



# MGNREGS and Women's Collectives

Working together to build sustainable livelihoods

The Kerala Experience



Aajeevika  
National Rural Livelihoods Mission



Kudumbashree  
Kerala State Poverty Eradication Mission

Kudumbashree-National Resource Organization

## PREFACE

Kudumbashree – State Poverty Eradication Mission of Kerala was launched in 1998, with the objective to “eradicate absolute poverty through concerted community action under the leadership of local governments, by facilitating organization of the poor for combining self-help with demand-led convergence of available services and resources to tackle the multiple dimensions and manifestations of poverty, holistically”. The Malayalam term ‘Kudumbashree’, in its literal sense, means ‘prosperity of the family’.

Kudumbashree is a Community Based Organisation (CBO) of poor families, represented by a woman from the family. It is built as a three-tier structure. At the base are Neighbourhood Groups (NHG) that work on the principles of mutual affinity and benefit. The NHG are federated at the level of a Ward in the Local Government into Area Development Societies (ADS), and further into a Community Development Society (CDS) at the level of the Local Government. Today, the Kudumbashree network has membership of 4.1 million families, organized into 261,000 NHGs, 19,773 ADS, and 1072 CDS. Kudumbashree focuses its programs in three domains, economic empowerment, social empowerment and women’ empowerment.

A significant aspect of the Kudumbashree network is its close and organic linkage with the local governments. The NHG functions as a sub-set of the Gram Sabha (i.e. a village assembly of voters at the Ward level). The ADS at the Ward level coordinates with the Gram Sabha and the elected Ward member. At the local government level, the Executive Committee of the CDS also comprises of representatives from the elected Gram Panchayat (GP) council. Furthermore, the CDS and its activities are overseen by the ‘Evaluation Committee’ headed by the President of the Gram Panchayat. The CDS represents the interests of poor women and their families in the local governance structures and also supports in the implementation of development programmes of the local government.

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) was launched in Kerala on a pilot basis in two districts, Palakkad and Wayanad, in 2006. It was scaled up to cover all 14 districts of Kerala by 2008. The Kudumbashree community network plays a vital role in implementation of MGNREGS. The Ward-level federation ADS plays the most critical role. They play a role in the registration of labourers, preparation of the Annual Action Plan for MGNREGS, and provision of amenities at the work site. ADS members are chosen to work as Mates in MGNREGS. The scheme is also a part of the Kudumbashree CDS Action Plan.

In Kerala, MGNREGS has transitioned from a poverty alleviation measure into a platform for the enhancement of the economic, social and governance capabilities of women. In Kerala, women account for 90% of the labour groups under MGNREGS - the highest for any state in the country. The heightened spirit of collectivisation brought about by the Kudumbashree NHGs is a key factor contributing to the rallying of women to join the fold of MGNREGS workers.

Kudumbashree was recognised as a National Resource Organization (NRO) by the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India, under the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM), to provide technical and implementation support to NRLM and State Rural Livelihood Missions (SRLMs), based on mutual interest. Presently, NRO provides support to eight states in two domains – enhancing convergence between Panchayati Raj Institutions and Community Based Organisations, and Micro-enterprise development through provision of on-ground Micro-Enterprises Consultant (MEC) support.

Taking cue from the Kerala experience, NRO has identified MGNREGS as an entry point scheme for convergence activities in partner-States. Implementing MGNREGS through the

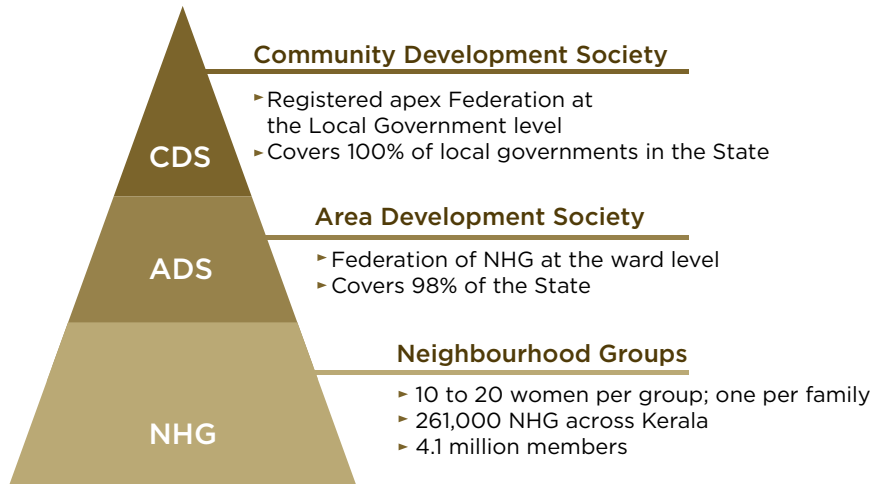
CBO network formed under NRLM would be beneficial to reach out to a larger section of the community. The Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI) can work with the Self-Help Group (SHG) network and their federations for awareness generation programmes, job card registration and distribution, identification of work, labour budgeting, supervision of work, and other relevant activities under MGNREGS. The wages earned by the workers through MGNREGS can be invested in the SHGs, which can be used for further asset creation and for developing livelihood prospects through self-employment.

This volume is a compilation of case studies and narratives of Kudumbashree women sharing their experiences of being empowered through MGNREGS.

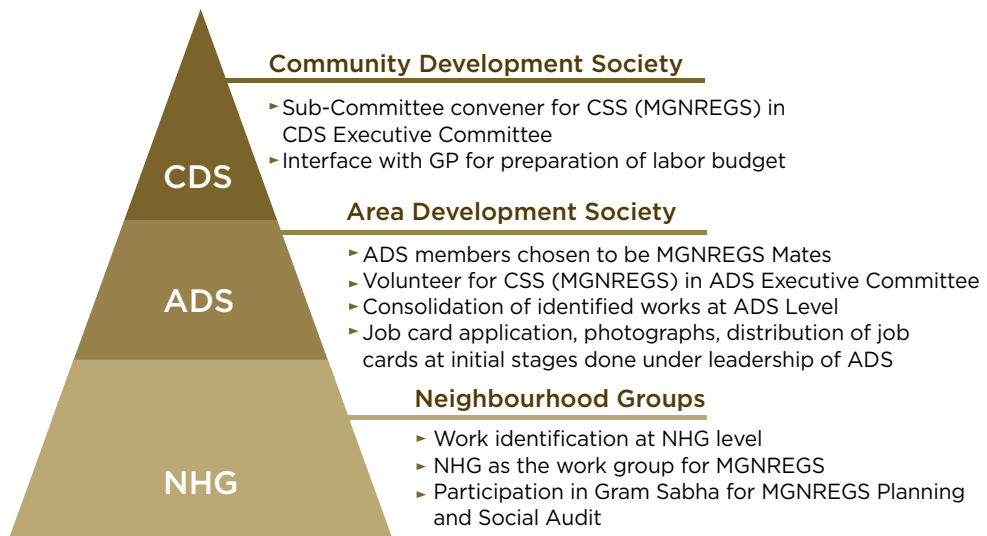
## List of Acronyms

ADS	Area Development Society
ATMA	Agriculture Technology Management Agency
BDO	Block Development Officer
BPL	Below Poverty Line
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CDS	Community Development Society
DPC	District Planning Committee
GP	Gram Panchayat
HDPE	High Density Polyethylene
JLG	Joint Liability Group
MEC	Micro Enterprise Consultant
MGNREGA	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
MGNREGS	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme
MoEF	Ministry of Environment and Forest
MoRD	Ministry of Rural Development
MoWR	Ministry of Water Resources
NABARD	National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development
NAP	National Afforestation Policy
NFP	National Forest Policy
NHG	Neighbourhood Group
NRLM	National Rural Livelihood Mission
NRO	National Resource Organisation
PDS	Public Distribution System
PRI	Panchayati Raj Institutions
SBA	Swacch Bharat Abhiyan
SC	Scheduled Caste
SHG	Self-Help Group
SRLM	State Rural Livelihood Mission
ST	Scheduled Tribe

# Kudumbashree CDS Structure



# Kudumbashree and MGNREGS



# MGNREGS, for Sustainable Livelihoods

When MGNREGS was introduced in Kerala, many shared a feeling of uncertainty regarding how successful the scheme would turn out to be. Given the fact that literacy rates and prevailing market wage rates in Kerala are high, a daily wage scheme for unskilled labour work was not expected to bring about any significant change or evoke enthusiastic participation from the people.

