Department of Rural Development

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1. Key Performance

The Department of Rural Development, Government of Andhra Pradesh is focusing on proving the efficiency and effectiveness of public administration by coming close to citizens by providing government information and services through ICT interventions. The website *www.rd.ap.gov.in* provides information about structure, functions and services of the Department and has links to related websites, wherein, the concerned schemes are implemented through the work flows of customized software applications.

The sole aim is to:

- Increase efficiency and effectiveness, and to enhance transparency and accountability in the delivery of government services through the use of information technologies

- Improve the internal workings of government to be externally oriented and more customer-focused

- Facilitate collaboration and the sharing of information within and between government agencies

- Reduce significantly transaction costs leading to savings

- Encourage participation and empowerment of citizens including the disadvantaged groups and, communities in the rural and remote areas (grass-root level) through closer interaction with the government

- All this has led to the overall impact of the citizens getting connected to the department more easily

- Achieving efficiency in public service delivery through faster dissemination of department's information to a larger audience

- Reduction of the cases of corruption as accountability and transparency is increased and the Department's activities are easily monitored

- Providing equal opportunity to access information which is provided, regardless of one's physical location and physical disability

- Breaking the barriers of bureaucracy experienced generally in the government offices as the hindrances caused by those in 'power' are removed and the services are offered regardless of one's background

- Reach all the people who need government services regardless of their location, age, status, language

- Interdepartmental exchange of information

- Convergence of related services thus leading to significant reduction of transaction costs, time, space, and manpower

- Enhancing the internal efficiencies. Implementation of this system has enabled employment of a large number of rural youth as computer operators, instilled a sense of accountability in the administration and instilled confidence amongst the rural poor in demanding due entitlements.

2. Citizen and Business Centric

- **Rashtra Grameena Abhivridhi Samacharam – RAGAS software:** RAGAS is a wage seeker centric and solution-focused initiative, which seeks to empower people, particularly the disadvantaged Standalone software application placed at all the 1098 Mandals of 22 rural Districts of Andhra Pradesh to implement three area development-related premier programmes of the Department of Rural Development, Watersheds, Comprehensive Land Development Programme (CLDP) and National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme (NREGS-AP). The job cards registration, the work estimates, wage payments and funds handling are carried through software. The daily transactions are uploaded to central server and the information is available in the respective websites with the URLs—Watersheds *(http://www.nrega.ap.gov.in/Watershed/jsp/),* CLDP *(http://www.nrega.ap.gov.in/CLDP/index.jsp), NREGS-AP (http://www.nrega.ap.gov.in/).*

- **Social Security Pensions – SSP software:** The ICT solution is used in social security sector in order to provide an optimal tailoring of social security benefits in a financial feasible way with special attention for prompt, efficient and high-quality services to the beneficiaries. It facilitates regular payment and monitoring of the disbursement so as to maintain transparency, thus is an effective anti corruption initiative. The transaction details are captured in the Districts and uploaded to the website with the URL – *http://www.ssp.ap.gov.in*

- **Smart Card Project:** Timely disbursement of Social Security Pensions and wages to the target group with zero leakages is the avowed aim of the Government of Andhra Pradesh. To achieve this, the Government has initiated the Smart Cards project in partnership with banks and financial institutions for prompt payment of Social Security Pensions (SSP) and wages to NREGS (National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme) labour leveraging technology, by using smart cards. This not only enables reliable identification of beneficiaries of the schemes through finger-print validation but also, promotes Financial Inclusion. The URL for seeing NREGS payments through smart cards is *http://nrega.ap.gov.in/Nregs/smartcard.jsp*

- **Employment Generation and Marketing Mission – EGMM software:** This software captures the training and improvement of skills of the economically and socially underprivileged rural poor from remote areas with a bottom-up approach, tailored to move the rural poor from the unorganized to the organized labour market. The URL for the website is *http://www.egmm.ap.gov.in*

