

# Chapter - 11

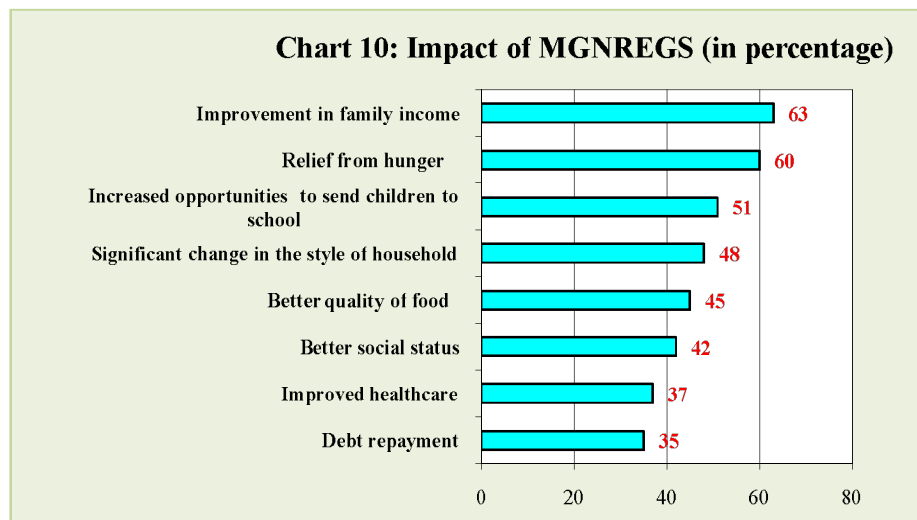
## Impact assessment

### 11.1 Impact assessment

The workers engaged on MGNREGS are largely poor and MGNREGS assumes a lot of significance as it provides the rural population with income during lean agricultural seasons and natural calamities like drought, *etc.* MGNREGS is designed to bring about significant improvement in the quality of life of the rural population by ensuring that the needy households get a guaranteed employment for at least 100 days in the village. An attempt to assess the impact on individual households had been made on the following broad parameters:

- improvement in family income;
- relief from hunger;
- increased opportunities to send children to school;
- improved lifestyle;
- improved food security;
- better social status;
- improved healthcare; and
- debt repayment

The impact of MGNREGS on individual households as ascertained during the survey is shown in the **Chart 10**.



Source: Beneficiary survey

The largest impact of the Scheme was on improved food security in the rural areas. While 60 *per cent* of the sampled workers stated that the Scheme had helped them avoid going hungry, 45 *per cent* informed that the Scheme helped them to have better quality of food than what they had been able to eat before the Scheme started. This is followed by increase in family income. As per the survey, while 63 *per cent* stated that there had been marginal improvement in family income, only nine *per cent* informed that the improvement was about 50 *per cent*. Another 17 *per cent* did not notice any change in family income as a result of the Scheme.

Another positive emerging from the survey was that 51 *per cent* of the workers informed that the Scheme had spared their children from domestic and other work so that they could send their children to school. The social status of workers engaged on the Scheme had also improved as the Scheme had helped 42 *per cent* of the workers in giving up demeaning and hazardous work that they did not want to do. The survey also showed that while 35 *per cent* of the workers had been able to use the additional income in repayment of debt, 37 *per cent* informed that the Scheme helped them pay doctors' fees, buy medicines *etc.*, during illness in the household.

#### **11.1.1 Assets created under the Scheme**

One of the main goals of MGNREGS is to create assets which will ensure sustainability in the livelihood of the rural poor. As per the survey, 59 *per cent* of the sampled workers felt that the Scheme had resulted in creation of useful assets in the village. The awareness level of Scheme works being undertaken for development of land belonging to SC/ST/BPL/small or marginal farmers was 62 *per cent*.

Though the Operational Guidelines provide for maintenance of assets created out of MGNREGS funds, no expenditure on maintenance had been incurred. Out of 1,432 works physically verified, execution of only 941 works (66 *per cent*) was found to be satisfactory. The remaining works were in poor condition. Non-maintenance of the assets defeated the very purpose of creation of durable assets under MGNREGS.

The State Government stated (January 2013) that it would be incorporated in annual action plans as per the Operational Guidelines.

#### **11.1.2 Impact on migration**

MGNREGS is designed to reduce migration as the Scheme provides work for the poor in times of their need. The 100 days' employment as a right to the rural households is as an opportunity to check migration from the villages. Though it would perhaps never be possible to stop migration the perception of the workers surveyed showed that 57 *per cent* felt that the Scheme had helped avoid migration to other places for work.

The survey also showed that officers other than from GP, like PO, Executive Engineer, *etc.*, had visited the worksite and a majority of the workers (84 *per cent*) did not face any harassment at worksite.

## **11.2 Evaluation of the Scheme**

As per the Operational Guidelines, the outlays for MGNREGS had to be transformed into certain outcomes. Regular evaluations and sample surveys of specific MGNREGS works were to be conducted to assess the outcomes. The broad guidelines for evaluation studies were to be framed by SEGC. The findings of the evaluation studies were to be used by SEGC, district panchayats and other institutions for initiating corrective action. It was seen that the State Government had not commissioned any study to assess its performance in the implementation of the Scheme and its impact on individuals' lives.