However, these assumptions proved false as MGNREGS emerged to become a unique opportunity for many women in Kerala to experience a world beyond their homes. Neither did these women possess high levels of education, nor were they financially independent. They relied on the men in the house for their financial needs. Through MGNREGS implementation, Kerala witnessed the emergence of three important features:

- Attitudinal change among women
- Skill development among women
- Renewed focus on natural resource management



*Women working towards land development (left) and bund creation (right) under MGNREGS*

Kudumbashree played a key role in the mobilization, planning and implementation of MGNREGS in Kerala. Resultantly, women came out in large numbers to participate in MGNREGS work. Many NHGs organised themselves into labour groups in their respective localities. The women preferred to work as a collective, rather than as individuals. This willingness led to attitudinal changes. Many women who were home makers earlier, came out of their homes to perform manual labour and earned cash income for the first time in their life.

Due to their involvement in these activities they also gained new skills. They learnt to make farm bunds, dig soak pits, build cattle sheds and basements of houses. They also participated in land development and water conservation related activities, and in the process learnt to work with hoes, chisels, forks, spades, shovels, and many other tools.

Newly acquired skills accompanied by the cohesive solidarity and strength of collectives inspired confidence in the women to take up work in the open market after the 100 days of work under MGNREGS. The work groups turned into Thozhil Koottam (labour collectives) and started working on private lands in the neighbouring areas. For the land owners, this meant that labour was available in the local market at a reasonable rate. Whereas, for the workers it translated into access to income opportunities throughout the year. It was a win-win situation.

MGNREGS gained widespread popularity through active participation of women. It also generated additional gains due to conservation and development of natural resources and building of common property resources. Works related to building and maintenance of canals, renovation of ponds, wells and farm land, afforestation, etc. have contributed to increased quantity and improved quality of common property resources and natural resources within Panchayats.

Admittedly, MGNREGS has brought about significant changes to the work culture and resource development scenario in rural Kerala. However, transitioning towards the next phase is crucial. The scheme should also consider providing opportunities to educated personnel to engage in higher levels of skill acquisition, and build a sustainable livelihood in their own neighbourhood.

'There are lessons to be learnt about the opportunities for Panchayati Raj Institutions to bring strategic convergences into the programme, and the opportunities for community organisations to strive for organisational empowerment through participation in governance — lessons that could have far-reaching implications for improving the quality of life of the poor, transforming agriculture and the labour market, and ushering in a new dialogue of women's empowerment that quickens the movement of women from second class citizens to full citizenship.'

Quoted from 'Women, work and a winning combination', by Sarada Muraleedharan, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Panchayati Raj, and former Executive Director, Kudumbashree.

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# Tomorrow - Brighter and Better

“Namaskaram (Hello). I am Anamma Biju. I live in Meppadi Panchayat in Wayanad, Kerala with my husband and two children. I belong to an economically backward family. My husband is an auto driver and earns a monthly income of Rs. 2000. He was the sole earning member of the family and it was difficult to meet household expenses until I started working in MGNREGS. I also work in the coffee and tea gardens but the number of days for which work is available are not fixed.

I joined Kudumbashree as a NHG member in the year 2004. Kudumbashree has given me the energy and courage to face the problems in my life. Our collective has given me good support and space for sharing my problems. The NHG loans were also a huge support in my life. At the NHG meeting we also got information regarding the different schemes being implemented by the Panchayat. One day our Panchayat member and CDS member called a special meeting of ADS and explained about MGNREGS. They instructed the ADS member and NHG secretary to take responsibility for registering the NHG family members (adult household members above 18 years of age) under MGNREGS.

I learnt about MGNREGS and also started motivating other women to register for MGNREGS. I would visit various NHGs during their meetings and encourage women by telling them about the benefits of working under MGNREGS and help them get job cards. As I was an ADS member, it was also my duty to help other people in the Panchayat to get job cards. I distributed the forms for job cards, helped organise camps at the Ward level to verify and collect job card application/forms, and assisted in the distribution of issued job cards. After a few months of being an ADS member, I was chosen to be a Mate by the Panchayat.

The Kudumbashree network takes active part in important activities such as the identification of work under MGNREGS. The Ward members and the CDS are informed about the time frame of work identification by the Gram Panchayat. This Information is disseminated through the Kudumbashree network (CDS - ADS - NHG). Identification of work is done at the NHG level and the list is submitted to the ADS. The various work lists at the Ward level are then consolidated. This



Name: **Anamma Biju**

Age: 36 years

Place of Residence: Meppadi  
Gram Panchayat, Wayanad

Year of Joining MGNREGA: 2008

is followed by mobilising the MGNREGS workers of the Ward for the project meeting. This meeting is facilitated by Kudumbashree members and consolidated work list is presented to the Ward member. I have always taken an active part in these activities.

Since 2008, I have been working regularly in MGNREGS and have been a Mate several times. I have worked for 100 days each year since 2008 and have also received a prize from my Panchayat for completing hundred days of work in the last two years.

Working in MGNREGS has brought about many changes in my life. I have become financially independent and I use my income to finance my children's education and other household expenses. Other than buying groceries for the house, I have also used my income to buy some furniture, induction stove, some gold, and also contributed to construction of my house. I could never imagine any of this before I started working for MGNREGS. Earlier, even accumulating the thrift amount of Rs. 10 every week for my NHG savings seemed next to impossible. We can now afford to eat non-vegetarian food and my children's favourite bakery goods more often. I still remember those difficult days when my children demanded special things like bakery goods but I was forced to turn a blind eye and sometimes even scold them. I cannot tell you how bad I felt scolding them but I had no other option.

Before I joined Kudumbashree I used to just restrict myself to my house and the work at a coffee plantation. After joining Kudumbashree, I started stepping out a little but my interaction with the world outside the four walls of my house increased only after I started working MGNREGS. Earlier, I just sat at home and would always be unhappy and stressed about my financial and other problems. Now, when I go to the worksite and work, interact with other workers, take part in various types of discussions and sit together and eat food, I forget all my worries and am able to deal with my problems in a better manner. This has had a good effect on my mental health, and when one is mentally at peace only then can he or she can be physically fit.

When I work at the MGNREGS work site, I give instructions and take decisions as a Mate. I am accountable to the workers at the worksite, and I interact with various officials of Panchayat, banks, MGNREGS etc. I have also grown aware about the functioning of the Gram Panchayat, unlike earlier when I only had a vague idea about it. All this has made me a confident person. I feel powerful and responsible at the same time. Earlier, I could not even speak to anyone; words would not come out of my mouth especially if I had to speak to someone whom I had never met before. Now, I can address big meetings even in the presence of officials. I also developed my skills in this process. I now realise that whatever help we get from the government is not help, it is our right.

I would like to share something that I have learned from my personal journey - when you confine yourself to your house and domestic chores, you remain stressed. If you go out and work for MGNREGS, you will not just become financially independent but also be free from all the unnecessary stress. You will find yourself more ready to face the world."



