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**PRIA**

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# **Migrant Workers' Access to MGNREGA during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Survey**



## Summary

- 64 PANCHAYATS ACROSS 5 STATES OF INDIA WERE SURVEYED TO ASSESS HOW MIGRANTS WERE BEING ENGAGED IN MGNREGA WORK.
- 71.1 % OF WORKERS THAT RETURNED TO THE VILLAGES WERE MALE, AND 50.2% MIGRANTS RETURNED FROM OTHER STATES.
- WHILE EFFORTS WERE MADE TO INCLUDE MIGRANTS IN MGNREGA, AND 71.2% OF THE MIGRANTS IN OUR SURVEY GOT WORK, AVAILABILITY OF WORK OVERALL WAS NOT SUFFICIENT TO MEET THE HEIGHTENED LEVEL OF DEMAND.
- OF THE WORKERS WHO GOT MGNREGA EMPLOYMENT, MOST WERE ENGAGED IN LAND DEVELOPMENT AND POND DIGGING/RENOVATION WORK.
- IRREGULARITIES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MGNREGA WERE PREVALENT, AND ONLY 10% OF SURVEYED PANCHAYATS REPORTED NO IRREGULARITIES. THE MOST WIDELY REPORTED IRREGULARITY WAS DISCREPANCIES IN THE MUSTER ROLL WHICH ARTIFICIALLY INFLATED THE NUMBER OF WORKERS HIRED.
- A NUMBER OF THE DIFFICULTIES MIGRANT WORKERS FACED—SUCH AS DELAYED WAGE PAYMENTS, LOW WAGE RATES, LACK OF ACCESS TO JOB CARDS AND LACK OF AVAILABLE WORK—ARE LONG STANDING ISSUES WITH OVERALL MGNREGA IMPLEMENTATION.
- MIGRANT WORKERS ALSO DESIRED TO BE GIVEN WORK THAT BETTER ALIGNED WITH THEIR SKILLSETS.

## Acknowledgements

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## Introduction

The onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic in India began in March 2020, and on March 24, the Prime Minister announced a nationwide lockdown until April 14, which was then extended until May 31<sup>st</sup>. Due to the lockdown, millions of Indians lost their jobs, and migrant labourers who emigrated to larger villages, towns and cities to find agricultural, construction or other work were disproportionately affected. Over 1 Crore<sup>1</sup> migrant workers made long, arduous journeys back to their native villages in their home states upon losing their jobs elsewhere. As the economic crisis continued, many residents and returned migrant workers in the villages turned towards the Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) as a source of work. Recognizing MGNREGS's potential as a source of employment during this crisis, the Government of India, under its Atmanirbhar Bharat stimulus package, allotted the programme Rs. 1 lakh crore as its budget for this fiscal year. Further, the average wage rate was raised to Rs. 202 per day.<sup>2</sup> Given the increased budgetary allocation and expenditure sanctioned, one would hope that more workers would be hired under MGNREGS. To find out if migrant workers were getting work under MGNREGS, and to assess MGNREGS's effectiveness in providing employment during this crisis, a survey was conducted to answer the key questions outlined below:

1. What is the demography of migrant workers working under MGNREGS during this crisis? Are migrant workers finding work during this time?
2. What kinds of work are they being engaged in?
3. What difficulties are returned migrant workers facing at this time?
4. Are there any irregularities in the implementation of MGNREGS during this time?
5. What more can be done to improve the implementation of MGNREGS during this time?

Outlined below are the results of the survey and analyses of the information generated to present a picture of the state of MGNREGA, and how it is being accessed by migrant workers during this time.

## Methodology

The survey was conducted across 64 Panchayats across the 5 states of Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Chhattisgarh and Gujarat. It was administered by PRIA and its partner organizations—Samarthan, Unnati, Centre for Youth and Social Development (CYSD) and Sahabhagi Shikshan Kendra (SSK)—and some other civil society organizations (CSOs) within their network. The survey was conducted between June and July 2020—a month into Unlock 1.0 and overlapping with the beginning of Unlock 2.0, where restrictions on mobility and the types of work permissible were being lifted in phases. It consisted of a structured questionnaire which was administered to workers of local grassroots organizations, elected representatives to Panchayati Raj Institutions and the Panchayat Secretary. The survey was administered online via Google Forms. The questionnaire consisted of both objective and subjective questions to elicit both quantitative and qualitative insights.

<sup>1</sup> FE Bureau, "Over 1 Crore Migrant Workers Returned To Home States Since End-March", The Financial Express, 2020, <https://www.financialexpress.com/india-news/over-1-crore-migrant-workers-returned-to-home-states-since-end-march/2083076/>.

