The proportion of rural population living below poverty line in Manipur during 2004-05 was estimated to be 39.28 per cent against national average of around 41.8 per cent (Pathak and Mishra, 2011) to signify occupying of its 10th position from the bottom among 29 states and 7 union territories of the country. As MGNREGA has primarily been triggered at generating certain minimal level of income through enhanced wage earning of the rural poor, it may be presumed that proper execution of this flagship programme might really contribute a great way in providing those poverty stricken vulnerable people of Manipur with greater access to employment, income and, of course, food in a sustainable manner. And there lies the importance of the present study to analyze and understand the performance of the scheme across North-Eastern state of Manipur in terms of its promised deliverables.

DATA BASE AND METHODOLOGY

The basic objective of the research study was to assess MGNREGA in Manipur especially with respect to the performance in job creation across various social categories, efficiency of work completion rate in terms of number of works undertaken and efficiency in fund utilization contextual to demand based employment generation. The MGNREGA in Manipur was introduced in 2006 in only Tamenglong district. Subsequently, since 2007-08, the districts of Chandel and Churachandpur were included under the scheme. And it was only since

2008-09 when all the remaining districts of the state were brought under its fold. For getting a comprehensive understanding of MGNREGA, therefore, the analysis of performance was made relating to the years 2008-09 to 2014-15. The study was based on published secondary data of 7 years i.e., from 2008-09 to 2014-15 of the Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Govt. of Manipur with necessary interpolation by way of utilizing the official on-line sources of MIS manager of MGNREGA (<http://nrega.nic.in/netnrega/home.aspx> and http://nrega.nic.in/netnrega/homestciti.aspx?state_code=20).

In order to fully understand the extent, nature and pattern of employment generation through MGNREGA, a critical analysis of the issuance of job cards, demand for employment by job card holders, share of social category and gender in employment, the proportion of households completing 100 days of employment and, thereby, creation of man days under MGNREGA activities during study period was done through tabular analysis of the recorded data. In the similar way, efficiency of work completion rate in terms of number of works undertaken and efficiency in fund utilization contextual to demand based employment generation were also analysed and interpreted.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The single most important and distinguishing feature of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA (MGNREGA), from employment programmes of the past, is making the provision of work on demand by wage-seekers as to be their legal right. Under this demand driven public wage employment programme, works are opened and jobs offered whenever there is a demand for work (Anonymous, 2013). Here, the Job Card is considered to be a key document that records workers' entitlements under MGNREGA and the *Gram Panchayats* are to issue the job cards free of cost within 15 days of receipt of such applications in writing or orally.

The status of seven years' physical achievement in issuance of job cards for the periods between 2008-09 and 2014-15 has been presented through Table-1. It is being revealed from the table that in Manipur a total of 3228861 job cards have been issued during the period under study. Among those, 84693 (2.62%) were

from Scheduled Caste background, 1653562 (51.21%) were from Scheduled Tribe background and 1490606 (46.17%) were from 'others' background. Notably, out of the seven years under consideration, the year 2013-14, with issuance of 525791 job cards (i.e., 16.28% of the total job cards issued in the state), turns out to be the year when highest number of job cards were issued. And it is followed in next orders by 2014-15 and 2012-13 with 514603 (15.94%) and 474926 (14.71%) respectively. Here, 2008-09 has been observed to be the year in which least number of job cards was issued. It was 380910 in number (i.e., 11.8% of the total job cards issued in the state). This is possibly because 2008-09 was the take off year in terms of implementation of the scheme in six out of nine districts of the state of Manipur.

Table 1: Issuance of job cards under MGNREGA in Manipur during 2008-09 to 2014-15

Year	Number of households issued with job cards			
	SCs ¹	STs ¹	Others ¹	Total ²
2008-09	5592 (1.47)	206574 (54.23)	168744 (44.30)	380910 (11.80)
2009-10	12188 (2.86)	226993 (53.21)	187401 (43.93)	426582 (13.21)
2010-11	13752 (3.10)	235298 (53.07)	194331 (43.83)	443381 (13.73)
2011-12	14300 (3.09)	251117 (54.28)	197251 (42.63)	462668 (14.33)
2012-13	14333 (3.02)	255831 (53.87)	204762 (43.11)	474926 (14.71)
2013-14	11119 (2.11)	240676 (45.77)	273996 (52.11)	525791 (16.28)
2014-15	13409 (2.61)	237073 (46.07)	264121 (51.33)	514603 (15.94)
Total	84693 (2.62)	1653562 (51.21)	1490606 (46.17)	3228861 (100.00)

Source: Authors' own calculation based on Annual Administration Reports of 2008-09 to 2014-15 of the Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Govt. of Manipur.

