



**Piloting of Some Key Steps of
Andhra Pradesh Rural Employment
Guarantee Scheme (APREGS)
in Parigi, Ranga Reddy district,
Andhra Pradesh**

15th December 2005 to 31st March 2006



**Commissionerate,
Rural Development, GoAP**



**Watershed Support Services
and Activities Network (WASSAN)**

INDEX

❑ BACKGROUND	1
❑ MILE STONE - 1: Organizing Initial orientation programmes.....	3
❑ MILE STONE 2: Communication Campaign in all Grama Panchayatis.....	4
❑ MILE STONES - 3 and 4: Supporting the village secretaries for registration of wage seekers and Issuing job cards.....	7
❑ MILE STONE 5: Orientation to the Field Assistants and Other team members on planning process.....	10
❑ MILE STONE 6: Planning and Shelf of Works	12
❑ MILE STONE 7: Generating Estimates for selected works and Initial preparations for grounding the works.....	14
❑ MILE STONE 8: Ground the First Batch of Works and Work Site Facilities.....	15
❑ MILE STONE 9: Making Payments.....	17
❑ MILE STONE 10: Supporting the preparation of Mandal Level Action Plan and Mainstreaming the Pilot.....	20
❑ Recommendations:.....	21
❑ Conclusions:.....	23

BACKGROUND

Providing employment to rural masses was always considered as an obligation of the state. Since independence, Government of India devised several schemes to provide employment. FFW; NREP; RLEGP; JRY; JGSY; EAS; NFFW are among the prominent schemes to provide employment to rural masses. In spite of operating these schemes for several years, the employment related issues are not completely addressed at village level. As a result of consistent efforts by several activists, government officers, people's representatives and many others, Government of India enacted "National Employment Guarantee Act (August 2005). Each state government (in which the act is relevant) is expected to prepare a scheme to fulfill the obligations of the state. The main difference between this new scheme and previous schemes lies in the philosophy of the scheme itself. Employment is perceived as a "right" of wage seekers and the central/state government "guarantees" this right, through this act.

In the light of this philosophy, Government of Andhra Pradesh conceptualized Andhra Pradesh Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (APREGS). While the scheme was being conceptualized, the GoAP also wanted to "test" some of the key steps of the proposed scheme in a real life condition. With this background, a pilot for APREGS was initiated in Parigi Mandal, RR District, AP. The Pilot of APREGS covered in the entire mandal that consists of 22 Grama Panchayat is, covering 54 villages and hamlets in all. The pilot was anchored by Cluster-level Livelihoods Resource Center (CLRC), WASSAN, Parigi in association with District Water Management Agency (DWM A), Rangareddy District. The pilot of APREGS was launched on 15th Dec 2005 and formally completed on 1st Apr 2006 (About 3.5 months time).

OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE OF THE PILOT

"To test the operational processes of the APREG Scheme (Draft) at the village level on pilot basis one mandal (around 22 Grama Panchayat is)"

OUTPUTS OF THE PILOT

- Report on lessons on the field level processes at village level that feed into the revision of the scheme
- Field tested formats and a case example on registration, planning shelf of works and works implementation plans
- 3 Training modules Prepared and field tested on following themes Awareness, Planning Process and Measurements
- Communication material prepared and field tested (Kalajatha/ posters/ brochures)

ROLE OF WASSAN:

- WASSAN is primarily responsible for piloting the project with active support and guidance from DWM A, District Collectorate and CRD.
- Provided support to DWM A/ District Collectorate in the implementation of the pilot.
- Coordinated with DWM A, Mandal Development Officer and Commissionerate of Rural Development for seeking support and implementation of activities.
- Conduct awareness campaigns; provide capacity building inputs to several stakeholders
- Took up responsibility of completing the entire cycle of project implementation (awareness, job cards; shelf of works; approvals; execution of works; payments and so on) in limited number of cases.

- Shared the observations, experiences and lessons learned from time to time to GoAP (Mandal; District and State level) in the form of reports and other means, including web based reports.
- Field -tested the formats at every stage at field level and provided feedback for improvements.
- Constituted an anchor team and a separate "pilot team" consisting of 3 members - Documentation officer, Pilot In-charge, Pilot Assistant to carry on the activities of pilot testing of core practices of APREGS in Parigi.
- Contributed about 24% of the budget in the form of human resources; cost of conducting capacity building events and part of other expenses.

ROLES OF CRD:

- Nomination of one person to provide necessary linkages/ liaison with district and mandal administration
- Facilitate the evolution of support systems from district administration and evolve the roles of MDO/ MRO and Other functionaries (Grama Panchayati and secretaries).
- Facilitate the convergence of IKP-DPMU with Pilot Team.
- Facilitate the nomination of a nodal officer at DWMA, RR District who could facilitate the convergence of action between several institutions at village level and departments, as per the need and over all coordination.
- Ensure that appropriate field level functionaries are deployed from its staff/new staff, as per the draft scheme.
- Facilitate the coordinated functioning between Pilot Team and TCS, which is engaged in development of soft ware for APREGS.
- Supply of communication material and necessary registers/ records/ job cards/ application forms for each of the village for field-testing.
- In case they are unable to supply, adequate budget support would be provided to procure these material.

MILE STONES FOR PILOTING APREGS AT PARIGI MANDAL:

By the time the need for pilot was recognized and pilot was formally launched, the APREGS was not completely conceptualized. Several consultations were going on, on this theme and ideas were being gathered to draft the scheme. However, some "MILE STONES" are identified and the pilot was expected to "field-test" the following MILE STONES of APREGS.

- Organizing initial orientation programmes
- Communication campaign in all Grama Panchayati
 - Organizing Grama Sabhas
 - Awareness Campaigns at VOs/ CBOs/ Village on the APREGS
- Supporting the village secretaries for registration of wage seekers
- Issuing job cards
- Orientation to the Field Assistants and Other team members on planning process
- Planning and Shelf of Works
- Generating Estimates for selected works
- Initial Preparations for grounding the works
- Ground the First Batch of Works and Work Site Facilities
- Making Payments
- Supporting the preparation of Mandal Level Action Plan
- Mainstreaming the Pilot

INPUT STRATEGY

Though the pilot was formally launched, the state machinery was parallelly making efforts to launch the scheme in the entire state. So it was important to contribute to the process of designing the scheme for the entire state instantly by sharing the reports from pilot. For ensuring this process, pilot team devised an "input strategy" to make effective use of limited time period available with the Pilot Team. The input strategy consists of the following streams.