<sup>2</sup> Tina Edwin, "MGNREGA Wages Up About 11%; Yet At Least 40% Lower Than Minimum Wages", The Hindu, 2020, <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/mgnrega-wages-up-about-11-yet-at-least-40-lower-than-minimum-wages/article31197140.ece>.

Analysis of this survey has been conducted using basic statistical tools, and wherever possible, trends presented in the survey have been compared with PRIA's past work on MGNREGS, as well as with existing external data and literature.

**Table 1: Areas Surveyed in this Study**

Areas Surveyed		
State	Districts	Number of Panchayats
Chhattisgarh	Jashpur, Korba, Raipur, Rajnandgaon, Sukma, Surguja	23
Gujarat	Kutch, Dahod, Sabarkantha, Anand, Narmada	5
Odisha	Malkangiri, Koraput, Rayagada, Nabarangpur	13
Rajasthan	Pali, Barmer	12
Uttar Pradesh	Varanasi, Sitapur, Jhansi, Ghazipur, Lalitpur	11

A total of 64 Panchayats were surveyed, across 37 blocks, in 22 districts across 5 states of India.<sup>3</sup>

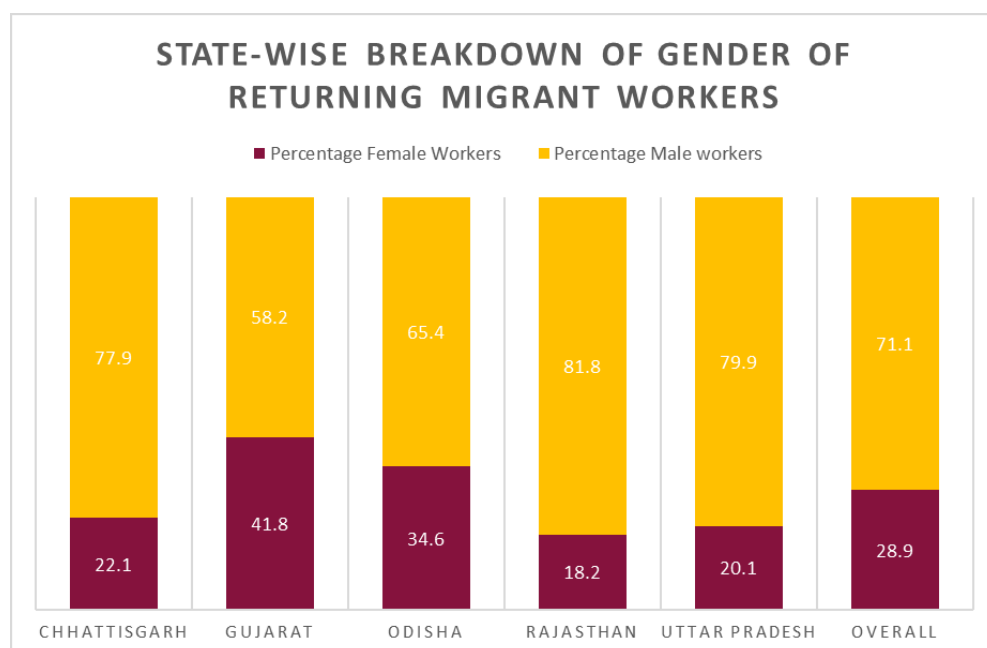
*Analysis:*

**Number of Migrant workers that returned**

**Table 2: Number of Migrant workers that returned to their native Gram Panchayats**

State	Total Number of Returned Migrants	Percentage of Female Workers	Percentage of Male workers	Percentage of out of state migrants	Percentage of within state migrants
Chhattisgarh	1148	22.1	77.9	45.4	54.6
Gujarat	1542	41.8	58.2	0.0	100.0
Odisha	4367	34.4	65.6	39.5	60.5
Rajasthan	1975	18.2	81.8	70.3	29.7
Uttar Pradesh	1077	20.1	79.9	90.7	9.3
Overall	10109	28.6	71.4	48.8	51.2

<sup>3</sup> A total of 74 Panchayats were surveyed, however, as data for 10 Panchayats in Babina Block in UP was clustered and presented together by the surveyor, we treat that area as 1 Panchayat. Therefore, for the purpose of this analysis, 64 Panchayats were considered. Throughout this study, depending on missing data under certain columns for different panchayats, the size of the sample is altered for complete analysis.