Note: 1. Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage to the total of respective year.

2. Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage to the respective column total.

Table-1 has further been revealing of the fact that although till 2012-13 the proportion of job card recipients in the state was dominated by the households from Scheduled Tribe (ST) communities, during the remaining two years i.e. 2013-14 and 2014-15, nevertheless, households from 'others' social categories emerged to be the dominant ones with their shares being 52.11 per cent and 51.33 per cent for the earlier and later year respectively. In fact, the explaining reason behind this might be due to the manner in which the execution of the scheme has taken place across various districts of the state. As indicated earlier, Manipur comprises of five hill districts which are dominated by the tribal communities. And in case of three out of those five ST dominated hill districts, MGNREGS had started getting implemented by the first two phases (i.e., 2006 in Tamenglong district and 2007 in Chandel and Churachandpur districts) as against all the four 'others' community dominated valley districts wherein the scheme had started at the third phase of implementation of the scheme (i.e., since 2008) and, therefore, presumably the tempo was yet to occur for

those later included districts.

Being a demand driven employment guarantee Act, any endeavour to gain insight on the performance of MGNREGA critically requires development of comprehension about the extent of provisioning of jobs to the deserving households. From a glance at Table-2, it is revealing that in Manipur during the seven years under study (i.e. 2008-09 to 2014-15), almost cent percent (truly to express 99.77%) of the households were provided employment in response to demand raised by them. By all means, this may be considered to be one of the creditable tangible performance indicators of the scheme for the state under reference. Especially for the year 2013-14, there was even 100.04 per cent achievement in this regard to mean that the extent of provisioning of employment was made from amongst those job card holding households who even didn't demand for any job may be due to incomplete awareness regarding procedural part of getting employment under the aegis of the scheme or otherwise.

Table 2: Employment provided under MGNREGA in Manipur during 2008-09 to 2014-15

Year	No. of HHs issued with job card ≠	No. of HHs demanded employment ¹ ≠	No. of HHs given employment against demand ² ≠	Gap between employment provided <i>w.r.t.</i> HHs issued with job card ³ ≠	Percentage of job card holding HHs given full 100 days' employment ⁴ ≠
1	2	3	4	5	6
2008-09	380910	376237 (98.77)	376237 (100.00)	4673 (1.23)	207148 (54.37)
2009-10	426582	418613 (98.13)	418613 (100.00)	7969 (1.87)	31269 (27.33)
2010-11	443381	420748 (94.90)	417122 (99.14)	22633 (5.10)	0.00 (0.00)
2011-12	462668	457171 (98.81)	457171 (100.00)	5497 (1.19)	53 (0.01)
2012-13	474926	454466 (95.69)	454466 (100.00)	20460(4.31)	79 (0.02)
2013-14	525791	455236 (86.58)	455398 (100.04)	70555 (13.42)	2 (0.00)
2014-15	514603	472309 (91.78)	468864 (99.27)	42294(8.22)	44 (0.01)
Total	3228861	3054780 (94.61)	3047871 (99.77)	174081 (5.39)	238595 (7.39)

≠ HHs - Households

Source: Authors' own calculation based on Annual Administration Reports of 2008-09 to 2014-15 of the Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Govt. of Manipur.

- Note:**
1. Figure in parenthesis indicates percentage to Col. 2 of corresponding year.
 2. Figure in parenthesis indicates percentage to the no. of HHs in Col. 3 of corresponding year.
 3. Figure in parenthesis indicates percentage to the no. of HHs in Col. 2 of corresponding year.
 4. Figure in parenthesis indicates percentage to the no. of HHs in Col. 2 of corresponding year.