- Stream 1: High Level of Inputs and Facilitation (3 Villages)
- Stream 2: Average or Medium Level of Inputs and Facilitation (14 Villages)
- Stream 3: Low Level of Inputs and Facilitation (5 Villages)

This strategy was designed to concentrate on the innovations as well as support general stream of activities within pilot mandal. However, the strategy was not completely operationalized as the pilot team was dedicating the energies and time more on the implementation of pilot in the entire mandal, in the absence of mainstream staff (which was deployed at the end of the pilot period by local offices of APREGS) that was supposed to work in the pilot.

STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT:

The report of pilot gives a detailed analysis of experiences at every MILE STONE of the pilot. The format of the report largely follows the chronological order of events. A chapter is dedicated at the end to highlight the issues and concerns and lessons learned during the pilot. Several reports are concurrently produced during the course of pilot itself, which are available on the web site of WASSAN.

MILE STONE - 1: Organizing Initial orientation programmes

Description of Process Steps:

The launch of pilot in Parigi:

On 15th December 2005, Mr P Premchandra Reddy, District Collector formally launched the pilot of the APREGS at CLRC, Parigi. Ms Nirmala, Joint Commissioner (CRD), Mr Narasimha Reddy, Project Director, DWM A and other team members participated in this meeting. Mandal Development Officer, Sarpanches and Secretaries of selected villages and members of village organisations also participated. The basic features of the APREGS were explained to the participants. There was a debate among the participants on issues like mode of payment, equal wages for men and women, share of grain and money (as part of wage payments) and so on. The feed back from this meeting was useful for understanding the sentiments of different stakeholders in the programme at village level.

Initial Orientation Programs:

Parigi mandal is divided into three clusters and for each cluster a one-day orientation programme was organized for Secretaries, Sarpanches and representatives of village organisation on the salient features of the APREGS at CLRC, Parigi from 22nd to 26th December 2005.

WASSAN developed relevant modules and conducted the orientation programme. Resource material such as four posters developed for the

campaigning of the scheme were also used for facilitating the group discussions and crystallize their impressions. Each poster dealt with a different subject namely, non-negotiables in the scheme, how to get the work, the shelf of works to be taken up and the facilities at the work place.

Common Planning Meeting

A common meeting was organized on 27th December 2005 in which Project Director, DWM A and his team representative, MDO, the Programme Officer in the mandal and WASSAN team participated. In this meeting, action plan for the next two months and roles and responsibilities of each group were decided. MDO was given the responsibility of coordinating with Village Secretaries and Sarpanches. Communication channel was clearly established in the context of piloting of the APREGS.

Lessons Learned/ Accomplishments:

1. Participation of senior officers at state/ district/ mandal level gave adequate support to the initial process of the pilot.
2. Orientation programs equipped the members of local institutions to take up necessary responsibilities in the next steps of pilot.
3. Common Planning meetings helped to develop clarity on the roles and responsibilities of each partner.
4. In the absence of adequate support from IKP Teams, pilot team had to spend considerable time in mobilizing the members of IKP.

Recommendations:

1. Common planning meetings are necessary instruments in ensuring coordination among the partners.
2. Initial orientation to key players is an important requirement for sharing the basic philosophy and features of the scheme.

MILE STONE 2: Communication Campaign in all Grama Panchayatis

Process Description:

Organizing Grama Sabhas/ VOs And CBOs On APREGS

Three teams consisting of members from WASSAN and DWM A have organized these village-level grama sabhas and small group meetings. These meetings were aimed at building awareness on the APREGS - in all the gram panchayats and hamlets. While the grama sabhas were held in the mornings, the small group meetings of women were organized during the nights. The village-level campaign (grama sabhas and small group meetings) was initiated on 28th December 2005 and completed in all the villages by 9th January 2006.

Each grama sabha was attended by a minimum of 100 to 500 villagers. Special efforts were made to reach out to women and explain the details of the scheme. Though women have participated in the small group meetings in the nights their participation in grama sabhas was either very high or almost nil. It was mostly because of the abundant work going on in cotton and paddy fields at the moment where women were highly employed.

Initially, it was decided to distribute applications forms after each grama sabha. These application forms are meant for the enrollment of wage seekers and

seeking the job cards. However the applications forms for job cards reached the pilot team on January 4, 2006 and they were distributed from then on wards, to all participants in the meetings. Several questions and issues were clarified during the distribution of application forms.

Communication Campaign at Village Level:

After Grama sabhas, an intensive and focused communication campaign was planned to cover the stakeholders of the scheme. It is a step ahead of the grama sabhas and night meetings already conducted for the awareness building. The campaign includes pasting wall posters, wall writings and street meetings, reaching out to every household through pamphlets, focus group meetings, canvassing in the streets with an auto and organizing kalajatha. Apart from developing the publicity material in coordination with CRD and APARD, a Writers' Workshop was conducted to develop songs and dance dramas on the scheme.

Writers' Workshop

A three-day Writers' Workshop was organized at CLRC, Parigi between 4th and 7th January 2006. Five writers worked for three days and produced half a dozen songs, dance dramas and skits for a package of three hours of cultural show. Most of the writers then turned into performers along with new artists to perform kala jathas in the villages.

The cultural teams and Kala Jathas

Three cultural teams consisting of six members each were constituted to hold Kala Jathas in all the villages. The teams were thoroughly trained on the salient features of the APREGS, its philosophy and key messages of the programme. This workshop was organized on 8th and 9th January 2006. From January 10th Jan 2006, they have taken up the communication campaign in the villages till 28th January 2006.

The evening attraction

Day long communication activities in the villages culminate in detailed Kala Jatha programme on the scheme in the late evening. They used to begin the programme with songs specific to the village and gather people. When the gathering reached a few hundreds the subject was slowly introduced into the

Main Features of Communication Campaign

The team reaches the villages in a specially decorated auto rickshaw named "Kooli Bandi" between 10 and 11 in the morning and starts its activities. They form sub groups and conduct the following activities in the village till evening.

- Street publicity by mike
- Door-to-door canvassing
- Distributing pamphlets
- Wall writings
- Pasting the posters
- Focus group meets in Dalit colonies,
- Cultural programme Kala Jatha
- Slide shows

The focus in the night meetings and grama sabhas was mainly on

- Salient features of the APREGS
- Non-negotiable aspects
- Facilities at work place
- Nature of the works that can be taken up in the scheme
- Payment through post offices and banks
- The wage seekers' rights and the importance of the Right to Information Act on the scheme

songs. The Jatha teams were equipped with around 10 songs, three dance songs, one drama, one palle suddulu and with humour bits. Though the Kala Jatha programme was mostly a one-way communication, it had a strong impact on the villages. When the villagers were asked how they knew about the scheme, the top thing that came as an answer was Kala Jatha.