- In total, 10,109 migrants returned to the Panchayats we surveyed, of which approximately 71.1% were male and 28.9% were female. The state-wise percentage breakdowns of migrants by gender are reflected above.
- Overall, there are more male migrant workers returning. This could be because it is mostly males who are emigrating. In almost all Panchayats, the number of returning male migrants is higher than the number of females, and in some, there are no female returnees reported, which supports this hypothesis.
- Approximately 49.8% of the migrants are returning from locations in other states, while 50.2% are returning from cities within their native states.
- In the panchayats we surveyed in Gujarat, none of the migrant workers had returned from other states. Selected panchayats in Odisha also showed that 57.1% of migrant had returned from within the state. However, in Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Uttar Pradesh, a much larger percentage of migrants had travelled out of their native state for work. The trend in Gujarat is in line with existing realities<sup>4</sup> - Gujarat is a highly industrialized state with many industrial pockets, including in the districts surveyed. Thus, workers most probably didn't need to emigrate to other states as there were employment opportunities closer to home. In Odisha however, the numbers of intra-state migration are higher due to the district selection in this survey. While Odia workers account for a substantial chunk of the nation's migrant labourers, and the districts of Koraput, Rayagada and Nabarangpur selected in this survey are also migration prone<sup>5</sup>; most out-of-state returnees in Odisha during this pandemic came from Ganjam, Jajpur, Balasore, Khurda and Bhadrak districts<sup>6</sup>. Moreover, most of the

<sup>4</sup> Chinmay Tumbe, "A Million Migrations: Journeys In Search Of Jobs", Livemint, 2020, <https://www.livemint.com/Politics/8WPPsZyqgR7Mu6e3Fgy55N/A-million-migrations-journeys-in-search-of-jobs.html>.

<sup>5</sup> Ashok Pradhan, "Number Of Migrant Labourers From Odisha Rise Three-Fold In 10 Years | Bhubaneswar News - Times Of India", The Times Of India, 2016, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/bhubaneswar/Number-of-migrant-labourers-from-Odisha-rise-three-fold-in-10-years/articleshow/55911040.cms>.

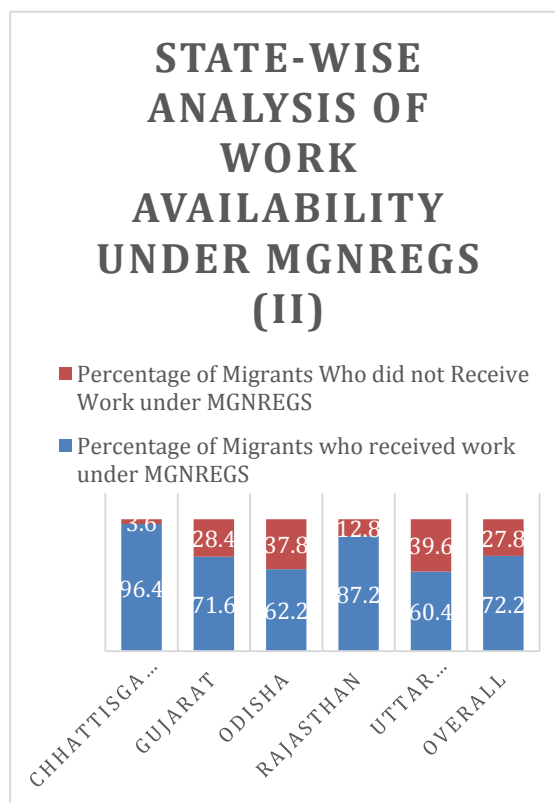
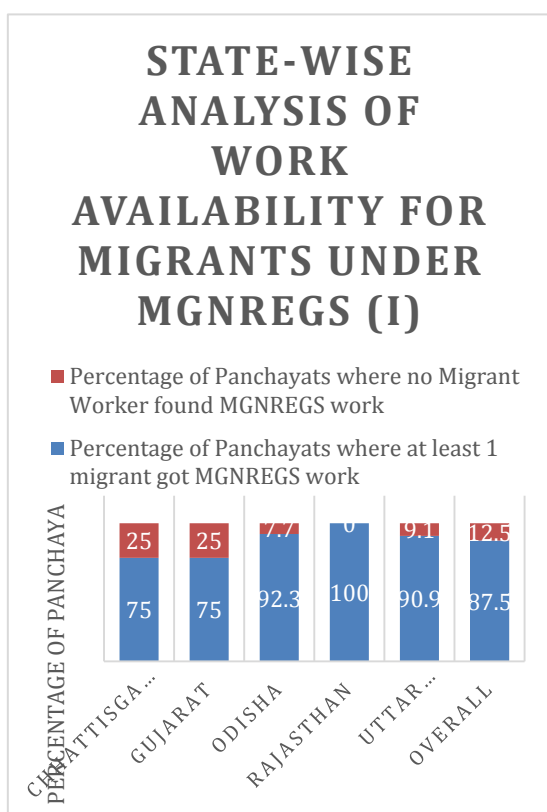
<sup>6</sup> Ashutosh Mishra, "As Odisha Struggles To Deal With Rapid COVID-19 Spread, Migrant Workers Demand More Testing", The Wire, 2020, <https://thewire.in/government/odisha-covid-19-migrant-workers-testing>.

panchayats surveyed in this study were in Malkangiri district, which is not as known for out of state migration trends.

