

Study on impact of NREGA in district Allahabad

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■ **ABSTRACT** : The present study was done on impact of NREGA. Two blocks –Chaka and Mohabbatganj of Allahabad district were selected randomly. The analysis was done on the basis of both primary and secondary data. The introduction of the scheme improved the debt-servicing capacity of the poor households and also helped in reducing the liabilities. The households spent their income mainly on household expenses and on education and clothing of the children. There has been minimum increase in the livestock population after the implementation period. High participation of women was likely to empower them socially, economically and politically. 36.4 per cent of the respondents reported that the women were socially empowered. 43.8 per cent of the women respondents said that they were economically empowered. It was reported that women enjoyed freedom in spending the money they earned and 17.6 per cent women beneficiaries reported that they were politically empowered as they participated in decision making process under the scheme.

■ **KEY WORDS** : NREGA, Rural labour, Family income, Employment

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The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) 2005 is landmark legislation in Indian history of social security legislation after independence. The unique feature which distinguishes this scheme from previous employment programmes is that the NREGS is endorsed by a legal guarantee. This is a major step forward in the sense that it makes 100 days of employment or payment of unemployment benefit in lieu of that, an enforceable right of citizen to demand employment. Thus, NREGA is a public works programme with a difference, which moves away from being a purely supply-side intervention to one which caters to demand for wage employment at individual/family level in rural areas. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme aims at enhancing the livelihood security of the people in rural areas by guaranteeing hundred days of wage employment in a financial year, to a rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. The objective of the scheme is to create durable assets and strengthen the livelihood resource base of the rural poor. The Act envisages that the schemes will lead to large scale creation of livelihood assets in rural areas which can have a sustainable impact on

rural poverty. Every programme/scheme is designed with a very clear and focused objective. As mentioned earlier, the NREGA was launched by GOI to have a direct impact on the rural households in terms of their increased opportunity for wage employment on one hand, and in creating livelihood assets in the farm and non-farm sector, on the other. With this perspective, GOI, as a part of its developmental mandate, has invested a huge sum of money in the promotion and implementation of NREGA across all the districts in the country. The implementation of the programme has indicated a need to undertake the impact assessment to identify within district and across the state, efficient management practice, procedures, process, factors that contribute to good performance and the positive outcome and impact generated. Therefore, it is worthwhile to see what impact the NREGA has been able to make on the village community. Has the scheme been able to justify its existence in terms of achieving its envisaged objectives? Whether the performance of NREGA has been uniform across the different district in U.P.? The NREGA has great potential for increasing the volume of employment among the rural unemployed and underemployed.