Even though the overall achievement towards issuance of job cards in Manipur apparently seems commendable to, in turn, indicate encouraging performance of the implementing agency, it has nevertheless been transpiring simultaneously from Table-2 that still there remained a gap of around 5.39 per cent at aggregate level in the state concerning the matter of employment provisioning with respect to the actual number of households which were issued with job cards during the entire span of seven years under study and, hence, were otherwise deserving to have the benefit of employment as per the laid down provision of the Act. By number, around 1.74 lakh job card holding households are found to have not provided with employment during the period in reference. Further, for the years of 2010-11, 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15 the so explained gaps between employment provisioning with respect to the actual number of job card holding households have been observed to the tune of 22.63 thousand (5.10%), 20.46 thousand (4.31%), 70.55 thousand (13.42%), and 42.30 thousand (8.22%) respectively. This revelation thus warrants discharging of some proactive and responsive function from the part of implementing functionary of the scheme in matters of more awareness building of the deserving poor people in general and job card holders in particular on the procedural part of getting jobs after they are delivered with the job cards. This is more so because the poor people are to take recourse to diversified subsistence livelihood strategy by compulsion and

social exclusion is a typical feature for that section of social class. And for that, often are they found to remain deprived of mainstream information network even if that information basket remains concerned with the matter of rights and privileges of those poor people themselves like the present case of MGNREGA. Even the Operational Guidelines of MGNREGA advocated that the implementers should pay very close attention to generating awareness among potential wage-seekers (Anonymous, 2013). A thoroughly deplorable revelation is also being made out of perusal of the Table-2 which is indicative that despite MGNREGA is committed to provide 100 days' guaranteed wage employment in a year in terms of unskilled manual work to every deserving household, there has been wide deviation in terms of provisioning of actual employment to this effect in case of Manipur. Out of the seven financial years under study, the year 2008-09 could provide highest number of 207148 households with full 100 days of employment which was again only 54.37 percent of the total job cards issued in that particular year. And those were 31269 (27.33%) in 2009-10, and nil to virtually negligible during the remaining years. Thus, in sharp contrast to the laid down provision of the Act, Manipur has been found to be far lagging with respect to committed provisioning of 100 days' employment in a year under the scheme and this requires adequate attention by the state authority.

Table 3: Social category wise employment generation under MGNREGA

(in lakh person days)

Year	Cumulative person days generated				
	SC	ST	Others	Total	Women
2008-09	4.84 (1.69)	208.3 (72.59)	73.8 (25.72)	286.94	95.58 (33.31)
2009-10	6.55 (2.01)	226.9 (69.47)	93.16 (28.52)	326.61	157.15 (48.12)
2010-11	2.69 (1.64)	119.9 (72.97)	41.72 (25.39)	164.31	76.92 (46.81)
2011-12	5.84 (2.04)	177.51 (61.97)	103.08 (35.99)	286.43	131.09 (45.77)
2012-13	4.25 (1.69)	177.03 (70.35)	70.36 (27.96)	251.64	109.06 (43.34)
2013-14	1.28 (1.13)	74.54 (65.84)	37.4 (33.03)	113.22	39.9 (35.24)
2014-15	2.95 (2.92)	52.16 (51.56)	46.05 (45.52)	101.17	38.71 (38.26)
Total	28.4 (1.86)	1036.34 (67.72)	465.57 (30.42)	1530.32	648.41 (42.37)

Source: Authors' own calculation based on Annual Administration Reports of 2008-09 to 2014-15 of the Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Govt. of Manipur.

In terms of person days of employment generated under MGNREGA, Manipur is found to have generated a cumulative total of 1530.32 lakh person days during the seven years between 2008-09 and 2014-15. Out of that, Scheduled Tribes share 67.72 per cent (i.e., 1036.34 lakh person days) followed in descending order with 30.42 per cent (i.e., 465.57 lakh person days) by communities from 'others' background and with 1.86 per cent (i.e., 28.4 lakh person days) by Scheduled Castes. Moreover, cumulative employment generation for women under MGNREGA in case of the state has been observed to be 648.41 person days which is 42.37 per cent of the gross wage opportunities created therein (Table-3). And this accomplishment happens to be in congruence with one of the important mandates of the Act that priority shall be given to women in such a way that at least one-third of the workers shall be from women for the

very purpose of creating an enabling environment for the women to be economically empowered so as to lay the basis for greater independence and self esteem for the poor women folk. At least, the stigma of gender discrimination in case of MGNREGS cannot be given on the state of Manipur.