### Availability of Work to Returned Migrants

**Table 3: State-wise Analysis of Work Availability for Migrants Under MGNREGS**

Area	Percentage of Panchayats where at least 1 migrant got MGNREGS work	Percentage of Migrants who received work under MGNREGS
Chhattisgarh	75	96.4
Gujarat	75	71.6
Odisha	92.3	62.2
Rajasthan	100	87.2
Uttar Pradesh	90.9	60.4
Overall	87.5	72.2



**Table 4: Nature of Work Performed by Migrants under MGNREGS**  
(Percentage of Employed Migrants Engaged in the Task)

Area	Land development	PMAY related works	Road construction	Horticulture development	Pond construction/ Pond digging	Check dam	Pastureland development	Plantation	Afforestation	Work on own field	Digging well on own land	Construction of farm pond on own land	Other MGNREGS works
Chhattisgarh	16.1	6.0	3.4	2.4	24.8	5.6	4.0	4.3	0.7	29.2	3.3	0.2	6.6
Gujarat	19.9	13.6	0.5	0.0	25.2	9.1	0.0	0.0	13.6	9.1	9.1	0.0	0.0
Odisha	12.2	0.6	18.7	32.3	14.1	0.7	0.0	9.9	0.0	3.4	0.6	7.7	25.1
Rajasthan	74.4	7.3	2.3	0.0	9.8	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	3.5	2.4	0.0	0.0
Uttar Pradesh	16.8	0.0	36.3	0.0	21.4	7.7	0.0	6.2	0.0	11.7	0.0	0.0	5.4
Overall	26.2	4.4	10.2	11.2	15.4	0.6	0.6	4.4	2.0	8.0	2.4	2.6	9.8

- In 87.5% of the Panchayats (n=64), at least 1 migrant worker had found work under MGNREGS. In Rajasthan, this was the case in all surveyed panchayats. Overall, 72.2% of migrants who returned to the surveyed Panchayats found MGNREGS work. Chhattisgarh performed best in this regard, as is evidenced above. However, this is not an indicator that migrants were receiving adequate employment within these panchayats. In 12.5% of panchayats, no migrant workers had received work under MGNREGS. The overall statistic also mirrors national trends, as figures as of June 2020 indicated that 33% of all registered MGNREGS workers in India (migrants and non-migrants) had not yet been given work.<sup>7</sup>
- Overall, the highest number of workers were engaged in land development, followed by pond digging and renovation. Ongoing trends nationwide also indicate a focus on water-related works—currently, the highest number of ongoing works under the MGNREGS MIS<sup>8</sup> are water-related.<sup>9</sup>
- Each state has a different task employing the most number of workers. In Rajasthan, it is land development; in Chhattisgarh, it is working in one's own field and pond digging/renovation; in Odisha, it is garden development; in Uttar Pradesh, it is road construction; and in Gujarat, it is pond digging/renovation.
- In 9.8% of Panchayats, Other MGNREGS works were conducted. Some of the other works specified included Gram Panchayat construction, fishery and orchard work, and building houses under the Chief Minister's housing development plan in the state.

### Irregularities in MGNREGS

In this section of the survey, pre-determined types of irregularities were presented to the surveyors and they had to select (based on their interviews) the types of irregularities observed. The options presented were-

- None of the mentioned irregularities
- Discrepancies between the number of names on the muster roll vs the number of workers working- less workers actually working than reflected on the rolls.
- Some of the work being done by machines
- Most of the work being done by machines
- The work shown on the records did not occur
- All of the above irregularities occurring.

<sup>7</sup> Ashlin Mathew, "More Than 33% Of Registered NREGA Workers Yet To Get Work", National Herald, 2020, <https://www.nationalheraldindia.com/india/more-than-33-of-nrega-workers-yet-to-get-work>.

