

## National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) Guaranteeing the Right to Work

### **Objectives**

- To provide legal guarantee for 100 days of wage employment to every household in the rural areas of the country each year
- To combine the twin goals of providing employment and asset creation in rural areas

### **Salient Features**

- First such effort in the world to provide legal guarantee for the Right to Work
- Covers all districts of the country
- All rural households in rural areas, whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work eligible
- Job card under the Act is the right of every rural household willing to work on NREGA and applies for it
- Choice of works done through village level plans and 50% or more of work to be executed by panchayati raj institutions
- Work focuses on areas like water conservation, land development, provision of irrigation facility on private land of people below the poverty line, rural connectivity etc.
- Contractors banned in NREGA works
- Payment made through post office and bank accounts
- Unemployment allowance to be paid if Government unable to provide jobs within 15 days of application
- All muster rolls put up on the internet
- Social audit made mandatory

## **What was Done**

- 3.4 crore people provided jobs in 2007-08 and 3.5 crores up to December, 2008.
- Women constitute 49%, SCs 30% and STs 25% of those working in NREGA in 2008-2009
- Total expenditure Rs. 41,700 crores since commencement of programme in February 2006
- 46 lakhs work taken up of which 19 lakh stand completed.
- Water conservation, irrigation and land development account for 83% of the work taken up in 2008-2009.
- Impact studies show reduction in migration, improvement in agricultural productivity and increase in minimum wages.
- Minimum wages have gone up from Rs.65/- in 2006-07 to Rs.83/- in 2008-09.
- 6 crore accounts of NREGA beneficiaries opened in post offices/banks contributing to financial inclusion.