This campaign was well received in almost all the villages resulting in a tangible and perceptible change in the awareness levels. Both the Directorate of the APREGS and WASSAN assessed the awareness levels in the wake of this communication campaign.

Planning and Review Meeting

A planning and review meeting was organized with Village Secretaries, DWMA team and WASSAN team at CLRC Parigi on 30th January 2006. The responses of grama sabhas were analyzed and messages were crystallized. Though the communication campaign schedule was meant for 22 villages initially, the campaign was extended to 35 villages on the advice of the secretaries and Project Director, DWMA.

Lesson Learned/ Accomplishments:

1. Consistent and continuous inputs are important to spread the message of the act and scheme. It is important to be among/ along with the communication campaigning team to understand the communities.
2. The responses from the initial awareness meetings helped to understand the thinking of the communities and shaped the content of the communication campaign.
3. Though there were minute differences in the awareness levels, the pilot team could not find a single person who did not hear about the programme. All of them including a 10-year child know at least a couple of salient features.
4. A set of communication material, modules and resource persons are available by the end of this phase.
5. Considering the effectiveness of the communication campaign, the DWMA/ Director (APREGS) wanted this campaign to be continued even in the hamlets of the mandal. These were not included in the plan due to limited budgets available for the pilot. The budget required for this sanctioned from DWMA, RR District.
6. This generated considerable interest among the villagers. Unlike villagers in neighboring mandals, where people have already migrated, villagers in Parigi mandal waited for the works to be initiated.
7. Though the application forms are supposed to be distributed in these communication campaigns, the format (white paper/ printed/ with receipt/ without receipt) are not finalized till 4th Jan 2006. The pilot team had to revisit the villages again to distribute the application forms. The receipts are not issued as the initial forms did not have them.

Recommendations:

1. Series of communication interventions are important during the initial stages of the scheme. It is also important to reach out to different target groups within the village.
2. It is important to synchronize the inputs (Such as supply of application forms) with the field level action.

MILE STONES - 3 and 4: Supporting the village secretaries for registration of wage seekers and Issuing job cards

Process Description:

Field Testing of Formats:

One of the major contributions made by the pilot was testing various formats starting from the enrollment applications to disbursing wages using the software package that is specially developed for APREGS. The first format that was tested in the pilot was the application for job card.

The applications for job cards were issued from the eight day of the grama sabha campaign. When the applications were distributed to the village secretaries and in villages, the village secretaries raised the first objection as they found fault with the application receipt form. Hence the forms were replaced by another format, which consists of a counterfoil that could be torn off, and issued as receipt.

Computer Software to Manage APREGS

Andhra Pradesh is the first state to take a bold step to introduce management of EGS through computer software aiming at transparent and corruption-free implementation of the scheme. This software package is being developed by Tata Consultancy Services (TCS). The software supports the process of operating all MILE STONES of APREGS, which are mentioned below.

1. Profiling of all wage seekers
2. Generating job cards
3. Generate estimates of the works based on the input data sheets from the field.
4. Generate the pay orders and the pay slips to the wage seekers.

The software package also helps in keeping a track of several issues including fund flows, progress of works, analysis of data and so on. The computer center was established at the MDO office, Parigi. Part of the software was developed and remaining program was developed while the pilot was being implemented. The experiences and data generated from the field helped to "field test" the software also. All along the pilot the software package had gone through real time testing leading to many changes both in the front end and back end.

However the second format for application for job cards was also changed in another week as the government wanted to know whether the wage seekers, particularly women, were members of the self help groups or not. Later they also added the columns to get data on "whether the wage seekers were physically challenged".

As the enrollment process was taken up simultaneously the changes in the application forms created a little confusion and chaos. By the time the format was changed most of the wage seekers used the old format to apply for the job card. Then the village secretaries were asked to fill in the new columns. Secretaries did not pay much attention to this issue, in spite of taking responsibility. There was also a great rush in going ahead with the other things.

As a result, the application forms had several gaps and it was not possible for the Pilot Team to get the correct details in the absence of cooperation from

the secretaries. As the pilot progressed the village secretaries have completely missed from the scene as they were asked to concentrate on the issue of ration cards and nothing else.

Applications for a Job Card:

As the applications started reaching the villages from 4th January 2006, the filled up applications have started reaching the mandal office from almost next day onwards through Village Secretaries. This process continued till the end of January. After finishing the first phase of awareness building an assessment was done by the pilot team on the trends in the enrollment and could come to a rough estimate of potential wage seeking families. With higher number of marginal farmers who have the habit of taking up work outside their own fields to support their family income it was estimated to have a higher number of applications from wage seekers in the mandal. It was estimated around 10,000 wage seekers in the mandal might apply for job cards. The estimations were made in a review meeting held on 10th January 2006, and it was almost proved right. By 13th February 2006 total 10,450 wage seekers were applied (about 4,250 application forms).

The soft bugs

The computer and the software were also installed in Parigi MDO office on the 19th January, 2006 which was inspected by both the officials from the directorate and the district collector Mr Premchandra Reddy and the joint collector. A DTP operator was deputed from DWMA, Rangareddy to enter the data for job cards. However the software started showing bugs once the real operation of data feeding started. The initial output in Telugu was not readable as the transcription software was used to feed the data in English and take the output in Telugu. The form did not accept the entries if the women were members of the self help groups. These two bugs were later rectified and later on the software was revised to give provision to enter the names directly in Telugu.

When the data entry issues for job card were solved the paper that was selected for the printing of the job card was found to be incompatible to the printer. The Pilot Team informed this to the DWMA and TCS team, who changed the quality of paper for Job Card to printable quality.

Issue of job card

Coinciding with the national launch of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme on 2nd February, 2006 the Parigi pilot initiated a big step by issuing job cards. The card distribution on the day was a token, due to some unresolved issues relating to the software systems provided in the pilot. Thus only 600 job cards were issued between 2nd February and 20th February 2006. The data entry operator and pilot team was waiting for the secretaries to collect correct details of applicants (as per the revisions of the applications) and the data entry was also incomplete. However, the data entry of 2,250 application forms was over by 20th February 2006 with the available data.

Around 10,000 job card applications were distributed in Parigi mandal. In response, 4,250 completed applications were received back by Secretaries by mid-February. But the job cards distributed did not cross 600 by 20th Feb 2006. And there was a heavy demand for job cards and works in the villages as the awareness level about the programme was very high in the entire mandal, thanks to intensive communication campaigning. The delay was mainly

because of the teething problems with the software and shortage of human resources available for data entry and incomplete data in application forms (which was supposed to be verified by the Secretaries). But slowly, the all applicants were issued job cards by 8th Mar 2006.