# Crossing New Frontiers

The labour market in Kerala is facing a severe shortage of persons who are willing to be employed in occupations that involve physical labour. Resultantly, this gap is currently being filled by a large number of migrant workers from other States. The 2011 Census figure shows that the work participation rate among women in Kerala is 18.23%. In this context, the fact that 94% of MGNREGS workers in the State are women assumes significance. It is observed that most women who participate in MGNREGS in Kerala are primarily homemakers with no previous participation in the the labour market. Significantly, these women do not view MGNREGS as casual work but as “working for the government.” For them, MGNREGS is not just 100 days of guaranteed wage employment but a unique space in the community to engage in a dialogue with each other, share meals, articulate demands and upgrade skills. This shift in the perspective of MGNREGS - from being a supplementary source of income to emerging as an opportunity for creating durable assets, improving water security, soil conservation and increasing land productivity - has been gradual, but definite.

## Creation of Community Benefit Assets



Name: Raji  
Age: 26 years  
Place of Residence: Meppadi  
Gram Panchayat, Wayanad  
Year of Joining MGNREGS: 2008

Raji is a resident of Arunamala colony in Meppadi Panchayat of Wayanad. Arunamala is a Scheduled Tribe (ST) colony inhabited by 67 ST families. Raji started working in MGNREGS in the year 2008. She shares her experience.

“Every family in my colony takes part in MGNREGS and I have completed 100 days of work for the past 5 years. To reach my colony you have to trek for around one hour as the terrain is hilly with no roads. All of us residents of Ward 13 sit together and do planning for MGNREGS and then take it to the Gram Sabha. Earlier, I never went out of my colony, did not have a bank account or the confidence to talk to any unknown person. Today, I have a bank account with savings and the confidence to not only talk but also question everyone, ranging from bank officials and engineers to Gram Panchayat elected members. I have been able to support my family and also buy things for myself with the money I make through MGNREGS. I recently bought a pair of anklets for myself and some furniture for my house. One of the best things about MGNREGS is that the work

is getting done on the community land, and more importantly I don't have to ask other people for work. I am working for the government. MGNREGS has brought about a change in my life. It can do the same for you.

Working for MGNREGS has not only supplemented livelihoods but has also contributed towards community asset creation. There is a small river that flows in our Panchayat, around which we have made a stone bund under MGNREGS. We use this water for watering plants and other activities. The work that we choose to do under MGNREGS depends on what is required to be done in our colony. The MGNREGS staff members and our elected representatives in the Gram Panchayat help us in understanding what works can be chosen. In the past, creation of earthen bunds, stop dams, landscaping, plantation farms of mango, jack fruits are some of the works that were undertaken in my colony through MGNREGS.”



*Stone bunding work done through MGNREGS to regulate the flow of a stream in Arunamala colony, Meppadi Panchayat, Wayanad District*



## Community Based Rehabilitation



Name: Sharada

Age: 65 years

Place of Residence: Akathethara  
Gram Panchayat, Palakkad

Year of Joining MGNREGS: 2005

Sharada is an unmarried woman who has completed 100 days of work every year since 2007.

Sharada says, “In the beginning, my neighbours began to work under MGNREGS and I just went along with them. Now, it is my only source of income.

There is also an added incentive of being able to purchase rice at reduced rates (Rs. 2 per kg.) through the Public Distribution System (PDS) for women who have completed 50 days of work under MGNREGS. This serves as an additional motivation for me to participate in MGNREGS work.

In the year 2013-2014, a list of people who completed 50 days of work was forwarded to the District office. The people were then directed to the Civil Supplies Corporation outlet to get rice at Rs. 2 per kg.”

### Role of PRI

Section 9.6 of the Operational Guidelines of MGNREGS states that, “Widowed women, deserted women and destitute women are highly vulnerable and requires special attention. The GP should identify such women and ensure that they are provided 100 days of work. Special works which require less effort and are close to their house should be identified and implemented for them.”

### Role of CBO

A strong factor that brought women out from their homes to the worksite is the continuous engagement of the Kudumbashree members within the framework of MGNREGS - from the process of awareness creation, job card distribution, identification of work to the social audit process.

## Obtaining Access to Higher Education



Name: Shobhana C.K  
Age: 46 years  
Place of Residence: Chathamangalam  
Gram Panchayat, Kozhikode  
Year of Joining MGNREGS: 2009

Shobhana C.K has been working in MGNREGS since 2009. Her husband works as a daily wage labourer. In 2013, she completed 100 days of MGNREGS work. For her, the biggest joy that comes from doing MGNREGS work is that she can contribute funds towards her daughter's education. Her daughter is currently pursuing a degree in medicine in Calicut.

## Improved Standard of Living



Name: Nisha Mekkadakavil  
Age: 40 years  
Place of Residence: Chathamangalam  
Gram Panchayat, Kozhikode  
Year of Joining MGNREGS: 2010

Sharing food with her fellow workers at the worksite is something that Nisha enjoys. The meal time conversations helps her relax. MGNREGS work has also helped Nisha save more and buy furniture for her house. Beaming brightly Nisha showed her gold bangles and said, "I bought these with my MGNREGS savings."

## Crossing the Frontier of Unskilled Labour

Annamma has been working in MGNREGS as an unskilled labourer since 2009. Her family comprises of four people. Her husband is not working while both her sons work as bus conductors, one of whom stays with her.

Recently, a "goat shed" project called "Gramsamruddhi" was initiated in her Panchayat under which she was chosen as a beneficiary. This project was under MGNREGS in convergence with the Department of Animal Husbandry and Kudumbashree. The funding for the project was given by Kudumbashree and MGNREGS. She received training for 20 days at Archana Women Centre in carpentry and masonry. Now, she builds goat sheds in the Panchayat with her fellow group members.

In her words, "MGNREGS has not only given me financial security, but also transformed me into a skilled labour personnel. I am confident of obtaining other skilled labour work after exhausting 100 days of MGNREGS work.



Name: Annamma  
Age: 61 years  
Place of Residence: Panachikad  
Gram Panchayat, Kottayam  
Year of Joining MGNREGS: 2009



### Role of PRI

According to Section 15 of the Operational Guidelines, the objectives of MGNREGS - namely, creation of durable assets and securing livelihood of rural households - can be facilitated through convergence of MGNREGS works with resources of other programmes/ schemes available with Panchayats and other line departments. These resources are not restricted to availability of funds but include access to technical expertise and knowhow possessed by officials of the line departments.

### Role of CBO

In the Gramasamruddhi Project in Panachikad Panchayat (Kottayam District, Kerala) the Kudumbashree CDS members were given the responsibility of identifying beneficiaries who wanted goat sheds. One of the eligibility criterias of the scheme was that the beneficiaries should be MGNREGS registered households. In addition, the Block Panchayat decided to provide training through a NGO (Archana Women's Centre) to the beneficiaries (women only) to build the goat sheds.

## Building Democratic Capability of People



Name: Ambili  
Age: 48 years  
Place of Residence: TV Puram  
Gram Panchayat, Kottayam  
Year of Joining MGNREGS: 2006

Ambili lost her husband to cancer in 2014. She lives with her two daughters. Her husband's cancer was detected in 2005.

She says, "During these nine years (2005-2014) along with financial support, MGNREGS also gave me the much needed emotional support and confidence." In the year 2013-2014 she completed 60 days of work.

In 2006, as an ADS member of Kudumbashree, she was chosen to be a Mate. She explained that as a part of her job as a Mate, she interacts with engineers, officials and meets a lot of people in the course of her visits to households in the Ward. She proudly admits that this has led to a rise in her confidence and knowledge levels. "When the wage payment is delayed, the workers question me repeatedly. I then have to speak to the engineer and other officials. If there is a problem with some body's bank account, then I personally go to the bank and look into the situation.

Ambili reveals, "Widows usually seclude themselves from rest of the society, I did not do that. MGNREGS gave me the strength to carry on in difficult times." In the end, she smiled and said, "I confidently sit here with a smile so it must be difficult for you to guess that I have gone through all this."

