

Administrative Reforms Commission's 2nd Report titled 'Unlocking Human Capital: Entitlements and Governance – a Case Study' – Implementation of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act Schemes

Details of the Government's Decisions on the recommendations of the Administrative Reforms Commission

| Sl. No. | Recommendations made by Administrative Reforms Commission | Government's Decision |
|----------------|--|--|
| | <p>1. Guaranteeing Reach (Para 5.2.1.6)</p> | |
| 1. | (a). Awareness generation programmes should be taken up by all States Govts. The publicity and guidance material should be available in local languages. The effectiveness of these programmes should be measured through independent sample surveys. (1) | (a)& (b) The recommendations are accepted. |
| 2. | (b). Intensive use of All India Radio and Doordarshan should be made to local languages as is done in the case of Sarva Siksha Abhiyan and National Rural Health Mission. (2) | |
| 3. | (c) In order to ensure proper coverage, voters' lists may be used for ascertaining the number of eligible households. This however, should not be the sole basis for registering households under NREGA. The number of households registered should be monitored and compared against other data like census, BPL survey etc, so that affirmative action could be taken wherever the participation is not satisfactory. (3) | (c) The recommendation is accepted. However, as NREGA is a demand based programme, registration of households would be done only when there is an application. |
| 4. | (d) Independent monitors, wherever necessary, should be deployed in areas where participation of vulnerable sections is not adequate, to ensure that the weaker sections are participating and getting their entitlements. It also needs to be ensured that all habitations/hamlets get fully covered. (4) | (d) The recommendation is accepted. |
| 5. | (e) Special norms should be worked out for various parameters of the Scheme for difficult areas. (5) | (e) The recommendation is accepted. |

| Sl. No. | Recommendations made by Administrative Reforms Commission | Government's Decision |
|---------|--|---|
| 6. | (f) 'Household' should be defined to mean a nuclear family i.e. husband, wife and minor children, and may include any person wholly or substantially dependent on the head of the family. (6) | (f) The recommendation is accepted. |
| 7. | (g) Job-cards should be issued separately to each adult physically challenged person. (7) | (g) The recommendation is not accepted because of the fact that the basic unit under NREGA is the "household" and not an "individual". The Act also does not specifically address the problem of physically challenged who required special assistance of different nature. |
| 8. | <p>2. Guaranteeing Outcomes (Para 5.2.2.6)</p> <p>(a) An evaluation should be carried out to assess the socio-economic impact of NREGA. This evaluation should encompass the following activities; (8)</p> <p>a1. Identifying the parameters to be evaluated: These parameters should capture the livelihood security. The following parameters are suggested</p> <p>(i) Average annual income of households</p> <p>(ii) Prevalent market wages for agricultural labour</p> <p>(iii) Average number of days a family migrates in search of labour</p> <p>(iv) Productivity of small and marginal land holdings</p> <p>(v) Quality and contribution of assets</p> <p>Before finalizing the list of parameters, each of them should be validated after a field study.</p> <p>a2. Conducting a baseline survey: This should be concluded within three months.</p> | (a)&(b) The recommendations are accepted. The Ministry of Rural Development has undertaken such an evaluation, and the set of indicators suggested include most of those indicated by the ARC. |

| Sl. No. | Recommendations made by Administrative Reforms Commission | Government's Decision |
|--------------------------|--|--|
| 9. | <p>a3. Fixing threshold levels for parameters to signal successful implementation of NREGA.</p> <p>a4. Impact evaluation: The first evaluation should be carried out on completion of three years of implementation of the NREGA.</p> <p>(b). This outcome evaluation could be done as part of the expanded task of the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) to develop district and sub-district level data. (9)</p> | |
| 10. 11. 12. 13. | <p>3. Ensuring Convergence (Para 5.2.3.6)</p> <p>(a) Baseline performance indicators should be worked out for important services such as health and education and efforts should be made to improve them continuously. (10)</p> <p>(b) Rural development programmes, which could be best managed at the local level, should be transferred to the Panchayati Raj Institutions. (11)</p> <p>(c) There should be only one Plan for an area so that an integrated view of development of the area could be taken. All sectoral/schemewise plans should be culled out from this plan. (12)</p> <p>(d) To the extent possible, the earthwork components of other asset creation programmes should be taken up under NREGA. Specifically, the projects under Bharat Nirman may be dovetailed with NREGA. (13)</p> | <p>(a) The recommendation is accepted.</p> <p>(b) The recommendation is accepted.</p> <p>(c) The recommendation is accepted.</p> <p>(d) It is agreed that there should be proper coordination in implementation wherever feasible. The States have been advised accordingly.</p> |
| 14. | <p>4. Expanding the Scheme(Para 5.2.4.2)</p> <p>(a) The extension of NREGA to remaining areas should be taken up in a phased manner. While expanding the coverage of the NREGA, the block should be taken as the unit instead of the district, with the most backward blocks to be included first. In order to bring objectivity, the expansion plan should be finalized within six months and announced well in advance. (14)</p> | <p>(a) The recommendation is accepted.</p> |