Though the law envisages proper acknowledgement to all the applications for job card none of the wage seekers did get receipts for their applications for the job card. By the time the receipt books were given by DWMA/CRD to village secretaries, the act of distribution of application forms and receiving them was completed in Parigi.

Name of Format/ Software Applications	Gaps Identified	Improvements made
Receipt Book for the application	There were no counter foil for giving receipt	Receipt book with counter foil.
Cover page of Job card	Thickness of the cover page was not suitable for taking print or compatible with printer	Thickness of cover page was reduced.
Master rolls	Only eight columns to register the wage seekers. No space for signatures of the Field Assistants and Group leaders. So space for recording number of the children at work site so that the need for Aaya could be assessed.	New format developed to incorporate all the above points.

However in the villages where the high intensive strategies were implemented by the pilot team it was made sure that all the wage seekers who have applied for the job cards were given the receipts too. The pilot team also made sure that all the wage seekers who were in need has applied for job card and got it by going to every household verifying the same.

Fixing Channel of Payments

Meanwhile, CRD and DWMA Rangareddy have finalised the mode of payment to wage seekers. In a joint meeting of CRD, DWMA, MDO and Postal Department officers at Parigi, on 3rd February 2006, it was decided to pay the wages through 9 post offices to wage seekers in 17 Grama Panchayat, through 2 Banks to wage seekers in 5 Grama Panchayat in the mandal. However, in the Stream 1 villages, payments are made through bank in only one village Ibrahimpur. In the context of Parigi, it was generally observed that payment through post offices was relatively easy as the post offices are available and easily accessible in comparison to the banks.

Lessons Learned/ Accomplishments:

1. A genuine demand for job applications was created.
2. In spite of several changes in the format of application form and some information gaps in the received applications, the pilot team was able to get the completed application forms from the secretaries.
3. Several suggestions to Director, APREGS/ Tata Consultancy Services on the software related issues helped to improve the software (Eg: Missing villages, font on the job cards and thickness of the job cards and so on).
4. Unlike several other mandals, where the data entry is outsourced (which could lead to confusion and gaps), in Parigi mandal entire data was fed into the computer with active involvement of local teams and pilot teams.

This gave an opportunity to improve the quality of data, which is an important requirement for future purposes.

Recommendations:

1. It is important to think of a continuous process of getting application forms, with photos, inclusion of new members.
2. The secretaries and Sarpanches are not taking keen interest. Even the members of Village Organization are not taking adequate interest in this issue. It is important to develop a monitoring and responsive systems that ensures that the applications are received, processed and job cards are issued. Role of genuine NGOs could be around this agenda.
3. The outputs of the soft ware on the data base of application forms needs to be field tested for correctness in the entire state. With considerable support and handholding in Parigi, there are gaps in data base. One can imagine the situation, where this entire task is 'outsourced'.

MILE STONE 5: Orientation to the Field Assistants and Other team members on planning process

Process Description:

Delayed selection of Field Assistants

The scheme requires several field level functionaries to be appointed by DWMA/CRD (as per the TOR) to perform their roles. Despite many reminders, the mainstream staff did not fully come into effect till the third week of February (nearly two months after the pilot was launched).

In a review meeting held on January 19, 2006 at MDO Office Parigi, Director, APREGS instructed the MDO, the programme officer of the scheme at mandal level and other village secretaries to identify field assistants and follow the rule of reservation as per the reservation in Panchayatis. This meant that the field assistant should be selected from the same category from which the Sarpanch was elected. It was also decided that Secretary to pick up three names from each village through Gram Sabhas and ratify one of them in Mandal Parishad. The persons with prior experience in other developmental schemes like FFW and watershed should be given the priority. The entire process took almost a month to finish. About 15 field assistants (out of 22 villages) were appointed by 10th February 2006 by MDO, Parigi. Pilot recognized that the above norm was not followed in the selection process of field assistants and brought this issue to the notice of MDO/ Director, APREGS. As the work pressure was mounting, this issue did not get its attention and the pilot team worked with the selected field assistants.

Delayed entry of Technical Assistants

On the other hand the selection of the Technical Assistants in the Parigi pilot was not finished even when it was time for taking up the works in the villages. Two Technical Assistants, who were working for CLDP, were deputed by DWMA in the first week of February, but they could not continue due to their own reasons and left after working for 1-2 days only.

After considerable efforts by DWMA, RR district one more person was identified as Technical Assistant, who started coming to Pilot villages from 14th February 2006. (Nearly after two months after launching of the pilot). Another Technical

Assistant joined only on 21st February 2006. The availability of capable human resources could be a major challenge in the implementation of the APREGS. However the identification of works went on despite the non-availability of the field and technical assistants. Secretaries have already taken the initiative to generate the list of activities for preparing the shelf of works. In the absence of the field assistants and technical assistants the pilot team had to attend to the tasks of technical assistants/ field assistants and got overburdened to complete several tasks and keep the pace of the pilot.

Basic orientation to Field Assistants

In spite of definite selection criteria of having experience in other developmental schemes like FFW and watersheds, only a few among the 15 Field Assistants had prior experience. Obviously the APREGS was a completely new phenomenon to them. Hence a two-day training programme was conducted at CLRC, Parigi on 16th and 17th February 2006. This programme included both classroom and field training. The first day of the training was devoted to the explanation of the salient features of the Rural Employment Guarantee Act such as right to work, details of possible activities and provisions in the APREGS. The second day was a field trip in which all the Field Assistants were exposed to PRA method where they were taught about the facilitation process of resource map in a village. Later in the afternoon session, the understanding of watershed approach, selection of works and prioritization of works were imparted to the Field Assistants. It was followed by a session on finalizing both demand plan of budget and budget estimates for proposed works explaining each component in detail.

Lessons Learned:

1. Human resource deployment is an important requirement of any scheme. Initially the proposal for pilot proposal had this component. But later on it was proposed that DWM A/ CRD/ MDO would take care of this component. Delay in this step had severe work pressure on the pilot team. They had to perform the roles of field assistants till they were appointed, by the end of pilot phase.
2. When the roles of respective partners are performed in time, there will be adverse impact on the over all performance of the pilot.
3. Pilot team should be able to evolve several interim operational strategies to manage the crisis. Appointing additional field level functionaries along with pilot team was one of the strategies adopted by pilot team.

Recommendations:

1. The field assistants and technical staff require considerable capacity building inputs to perform their roles. It is important to develop a capacity building strategy and resource centers that can provide these skills/ knowledge.