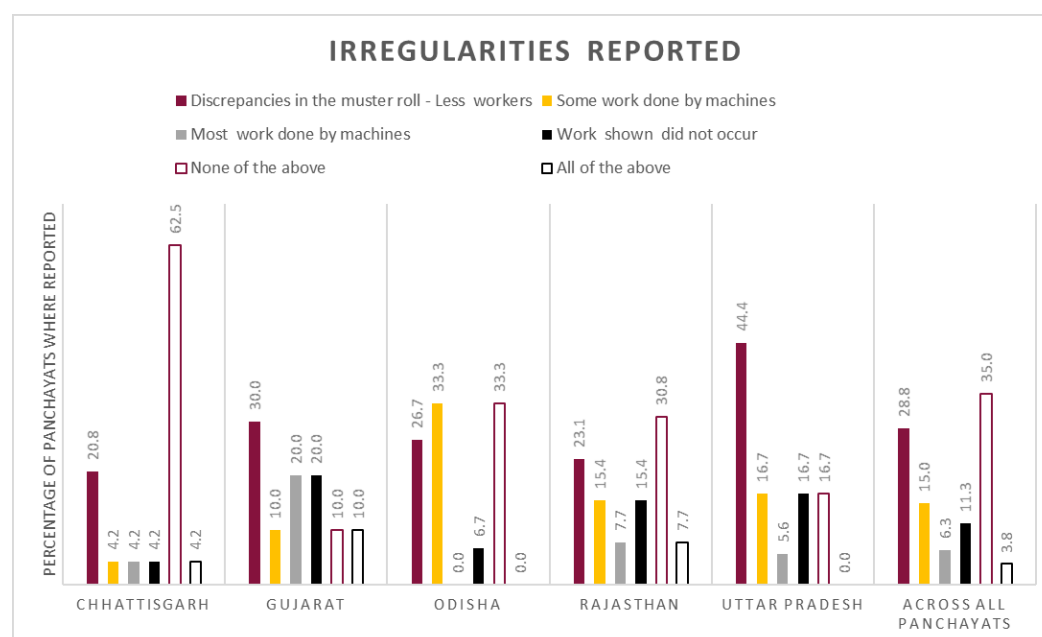
<sup>8</sup> MIS- Management Information System

<sup>9</sup> "R6.1.1 Work Status During The Financial Year", Mnregaweb4.Nic.In, 2020, [http://mnregaweb4.nic.in/netnrega/Citizen.html/stworkreptemp\\_n.aspx?lflag=eng&fin\\_year=2020-2021&source=national&labels=labels&Digest=GVEtyTyMaktI6zoZi/EYWg](http://mnregaweb4.nic.in/netnrega/Citizen.html/stworkreptemp_n.aspx?lflag=eng&fin_year=2020-2021&source=national&labels=labels&Digest=GVEtyTyMaktI6zoZi/EYWg).

They could select multiple options for each Panchayat as were applicable. Based on this, overall across the states (n=54 panchayats), the following results were observed state wise.

**Table 5: Nature of Irregularities Reported Across Gram Panchayats**  
(Percentage of Panchayats where the irregularity was reported)

Area	Irregularities					
	Discrepancies between the number of names on the muster roll vs the number of workers working- less workers actually working than reflected	Some of the work is done by machines	Most of the work is done by machines	The work shown on the records did not occur	None of the above	All of the above
Chhattisgarh	20.8	4.2	4.2	4.2	62.5	4.2
Gujarat	30	10	20	20	10	10
Odisha	26.7	33.3	0.0	6.7	33.3	0.0
Rajasthan	23.1	15.4	7.7	15.4	30.8	7.7
Uttar Pradesh	44.4	16.7	5.6	16.7	16.7	0.0
Across all Panchayats	28.8	15.0	6.3	11.3	35.0	3.8



- 35% of Panchayats reported no irregularities.
- In the remaining 65% however, multiple irregularities were present, out of which 3.8% displayed all selected irregularities occurring
- Gujarat reported the highest concentration of irregularities taking place with 90% of panchayats reporting irregularities. Chhattisgarh in contrast reported the lowest concentration, with only 37.5% panchayats reporting irregularities.
- The irregularity most reported is that there are discrepancies in muster roll entries, which inflate the number of workers actually working. This is reflective of a long-standing, commonly reported error under the scheme, despite the digitalization of

muster rolls. Critics have long highlighted that the process of inputting the muster roll data is very vulnerable to errors, and is often deliberately manipulated.<sup>10</sup>

- The other irregularities reported—related to use of machines for MGNREGS tasks and misreporting the number of works actually in progress—are also long-standing, and have been occurring since the initial implementation of the scheme—as documented in PRIA’s studies from that time.<sup>11</sup>

### Issues faced by returnee migrants working under MGNREGS

Surveyors had filled out data for Panchayats (n=50) across all states for this question. Most Panchayats reported multiple difficulties faced by migrant workers. Within the Panchayats, the following responses were seen-