| Sl. No. | Recommendations made by Administrative Reforms Commission | Government's Decision |
|---------|--|---|
| 15. | <p>5. Fixing Wage Rates(Para 5.3.2.7)</p> <p>(a) The provisions regarding prescription of wages under NREGA and the Minimum Wages Act would require detailed examination. A task force comprising representatives of the Ministry of Rural Development, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Law and Justice and a few State Governments may be constituted to examine and make recommendations on this issue. (15)</p> | <p>(a) The recommendation is not accepted. States are already revising wage rates keeping in view NREGA works. The Ministry of Rural Development has been advised to regularly monitor the wages. The Ministry of Rural Development has incorporated detailed instructions on taking up work, time and motion studies in the NREGA Guidelines so that productivity norms are made labour intensive and enable earning of minimum wages.</p> |
| 16. | <p>6. Financial Management System (Para 5.3.3.15)</p> <p>(a) Funds from Government of India should be transferred directly to the districts. (16)</p> | <p>(a) The recommendation is accepted.</p> |
| 17. | <p>(b) The State Government's contribution may be fixed at 10 per cent of the total cost of REGS in a year, and may be made annually. If the State does not make this contribution, it may be deducted from its 'Central Assistance for State Plans'. (17)</p> | <p>(b) The recommendation is accepted.</p> |
| 18. | <p>(c) Target (maximum) levels of funds should be fixed for Panchayats (village, block and district levels). Government of India should release funds to districts every month, so that the target levels are restored. The district in turn should release funds to blocks to bring their funds up to the prescribed target levels. Finally the blocks should replenish the funds at the Gram Panchayats. (18)</p> | <p>(c) The recommendation is not accepted. The Ministry of Rural Development mentioned that NREGA funds released is not based on budget allocation but on employment demand in a district. The Ministry of Rural Development was advised to regularly monitor funds flowing from districts to blocks and suitable instruction be issued to the State Governments.</p> |
| 19. | <p>(d) The system of releasing funds based on utilization certificates should be replaced with a system of concurrent monitoring and audit through an independent agency. (19)</p> | <p>(d)& (e) The recommendations are not accepted. The implementation coverage is extensive with huge number of works. Therefore, it would</p> |

| Sl. No. | Recommendations made by Administrative Reforms Commission | Government's Decision |
|---|--|---|
| 20. | (e) The audit should be taken up every quarter, and if major irregularities are found, the concerned Panchayat should immediately make good the misutilised amounts from its own funds (not NREGA funds). It should initiate action for recovery against those concerned. If there is a prima facie case of corruption, criminal cases should be launched against the concerned persons. (20) | not be feasible to replace Utilisation Certificate (UC) and go for concurrent audit. Further, Section 24(1) of the Act provides for audit of accounts of NREGA, Section 25 provides for penalties for non-compliance and Section 27(2) provided for suspending Central assistance in case of misutilisation of funds. |
| 21. | (f) The target (maximum) level of funds required for Gram Panchayats may be fixed at two months requirements, and so also for the blocks and districts. (21) | (f) The recommendation is accepted. |
| 22. | (g) A uniform financial information flow system should be prescribed for the entire country. (22) | (g) The recommendation is accepted. |
| 7. Mode of Payment to Workers (Para 5.3.3.16.3) | | |
| 23. | (a) The ultimate choice of the mode of payment should be left to the workers; payment in cash may be the preferred option. The person/agency preparing the muster roll must be different from the person/agency making payment to the workers. (23) | (a) The recommendation is not accepted as it would dilute accountability. The Ministry of Rural Development was advised to ensure transparency in payment and the use of Banks and Post Offices should be explored. |
| 24. | (b) In drought prone and remote areas (tribal and hilly areas), a part of the wages may be disbursed in terms of foodgrains. In all cases, quality and timely availability of foodgrains should be ensured. (24) | (b) The recommendation is not accepted. It is not practicable in view of foodgrains supply being inadequate. |
| 8. Role of Banks and Post Offices in Fund flow (Para 5.3.3.18.5) | | |
| 25. | (a) The post office network should be used along with the bank network for flow of funds and the procedural bottlenecks addressed. (25) | (a) (b) (c) & (d) The recommendations are accepted. The Ministry of Rural Development was advised to encourage payments to NREGA beneficiaries through Banks and Post Offices. |
| 26. | (b) Banks and post offices would have to play a more proactive role in handling these accounts. Procedures, especially in post offices need to be | |