The performance of MGNREGA was also examined in the light of works undertaken and their completion rate. Table-4 is reflective of gross inefficiency in terms of work completion rate under MGNREGA in Manipur. Within the seven years between 2008-09 and 2014-15, only 47.25 per cent of the undertaken works in the state could be completed. Moreover, as high as 95.55 per cent of 32503 numbers of undertaken works remained incomplete despite their estimated completion dates were over.

Table 4: Works undertaken and completion rate under MGNREGA during 2008-09 to 2014-15

Year	Total no. of works undertaken	No. of works undertaken whose estimated completion date is over	No. of works completed	Work completion rate
Upto 2009-10	1432	1427 (99.65)	952	66.48
2010-11	950	949 (99.89)	422	44.42
2011-12	6961	6937 (99.66)	3646	52.38
2012-13	12832	12785 (99.63)	8169	63.66
2013-14	5747	5556 (96.68)	1932	33.62
2014-15	4581	3404 (74.31)	237	5.17
Total	32503	31058 (95.55)	15358	47.25

Source: <http://nrega.nic.in/netnrega/home.aspx>

It requires a further mention that whereas more than 99 per cent of the works undertaken in Manipur during the years 2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12 and 2012-13 could not be completed within their respective estimated dates of completion, in the best performing year of 2014-15 to this effect even the rate of work completion by scheduled completion date was found to be only 25.69 per cent and thus left 74.31 per cent of the undertaken works incomplete within the dateline (Table-4).

Though it is evident from Table-3 that altogether 1530.32 lakh person days of employment could be generated in

the state during the seven years spanning between 2008-09 and 2014-15, Manipur state still remained far short of providing 100 days guaranteed employment to the deserving households with respect to all the individual constituent years. In fact, Table-5 bears a testimony that after the initial good performance for the years 2008-09 and 2009-10 with provisioning of more than 75 average person days of employment generation per household in those years, the so mentioned performance graph dipped down to even less than 40 person days per household in 2010-11.

Table 5: Average person days of employment generation per household under MGNREGA during 2008-09 to 2014-15

Av. person days of employment generation	Financial Year							Overall person days
	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	
Per job demanding household	76.27	78.02	39.05	62.65	55.37	24.87	21.42	50.10
Per job card holding household	75.33	76.56	37.06	61.91	52.99	21.53	19.66	47.40

Source: Authors' own calculation based on Annual Administration Reports of 2008-09 to 2014-15 of the Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Govt. of Manipur.

Despite the scenario became bit brighter in 2011-12 when employment of little over 60 person days per household was made, again there occurred a steady decline in the person days of employment per household across the years of 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15. And it was so much so that in the last two years of the period under reference (i.e., 2013-14 and 2014-15), average person days of employment generation per job card holding household in countryside Manipur was shockingly low in the form of 21.53 days and 19.66 days for the earlier year and the later year respectively. Such kind of slack performance has ultimately led the overall figure of average person days of employment generation per job card holding household under MGNREGA in Manipur to stand at 47.4 days a year. It requires a clarification here that if the calculation is done on the basis of job demanding households, as is customarily being done while preparing the Annual Performance Reports by the relevant State Department, the just mentioned overall figure would be little bit better with around 50 days a year (Table-5). But, in the backdrop of the need to objectively address rural poverty in the country which paved the way for introduction of MGNREGA and the purpose with which issuance of job cards was

thought of, it won't perhaps be inappropriate, as being urged upon by the present researchers, to calculate the performance of person days of employment generation on the basis of job card holding households in lieu of job demanding households.

The financial performance of MGNREGA in the state has been summarized through Table-6. Here, going by the year wise proportion of fund utilization as against available fund of that year, apparently the financial performance may seem to be quite satisfactory as, during five out of the seven years under study, the proportion of fund utilization to total available fund of the corresponding year was around (or even over) 92 per cent and for the years 2010-11 and 2012-13, those were 80.91 per cent and 87.44 per cent respectively. As a cumulative effect, the overall fund utilization for entire seven years also stood to be 91.97 per cent. But, this apparent good looking performance tends to become gloomy when examined in the light of per household employment generation *vis-a-vis* poverty scenario of the state and the work completion rate under MGNREGA as well.