- Only 10% of Panchayats reported no difficulties
- Wage related issues- consisting of delays in wage payment, low wage rates and issues with bank accounts were the most prevalent, reported in 27 panchayats. As PRIA’s own studies<sup>12</sup> and other studies by academics show<sup>13</sup> delayed payments and low wage rates are long-standing issues within MGNREGS<sup>14</sup>. The issues related to bank accounts began in 2009 when bank payments as the mode of payment were universalized within the scheme.<sup>15</sup>
- Access to job cards (whether new or inclusion within a household card) as well as the availability of work (either due to a lack of job openings, tasks not taking place or weather disruptions) were also serious issues, with 22 and 20 panchayats reporting them respectively. As PRIA’s national study on MGNREGS conducted from 2006-2008 also showed, this too is a long-standing issue with MGNREGS, prevalent since the scheme was first implemented.<sup>16</sup>
- Migrant workers also felt discouraged from working MGNREGS jobs due to skill level mismatches—as was seen in at least 6 panchayats. Workers either felt over-qualified or under-qualified/ unused to the unskilled, manual work that MGNREGS provides.
- Numerous other factors were also in play. Some of the issues reported were administrative, such as not following distance and amenity provision regulations within the scheme. Others included social factors—such as workers not wanting to work MGNREGS jobs as they felt it was a step-down for them, as well as they and their families being discriminated against by other villagers. Surveyors also reported that Coronavirus fears slowed down the pace at which work was provided in certain panchayats. Issues of caste-based discrimination against migrant workers have also been reported nationwide during this time, as many belong to lower caste

<sup>10</sup> Debmalya Nandy, "MGNREGA'S Information System Flawed, Misguiding", Downtoearth.Org.In, 2018, <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/blog/agriculture/mgnrega-s-information-system-flawed-misguiding-62545>.

<sup>11</sup> Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA), "Enabling Panchayats To Deliver Rural Employment- Annual Report (April 2006- March 2007)" (repr., New Delhi: Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA), 2007).

<sup>12</sup> Society of Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA), "Implementation Of NREGS: Emerging Trends-Summary Of Sample Studies In The States" (repr., New Delhi: Society of Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA), 2006), <http://192.9.200.243/greenstone/collect/pri/index/assoc/HASH01a5/0cd5523c.dir/doc.pdf>.

<sup>13</sup> Nrega.Nic.In, 2015, [https://www.nrega.nic.in/Circular\\_Archive/archive/MGNREGA\\_Sameeksha2\\_English.pdf](https://www.nrega.nic.in/Circular_Archive/archive/MGNREGA_Sameeksha2_English.pdf).

<sup>14</sup> Jean Drèze, "The Need For A Million Worksites Now", The Hindu, 2020, <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/the-need-for-a-million-worksites-now/article31665949.ece>.

<sup>15</sup> Anindita Adhikari and Kartika Bhatia, NREGA Wage Payments: Can We Bank On The Banks?, ebook (repr., Economic and Political Weekly, 2010), <http://re.indiaenvironmentportal.org.in/files/NREGA%20Wage%20Payments.pdf>.

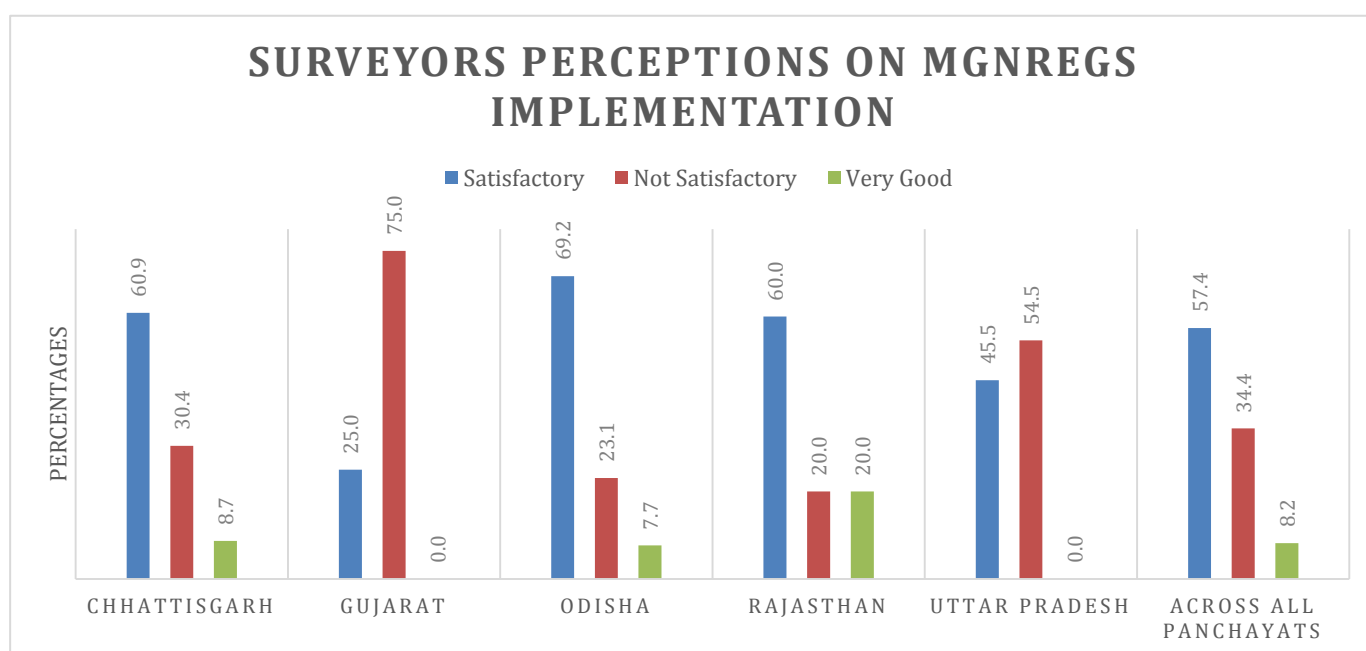
<sup>16</sup> Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA), "Role Of Panchayati Raj Institutions In NREGS" (repr., New Delhi: Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA), 2006), <http://192.9.200.243/greenstone/collect/pri/index/assoc/HASHef42.dir/doc.pdf>.