| Sl. No. | Recommendations made by Administrative Reforms Commission | Government's Decision |
|---------|--|---|
| 27. | <p>simplified. (26)</p> <p>(c) Opening of zero balance accounts in post offices by both individuals and institutions may be permitted by the competent authority. If the enhanced costs of opening zero balance accounts cannot be borne by the post offices, the amount required may be quantified and examined if remuneration can be given to selected post offices in difficult areas where the bank network is not easily accessible. (27)</p> | |
| 28. | <p>(d) To avoid leakages, payment through banks and post offices is a better option, Banks and the post offices need to be reoriented to handle this task. (28)</p> | |
| | <p>9. Time Rate Versus Piece Rate (Para 5.3.4.1.5)</p> | |
| 29. | <p>(a) Payments should be made based on the piece rate system, and not the time rate system. (29)</p> | <p>(a) The recommendation is accepted.</p> |
| 30. | <p>10. Schedule of Rates(Para5.3.4.2.11)</p> <p>(a) State Governments should evolve a more realistic rural Schedule of Rates for NREGA in each district. These rates should be evolved that, workers both men and women, get the prescribed minimum wage. The prescribed minimum wage should be taken as the base and the Schedule of Rates should then be worked out. Adequate allowance should be provided as there would be a substantial proportion of women workers. This could be achieved by conducting a gender specific Time & Motion study at the district level. (30)</p> | <p>(a)(b)&(c) The recommendations are accepted.</p> |
| 31. | <p>(b) The district Schedule of Rates for NREGA should be prepared under the supervision of the District Technical Resources Support Group. (31)</p> | |
| 32. | <p>(c) State Government should ensure that inter-district variations are within a permissible band. (32)</p> | |

| Sl. No. | Recommendations made by Administrative Reforms Commission | Government's Decision |
|---------|--|--|
| 33. | (d) A mechanism whereby the Schedule of Rates is harmonized across States needs to be put in place. There is also need to rationalize the quantity of labour required for a given job. The Ministry of Rural Development should coordinate this process. (33) | (d) The recommendation is not accepted. States have their own systems for fixing the SORs. They are based on the geo- morphic conditions of the region and the prevalent notified minimum wages for a particular task in a State. Fixing SORs is within the jurisdiction of the State. It was, therefore, not possible for the Central Government to coordinate or harmonise SOR across States |
| 34. | (e) As regards elderly and physically challenged people, it is suggested that while prescribing norms for a realistic Schedule of Rates the productivity of such person should be kept in mind. They should be assigned works such as provision, assistance in taking measurements and overseeing the amenities at the worksite. (34) | (e) The recommendation is accepted. |
| 35. | (f) The Schedule of Rates needs to be made transparent. It should clearly spell out the amounts required for the material as well as labour components in each item of work. (35) | (f) The recommendation is accepted. |
| 36. | (g) The Ministry of Urban Development should coordinate the large issue of rationalization of the PWD Schedule of Rates in various States. (36) | (g) The recommendation is not accepted. States have their own systems for fixing the SORs. They are based on the geo- morphic conditions of the region and the prevalent notified minimum wages for a particular task in a State. Fixing SORs is within the jurisdiction of the State. |
| 37. | <p data-bbox="207 1587 919 1656">11. Maintaining Labour Material Ratio (Para5.3.5.2)</p> <p data-bbox="207 1696 919 1873">(a) The stipulation that the material component should not exceed 40 percent of the total cost should be strictly adhered to for each work. In exceptional cases, if it is not possible to maintain this for each work it should be maintained at the</p> | (a) The recommendation is accepted. |

| Sl. No. | Recommendations made by Administrative Reforms Commission | Government's Decision |
|---------|---|--|
| | Gram/Block Panchayat level. (37) | |
| 38. | 12. Mechanism for Procurement (Para 5.3.6.2) (a) State Governments should evolve transparent procurement procedures under the scheme, and ensure that they are followed by the Panchayats in a transparent manner. (38) | (a) The recommendation is accepted. |
| 39. | 13. Strengthening Local Governments – Building Institutions (Para 5.4.1.1.3) (a) Panchayats should be empowered by transferring all development schemes which are better managed locally, to them. This transfer should also include the commensurate transfer of administrative and financial power and the implementation machinery. (39) | (a)(b)&(c) The recommendations are accepted. |
| 40. | (b) District Rural Development Agencies (DRDA) should be subsumed in the District Panchayat. (40) | |
| 41. | (c) Officers of adequate seniority should be posted as CEOs of District Panchayat and the intermediate level Panchayat. (41) | |
| 42. | 14. Strengthening Local Governments – Capacity Building Para 5.4.1.2.8) (a) NREGA should be implemented by a judicious mix of permanent and contractual staff. Staff required for implementation of NREGA at sub-district levels should, be engaged locally. This appointment may not be to a service but to a particular post. This could be achieved through contractual engagement. The process should be totally objective and transparent.(42) | (a) The recommendation is accepted. |
| 43. | (b) There should be a provision to relax qualifications in the case of local candidates to be backed by capability building programmes for them. (43) | (b) The recommendation is not accepted as consideration of norms and qualifications by a State would not be confined to NREGA staff but be part of their overall personnel policy. |
| 44. | (c) Services of Non- Governmental Organisations with proven track records could also be used to | (c) The recommendation is not accepted as the NREGA Guidelines |