- **Aam Admi Bhima Yojana – AABY software:** Through this software Indira Jeevitha Bima Pathakam—AABY is implemented. The scheme is a Group Insurance Scheme for the benefit of Rural Landless Agricultural Labourers through Life Insurance Corporation of India. Through this scheme, the poor have access to relevant and affordable insurance and are protected from risks on death/disability. Children of the poor are financially supported for education through scholarships. The website contains member, village, mandal, district, gender, castewise details. It projects members profiles and generates all types of analytical reports basing on age and other parameters. It also contains list of children

eligible for scholarship with details like their class, schools and place, status of payment of scholarships etc. It gives information of call centers like call center numbers and all the insurance Anchor persons' numbers. The URL of the website is *http://www.aaby.ap.gov.in*

- **Social audit:** Social audit is an independent evaluation of the Rural development programmes like RAGAS at the grass-root level. It brings out the strengths and weaknesses in great detail by providing a formal forum for articulation of the issues of the primary stakeholders and accountability of those responsible for implementation. The social audit findings and the action taken are captured and web enabled. The website will be put in public domain shortly.

- **SHG software:** 90,97,139 members are organized into 7,29,522 SHGs in 34,269 Village Organizations (VOs) and 1086 Mandal Samakhyas (MSs). In addition, there are 126 Mandal Vikalangula Sangams, 17 Chenchu Mandal Samakhyas and 15 Fishermen Mandal Samakhyas. Zilla Samakhyas have come into existence in all the 22 districts. The SHGs in AP, constitute around 25% of all 27,99,850 SHGs in India. All their activities are proposed to be carried through the workflows in the software and visible in the website. Performance monitoring of different initiatives by SHGs, Performance monitoring of different SHGs, Transparency and visibility reducing corruption and leakages, Grading of SHGs by setting certain parameters, review of loans, utilization of funds, and impact against each SHG are some of the benefits flowing from the website. This website will be in public domain very shortly. Fast and accurate information flows to the beneficiaries.

3. Government and Employee Centric

All the above 7 e-governance projects serve as the best decision support systems apart from generating transaction-based monthly progress reports, which are of immense use to the implementing department as well as other welfare departments that need this data to plan their activities. However, two initiatives are made exclusively for G2E and G2G.

- **HRMS software:** The objective of developing the HR system is to professionally manage all the contracts and bring in transparency in implementing all the HR processes from Manpower Recruitment to Exit

Management. HRMS software deals with the contractual agreement of all the staff recruited for implementing the RD Programmes. The web-based HR services enable the FTEs, the Unit Reporting Officer, DDO etc., to avail various HR services at their respective work units in/ for Generating FTE contracts, Access to Service register, Access to Roster register, Access to career advancement list, Generating monthly pay orders, Generating Pay slip, Generating HR analytical Reports etc.

- **FAS software:** FAS software is the customised accounting package developed to maintain accounts in the Commisionerate, Department of Rural Development, Project Directors' office of DWMA (District Water Management Agencies) and DRDAs (District Rural Development Agencies). This is being implemented in the Commisionerate, and DWMA offices. Shortly, it will be implemented in DRDAs and will be web-enabled.

4. Integrated Government

- In RAGAS, synergies are achieved across service delivery channels, enabling the sharing and re-use of data for more proactive service delivery. The pay orders are given to post offices to deposit the wages in the wage seeker accounts. Photos are captured from Civil Supplies database that have captured the iris of citizens to issue ration cards. The information in the website is used by other welfare departments like Scheduled Castes welfare, Backward Class welfare, Scheduled Tribes welfare departments, and horticulture and irrigation departments to monitor and plan for convergence.

- The insurance policies in AABY are directly downloaded by the Insurance department for processing the claims and thus avoiding the delays of manual transfer. This is the first time that LIC has introduced electronic-claim settlement system for speedy disposal of the claim. A dedicated satellite office has been created by LIC for this purpose and shall have regular access for downloading the documents. It is a public domain which can be accessed by any individual (common man) to track the status of claim settlement process not only the Government & LIC. It is a technological intervention, which the rural community is in a position to utilize the services of Information & Technology to the optimum.