communities, and are often stereotyped for being “impure”, and therefore unhygienic and disease-ridden.<sup>17</sup>

### Surveyors’ Levels of Satisfaction with the Scheme

Based on the previous sections they answered, surveyors were asked to rate their perception of how they assessed the extent to which migrant labourers were being engaged under MGNREGS. They were asked to rate the level of engagement as either “Not Satisfactory”, “Satisfactory” or “Very Good”. Responses obtained for Panchayats (n=61) have been presented below:

Percentage of Panchayats where Response was reported	Perceptions of MGNREGS Implementation		
	Satisfactory	Not Satisfactory	Very Good
Chhattisgarh	60.9	30.4	8.7
Gujarat	25.0	75.0	0.0
Odisha	69.2	23.1	7.7
Rajasthan	60.0	20.0	20.0
Uttar Pradesh	45.5	54.5	0.0
Across all Panchayats	57.4	34.4	8.2



<sup>17</sup> Shruti Shrivastava, "How Coronavirus Has Brought Caste Discrimination Back For India's Migrant Workers", The Print, 2020, <https://theprint.in/india/how-coronavirus-has-brought-caste-discrimination-back-for-indias-migrant-workers/486261/>.

- Majority of the panchayats were said to have a satisfactory level of engagement at 57.4 %.
- Only 8.2 % of panchayats were rated to have a “very good” or above expectations level of engagement.

### **Surveyors’ suggestions for effective implementation of MGNREGS**

Most of the suggestions were related to difficulties as reported under the section on difficulties faced by migrant labourers. The suggestions made were for -

- Ensuring that works were expeditiously sanctioned and commenced to meet rising job demand.
- Confirming that works are rigorously supervised and records are meticulously kept.
- Ascertaining that all migrant workers were expeditiously registered and given access to / included in job cards under MGNREGS.
- Timely payment of wages and increases in the wage rate to at least match the minimum wage in the state.
- Taking precautions against the weather to ensure that works do not get interrupted during the monsoon. Halting of works, especially those related to agriculture has been a long-standing issue with the scheme.
- As Srivastava<sup>18</sup> has estimated, over 5 crore migrant workers in India are engaged in non-agricultural work. Many migrants work as plumbers, masons, electricians, painters etc. Since MGNREGS provides unskilled labour under its mandate, and most of the works are agriculture-related, a number of migrant workers in the surveyed panchayats have expressed the need for better skills-matching so that they can perform work in which they have skill and capacity.
- Providing adequate awareness of rights under MGNREGS among returning migrant labourers- such as entitlement to an unemployment allowance after 15 days application if work is not received, provision of a transportation allowance if the worksite is more than 5km away from the Gram Panchayat, right to be included in a job card etc.
- Active encouragement by Gram Panchayats to ensure that migrant workers registered themselves under MGNREGS.
- Increases in the number of work-days provided under the scheme to ensure employment for rural workers during this crisis.
- Ensuring the provision of necessary tools, water, adequate PPE such as masks and sanitizers, and creche facilities at all work sites.
- Preventing the use of machines to ensure more people can be employed.
- Better coordination between Panchayat, Block and District level officials on MGNREGS related work.
- Preventing the exploitation of village-level elected representatives by government officials.
- Better treatment of workers by Gram Panchayat and higher-level officials.

<sup>18</sup> Srivastava, Ravi (2020). Understanding circular migration in India: Its nature and dimensions, the crisis under lockdown and the response of the state. Institute for Human Development, Centre for Employment Studies Working Paper Series-WP 04/2020. [http://www.ihdindia.org/Working%20Papers/2020/IHD-CES\\_WP\\_04\\_2020.pdf](http://www.ihdindia.org/Working%20Papers/2020/IHD-CES_WP_04_2020.pdf).