| Sl. No. | Recommendations made by Administrative Reforms Commission | Government's Decision |
|---------|--|---|
| | <p>supplement staff deficits. (44)</p> | <p>provided for establishing a technical resource network and empanelment of engineers at the State level. With the increase in the administrative limit to 4%, States are expected to strengthen their technical and administrative resources.</p> |
| 45. | <p>(d) The norms for engaging staff, both technical and administrative, should be linked to the average population per Panchayat (village/block and district). In hilly terrain, the area per Panchayat should also be a criterion. (45)</p> | <p>(d) The recommendation is not accepted as consideration of norms and qualifications by a State would not be confined to NREGA staff but be part of their overall personnel policy.</p> |
| 46. | <p>(e) In case of smaller Gram Panchayats where each Panchayat cannot financially support a full complement of staff, the State Government may group them into compact administrative units for staffing purposes. (46)</p> | <p>(e) The recommendation is accepted.</p> |
| 47. | <p>(f) The following incentives may be provided to officials working in difficult areas: (47)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Liberal life insurance cover. ii. Hardship allowance. iii. Retention of government accommodation for family if required outside the place of posting. <p>However, all these incentives should be linked to performance which should be reviewed each year.</p> | <p>(f) The recommendation is not accepted as this is a general policy issue and could not be linked with NREGA.</p> |
| 48. | <p>(g) In case of acute shortage of engineers in the field, a panel of non-government engineers may be engaged at the block level. Educated youth could be identified and trained to prepare estimates for works. These draft estimates would then be scrutinized and approved by the panel of engineers at the block level. (48)</p> | <p>(g) The recommendation is accepted.</p> |
| 49. | <p>(h) The limit of administrative expenses should be raised from the existing 2 per cent to 6 per cent of</p> | <p>(h) The recommendation is not accepted. The proposal of the Ministry</p> |

| Sl. No. | Recommendations made by Administrative Reforms Commission | Government's Decision |
|---------|---|---|
| | the total expenditure under the Scheme. Out of this, 1 per cent of the total funds should be earmarked for concurrent monitoring and audit, and 2 per cent for training. Additional funds for meeting enhanced administrative expenses should be provided in difficult areas. (This could be 2 per cent of the total expenditure under the Scheme, in addition to what is provided for normal districts). (49) | of Rural Development to raise the permissible administrative cap of 2% to 6% was considered by the Government and approved only 4%. . |
| 50. | (i) Training should not be envisaged as a one time intervention but should be a continuing process. (2 per cent of the total funds should be earmarked for training activities). (50) | (i) The recommendation is not accepted. The overall ceiling was fixed at 4% and, as such, 2% for training could not be earmarked. |
| 51. | (j) The following subjects should inter alia be covered in the training programmes : i. The concept of poverty, its dimensions, causes and possible solutions. ii. The problems of gender inequality. iii. An overview of Panchayati Raj. iv. NREGA and the processes involved in it. v. Associated laws such as Right to Information, Minimum Wages Act etc. (51) | (j) The recommendation is accepted. |
| 52. | (k) A cascading approach should be adopted for training. Pools of resource persons should be created at the State, district and block levels. (52) | (k) The recommendation is accepted. |
| 53. | (l) Distance learning technology should be used for imparting training in remote and inaccessible areas. (53) | (l) The recommendation is accepted. |
| 54. | (m) There should be evaluation of training activities through independent agencies. (54) | (m) The recommendation is accepted. |
| 55. | (n) The services of NGOs and SHGs should be used to impart trainings. (55) | (n) The recommendation is accepted. |
| 56. | (o) In violence affected areas, a District Task Force headed by the District Collector having the | (o) The recommendation is accepted. |