- In smart cards Projects, Collaborative partnership is established between the Government and banks/financial institution. The Government of Andhra Pradesh has partnered with 7 banks. M/s Little World, M/s FINO and Integra are the service providers.

5. Government Efficiency

The Department of Rural Development's vision is to eradicate rural poverty and secure better quality of life to the rural poor. The challenges lie in harnessing the innate potential within the poor and enabling the poor to manage the natural resource for sustainable development. Enhancement of skills of the poor, access to credit, technology and markets has proved to be critical to economic empowerment of the poor. The above e-governance initiatives reflect the Department's strategies and approach to poverty reduction with a commitment to provide transparent accountable governance.

RAGAS software: RAGAS is a powerful tool in the hands of the stakeholders who can browse information about entire gamut of activities under the three programmes. It aims to demystify work estimates, reduce drudgery of paper work, make the work available on demand by maintaining a shelf of works and monitor the works through measurement books and muster rolls. It also aims at funds management by tracking wage payments, material payments and administrative costs. It facilitates social audit and right to information. It is a robust web-based monitoring and review tool. Fulfilment of 100 days guarantee for every household can be monitored. Every work and every rupee spent on EGS can be tracked. All the MIS reports required by the district, state and central administration are readily available, reducing the effort of preparation of such reports and increasing the accuracy of data RAGAS has helped in reaching out to 2,45,99,635 people (as on 12.9.08) who applied for work in 65,000 villages covering 275,000 sq km. Payment of minimum wages to every worker is being monitored and it is ensured that women are not discriminated in calculating their wage entitlement. The delivery of entitlement of every worker is monitored and fraud is prevented by making every business process simple and transparent. Worker population is spread over 275,000 sq km Availability of funds is crucial to provide work and make wage payments. Daily monitoring of funds position at all locations helps to identify and replenish funds in nearly 1000 locations on a timely basis, thus leading to enhanced coverage of under-served population. Paying bribe to Government functionaries/

agents is practically nil and whenever it is paid, it is exposed during the social audit leading to recovery and transfer to the rightful owner.

SSP software: The ICT solution has ended the clumsiness of the delivery system and reduced misrepresentation and fraud by building a comprehensive client database. The ICT solution has also brought in checks and balances to ensure proper working of the processes. All the key processes are captured in the software work flows. By the 20th of every month the District Collector issues a release order generated through the software. Then proceedings and aquittance lists are generated. The DRDA sends them along with cheque to the pension-disbursing agency, i.e., the MPDO office. The Mandal Parishad Development Officer (MPDO) in turn gives the cheques and aquittances to the designated functionaries to disburse pensions in the village. The designated authority disburses pensions on 1st of the month at the notified venue, which is mostly a government building in the village. For all those beneficiaries who were not present in the village on 1st, the disbursement is done again on 5th. On 5th evening, the aquittances along with Utilization Certificate and undisbursed amount is returned to the Mandal Office. Temporary migration or death of a beneficiary is marked in the aquittance. DRDA receives the aquittances and undisbursed amount from the whole of the district by 8th. The data in SSP Software is updated and uploaded by the 15th of every month. District Collector issues financial approval to the pensions in the proceedings generated only through SSP s/w live data base containing names of the pensioners' mandal/municipality wise. No money can be disbursed without this approval. As and when new pensions are sanctioned, the sanction proceedings of the MPDO/Municipal Commissioner have to be communicated to the DRDA. The DRDAs update the data base with the particulars of newly sanctioned pensions. In all such cases supplemental financial approval for each Mandal/ward is generated by the computer and communicated to the Mandals/ wards after obtaining approval of the District Collector. The G2C ICT solution is helping the rural poor to leapfrog some of the traditional routes to development by improving access to information and making the delivery system work better. As the information on pensions and the 5.27 million data base is in public domain, misrepresentation of the fact can be detected thus leading to removal of ineligible persons. It is enabling right targeting.