## Conclusions and Recommendations Going Forward

The survey thus highlights that the process of including migrant workers in MGNREGS is underway and progress is being made, but enduring implementation gaps serve as significant hurdles to their inclusion. Some interesting sociological insights have emerged from this survey; caste and class discrimination serve as hindrances towards inclusivity in implementing MGNREGS, and number of returning migrants feel less-suited for unskilled, manual labour, and thus hesitate and/ or struggle to work under this scheme. The most significant hurdles towards ensuring that migrants receive work under this scheme, however, are ensuring implementation failures, as elucidated in the analysis above. In the short-term therefore, the following steps must be taken:

1. Timely registrations and wage payments under MGNREGS must take place to ensure that workers do not face further problems in accessing basic necessities like food and healthcare during the pandemic.
2. Wages should be paid in cash so workers who can't access the banks at this time are not left out.
3. In every Panchayat, it must be ensured that no worker is paid below the new revised average wage rate, and provisions should be made to ensure that the wage rates match the minimum wage rates in states. Currently, the MGNREGS wage rate is between 40-50% lower than the minimum wage rate for unskilled agricultural labour.<sup>19</sup>
4. A wider ambit of necessary tasks during this pandemic—such as works and infrastructure creation related to sanitation and healthcare—need to be introduced and provided in the near term to help more workers be employed as well as address critical infrastructure gaps at the Gram Panchayat level. While the government has allowed Gram Panchayats to spend allocated funds on these tasks, MGNREGS can also be used to facilitate this.
5. Currently, MGNREGS provides only unskilled work related to construction and repair of rural infrastructure as related to agriculture, watershed development, Panchayat building construction and house building schemes. However, temporary relaxations can be made to allow skilled migrants who work as masons, plumbers, electricians, painters etc. to work on more detailed aspects of these works, so they can be employed under MGNREGS and can work on tasks where their skills are best leveraged.
6. The permitted number of workdays should be increased to employ as many people as is possible.
7. Strict oversight, and checks and balances in the data entry process need to be maintained to ensure that workers do not face difficulties due to technical and bureaucratic glitches.
8. Machine use must be stopped unless absolutely necessary.

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<sup>19</sup> Tina Edwin, "MGNREGA Wages Up About 11%; Yet At Least 40% Lower Than Minimum Wages", The Hindu, 2020, <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/mgnrega-wages-up-about-11-yet-at-least-40-lower-than-minimum-wages/article31197140.ece>.

## Annexure 1: Lists of Districts, Blocks and Panchayats Surveyed in 2020 COVID Survey

### Chhattisgarh

Districts	Blocks	Panchayats
Jashpur	Bagicha	Rengale
		Pirai
	Kansabel	Bansbahar
	Kunkuri	Charaikhara Barangjor
Korba	Korba	Chuiya
		Dhangaon
Raipur	Abhanpur	Dulna
	Arang	Chhatera
		Kutela
	Dharsiwa	Silyari
Tilda	Sararidih	
Rajnandgaon	Ambagarh Chowki	Handi Tola
	Chhuriya	Pendridih
	Dongargaon	Aasara
		Palandur
Mohla	Marartola	
Sukma	Chhindgarh	Chipurpal
Surguja	Batouli	Bansajhal
	Mainpat	Chidapara
		Dangbuda
		Jamdhodhi
	Sitapur	Baneya
Hardisand (JamJhariya)		

### Gujarat

Districts	Blocks	Panchayats
Kutch	Bhachau	Chhadwala
Dahod	Dhanpur	Sajoi
Sabarkantha	Poshina	Nada
Anand	Khambhat	Gudel
Narmada	Dediapada	Navagam (Panuda)

## Odisha

Districts	Blocks	Panchayats
Malkangiri	Mathili	Nayakguda
		Dalpatiguda
		Ambaguda.
		Chaulmendi
	Korukonda	Somonathpur
	Khairput	Khairput
		Kadamguda
		Parkanmala
Kudumulguma		
Govindapally		
Koraput	Laxmipur	Toyaput
Rayagada	Kolnara	Bhoimada
Nabarangpur	Kosagumuda	Attigaon

## Rajasthan

Districts	Blocks	Panchayats
Pali	Rani	Jawali
Barmer	Barmer	Vishala Agor
	Sindhari	Lolawa
		Dhanva
		Sada
		Hodu
		Kharntiya
	Patodi	Durgapura
		Baniyawas
		Patodi
		Okatiya Bera
		Nawatla

## Uttar Pradesh

Districts	Blocks	Panchayats
Varanasi	Cholapur	Rauna Khurd
		Tadi
		Jagdishpur
		Rauna Kala
	Harhua	Rajapur
Sitapur	Khairabad	Asodhar
		Pakariya
Jhansi	Babina	Cluster of 10 Gram Panchayats
Ghazipur	Mohammadabad	Hata
		Tandwa
Lalitpur	Mandawara	Sonrai

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