#### Role of the MGNREGS Mate:

Section 4.1.2 of the Operational guidelines states some of the responsibilities of the Mates as:

- Supervision of work sites
- Capture daily attendance in muster roll
- Facilitate applications for job cards and submit them to the GP
- Submit filled in muster rolls to the GRS
- Facilitate participatory identification of works in the GP

### MGNREGS - A Ray of Hope



Name: Leelamma Joseph  
Age: 60 years  
Place of Residence: Thidanadu  
Gram Panchayat, Kottayam  
Year of Joining MGNREGS: 2009

Leelamma Joseph is an unmarried woman living alone. She vividly remembers that unfortunate day in 2008 when her house was robbed and she was assaulted. The robbers took away all her gold, cash, and other valuables. This incident affected her mental health and she went into depression. She stopped going out of her house and cried all the time. She later learnt about MGNREGS and was encouraged by the CDS Chairperson to start working as a Mate. Earlier she felt lonely, but now she feels that she is working in a homely atmosphere. "I had lost all hope earlier but now I have new friends, savings in the bank and more importantly I have found my lost self-esteem."

## Role of the CBO

Through various training programmes, the Kudumbashree women are capacitated to play a very important role in creating awareness about MGNREGS among the community. Capacity building programmes for Mates were conducted in association with MGNREGS Mission and State Institute of Rural Development in all districts. Identity cards were issued to Mates. MGNREGS was included as one of the campaign topics of Kudumbashree's CBO institutionalisation programme. Efforts were also made to capacitate and equip Kudumbashree NHGs and ADS networks to play a more proactive role in MGNREGS and in social audit.

## Politics of Development



Name: Valsala Chandran

Age: 58 years

Place of Residence: Akathethara  
Gram Panchayat, Palakkad

Year of Joining MGNREGS: 2006

Palakkad was one of the first districts in Kerala where MGNREGS was implemented. Valsala Chandran is the Panchayat President of Akathethara Panchayat in Palakkad that won the second prize on the "Green Kerala Express" (a social reality television show that showcased the good work done by Gram Panchayats) in 2010. When MGNREGS was introduced, she became the first Mate in her Panchayat. As she was a homemaker, Valsala did not have prior work experience in the labour market. However, she received training as a Mate and learnt to manage large groups of workers. Along with the other ADS members, she was responsible for ensuring basic worksite facilities for workers. She went along with her group members and the elected Ward member to identify potential worksites in her Ward.

In 2010, on the advice of her group members, Valsala stood as a candidate in Gram Panchayat elections. She won and got elected as the President of the Gram Panchayat.

Valsala says, "People recognise me because of my work in MGNREGS. The training I received has made me a confident person and I have realised that MGNREGS is a great tool for encouraging people's participation in governance. Today, woman are moving ahead from their space at home to also claim their space in society through this work. Personally, MGNREGS has been the platform for my growth."



## Role of the CBO

In the year 2009-10, MGNREGS was scaled up from 4 districts to cover all 14 districts of Kerala. Kudumbashree ADS was actively involved in the following activities related to the implementation of MGNREGS in Kerala:

1. Registration of workers
2. Preparation of Annual Action Plan including Labour Budget and identification of works
3. Selection of Mate (Work Supervisor)
4. Provision of amenities at worksite
5. Provision of tools and implements for work
6. Community network to support social audit

## Social Security Net for the Elderly



Name: Pathumma

Age: 75 years

Place of Residence: Meppady

Gram Panchayat, Wayanad

Year of Joining MGNREGS: 2010

Pathumma has been working under MGNREGS for the past 5 years. Priorly, she worked in a tea plantation as a labourer for 55 years. Her husband resides in an old age home and her son had an accident due to which he can't work anymore. She says, "At my age, this the only work that I can do as there are times when it becomes difficult for me to do extremely heavy labour. The other labourers on the worksite help me to complete my work when I am unable to," she says with a grateful smile.

## Reflection of Community Spirit in MGNREGS



Name: Thangamani  
Age: 70 years  
Place of Residence: Akathethara  
Gram Panchayat, Palakkad  
Year of Joining MGNREGS: 2006

Thangamani lost her husband 37 years ago. Her two sons stay in the city with their respective families and her grandchildren suffer from kidney failure. Earlier, she was an agricultural worker but due to her old age she has severe backaches which makes it difficult for her to do extremely laborious work. Furthermore, she is not literate. MGNREGS work is her only source of income, however it means much more to her than that. She says, "I live alone but being at the MGNREGS worksite is the best part of the day for me as I don't feel lonely there. Most of the time, I can only afford to carry boiled rice for lunch but my co-workers share their food with me and ensure that I have a wholesome meal. At home I have no one to talk to, but there I find a space for discussing my thoughts. When I hurt my back, there was nobody from my family to take care of me apart from my neighbours, who are also my MGNREGS co-workers. They also took me to the hospital for treatment. If not for MGNREGS, I would have been lost in life."

## Stepping Forward to a Life of Dignity and Self-Respect



Name: Janaki  
Age: 72 years  
Place of Residence: TV Puram Gram  
Panchayat, Kottayam  
Year of Joining MGNREGS: 2008

Janaki is from the Scheduled Community (SC) and belongs to a Below Poverty Line (BPL) household. She lost her husband to a prolonged illness in 2011. She lives with her son and daughter-in-law and earns her own living. "After a point in life you cannot and also do not feel like asking for money from your children.

Thanks to MGNREGS, I don't have to spread my hands before anyone including my son", remarks Janaki.

Janaki supported her bedridden husband throughout his illness. "At this age, I could earn my living and pay my husband's medical bills. This is one of the biggest things MGNREGS has given me. I am very thankful for this. I would have not been able to do anything for my husband otherwise," says Janaki with tears in her eyes and a satisfied smile on her face. Even after losing her husband, Janaki does not feel lonely. She says, "Though I have lost my husband, I am not alone. I am a part of a big family, my MGNREGS family."

# Asset Creation

Creation of durable assets and securing livelihoods of rural households are prime objectives of MGNREGS. This can be facilitated through convergence of MGNREGS works with resources of other programmes/ schemes available with Panchayats and other line departments. These resources are not necessarily financial, but also include access to technical expertise and know-how possessed by officials of the line departments (Section 15, Operational Guidelines of MGNREGA 2013).

In Kerala, Natural Resource Management has been given a policy priority. This has also helped strengthen the relationship between the Panchayat (designated as the implementation agency for MGNREGS) and the community.

## Drinking Water

Artificial recharge of ground water is one of the most efficient ground water management tools for ensuring sustainability of ground water resources. Many areas of the country having limited aquifer storage potential, are facing acute problems of over-exploitation and depletion of ground water resources. The Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR) has been identified as an important partner to MGNREGS, as more than 50% of MGNREGS works relate to the water resources sector. Currently, two schemes viz. dug well recharge scheme and ground water management and regulation are being implemented under Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR).

Varavoor Gram Panchayat in Thrissur district is in the hilly region where agriculture is the main occupation. When MGNREGS was introduced, earthen works were taken up in



*MGNREGS workers digging a well in Varavoor Gram Panchayat, Thrissur District*

the Panchayat. After the revision of MGNREGS guidelines, the Panchayat took initiative to concentrate on asset creation works.

In the year 2013-2014, 108 drinking water wells were constructed under MGNREGS. The work undertaken is significant because in this Panchayat, it is difficult to construct wells due to the hilly terrain. Furthermore, the cost of constructing a well would be around Rs. 50,000 through private labour work. Under MGNREGS provision, wells have been provided for 65 SC and BPL families and 43 small and marginal farmers. The demand for construction of wells was made in the Gram Sabha. One of the MGNREGS workers

commented, "Earlier, the work of digging wells was done only by the men. Today, as a woman I feel proud to say that 98% of the workers are women. This has really motivated us to pursue more MGNREGS work because it is helping us do things we didn't know we were capable of doing."