MILE STONE 6: Planning and Shelf of Works

Process Description:

Orientation of mainstream staff on the planning:

CRD deputed resource persons (who are trained at APARD) to orient the planning teams at each mandal. The planning team consists of technical assistants, field assistants and agriculture officers/ other officers. Pilot team already trained the local level technical assistant and field assistants. Pilot team shared the experiences of planning with the planning teams. The planning teams initiated this process by 21st Feb 2006. Each Technical Assistant made responsible for one cluster of villages for finalizing the works and generating the data input sheets, as part of planning. From then onwards the mainstream teams consisting of three Technical Assistants worked in coordination with both the pilot team and the MDO office.

The mainstream teams have once again re-verified the shelf of the works (which are already prepared by Secretaries earlier). Limited number of them adopted the methodology followed by Pilot team, while majority of them have just approved the shelf of works again in grams sabhas (which are prepared by Village Secretaries), without much process. The pilot team provided support to the mainstream team for filling up input data sheets. However the input data sheets were not available for all the works initially as the formats of these input data sheets also changed several times at design stage itself.

Planning Process and Shelf of Works in Stream 1 Villages by Pilot Team:

Following the input strategy in the pilot, the pilot team has concentrated the planning of shelf of works in three villages – Roofkhanpet, Ibrahimpur and Syed Malkapur. As a result of intense facilitation in these villages, the awareness and enrollment are fairly high in these villages. The planning process of identification of shelf of works was participatory using PRA methods.

Three day PRA package

The process envisaged in the NREG and translated into the APREGS was followed meticulously for identifying the shelf of works based on the resource map and works were prioritized to benefit the resource poor. Wage seekers who enrolled for job cards were categorised into three levels – *fully dependent on wage labour, partly dependent on wage labour and occasionally dependent on wage labour*. Priority to assign the works was given to those who were fully dependent on wage labour. The process of planning took three days for each of these villages. A social map of the village by each household was done to identify the different socio economic groups and wage seekers in the

Input Data Sheet

This is one important format that was used in the EGS planning process. Input data sheets are the formats needed to get the details of the proposed works. The input data sheets were different to each work namely bunding, percolation tanks, horticulture, farm pond, jungle cleaning, etc. The Technical Assistant and/or Field Assistant are expected to fill in the details of proposed work (technical and location specific details) and submit to the data entry operator at the MDO. Based on this input data sheet, the computer generates estimates including the person days of employment generated and quantity of work. The experiences of pilot helped to stabilize these formats/ input data sheets also.

village. Flash cards based on voters' list were used to identify full time and part time wage seekers in the village which gave a thorough understanding of the wage demand in the village. The second day was dedicated to resource mapping in the middle of the village involving women, youth and elderly people to locate the resources and needs of the village. Third day was dedicated to transact walk by the pilot team along with villagers where the works were physically verified and the input data sheets were filled, from these villages. The type and number works identified through this process was found to be much higher compared to the method followed by planning team/ secretaries.

Shelf of Works:

As the preparation of the shelf of works in all villages of the mandal was taking long time, three villages in the stream 1 came handy to test some of the important remaining steps of the APREGS. In a meeting with the Principal Secretary, Commissioner, Joint Commissioners and Director, APREGS, at Commissionarate of Rural Development, Hyderabad on 25th February, 2006, it was decided to complete the entire cycle of APREGS by grounding works and making payments in these three villages of stream 1, where already sufficient data was generated from planning exercises.

From the identified list of works in the three villages, three different types of works - bunding, mini percolation tank and farm pond were taken up in Roofkhanpet, Ibrahimpur and Syedmalkapur respectively. The input data sheets were made ready for all the three works to generate the estimations using the software. The logic behind the selection of three works was only seeing and checking the processes involved both in the software and in the practice in three different kinds of works to begin with.

Lessons Learned:

1. There could be several methodologies/ tool for planning. If the main aim is to generate "list" of activities, most simple method could be adopted. But if the aim is to generate interests and genuine interest among the villagers, the methodologies/ tools that require detailed participatory tools need to be adopted.
2. There is a need to orient the planning teams on the contents of input data sheets. The outputs from planning steps should be used as inputs for input data sheets. The pilot team spent considerable time in understanding the input data sheets and organizing the available data to the needs of input data sheet.
3. It is always good to focus on few villages first and keep them in advanced stage.

Recommendation:

1. It is important to develop consistency among planning processes, outputs from planning, data requirements for planning and inputting the data sheets. Accordingly methodologies need to be fine-tuned.

MILE STONE 7: Generating Estimates for selected works and Initial preparations for grounding the works

Process Description:

The estimates

Based on the inputs from Director, APREGS the pilot team prepared input data sheets for the selected works. However the estimation generation raised a whole gamut of problems as the software package was tested with real time data for the first time in the field. The problems ranged from missing of village names from inventory of names provided with the software to unrealistic estimates of the works. However bugs in the estimations of the three works – bunding, farm pond and mini percolation tank – were resolved and the estimations were done on 27 February 2006.

The process of estimates created considerable tensions and anxiety in the pilot team, TCS team and also CRD team. Several rounds of discussions took place to arrive at accurate estimates. The feed back from the Pilot Team was helpful in making the estimates rigorous and realistic. These estimations were approved at mandal level by the programme officer and sent to the district collector through DWMA, Rangareddy. District Collector had given the administrative sanctions to the work, which was sent to the mandal on 7th March 2006.

Formal announcement of works

Meanwhile, meetings were organized with Village Organisation, group of wage seekers and Gram Panchayat in the first week of March to formally announce the works in the selected villages. Details were explained by the pilot team along with the technical and field assistants for the concerned village. The sanctioned estimations and the date of sanctioning works were announced in these meetings. The idea was to communicate the announcement of the works to these focused groups. Gram Panchayat passed a resolution announcing formally launching of the works.

Providing applications for work by wage seekers

Meetings were organized in the three villages, with a group of wage seekers and Village Organisation for explaining about the process of filling the application for works. Secretary and Field Assistant distributed the applications to the group of wage seekers. Most of the wage seekers filled their applications for work with the help of Field Assistant and receipts were issued immediately to the concerned applicants. As the date of commencing the works was already decided in these three villages a communication was sent immediately by the Field Assistant to all the applicants through letters intimating the date of the commencement of the works – 8th March 2006.

Opening the accounts

To facilitate the payments through the bank or post office, individual accounts were opened for the wage seekers (of the first batch) in their villages. Accordingly 25 bank accounts were opened for wage seekers of Ibrahimpurat Golconda Grameena Branch, Gadisingapur. The wage seekers of Roofkhanpet and Syedmalkapur (around 80) have opened their accounts in post office payable at Parigi. The accounts were opened for the wage seekers who have applied for the first phase of the work.