| Sl. No. | Recommendations made by Administrative Reforms Commission | Government's Decision |
|---------|---|---|
| 57. | <p>Superintendent of Police, Chief Executive of District Panchayat and other concerned officers, as members should be constituted to ensure that the provisions of NREGA are implemented properly, and to help the Panchayats. (56)</p> <p>(p) In areas where the Panchayats are non-functional, the District Collector should be made responsible for implementation of REGS. In areas which are not covered by Part IX of the Constitution, local bodies under the State law which may or may not be traditional institutions, can be used. State specific solutions will have to be evolved since the situation varies from State to State. (57)</p> | (p) The recommendation is accepted. |
| 58. | <p>15. Selection and Maintenance of Works (Para 5.4.2.5)</p> <p>(a) Selection of shelf of works at the Gram Panchayat and Block/ Intermediate Panchayat level should be in harmony with the district development plan. The shelf of works should be such that watershed development is ensured and water resources are enhanced. Stand-alone works should be discouraged.(58)</p> | (a) & (b) The recommendations are accepted. |
| 59. | <p>(b) The Block/Intermediate Panchayat should ensure that the works of one Gram Panchayat do not adversely affect the adjoining Gram Panchayat. The same principle should be followed by the District Panchayat to ensure coordination between works having inter-block ramifications. Inter-Gram Panchayat works should be taken up after the approval of the concerned Gram Panchayats involved. Similarly, works of inter block nature should be taken up after the approval of the concerned Intermediate/ Block Panchayats. (59)</p> | |
| 60. | <p>(c) It should be ensured that most of the works are executed through Gram Panchayats and need for works to be taken up by the Block/Intermediate Panchayats should arise only</p> | (c) The recommendation is accepted. |

| Sl. No. | Recommendations made by Administrative Reforms Commission | Government's Decision |
|---------|--|--|
| | in case of inter-Gram Panchayat works or where the Gram Panchayats have not been able to meet the demand for employment. (60) | |
| 61. | <p>16. Block Resource Centre(Para 5.4.3.2)</p> <p>(a) To augment the technical resources of Panchayats at the village and intermediate levels, a Block Resource Centre may be set up which would include a panel of experts and professionals available at the block level. This Centre would perform functions at the block level, similar to those of the District Technical Group at the district level. (61)</p> | (a) The recommendation is accepted. State level and district level technical resource group could be formed. However, setting up such groups at the block level may not be feasible at this stage. |
| 62. | <p>17. Entrepreneurship Institutes for the Rural Poor (Para 5.4.4.4)</p> <p>(a) Entrepreneurship training institutes should be set up in every block to train and impart skills to the rural poor so that they get the opportunity to be self employed. This should be financed out of the funds earmarked for administrative expenses under NREGA.(62)</p> | (a) The recommendation is not accepted. However, it was suggested that the recommendations be implemented through other schemes of Ministry of Rural Development. |
| 63. | <p>18. Monitoring Systems (Para 5.4.5.5)</p> <p>(a) The monitoring mechanism as prescribed under the guidelines should be enriched by incorporating those features which capture information about the crucial parameters of the Scheme. (63)</p> | (a) The recommendation is accepted. |
| 64. | <p>(b) For the purposes of record keeping, 'employment generation' shall be deemed to have taken place only when the workers have received their wages. This would ensure that (a) the functionaries make prompt payment to the beneficiaries, and (b) the financial and physical progress complement each other. (64)</p> | (b) The recommendation is accepted. |
| 65. | <p>(c) Independent monitoring and auditing agencies should be engaged to carry out concurrent monitoring and audit. These agencies should visit Panchayats at least once a month, check the records, verify the periodicals reports and set right any inconsistencies. The reports should be</p> | (c) The recommendation is not accepted as engaging independent monitoring and auditing agencies on a monthly basis for visiting each gram panchayat would imply engaging a massive network of agencies. Thus |

| Sl. No. | Recommendations made by Administrative Reforms Commission | Government's Decision |
|---------|--|--|
| 66. | <p>submitted only after validation by these agencies. These agencies should also guide the Panchayat staff in maintenance of records and preparation of reports. (65)</p> <p>(d) Within the permissible administrative expenditure of 6 per cent (recommended) of total expenditure, 1 per cent should be earmarked for monitoring and evaluation. (Refer Para 5.4.1.2.8.h) (66)</p> | <p>concurrent audit is not practical.</p> <p>(d) The recommendation is not accepted. Within the 4% ceiling as currently approved, it would not be possible to earmark too many sub ceilings for different activities. However, funds available under the administrative budget for monitoring could be used.</p> |
| 67. | <p>19. Curbing Corruption and Leakages (Para 5.4.6.7)</p> <p>(a) Templates of estimates of general works should be prepared showing the inputs of labour and material required. This should act as an aid for preparation of estimates. (67)</p> | <p>(a) The recommendation is accepted.</p> |
| 68. | <p>(b) The muster roll should incorporate the physical dimensions of work that has been carried out in the work cycle. To the extent possible it should be backed with a photograph of the work executed, at different stages. (68)</p> | <p>(b) The recommendation is accepted.</p> |
| 69. | <p>(c) The Grievances Redressal Mechanism as provided in the NREGA should proactively reach out to the people to redress their grievances. (69)</p> | <p>(c) The recommendation is accepted.</p> |
| 70. | <p>20. Transparency and Right to Information Act (Para 5.4.7.5)</p> <p>(a) A continuing process of training and awareness generation about the NREGA and RTI is essential. The impact of such programmes should be assessed through an independent evaluation, and officials should be required to qualify in a test after their training. (70)</p> | <p>(a) The recommendation of conducting tests is not accepted. RTI is applicable to all programmes. However, transparency in guidelines and works would be ensured and disseminated in local language.</p> |
| 71. | <p>(b) NGOs with credibility and spatial reach should be identified and entrusted with the task of creating awareness and capability building. (71)</p> | <p>(b) (c) & (d) The recommendations are accepted.</p> |

