

**JOINT EVALUATION OF EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE  
SCHEME OF MAHARASHTRA - 1977**

The Employment Guarantee Scheme (EGS) of the Government of Maharashtra was launched in May, 1972 with a view to provide employment (gainful to the workers and productive to the economy) to all unskilled job-seekers in the rural areas in such a way that agricultural operations would not get adversely affected. During 1976-78, an evaluation study of the Scheme was jointly conducted by the Programme Evaluation Organisation (PEO) of the Planning Commission and the Directorate of Economics and Statistics (DES), Government of Maharashtra. The present Report, published in 1977, conducted through a quick field visit by an improvised joint team. The concept of EGS and the problems in its implementation, as well as the sample design, objectives and reference period of the study are elucidated in the PEO Study No.113.

The first paper contained in the present report was a Field Report on the Implementation of the EGS in two Talukas of Sholapur district. Sholapur was one of the 4 districts selected for the study. The paper raised some preliminary issues regarding the implementation of the EGS. Need was felt for surveying a wide range of schemes so that it would be possible to choose among alternative type of works, considering local priorities. The faculties of local administration were to be improved to deal with typical manpower mobilisation situations which would arise in the course of the implementation of the EGS. Some officials had apprehended that EGS was tending to weaken because the daily wage earned by a person was not as liberal as it had been in the past on scarcity works.

The Second Paper encompassed State Level Information on the EGS. The paper revealed that the Scheme was faced with a myriad of problems relating to its planning, organisation, implementation, monitoring, reporting and review. Difficulties were felt in the selection of works, provision of works to the work seekers in the various Panchayat Samiti areas, fixation of wage rates for different categories of works and the periodicity of payment of wages, non-availability of adequate project profiles etc. In brief, the status of the EGS had not acquired the dynamism expected of it

either in terms of absorbing the estimated demand for labour or attracting an investment of Rs. 50 crore per annum. The appendix II of the Paper aired the views of some of the eminent economists and social thinkers on the EGS.

The third paper was in the form of a working paper containing the Current Status Report on the EGS (November, 1976). The paper showed that the number of labourers attending the works varied from 1.9 lakh persons in November, 1975 to 7.16 lakh in May, 1976. Starting from an initial level of Rs. 13.54 crores in 1974-75, the total expenditure on EGS works went upto 34.42 crores in 1975-76. Blue prints had far exceeded the normative levels. Initially, a large number of spill-over scarcity works had been included in the blue prints. (The blueprints were meant to contain a useable and exhaustible list of works and projects, surveyed and unsurveyed, which could be implemented within a relatively short time). Frequent revision of the blueprints and the initiation of works without prior inclusion in the blueprints were noticed. No projection of phasing work was attempted in any of the blueprints. Over 80% of the works, reported as complete on 1.4.76 out of the current blueprints, were of soil conservation and rural housing category. Even with broadly comparable blueprints or works on offer, the number of mandays of employment generated differed widely. The Collector, the overall in charge of the implementation of the EGS at the district level, was to ensure the adequacy of works available in different Talukas and a certain degree of continuity of work programmes. He was also to see that problems of land acquisition and payment of compensation were settled quickly. At the taluka level, no estimates of expenditure or employment were available. Finally, the progress reporting did not emphasise the completion of works or even the stages reached towards completion.