Though all the accounts in post office were opened in Parigi Branch Office, they have agreed to pay the wages through their sub post offices in the villages. Post office and the Bank have agreed to open the accounts with a minimum balance of Rs 10 and Rs 50 respectively. The amounts for opening balances were paid by the programme officer (MDO), which would be deducted later on payment of the wages. The money will be deducted in the installments of Rs 10 in each payment. Though the post office did not insist on photographs, the bank insisted on the passport size photos of the individuals and photo identity cards to open the accounts. Hence the MDO office had organized the photographers to take photos and issued temporary identification proof with photos. The pilot team had coordinated the opening of the accounts. However as the process was new to post offices and bank was too busy with the financial year closing the pilot team had to put a lot of effort in getting the accounts opened. One of the pilot team members had to practically sit in the bank for two days to fill the forms, finish the formalities, and write the ledger books. This process was completed by March 14th 2006.

Lessons Learned:

1. Though the pilot team provided opportunity to field test the estimates with the support of DWMA, the field testing of the data was not adequate.
2. The enthusiasm among the wage seekers on bank/ post office accounts indicates that this arrangement has great potential.

Recommendations:

1. The soft ware for estimates of all types of activities needs to be tested with real life data for different scenarios, before up-scaling the program.

MILE STONE 8: Ground the First Batch of Works and Work Site Facilities

Process Description:

Grounding the works

All the works in the three villages were grounded on the same day 9th March, 2006 while the planning process in rest of the villages (stream 2 and 3) was still going on. In Ibrahimpur, Mandal Praja Parishad (MPP) president Srinivasa Reddy formally launched the works for the mini percolation tank. In Roofkhanpet, village Sarpanch initiated the works. The presence of these public representatives gave much enthusiasm in initiating the works in selected villages. Narsimha Reddy, Project Director (DWMA), Rangareddy, visited two villages Roofkhanpet and Syedmalkapur, giving much needed enthusiasm and encouragement to the field staff.

Amenities at worksite

The APREGS is a scheme with right-based approach. For the first time there was a statutory obligation for creating facilities to the workers at the workplace. The scheme envisaged the facilities like supply of drinking water, shade for rest and aaya to take care of children. Following are the experiences regarding the facilities in the pilot where the works in three villages grounded and the payments made:

Drinking water:

The mandal office bought three plastic pots and an earthen pot to each village. This material was sufficient to serve water for the workers. In these

villages where the works were initiated, the pilot team had ensured that this job was given to old age persons in the village. In all the three villages the wage seekers who were women of above 50 years age were employed for the purpose. They fetched water from near by bore well and supplied to the workers. One water woman in Ibrahimpur received Rs 560 per week by supplying water.

Shade:

Director, APREGS suggested to get the shelter (for shade) stitched from the used fertilizer bags. This was to be done by the disabled people in the villages so that they can get some wage. That will work out to Rs 105 per shade of 12 X 12 feet. The pilot team met several disabled persons and their families to motivate them to make this shade. The Pilot Team also organized several meetings with VO on this issue. However none of the disabled groups or individuals in the villages has come forward to make the shade. Hence the pilot team in consultation with MDO, the programme officer decided to buy tarpaulin cloth available in the local market. They bought tarpaulin cloth that cost Rs 400 (6 X 12 feet) and two shelter covers made out of super bags at Rs 110 each (9 X 10 feet). The workers observed that the tarpaulin cloth cover was better than cover made up of fertilizer bags. It was convenient in terms of providing better shade, preventing sun heat, stable to wind flow and able to withstand rain. 6 X 12 feet tarpaulin cloth was able to provide shelter for 12-15 workers but suggested for 12 X 12 feet tarpaulin cloth cover so as to cover 20 workers comfortably. However simple the task was, it consumed considerable time and effort of the pilot team to verify different options, decide and get the thing done. All this was done in consultation with the MDO office.

Aaya for children:

In none of the villages Aaya was employed to look after children as there was no necessity. In Nazeerabad only two children were brought for whom Aaya was not provided as the minimum number to provide an Aaya was five children.

Lessons Learned:

1. There are several formalities that need to be completed before the works are initiated. Incomplete preparation will only lead to complications.
2. After starting the work, several others who did not apply also joined the labor groups. This created some confusion.
3. Field Assistants/ Technical Assistant need to be over seeing each and every work. Without their supervision, the works may not become productive assets.

Recommendations:

1. Village Organisation can be delegated this responsibility of nominating a suitable person (old women/ men/ physically challenged) to function as water person/ aaya so that the provisions of the act are fulfilled.
2. It is important to organize the wage seekers/ labor force into groups and ensure that they follow the required formalities.
3. It is important to motivate Grama Panchayati and others in the village to take keen interest in the implementation of the scheme. The efforts made by pilot team are found to be inadequate in this regard.

MILE STONE 9: Making Payments

Process Description:

Taking the measurements:

The first measurement of the works was made on 15th March, 2005 as per schedule in all the three villages – Roofkhanpet, Ibrahimpur and Syed Malkapur. Three teams each consisting of Field Assistant, Technical Assistant and Pilot Team Member measured the works in the field and re checked the muster rolls. By the end of the first week, one work (earthen bunds) in Roofkhanpet was completed and the workers continued the work for another two weeks. In Nazeerabad Tanda of Syed Malkapur earthwork on farm pond was completed and the percolation tank in Ibrahimpur was finished by the end of March.

Generating Pay Order			
An attempt that continued for 6 Days			
Date	Main Event	Persons Involved	Remarks/ Results
15 th March, 2006	Measurement of the work at field level and submitted in MDO office.	Technical Assistant, Field Assistant and Pilot Team Member	Some gaps are found (No details of Job card number)
16 th March, 2006	Data entry into computer using the above data (measurements from field) for generating pay order	Data entry operator alone tried to enter the data with support of TCS team on telephone.	Data entry could not be completed as the operator did not know how to do the task (Without the support of TCS team)
17 th March, 2006	Again tried to enter the data for generating Pay Order.	Data entry team, FAs, TAs along with pilot team. TCS team joined.	Data entry was completed partially for one village Roofkhanpet. But this task did not produce any output, due to problems with soft ware.
18 th M arch 2006	Another attempt to generation of the pay Order	Data entry operator, Technical Assistants, Pilot team and CRD team for observation. TCS team was absent.	Could not finish the data entry as more bugs in the programme were found. In the absence of TCS team, no one could actually get the output.
19 th M arch, 2006	Generation of payment orders	Data entry operator, technical assistants, DW MA team, Pilot Team and TCS team	The payment orders were generated for the first week of work in all the three villages by the night of the day.
20 th M arch, 2006	Letters to GP, VO, Bank & post Office were issued along with pay slips to workers	Pilot team and field assistants.	Pay slips were delivered to workers