| Sl. No. | Recommendations made by Administrative Reforms Commission | Government's Decision |
|---------|--|---|
| 72. | (c) All documents should be prepared in local language. The estimates and measurement books are generally written in English. These need to be written and recorded in the official language of the State. In case of difficulty, at least, a summary of such documents should be prepared in local language. (72) | |
| 73. | (d) State Governments should evolve norms about the mode of publication of suo moto disclosures by the Panchayats. (73) | |
| 74. | <p>21. Use of IT – Blocks as Nodal, Fully-Electronic Points (Para 5.4.8.1.6)</p> <p>(a) Blocks must be the nodal levels of government at which all information is electronic. This should be achieved within a year. (74)</p> | (a) & (b) The recommendations are accepted. |
| 75. | (b) Any information collected in non-electronic form at this or a lower level of government must be digitized at block level. (75) | |
| 76. | <p>22. Use of IT – A Minimum and Common Set of National Standards for Data (Para 5.4.8.2.6)</p> <p>(a) A common minimum set of NREGA reporting standards should be established for Gram Panchayats, blocks, districts, States and Government of India. Specifically, the particular fields of data to be reported at every level must be identical. Where data is collected in manual form, the process for data conversion to electronic form should be based on standard forms, so as to ensure their uniformity. (76)</p> | (a) & (b) The recommendations are accepted. |
| 77. | (b) So long as the above condition is fulfilled, States need not be constrained to use the same software for implementation everywhere. If, over time, some software is found to be more advantageous, a transition towards that can be considered. (77) | |
| | 23. Use of IT – Architecture for Development | |

| Sl. No. | Recommendations made by Administrative Reforms Commission | Government's Decision |
|---------|--|--|
| 78. | <p>(a) Data from the blocks should be aggregated in central repositories in each of the States. A single data centre may be adequate for each State, and transmission to this Centre from each of the blocks should be enabled. District-wise aggregation of the data reported from the blocks should be taken up to facilitate monitoring at this level too, although no data centres are necessary at this intermediate level. (78)</p> | (a) The recommendation is accepted. |
| 79. | <p>(b) A pre-determined format for bulk transmission of data should also be established, as should the frequency for such transfers. (79)</p> | (b) The recommendation is accepted. |
| 80. | <p>(c) Dedicated transmission networks for government data are not necessary. Wide area networks established by private entities will suffice. Nonetheless data encryption and network security levels should be set high enough to ensure the integrity of the data from creation to analysis and archival. (80)</p> | (c) The recommendation is accepted . |
| 81. | <p>(d) The Union Government should maintain its own data centre, aggregating data from each of the State repositories. (81)</p> | (d) The recommendation is accepted. |
| 82. | <p>24. Use of IT – Assessment of Initial Deployment by Ministry of Rural Development (Para 5.4.8.4.3)</p> <p>(a) A unique identification should be issued not to each household, but to each individual. The members of each household should be tracked together to ensure that each household receives the appropriate benefit under the Scheme, but the identities of each individual should be kept separate. (82)</p> | (a) The recommendation is not accepted. It was, however, noted when Unique Identification No. would be ready it would be inserted as an entry in the job card. |
| 83. | <p>(b) Computerisation of records at the Block/Mandal level is being achieved. It is commendable, further, that Gram Panchayat level computerization is possible in some States; this should be the eventual goal for all States. (83)</p> | (b) The recommendation is accepted. |

| Sl. No. | Recommendations made by Administrative Reforms Commission | Government's Decision |
|---------|--|---|
| 84. | (c) Periodic reviews should be conducted, nonetheless, to determine whether the uniformity and standardization are adequate, and any necessary revisions should be made. (84) | (c) (d) (e) & (f) The recommendations are accepted. |
| 85. | (d) The central storage of data in electronic form is at Delhi. Access to the data in the IT system, however, should be possible for officials at all levels of government with due access authority. (85) | |
| 86. | (e) While social audits are a required measure for transparency under the Scheme, these should not be the only ones, or even the primary ones. Voluntary disclosure should be the norm for informing citizens about the functioning of the NREGA; this will considerably reduce the onus on social audits. (86) | |
| 87. | (f) Alerts are being generated using trigger points that ensure compliance with the rules and guidelines of the REGS. By periodic review, it should be determined what additional alerts are needed so that these too could be incorporated. (87) | |
| 88. | (g) A Geographic Information System for visualization of data on map spaces must be developed. Given the scale and complexity of the records being maintained, their analysis solely from databases will limit the efficiency of scrutiny; visualization to identify strengths and weaknesses in geographic terms is therefore needed. (88) | (g) The recommendation is accepted. It was suggested that pilot projects might be launched for developing GIS for visualization of data on map spaces. A wasteland atlas had been made by Department of Land Resources. Information on soil type, land use pattern at the district, block boundaries has been loaded on NIC GIS server and would be utilized for NREGA works. |
| 89. | (h) Rankings of districts based on outcome-based monitoring should be included along with other voluntary disclosures, and made available to the public, including on the website of the REGS. (89) | (h) The recommendation is accepted. |