The Accredited Engineer of the Panchayat, Sindhu A.B, shared, “The construction of wells have really made a difference to the lives of women who now have more access to water. This work has not only created assets for the community but has also contributed to natural resource management. The future work that the Panchayat plans to undertake as a part of MGNREGS is the construction of protective structures around wells”.

<b>Information Box – Varavoor GP</b>	
Total Population	20,985
Number of Females	10,529
Kudumbashree Members	3,138
Families with MGNREGS Job Cards	3,330
Kudumbashree Families with MGNREGS Job Cards	2,900
Kudumbashree SC Families with MGNREGS Job Cards	890
Cost of Well Construction	Rs. 16,000
Total Cost of the Project	Rs. 41,00,000 (approx.)
Total no. of Wells Constructed	108

## **Sanitation**

Munduparakunnu is a ST colony in Meppadi Panchayat of Wayanad district. The colony comprises of 29 families spread over 5 acres of land. The residents of the colony belong to the Paniya community and their main source of income is daily wage labour work. From 2006 onwards, they also began to work under MGNREGS.

Residents of this colony did not have sanitation facilities and open defecation was a common practice. Eventually, more houses were being built in the colony and there was shortage of land. ASHA workers also spoke to the people about the spread of diseases through open defecation. In the Gram Sabha, people raised demands for sanitation facilities. They were told that under Swacch Bharat Abhiyan (SBA), toilets would be constructed. Part of this work would be undertaken through MGNREGS. The MGNREGS staff then spoke to them about other sanitation work that could be done in the colony.

Through participatory community planning, the following works were completed - construction of toilets pits, wet waste pits, dry waste pits, and earthen drainage work for kitchen and bathroom waste. The work has been completed for 20 households and shall be soon be completed for the 9 remaining households. For the construction of toilets, the funding was extended by SBA and MGNREGS in the ratio of 80:20 respectively. The total cost of the project is Rs. 2,00,000 and 22 working days were utilised for this work. 99% of the workers who participated in the work were women. One of the villagers expressed, “Our colony is cleaner now and we feel very happy that we made the change happen. The next time we want to do land development work under MGNREGS”.



*MGNREGS workers digging a dry waste pit, Munduparakunnu colony, Meppady Gram Panchayat, Wayanad District*



*MGNREGS workers and Mate standing in front of a Individual Household toilet constructed by them through NBA-MGNREGS convergence.*

## Eco- Restoration

Parakadavu is a block in Ernakulam district comprising of the following Panchayats - Chengamanad, Kunnukara, Nedumbassery, Parakadavu and Puthanvelikkara. The point where Nayathodu-Mookkannur canal and Karukutty canal meet is known as Moonnuthodu (i.e. three canals). It is the birthplace of Manjaly river. The length of the river is 29 kilometres and it covers almost all the Panchayats in the block and merges with the Periyar river.

Once upon a time, the water from this river was used to irrigate about 50,000 acres of land in Karukutty, Manjapra, Nedumbassery, Parakadavu, Puthanvelikkara Panchayats and in Ankamaly Municipality. It was also the drinking water source for more than 28,000 families.



*MGNREGS workers cleaning Manjaly river in Parakadavu Block, Ernakulum District*

However, for 25 years the river lay wasted due to growth of weeds and unwanted grass. The decayed grass prevented the water flow and cattle began frequenting the place. The families settled here had to depend for water supply through water transporters.



The community protested to the Block Panchayat Committee for the restoration of the river. They formed a group called “Manjaly River Protection Samiti” and demonstrated for their cause at the Block Office. The Block Development Officer (BDO), Joint BDO, accredited engineers of Blocks and Panchayats, Panchayat presidents, representatives of Panchayats, representatives of “Manjaly River Protection Samiti” and leaders of Kudumbashree sat together to find a solution. It was suggested that MGNREGS could be a solution to this problem. This was included in the 2013-2014 Plan for MGNREGS. The work started on 30 May 2013.



*Manjaly river, after the completion of the restoration work through MGNREGS*

including Uchukulam, Puthankulam, Chettikulam, Moodamkulam, Mankulam, Madavana chira, Vattekkattu chira, Anchalackal pond, and Karthikachal for enhancing the sustainability of the drinking water facilities as well as irrigation projects.

The river was restored to its former glory after 5,434 person days of work under MGNREGS. Rs. 10,01,672 was paid as wages. In addition to this project, the MGNREGS workers have also renovated the Kurummasser canal, Manjaly canal, Kodiserry canal, Edamalayar canal, Kankoly canal, Aryanthode, Perinthode and ponds includ-

## Afforestation

The National Forest Policy (NFP) of 1988 envisaged the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) as the institution responsible for achieving the objective of ensuring that one-third of the land area in India is under forest and tree plantation. However, this task is challenging for the MoEF to accomplish by itself owing to the huge manpower and resources required for it. Thus, convergence between MGNREGS and National Afforestation Programme (NAP) is mutually beneficial.

Akatethara Gram Panchayat in Palakkad came up with the decision to plant trees to utilize waste land and combat global warming. This was a joint venture of the Forest Department and the Gram Panchayat. During the initial survey, they identified 25 hectares of public land that was privately occupied. The Social Forestry Department provided the seeds free of cost.

In the year 2008-2009, the Panchayat planted 1,00,000 trees and 8,000 protection nets were used to protect the trees planted along the roads. The saplings were planted around five different locations, namely - schools (Ummeni Higher Secondary School and Akathetara Upper Primary School, Hemambika Sanskrit School) and common places (Panchaliyaman, Kalyana Mandapam, Dhoni). It was the responsibility of the MGNREGS Mates to collect the seeds. Out of 1,00,000 trees, 60,000 were planted in the public spaces while 40,000 seeds of their choice were distributed among private land owners. The method of irrigation used was drip irrigation. To accomplish this, the community collected waste bottles from the surroundings, cut the upper part of the bottle and made a small hole at the bottom. This bottle was buried into the ground and water was filled into it to provide irrigation facility for up to three days.





*Trees planted in the railway colony through Convergence between MGNREGS and Social Forestry Department in Akathethara Gram Panchayat, Palakkad*

At the Ward level, each family took care of 10 trees in their surrounding areas. Labour cost comprised 90% and material cost constituted the remaining 10% of the total project cost respectively. The material cost was primarily the protective gear for the trees planted and the transportation cost.



*Trees planted along the roadside in Akathethara Gram Panchayat, Palakkad*

Every month a review meeting was conducted by the Vigilance and Monitoring Committee to oversee the project and troubleshoot its problems. The members of this Committee were Gram Panchayat staff, social workers, NGOs, farmers, individuals belonging to the SC community, women and officials of line departments. This team was constituted through the Gram Sabha.

Every year on June 5th, Afforestation Day is celebrated in the Panchayat. 5000 trees are planted across the Panchayat on this occasion. The entire Afforestation Project in the Gram Panchayat was handled by 2 MGNREGS officials, namely - Sunil K.S (accountant) and Sathish (currently the Accredited Engineer, who was earlier the overseer at the time of the Afforestation Project).

The details of the Tree Plantation Project:

Ward	Trees Planted	MGNREGS wages and cost of protection nets (in rupees)	Area (in hectares)
1	8972	134718	7.0
2	9181	179624	7.2
3	7318	132642	6.8
4	6342	89812	6.3
6	3000	44906	2.0
7	4230	87618	3.6
8	3200	44816	2.5
9	3000	41719	2.0
11	3000	40722	2.0
12	3000	42318	2.0
13	3000	39971	2.0
16	5787	88743	4.2
17	60030	967609	71.1

# Better Incomes

## Goat Shed



*Goat shed constructed by MGNREGS women workers in Pallom Block, Kottayam District*

Construction of Goat Sheds under the Gram Samruddhi project is being undertaken in Pallom Block Panchayat, Kottayam District. It is the first of its kind in Kerala. In the first phase of this project, 200 goat sheds are being constructed in five Panchayats. All the 200 beneficiaries are Kudumbashree members who are also MGNREGS workers.