Generating the Pay Order

The pay order generation was also done through the software package. The generation of the pay orders for the three works had once again exposed a lot of bugs in the software. The pilot experiences helped to resolve them

Group Profile, Output and Earnings in First Works of APREGS									
Group No	Male	Female	Total	Working Days	Person Days	Quantum of Work	Amount Received	Rs/ Person/ Day	Output/ Person/ Day
1	4	7	11	6	66	110.4	6892	104	1.7
2	2	5	7	6	42	124.2	6841	163	3.0
3	2	2	4	6	24	62.7	3445	144	2.6
4	2	0	2	6	12	24.6	1383	115	2.0
5	12	21	33	2	66	74.9	4495	68	1.1
6	3	2	5	6	30	42.6	2042	68	1.4
7	5	5	10	6	60	167.4	8033	134	2.8
8	3	2	5	6	30	62.4	2995	100	2.1
9	1	1	2	6	12	25.5	1224	102	2.1
Total	34	45	79		342	694.6	37351	111	2.1

The first four groups worked on percolation tank (In Ibrahimpur); 5th Group worked on farm pond in (Syed Malkapur) and Groups (6 to 9) worked on Farm bunding in Rupkhanpet). The data related to another group in the same village is not properly documented. So it is not presented here, though there was another group in the same village.

and it likely that these problems are not repeated again, in the entire state. The software package was not ready for generating the "pay order", even when the first week of work was finished and wage seekers were waiting for the wages. The basic problem with the software package was mismatch between field data and software formats. The problems were rectified after repeated visits by the officials and technicians from the TCS thus making the delay of payment for three days from the promised Friday.

Generating Pay Slips and Payments through Post Office:

Though it was initially decided to make the payments on Friday, 17th March, 2006, it could not materialize till 20th though the pilot team tried and struggled to ensure payments according to the schedule. Though the muster rolls and measurement books have reached Parigi mandal headquarter by 16th March 2006, the software that enabled data entry and pay order generation was not ready. Repeated calls to the directorate and one visit of the Joint Commissioner, CRD have solved the issue after two days thus enabling the payment three days late. After all these efforts and energies spent by several individuals, the software package generated the pay slips for individual wage seekers bearing the details of the amount of the work and wage turnout. The pay slips were distributed to the wage seekers with the help of field assistants. The first ever payments under the APREGS were made in three villages through post offices and a bank after passing through many teething troubles. However it was later decided at state level that village organisations should be used to provide services to wage seekers like helping them getting enrolled for job cards, to getting their pay slips for their work, etc.

Analysis of Group Size, Output and Earnings:

- o Total 9 labor groups worked in the three villages, consisting of 79 persons. These three groups were engaged in construction of percolation tank,

- earthen bund and farm pond. An analysis of the group profile, outputs and earnings is presented in the box.
- o Group No 5, which has maximum number of members and worked only for two days, has lowest output/ person/ day (1.1 Cub mt). This group worked on farm pond. The highest output/ day/person and income/ day were achieved by Group No 2 (percolation tank).
 - o The regression analysis between group profile (group size, number of women/ men) and the total outputs, outputs/ day; total income and income/day indicates the following trends.
 - o Output and income are higher when number of women is more in a group.
 - o The larger the group, average outputs and average incomes.
 - o If the number of men in a group is more, the output is low and incomes are also low.

Field Assistants to take measurements....

However the measurements in the first week exposed some of the gaps in the field. It is a common practice that the small groups of laborers take up work and get paid. Each of such groups develops an informal arrangements/norms and share responsibilities and payments accordingly.

Generally they keep an informal record of their time, activities taken up and output (quantum of work) and so on. The laborers group would be unhappy when the formal measurements and payments do not match with their own informal records. In the pilot villages also, such misunderstanding took place between the labor groups and Technical Assistants. Based on such experiences, the need for keep record of "day-to-day" work/ output was recognized. The discussion also suggested that the field assistant could keep a day-to-day record of work along with the records of the labor groups. Pilot team also felt that it would be helpful if the field assistants have a thorough knowledge and training on the measurements. Based on this need, the pilot team had taken up the training to the field assistants on the measurements by the end of the pilot period.

Lessons Learned:

1. The regular data entry operators were not fully equipped to work on the software package provided by TCS. They need considerable training inputs as the process of data entry requires some basic understanding of engineering and proposed works.
2. The law envisages the signatures of the three laborers on the muster roll and MB sheet for which there was no provision on the said formats. The pilot team also missed out this point and did not make sure of the signatures.

Recommendations:

1. The muster rolls to be upgraded to 20 - 25 name list instead of present 8 name list provided in it.
2. The above modifications were suggested by the pilot team to the Director, APREGS with regard to the muster roll as there was some data automatically generated by the software which need not be in the manual formats. A point was also brought to the notice of Director on the provision of details with regard to the number of children at workplace. These suggestions were accepted and accordingly modifications were made in the formats within a day.

MILE STONE 10: Supporting the preparation of Mandal Level Action Plan and Mainstreaming the Pilot

Process Description:

The mandal plan

Even while the works were going on by taking the special permission from the DWMA in three villages of Stream 1, the village plans of other streams (2 and 3) have culminated into mandal plan and were approved by the special general body on 16th, March, 2006. There was great demand for roads in the mandal general body. However the DWMA decided not to take up roads in Rangareddy for the first year of the APREGS. The mandal plan worth Rs 5 crore was approved in the general body finally. The pilot team has coordinated village level plans and verified data, generated from the field teams. Pilot team provided considerable support and guidance to the Technical Assistants in verifying the data and consolidating the action plans (providing village wise and activity wise details) for the mandal.

Intensive training to Field Assistants

Field Assistants are the key personnel in the implementation of the scheme as they are responsible for the critical operation elements like dealing with wage seekers and getting the works done and support the payments systems. The field assistants in the pilot mandal have undergone two cycles of training that gave them the orientation of the scheme and taught the process of the scheme.

The first training by the pilot in the month of February gave them the required orientation towards the salient features of the scheme and gave training in planning the shelf of works in PRA method. They have also undergone regular training that came as a package in all the districts. However the pilot also gave them another four days of rigorous training split into two days each particularly after finding the gaps in the piloting the scheme in the first cycle. The first two-day training (March 28-29) held at CLRC Parigi by WASSAN focused on giving inputs in taking measurements in the field. There was also field orientation to the training team.

DWMA, Rangareddy also planned two days of training to field assistants on 31st March and April 1st, which was also facilitated by the Pilot Team. This two-day training dealt with re-orientation of the scheme and focused on the roles and responsibilities of the field assistants in tune with the gaps found in the piloting the scheme.