| Sl. No. | Recommendations made by Administrative Reforms Commission | Government's Decision |
|---------|---|--|
| 90. | <p>25. Use of IT – Unique Identification System – (Para 5.4.8.5.3)</p> <p>(a) The identification of participants in the REGS should be developed nationally, in preparation for wider use of a national citizen identification number. The potential for such identity to be developed congruently with other systems of nationwide participation – e.g. elections – should be explored along with appropriate representatives from such other arenas as well. (90)</p> | <p>(a) The recommendation is accepted. It was decided that as and when Unique Identification No. was ready, it would be entered in the job card.</p> |
| 91. | <p>26. Use of IT – IT System for Financial Management (Para 5.4.8.6.5)</p> <p>(a) The IT system should maintain numbered records of all transactions, and the specific fields to be contained in each transaction type should be pre-determined as part of the NREGA standards. (91)</p> | <p>(a) & (b) The recommendations are accepted.</p> |
| 92. | <p>(b) Specific triggers for replenishment of funds for implementers should be set in the IT system. (92)</p> | |
| 93. | <p>(c) Direct transfer of money from the origin of funds to the implementer's account should be possible. Intermediate levels of government should have access to this information, but for informational purposes only. (93)</p> | <p>(c) The recommendation is not accepted as under the Act, the DPCs and programme officers have legal responsibility and as such they could not be by- passed in fund transfer.</p> |
| 94. | <p>(d) Requests for replenishment should also be enabled without triggers, so that exigencies can be managed. A login-based system to facilitate this is needed, to ensure its security. Digital signatures could also be created for officers identified as vested with such authority. (94)</p> | <p>(d) The recommendation is accepted.</p> |
| 95. | <p>27. Use of IT – IT System for Monitoring and Evaluation (Para 5.4.8.7.5)</p> <p>(a) A comprehensive list of quantitative measures for the detection of inconsistencies between operations and rules should be</p> | <p>(a) & (b) The recommendations are accepted.</p> |

| Sl. No. | Recommendations made by Administrative Reforms Commission | Government's Decision |
|---------|---|---|
| 96. | <p>established within the IT system. These should be directly derived from the rules themselves – each of the rules/guidelines should be considered alongside the question “can this be monitored in real-time?” and the appropriate measure of detection should be developed. (95)</p> <p>(b) Violations of the rules using any of the quantified measures should trigger alerts in the IT system, which should be routed to the appropriate supervisory official.(96)</p> | (c) & (d) The recommendations are accepted. |
| 97. | <p>(c) Performance variables for the REGS as a whole should be identified, and these should be applied to data at all implementing levels. In addition to the implementing levels, the data should also be aggregated by jurisdiction and ranks established for all blocks, districts and States according to the measures of performance. Such output should be public as part of the Governments disclosures under the RTI law.(97)</p> | |
| 98. | <p>(d) A Geographic Information System for the REGS should be developed and information that is developed through aggregation should be presented through this system as well. A zoom-able and pan-able interface should allow performance to be understood at different levels of administration from the same base data. Wherever possible, suo moto disclosures should be in GIS format also, in addition to their other means of dissemination. (98)</p> | |
| 99. | <p>28. Use of IT – Right to Information in NREGA and use of IT (Para 5.4.8.8.4)</p> <p>(a) Information that is required to be disclosed suo moto by various implementing arms of government should be clearly identified for each level of government, and wherever possible the IT system should be able to integrate the data necessary for such reporting, and generate suo motu reports automatically. (99)</p> | (a) The recommendation is accepted. |