The Gram Samruddhi project was initiated by the Pallom Block Panchayat members in convergence with Kudumbashree, ATMA (Agriculture Technology Management Agency), Animal Husbandry Department and MGNREGS.

The model aims to use the resources available with each agency to provide aid to a beneficiary. In the first phase, goat sheds have been constructed through MGNREGS. Cow sheds would be constructed next. In this model, the beneficiary is identified through the Kudumbashree network, training is being provided through ATMA and the beneficiary is being linked to nationalised banks to obtain a loan for purchasing goats.

## Gram Samruddhi Convergence Model



<b>Constructing a Goat Shed</b>	
Cost of constructing one goat shelter	Rs. 35,500
Ratio of Unskilled Labour : Material	40:60
Human Resource requirement	7 skilled and 54 unskilled person days
Material used for goat shed construction	Wood
Dimensions of the goat shed	Length - 3m, Width - 2.5m, Height - 5 feet, Floor - 3cm gap, Sides - 10cm gap, situated 4 feet above from ground.

Interestingly, the skilled labour employed in this project is also being pooled in from amongst the MGNREGS workers. 25 women out of the 200 beneficiaries have been trained by an NGO called Archana Women's Centre. This training in masonry and carpentry has made them skilled workers. Hence, all the workers - skilled and unskilled - are MGNREGS workers.

Goat rearing is a very suitable and popular means of livelihood for families with low or no landholding, especially in rural areas. Projects such as these in which MGNREGS is in convergence with other agencies will enable these households to move towards sustainable livelihood options.

## **Fish Farming**

Fishery as a livelihood activity for the poor has immense scope. Many small reservoirs, tanks, water harvesting ponds created under MGNREGS are ideally suited for fish production. Fisheries related works under MGNREGS comprises of activities like digging and landscaping of the bed of the water body to suit fish production, ensuring year round dead storage, protecting the spillways and provision of small fish nursery ponds with assured water for rearing fingerlings. (Appendix 2, MGNREGA Operational Guidelines 2013).

In Meenachil Panchayat, Lalam Block, Kottayam District, ponds have been constructed for fish farming under MGNREGS. Convergence between the Fisheries Department



*A pond constructed for fish farming in Lalam Block, Kottayam District*

and MGNREGS has been successfully enabled. Ponds are dug under MGNREGS while fishes are provided through fisheries department. Only unskilled labour is required to dig the pit. Fishes from the farms are being used for self-consumption as well as sale. To construct an average size pit 60 person days of unskilled labour is required. Once the pit is dug, High Density Polyethylene (HDPE) sheet is spread in it. The tank is filled with water and seeds are released. The tank is covered with nets to keep it clean, and water is cleaned at regular intervals.



## Farming



*Joint Liability Group (JLG) members from Kudumbashree network doing land development work under MGNREGS (Alagappanagar Panchayat, Thrissur District)*

The demand for women workers has increased in many parts of Kerala due to their proven capabilities and positive attitude towards work as witnessed during their participation in MGNREGS. Farmers now hire women to take up various labour tasks in their farms. Farming related works that the women have been hired for include cultivation of crops such as paddy, banana and tubers, care for coconut palms, terracing in rubber plantations etc. The wage rates provided to women for these tasks vary between Rs. 200-300 per day.

The labour collectives that have been formed by the MGNREGS workers have taken great interest in agricultural activities. As mentioned earlier, these labour collectives were welcomed by farm owners as it had become difficult to find labourers to work on farm. In addition to this, women have also undertaken farming activities by forming Joint Liability Groups (JLG) and taking land on lease for cultivation. This has led to cultivation of large tracts of waste land.

The leader of a labour collective group of Alagappa Panchayat tells us that her group has converted 11 acres of waste land into cultivated land.

Kudumbashree collective farming has integrated the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development's (NABARD) concept of Joint Liability Groups (JLGs) into farming practices. Kudumbashree Mission with the support of NABARD, encourages JLG formation for agricultural practices so that the benefits of the interest subsidy programme are made available to farmers, i.e. 5% interest subsidy on short term loans which effectively renders the interest on the loan down to 2%. Additionally, the incentive for prompt repayment of loan is a further 2% interest subsidy resulting in the group effectively availing an interest free loan.

# Skill Building for Labour Collectives

Wage seekers need to be made aware of details of MGNREGS in order to enable them access their entitlements. To attain this, it is essential to organise them into labour groups, thereby providing a platform for articulating the collective voice and demand of the wage seekers. Also, the workers when organised into groups could give powerful demand side pull for improving the performance of MGNREGS (Chapter 16, MGNREGA Operational Guidelines 2013).

The experiences of Kerala in MGNREGS implementation indicates that the scope of the scheme has moved beyond that of a poverty alleviation programme to become a platform for the enhancement of the economic, social and governance capabilities of women. More than 90% of the participants and beneficiaries in the scheme are women. The mobilization efforts undertaken by the Kudumbashree network has ensured that an overwhelming number of women participate in MGNREGS work. Furthermore, in some places, these groups of women have come together to form labour collectives. Once the women exhaust the 100 days of work that under MGNREGS, they move out to the open market as a collective to seek work on private lands.

## Structure of the Labour Collective

- Labour collective comprises of a group of women workers, who are a part of MGNREGS
- Each group contains 15 to 25 members who elect a President and Secretary
- For administrative convenience, the group is divided into sub-groups comprising of 3 to 5 members
- The group has a joint account in a nationalized bank
- The wages are deposited in the bank and at the end of the month the group members receive a salary. The workers of the labour group receive equal wages for equal work

## Benefits of a Labour Collective

- Development of skills to estimate work, in terms of person days required to complete a certain task by observing the area of the land
- Leadership skills amongst the women
- After completion of 100 days of labour, the collective can identify more works in their neighbourhood for additional employment opportunities
- Improved savings

## Power of the Collective



Name: Saleena  
Age: 49 years  
Place of Residence: Alagappanagar  
Gram Panchayat, Thrissur  
Year of Joining MGNREGS: 2007

Saleena initially joined MGNREGS to earn money, but soon it opened up a door of opportunities for her.

When the idea of a labour collective was discussed in Alagappa Nagar Panchayat between the CDS and the Panchayat members, she came forward to form it.

One of the primary reasons to form a labour collective was to provide the MGNREGS workers in the Panchayat with

additional labour work. The Panchayat floated the idea and 120 labourers became a part of the labour collective. Saleena became the leader of one group which consisted of 60 persons in her Ward. After completion of their 100 days of MGNREGS work, they worked on jobs identified on private land. The group is primarily involved in farm related work and a worker receives Rs. 350-400 as daily wages. This has considerably improved their financial situation and boosted their confidence to participate in the labour market.

Saleena says, "I spoke in every function of the Panchayat to motivate the women to participate in MGNREGS. For obtaining more jobs, I interacted with the landowners who were not utilizing their land for farming. Under the aegis of JLG and MKSP, my labour collective began lease land farming. In one year, the group earned Rs. 1.80 lakh by cultivating and selling paddy from four acres of land. Our MGNREGS labour collective has transformed a group of homemakers into community leaders. These days men want to replicate our work."



# MGNREGS to Strengthen Functioning of the Gram Panchayat

The Eleventh Schedule (Article 243G) of the Constitution of India lists 29 functions of Gram Panchayats. Often, the lack of funds, functionaries and inadequate devolution of functions has hampered the ability of Gram Panchayats to fulfil their constitutional role. Implementation of Centrally Sponsored Schemes such as MGNREGS is one way for the GPs to build their capabilities and confidence in order to play the role of the local government. The table given below takes MGNREGS as a case in point to illustrate how 23 out of the 29 constitutionally mandated functions of GPs can be fulfilled through the opportunities provided by MGNREGS.