The information wall

The information wall is a key component in the scheme. Every village should have this wall and be displayed with all the works taken up and the wages paid. However there were no clear instructions on whom to be given the contract of construction of the wall in the beginning. The contract was given to the village sarpanch in Sayyadmalkapur, which he has constructed by 20th March, but no information was furnished on it as it was not delegated to anybody specifically by the time the pilot ended. There was a suggestion from the CRD that the wall construction contracts also should be given to VOs as they were the ones who were going to maintain it. But as the wall needs very

small quantities of material, which was not feasible to bring to the village as a separate unit, they were not enthusiastic to take it up.

Mainstreaming the pilot

Though the pilot was initially planned for three months between December 15, 2005 and March 15, 2006, it was extended for another 15 days, as there were operational problems in making the first payment. Even after the first payments on March 20, the pilot was continued to complete the planning process at Mandal level so as to take out the estimates for all the works in mandal and also to extend handholding support to the regular programme operation team of the EGS. The pilot testing of the operational procedures of the APREG scheme ended with integrating it into the mainstream programme. By this time, it had finished a complete cycle of the scheme including awareness building, registration of wage seekers, issuing job cards, planning the shelf of works, grounding the works and payments through banks and post offices. These initiatives brought out a number of nuances in various processes of the scheme. Along with the social process, the pilot was also able to test the software package developed for the APREGS. The formal closure of the pilot initiative was in consonance with the Directorate, APREGS decision and this was communicated to the DWM A, Rangareddy and MDO, Parigi.

Lessons Learned:

1. The completion of payments established that the software works as per the desired designs.
2. Several operational level issues need to be attended immediately. The software related problems also could be solved when someone attends to the problems immediately.

Recommendations:

1. The support services from software developers are an important requirement. This support might be eventually internalized at DWM A/ CRD level or with an external agency.
2. Capacity building needs of field level functionaries are immense and it is important to develop a clear strategy and operational delivery systems for the same.

Recommendations:

Role of Institutions:

- Intensive meetings were and Grama Sabhas organized in several times with involvement of Village Organisation and Grama Panchayati. Enrolment process is being done by several actors like Field Assists, Secretaries, Ward members, SHG Leaders, Communication team, and pilot team. The decision of involving VOs has come at the fag end of the pilot. By that time the enrollment process was almost finished. If the services of the VOs were to be used in the pilot they must be involved from the enrollment process. The VOs in some of the villages are not functioning actively in the pilot villages. Hence that should be kept in mind while involving them in the scheme as service providers.
- The role of the people's representatives was very minimal in the way the scheme was implemented which may boomerang over a period of time. There is a need to bring their contribution into the scheme. The roles and responsibilities should be defined and allocated.

- There should be extra effort to increase the share of women in the field assistants' recruitment.

Capacity Building Related:

- The field assistants and the village secretaries need to be given thorough training on filling and getting filled different formats in the scheme.
- The availability of the capable human resources is a key in the implementation of the EGS. Even after a lot of effort in selections and training the quality of the human resources in the field staff was not up to the mark in the pilot. This will have a greater effect on the total implementation of the scheme and its aimed objectives. Hence a training institute or rigorous training modules are needed for the field staff.

Systems related to Implementation:

- Systems should be developed for the enrollment of the wage seekers and issue of Job Cards through out the year. Otherwise it would become a mela for once in two or three years like Ration Cards.
- Photos are not pasted in the job card. Recently ration cards were distributed, the same photo graphs may use in the Job Cards.
- Individual cards are always better option than family cards as it ensures the payment to the wage seekers but not to the family. Getting paid to her or his work is fundamental right that cannot be altered and tampered.
- Payment mode is another key in the scheme. As it was proved in the pilot post offices are more accessible for the wage seekers compared to banks. However the accounts in post offices too should have photo identity. The idea that postmen know all the villagers by name and face is not realistic at least in the case of Tandas where these communication systems were sparingly used.

Works Related:

- As the earthen work (main work allowed under EGS) is very tough in the drought-hit areas where the EGS is implemented it is need of the hour to invent manual tools to be handled/ employed by the wage seekers to make the work a little easier.
- The problem of single women getting a pair in the work was an issue in the pilot. Forming women groups and delegating the work to the group can be one of the solutions. In fact the output from women is higher.
- People to provide drinking water and aaya for children at work place are two great opportunities for old and disabled persons. By relaxing the 100 day guarantee in this category, every week two old and physically challenged persons can be employed in the particular work which fetches them around Rs 500 each per week which is huge money for the starved families.

Action Planning related:

- While making the village plan the perspective should be broad enough to take the villages both in the catchment and command area. The improper and rigid plans may face the opposition from the people it was shown in some of the villages in the pilot on the works taken up in the earlier watershed programmes.
- Minimum of three day PRA is needed in every village to develop considerably good village plan. Then only the scheme would reach its aims of providing work and developing the villages at a time.

Software Related:

- As the computer software package is going to influence the EGS in the state of Andhra Pradesh as it did in the pilot. The field testing and stabilization of the soft

ware package should be conducted more rigorously and professionally, using the real life data from several parts of the district.

- The software team should be given more domain expertise and tested more in the field before going into mainstream.
- There should be a dedicated team working with field staff instead of testing in the lab.
- There are a lot of variations in the software inputs and reality in field, starting from the village inventories to the calculations done in generating estimates.
- The data entry operators should be specially trained, as the software package is not all that menu driven and user friendly. The operator needs extra knowledge to handle the package than just feeding the data into it.

Conclusions:

The Pilot of APREGS gave an opportunity to the Pilot Team and District/ State Administration to actually implement each step, before the rest of the state implements the same. After initiating the pilot on 15th Dec 2005, there was no adequate time for the state/ district administration to concentrate on the pilot, as the mainstream APREGS was also formally launched almost immediately (on 2nd Feb 2006). In a way, the pilot and the rest of the project ran parallel to each other. While the pilot team was focusing on processes related to key mile stones, the state administration was focusing on the arrangements for launching the project in the entire state. The lessons of pilot had to be quickly processed and shared with a wider audience/ key decision makers. The interactions between pilot team and district/ state administration were almost on day-to-day basis. The district/ state administration addressed several issues that emerged from pilot and processed/ used them for the mainstream project. The contributions from the pilot are some times explicit and implicit. Some of them are recognized and others were not. In this process, there were several gaps, tensions and questions on the relevance of the pilot itself. The Pilot Team presents the processes followed, lessons learned and recommendations in this document. The contributions made to the mainstream project are also mentioned along the description. The pilot gave an opportunity to WASSAN to know the finer details of APREGS and appreciate the concerns associated with it. WASSAN is willing to continue its association with APREGS in future also, playing different roles that strengthen the objectives of the program.