| Sl. No. | Recommendations made by Administrative Reforms Commission | Government's Decision |
|---------|---|--|
| 100. | (b) A list of questions that the IT system should be able to answer, to assure compliance with the RTI Act, must be created. This list must be periodically revised to include additional questions and make higher standards of disclosure possible. (100) | (b) & (c) The recommendations are accepted. |
| 101. | (c) The same data should be used for administrative purposes as well as RTI- related disclosure. The government, citizens and other stakeholders should all have information based on the same set of data, and the information available with each should be created from a common database. (101) | |
| 102. | 29. Use of IT – Smart Cards (Para 5.4.8.9.5) (a) A few pilot projects in different regions may be taken up in a cluster of villages using SMART Cards. Such SMART cards should store information about the person's identity (including biometrics) and should have the capacity of recording transactions under NREGA and even authorize payments. In the long run, a viable business model needs to be developed so that the private sector can participate. (102) | (a) The recommendation is not accepted as there is already a job card. It is noted that providing smart card readers in 6 lakh villages was not feasible. It was suggested to wait till Unique Identification No. system became operational. |
| 103. | 30. Implementation of NREGA in the Fifth and Sixth Schedule Areas (Para 5.4.9.4) (a) The recommendations of the expert group on "Planning at the Grassroots Level" (March, 2006) should be implemented in a time bound manner. {The recommendations are at Annexure V(2)} (103) | (a) The recommendation is accepted. |
| 104. | (b) The recommendations of the NCRWC contained in para 9.23(i) to (iii) of their Report, should be acted upon immediately. (104) | (b) The recommendation is accepted and the Ministry of Rural Development was requested to pursue. |
| | 31. Implementation of NREGA in Areas affected by Natural Calamities (Para 5.4.10.5) | |

| Sl. No. | Recommendations made by Administrative Reforms Commission | Government's Decision |
|---------|--|---|
| 105. | (a) Demand for employment in any area should be first met through works under NREGA. Relief works (in cases of natural calamities) should be taken up only if demand for work exists and the households have exhausted their entitlements under NREGA. (105) | (a) The recommendation is not accepted. The NREGA is demand based. Employment under NREGA is only for those households who apply for and obtain job cards and then submit written application for employment. On the other hand, relief work is not demand based. NREGA and relief work should not be seen as exchangeable. |
| 106. | 32. Relaxation of Certain Restrictive Provisions (Para 5.4.11.1.3) (a) The list of works in Schedule I needs to be enlarged. For the purpose, suggestions should be obtained from the State Governments and the list should be made comprehensive to meet the demands of topography and climate. (106) | (a) & (b) The recommendations are accepted. |
| 107. | (b) Land development activities may be permitted in the lands of small and marginal farmers. (107) | |
| 108. | 33. Number of Workers to Commence a Work (Para 5.4.11.2.2) (a) The minimum number of workers required for commencing a work may be reduced from the present number of 50 to 20. (108) | (a) The recommendation is accepted. |
| 109. | 34. Records (Para 5.4.12.6) (a) Each Gram Panchayat should have a Job Card Ledger in the Panchayat, which should be a shadow of the job cards. This would have the dual advantage of preventing any tampering in the job cards and also having the entire information available in the Panchayat. In Gram Panchayats, which have computers, this would not be an extra effort. In Panchayats, which do not have computers, this could be a simple register, which would have the same entries as in the job card. This register should be updated every week whenever payment of wages is made. (109) | (a) The recommendation is accepted. |

| Sl. No. | Recommendations made by Administrative Reforms Commission | Government's Decision |
|---------|--|--|
| 110. | (b) Records should be kept in a manner that enables accounting of each work voucher-wise, so that it is possible to track every voucher to a work and also get voucher-wise utilization of funds for each work. (110) | (b) & (c) The recommendations are accepted. It was noted that the States would be advised suitably and the formats would be reviewed. |
| 111. | (c) Formats of some registers need to be amended as suggested in para 5.4.12. (111) | |
| 112. | <p>35. Coordination Mechanism (Para 5.4.13.5)</p> <p>(a) A common inter-ministerial, empowered steering committee for NREGA, other flag-ship programmes and the Bharat Nirman Programme may be set up with the Cabinet Secretary as the Chairman and Secretaries of concerned Ministries/Departments as members. The Committee may be given adequate powers to: (112)</p> <p>(i) oversee the work of sectoral ministerial committees in order to remove differences, bottlenecks and lack of synergy and issue directions to bring about an integrated approach.</p> <p>(ii) take timely and appropriate decisions for effective and accountable implementation of the concerned programmes.</p> <p>(iii) bring about better coordination in implementation.</p> <p>(iv) ensure the centrality of local governments in the implementation at the local levels and also as part of the local planning process mandated by the Commission.</p> | (a)& (b) The recommendations are not accepted. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Council, which is a statutory body, meets periodically as required. |
| 113. | (b) Similar empowered committees may be set up at the state and district levels. (113) | |
| 114. | <p>36. Building a National Identity (Para 5.4.14.2)</p> <p>(a) This initiative taken up through NREGA may be called 'Rashtriya Sukshema Abhiyan'. (114)</p> | (a) The recommendation is not accepted. The NREGA is an Act of the Parliament and conferred a legal right on the eligible persons. |