Functions provided in Eleventh Schedule	Permissible works under MGNREGS	Relevant Case Studies cited in this document
Agriculture, including agricultural extension	Agriculture related works, such as, NADEP composting, vermi-composting, liquid bio-manures	Case Study on Farming - Page 26
Land improvement, implementation of land reforms, land consolidation and soil conservation	Land development work	Creation of Community Benefit Assets - Pages 8-9, and Case Study on Afforestation - Pages 21-22
Minor irrigation, water management and watershed development	Irrigation canals including micro and minor irrigation works	
Animal husbandry, dairying and poultry	Livestock related works, such as, poultry shelter, goat shelter, construction of pucca floor, urine tank and fodder trough for cattleshed, azolla as cattle-feed supplement	Case Study of Goat Shed Project - Pages 24-25
Fisheries	Fisheries related works, such as, fisheries in seasonal water bodies on public land	Case Study on Fish Farming - Page 25
Social forestry and farm forestry	Bamboo cultivation, nursery, horticulture	
Minor forest produce	Provision for tree plantation and afforestation	Case Study on Afforestation - Pages 21-22
Small scale industries, including food processing industries	Construction of community workshed to set up the small scale industry	
Khadi, village and cottage industries	Construction of community workshed to set up the khadi, village and cottage industry	

Functions provided in Eleventh Schedule	Permissible works under MGNREGS	Relevant Case studies cited in this document
Rural housing	Manual building construction	
Drinking water	Renovation of traditional water bodies including desilting of tanks; rural drinking water related works, such as, soak pits, recharge pits	Case Study on Drinking Water – Page 18
Fuel and fodder.	Construction of urine tank and fodder trough for cattleshed, azolla as cattle-feed supplement	
Roads, culverts, bridges, ferries, waterways and other means of communication	Rural connectivity to provide all weather access, including culverts and roads within a village, wherever necessary	
Poverty alleviation programme	Provision of 100 days of unskilled manual work per year for every rural household, opportunity to also develop skills and obtain other skilled labour work eventually	Crossing the Frontier on Unskilled Labour – Page 11
Education, including primary and secondary schools	Rural sanitation related works, such as individual household latrines, school toilet units, anganwadi toilets, solid and liquid waste management; construction of playgrounds	
Technical training and vocational education	Construction of Bharat Nirman Rajiv Gandhi Sewa Kendra as Knowledge Resource Centre at the Block level and as Gram Panchayat Bhavan at the Gram Panchayat level	
Markets and fairs	Construction of community sheds which can be use to set up markets	
Health and sanitation, including hospitals, primary health centres and dispensaries	Rural sanitation related works, such as, individual household latrines, school toilet units, anganwadi toilets, solid and liquid waste management	Case Study on Sanitation – Page 19

Functions provided in Eleventh Schedule	Permissible works under MGNREGS	Relevant Case studies cited in this document
Family welfare	Legal entitlement of 100 days of unskilled manual labour per household (for all adult members)	Creation of Community Benefit Assets – Pages 8-9, and Community Based Rehabilitation – Page 9
Women and child development	Facilities of crèche at the worksite, 1/3rd reservation for women for obtaining work under MGNREGS	Stepping Forward to a Life of Dignity and Self-Respect – Page 16, and Reflection of Community Spirit – Page 16
Social welfare, including welfare of the handicapped and mentally retarded	MGNREGS has provisions for identifying specific works for these groups	Social Security Net for the Elderly – Page 15, and MGNREGS – A Ray of Hope – Page 13
Welfare of the weaker sections, and in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes	Provision of irrigation facility, dug out farm pond, horticulture, plantation, farm bunding and land development on land owned by households specified in paragraph 1C of Schedule I	Creation of Community Benefit Assets – Pages 8-9
Maintenance of community assets	Flood control and protection works including drainage in water logged areas including deepening and repairing of flood channels, chaur renovation, construction of storm water drains for coastal protection	Case Study on Eco-Restoration – Page 20

# Roles of PRI and CBO in MGNREGS

Key Activity	Role of the Block	Role of the GP	Role of the CBO
<b>1. Awareness creation and mobilisation</b>			
1.1 Awareness Creation	<p>Give training to the PRI officials about MGNREGS</p> <p>Give training to the key persons of the CBO about MGNREGS</p>	Organising special Gram Sabhas for information dissemination about MGNREGS to the larger population	Awareness creation among the larger population through the CBO network (CDS – ADS – NHG)
1.2 Selection and training of Mates	Training of the selected Mates	Selection done according to the MGNREGS guidelines by the GP	Ensuring the representation of CBO members as Mates
<b>2. Job Card Registration</b>			
2.1 Printing of Job Card and Application Forms and ensuring its adequate availability	Provides the format for the Job Card and Application form	To get adequate copies of application forms for job cards printed according to the need	Facilitating the distribution through the CBO network
2.2 Developing mechanism to distribute job card application	Developing multiple chains for distribution (through CBO network and by itself)	Collection of job card applications through a camp at the Ward level	Facilitating the distribution through the CBO network

Key Activity	Role of the Block	Role of the GP	Role of the CBO
<p>2.3 Developing mechanism for filling in and collection of application forms</p>		<p>Arranging for the photograph of applicants to be clicked at the Ward level</p> <p>Collecting and consolidating the application forms at the Panchayat level</p>	<p>Verification of details and other documents accompanying the application form through a camp organised at the Ward level</p> <p>Facilitate the process of taking photographs of the applicants at the Ward level</p>
<p>2.4 Processing of job card application including verification of details</p>		<p>Cross checking with the MGNREGS guidelines and verifying the details of the job applicants within a given time frame</p>	
<p>2.5 Making the job cards</p>	<p>The government official in - charge needs to make sure the process is carried out in a smooth manner within the stipulated time</p>	<p>Responsibility of the GP to make job cards and print them within the given time frame</p>	<p>Information dissemination and facilitation in the process of distribution of issued job cards</p>
<p>2.6 Distribution of job cards</p>		<p>Ensuring multiple channels for the distribution of job cards (by itself and through CBOs)</p>	

Key Activity	Role of the Block	Role of the GP	Role of the CBO
3. Work Identification			
3.1 Deciding on a time frame and informing the people about the same		Informing the Ward members and the CBO members about the time frame for work identification  Ward member dissemination of the information by word of mouth	Information dissemination through the CBO network (CDS - ADS - NHG)
3.2 Identification of work			Identification of work by the members of the CBO (at the NHG level and submitting the list to the ADS)  Consolidation of the various work lists at the Ward level.
3.3 Project Meeting		Organise the project meeting at the Ward level and make a final list of works identified for the Ward	Mobilising the MGNREGS workers of the Ward for the project meeting  Presenting the consolidated work list to the Ward member  Facilitating the project meeting

Key Activity	Role of the Block	Role of the GP	Role of the CBO
3.4 Preparation and approval of Action Plan	Verification and approval by the Panchayat Samiti  Forwarding Action Plan to District Planning Committee (DPC)	MGNREGS Cell of the GP verifies the list of works on receiving it from the Wards and prepares an Action Plan within a given time frame  Approval of Action Plan by the Assistant Secretary of the GP  Forwarding Action Plan to the Panchayat Samiti	
<b>4. Labour Budget</b>			
4.1 Preparation of labour budget		Approved action plan from the DPC is received by the GP  Allocation of work to the labour groups by the MGNREGS cell based on their location  The labour budget is prepared by the MGNREGS cell of the GP	
4.2 Technical Sanction		The authorised group of Gram Panchayat officials provide the technical sanction	
4.3 Administrative Sanction		The Panchayat Committee provides the administrative sanction	
4.4 MIS Data Entry		MGNREGS cell of the GP does the MIS data entry	