Table 6: Financial performance under MGNREGA during 2008-09 to 2014-15

(Rupees in lakh)

Year	Opening balance	Total available fund	Total expenditure	Unspent amount
1	2	3	4	5
2008-09	1253.03	38540.35	35592.21 (92.35)	2948.14 (7.65)
200910	3532.77	44704.97	43570.33 (97.46)	1134.64 (2.54)
2010-11	1766.95	27706.61	22417.8 (80.91)	5288.81 (19.09)
2011-12	2442.03	54853.91	50939.11 (92.86)	3914.80 (7.14)

2012-13	2752.58	55820.24	48809.32 (87.44)	7010.92 (12.56)
2013-14	2303.93	30197.78	28048.95 (92.88)	2148.83 (7.12)
2014-15	2279.26	29066.71	26708.8 (91.89)	2357.93 (8.11)
TOTAL	16330.55	280890.6	256086.52 (91.17)	24804.07 (8.83)

Source: 1. Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Govt. of Manipur for 2008-09 to 2014-15.

Note: Figure in the parenthesis indicates percentage to Column 3 of corresponding year.

In 2013-14 and 2014-15, whereas Table-5 indicates that Rs.52.89 crore in 2010-11, Rs.29.49 crore in 2013-14 and Rs.23.58 crore in 2014-15 remained unspent, a cross examination of the Table-5, nevertheless, unveils of the sorry state of performance of per household employment generation in those years. It was 37.06 person days corresponding to 2010-11, 21.53 person days corresponding to 2013-14 and even less of 19.66 person days corresponding to 2014-15. This apart, the figure of accumulated unspent amount for the entire span of seven years has been appearing to be to the tune of Rs. 248.04 crore, which could otherwise be spent towards much aggressive endeavour in considerable enhancement of employment generation per job card holding household in the state (less than 50 days a year) to make the same to act as at least a kind of short term negotiating tool against rural poverty. It is well accepted a fact that employment generation is necessary to raise the purchasing power and thereby to create demand in the economy. A decline in the level of employment adversely affects the purchasing power and thereby the process of demand creation falters. In 2009-10, along with few other north-eastern states, the poverty in Manipur has been increased (<http://www.mdoner.gov.in/content/poverty-estimates>). Still later, Reserve Bank of India (2013), observed that the state of Manipur has been occupying the third position from the bottom among 29 states and 7 union territories of India with 36.89 per cent of its population living below the poverty line as against the national average of 21.92 per cent. A portion of the unspent fund might also be utilized in adequate supervision and monitoring of undertaken works under MGNREGA so as to give a boost to the poor overall work completion rate (47.25%). But, these didn't happen and in all individual years under consideration crores of rupees remained unspent as is being revealed from Table-6.

CONCLUSION

The basic purpose of introducing MGNREGA was to enhance livelihood security in rural areas by way of mandatorily providing at least 100 days demand based guaranteed wage employment in a year to every deserving rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. But, in sharp contrast to such laid down provision of the Act, Manipur has been found to be far lagging with respect to committed provisioning of 100 days' employment in a year under the scheme for the job card holding households. The person days of employment generated a year has been found to be inadequate and erratic to mean that the distressed rural people cannot remain reliant on the scheme for getting job for such days that might at least contribute sustainable livelihood protection to those hapless rural mass in a meaningful manner. Creation of durable assets at local levels based upon people's consensus and strengthening livelihood resource base of the rural poor were also constituted to be its vital objectives. But, in terms of work completion rate also the performance has been found to be far from satisfactory. The only silver lining within such shabby performance scenario however lie in the way the social category wise employment generation has taken place in the countryside Manipur. Out of the gross wage opportunities created, the shares of STs and women have been observed to be 67.72 per cent 42.37 per cent respectively. The revelations of the study call for resorting to not only a responsive political will but also far more careful planning and spirited execution of the scheme by all echelon of implementing institutions. One should not ignore that the poverty in rural Manipur has increased even after introduction of MGNREGA.

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