Key Activity	Role of the Block	Role of the GP	Role of the CBO
<b>5. Implementation</b>			
5.1 Initiation of work	Issuing of muster rolls to the GP		Issuing of muster rolls to the Mates following which the work commences
5.2 Work Site Management and Supervision	Training given to the Mates regarding their roles and responsibilities on work site management Officials have the responsibility to go to the work sites and supervise the work	To ensure the collection and distribution of the muster rolls through the Mates every 14 days  To ensure that all the facilities according to the MGNREGS guidelines are provided to the workers  Officials have the responsibility to go to the work sites and supervise the work	Identification of Mates who can be trained  Creating awareness among the MGNREGS workers about their entitlements
<b>6. Payment of wages</b>			
6.1 Measurement of work		MGNREGS cell members of the GP measures the work at each worksite every 14 days	
6.2 Approval of wage		Details submitted to the section clerk of GP for verification  Verified report submitted to the Assistant Secretary of the GP  The approved report is then passed onto the Secretary of the GP	

Key Activity	Role of the Block	Role of the GP	Role of the CBO
6.3 Disbursement of wages		On approval, the report is sent to the GP Accountant who issues the cheque for the payment of wages which will be collected by the Mates and put into the bank accounts of the workers. (The fund comes to the GP account when Joint Programme Coordinator of MGNREGS at the District level approves and transfers the money to the GP account)	
<b>7. Social Audit</b>			
7.1 Conducting special gram sabha for social audit		<p>Information dissemination about the conduct of the Gram Sabha for the purpose of social audit of MGNREGS</p> <p>Conducting special Gram Sabha for social audit at the Ward level</p> <p>Facilitating the creation of the 11 member social audit team by the Gram Sabha</p> <p>To provide all the records of financial transactions to be presented at the Gram Sabha</p> <p>Responsibility of the Ward member to present the details of all the records at the Gram Sabha.</p> <p>Noting down the minutes of the Gram Sabha and submitting it as a report to the Panchayat Committee</p>	<p>Awareness creation among the community about the importance of social audit and the processes to be followed to conduct it in a transparent manner</p> <p>Information dissemination about the conduct of the Gram Sabha for social audit</p>

# Conclusion

As the implementation agency, Gram Panchayat has a significant role in the entire MGNREGS process. Section 16 of the MGNREGA mandates that, at least 50% of the work in terms of cost, has to be implemented through the Gram Panchayat. It also explains the role of the Gram Panchayat in registering the households, providing them with job cards, allocating work and conducting Gram Sabhas to enable the social audit process.

In Kerala, the CBO network plays a role in creating awareness about the rights and entitlements of participating in MGNREGS. The Gram Panchayat works in co-operation with the Kudumbashree network to conduct the household registration process, provide training to Mates who are selected from the ADS, and to ensure that worksite facilities are in place among other activities. The Kudumbashree women identify work in their communities and articulate their demands through the NHG-ADS-CDS forum and they also mobilise the women in their community to demand employment by submitting applications at the Gram Panchayat. From participating in unskilled manual work, the women have now scaled up to building goat sheds, digging wells, and also forming labour collectives. The strength of the collective optimizes the manner in which MGNREGS is seen and implemented.

MGNREGS has a plethora of opportunities in its framework and is instilling confidence in women to step out of the confines of their households. Unlike other social security measures which work on the allocation based approach, MGNREGS requires active participation of the community. It also enables people to build their democratic citizenship rights through their involvement in every step of the process. MGNREGS is a means for fighting the current poverty situation and provides a robust mechanism to mitigate their vulnerability of falling back into poverty.

MGNREGS gives the Gram Panchayat an effective platform to exercise its roles and duties with the support of the community. The Gram Panchayats where MGNREGS is being implemented successfully will be able to create sustainable community assets in addition to building a network of skilled personnel.

MGNREGS should be seen as an opportunity for the Gram Panchayat to institutionalise decentralisation through a decision making process at the grassroots. It would be beneficial to have institutions of the poor (like community based networks) to assist the Gram Panchayat in fulfilling its role as the implementing agency for MGNREGS. Activities such as awareness generation, work identification, labour budget preparation can be done by the CBOs while the Gram Panchayat can ensure that work is provided as per the demand raised, and wages are paid in a timely manner. A strong partnership between the Gram Panchayat and CBOs will ultimately lead to the fulfilment of the goal of MGNREGS i.e. to ensure inclusive growth in rural India by creating a positive impact on social protection, livelihood security and democratic empowerment.

## Kudumbashree - National Resource Organization

Kudumbashree is recognised as a National Resource Organization (NRO) by the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India, under the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM), to provide technical and implementation support to State Rural Livelihood Missions (SRLMs), based on mutual interest. The NRO Secretariat formally began functioning in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala in May 2013.

Kudumbashree NRO provides support to partner-States in two domains:

### PRI-CBO Convergence Project

The project focuses on enabling working together of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI) and Community Based Organisations (CBO) to strengthen access of the poor to entitlements and development schemes, and increasing the quality of their participation in local governance. The Convergence Project has been initiated in 22 blocks across 17 districts of six partner-States namely, Assam, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Odisha and Rajasthan.

### Enterprises project

Building local capabilities, and creating community-based enterprise support systems in the form of Micro-Enterprise Consultants (MEC), for promotion and development of micro-enterprises of the poor are the prime objectives of the Enterprises Project. The Enterprises Project is being implemented in 17 districts across six states - namely, Bihar, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Rajasthan.

## NRO Partnerships

- State with Enterprises Project
- State with Convergence Project
- State with both Projects

### Rajasthan

Districts (Enterprises)	
Bhilwara	
Kota	
Udaipur	
Districts and Blocks (Convergence)	
Bhilwara	Asind
Kota	Sangod
Udaipur	Kherwara

### Gujarat

Districts (Enterprises)	
Narmada	
Patan	
Tapi	

### Maharashtra

Districts (Enterprises)	
Osmanabad	
Ratnagiri	
Wardha	
Districts and Blocks (Convergence)	
Solapur	Mohol
Thane	Shahpur
Wardha	Deoli

### Karnataka

Districts (Enterprises)	
Gadag	
Hassan	
Mysore	
Districts and Blocks (Convergence)	
Koppal	Gangavathi; Koppal
Tumukuru	Gubbi; Pavagada

### Bihar

Districts (Enterprises)	
Gaya	
Muzaffarpur	

### Assam

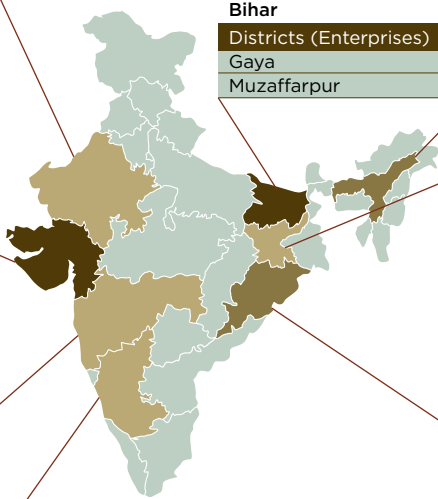
Districts and Blocks (Convergence)	
Morigaon	Lahorighat
Nagaon	Bajajgaon

### Jharkhand

Districts (Enterprises)	
Pakur	
Ranchi	
West Singhbhum	
Districts and Blocks (Convergence)	
East Singhbhum	Ghatshila
Pakur	Pakuria
Ranchi	Bundu; Angara
West Singhbhum	Khuntpani; Manoharpur

### Odisha

Districts and Blocks (Convergence)	
Gajapati	Gumma
Jajpur	Dharmasala
Malkangiri	Malkangiri
Sundargarh	Balisankara





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Aajeevika  
National Rural Livelihoods Mission



Kudumbashree  
Kerala State Poverty Eradication Mission

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