Smart Cards Project: Payments are delivered within 4 days of transfer of funds to banks. Citizens have welcomed the model because, it offers tremendous convenience to them by bringing banking services at their doorsteps.

Because of the customers biometric and keys inserted on the card, it is not possible for anyone to read the customer's account details without authentication. This has eliminated proxy payments. This has helped especially the old to access their money without any third person knocking it away. Single card for all the Government benefits is preventing the same benefits reaching the beneficiary twice. This is helping the Government to cater to large beneficiaries unlike before, wherein, a small group cornered the benefits. Bogus beneficiaries are eliminated in a foolproof manner. Death vacancies and permanent migration cases have come to light as banks give information about the pensions not disbursed. This has eliminated the bogus entries. The banks are using this as an opportunity to extend their services up to the village level as part of total financial inclusion.

EGMM software: Tracking each trainee until his recruitment has helped to trace the impact of the programme in providing employment to the economically and socially underprivileged rural poor from remote areas.. The data base has worked as the best decision support system to plan for the priority sectors of trainings, wherein, there is maximum scope for trainings.

AABY software: The software enables the Government's mission to empower the Community to play an active role in insurance operations, to reduce people's vulnerabilities through social security measures like Indira Jeevitha Bima Pathakam—AABY and to protect their income and asset base, by creating an enabling environment. Social Audit: Social audit has led to efficiency in building awareness of schemes and their entitlements. Social Audits act as an effective mechanism to resolve problems, perceptions towards officials, ability to approach officials to register complaints.

HRMS software: The contract employees' service matters are taken care. They can download their salary slip, know when their next salary hike is due and know about the emoluments of their colleagues, thus enabling them to voice forth their grievances. The Department is also able to efficiently manage the HR issues of the contract employees.

FAS software: FAS is ensuring Collection, Collation and Compilation of Financial Data. It helps in the decision-making activities to be more practical and result-oriented. Effective Fund Management of all schemes implemented in the Department is now possible.

6. Innovation and Best Practices

RAGAS software: When similar schemes were implemented earlier, in the absence of any extensive use of ICT, it was very difficult to address the matters of concern like lack of funds, lack of accountability and transparency. So, funds required for operating and maintaining the system are made available by the administrative component of the NREGS funds. For acceptance and understanding of all stakeholders to ensure that its benefits flow to the society as a whole, communication campaigns are run at the villages and knowledge sharing workshops arranged. At least one critical transaction at every stage passes through computers making it difficult (but not impossible) to steal from the poor. A cumbersome process of preparing estimates has been simplified duly saving several person months of unproductive time which otherwise the field officials would have had to spend. The payment cycle has been significantly reduced to less than 15 days. In the manual process calculating the measurements or the outturn per group will take at least a day, and taking their attendance, calculating the wage is cumbersome leaving scope for errors. Preparing work estimates in 65,000 villages is a tedious task. The software has a work estimate module for nearly 100 types of work. The input for the estimate is greatly simplified allowing even a para-technical person to collect the data. Once the data is entered into NREGS-AP, the estimate for the work will be generated including designs and drawings. This tool has drastically reduced the drudgery of manual preparation of estimates and demystified the concept of preparation of engineering estimates. This solution becomes the most efficient tool to prepare estimates for a large number of work spread over a vast geographical area, thus enabling the government to open work wherever and whenever the wage seekers demanded. Payments to wage seekers are being made entirely through agencies like banks and post offices ensuring that the right amount reaches the worker. The pay slips, generated along with pay order, are distributed to individual wage seekers informing about their payment details, thus preventing them from being misled by any middlemen. Equal wages are ensured among men and women through system calculations and direct deposit in their bank accounts. The wage seekers can go to banks/post offices and withdraw money or save it in their account, as required. Management systems, records and work processes are in place to provide the necessary data to support the ICT solution. In fact, the registers or support documents are compatible to the UI screens of the software and thus facilitate user friendly screen entries for generating job cards, estimates and pay orders.

SSP software: Social Security is one of the important dimensions of the development process. The welfare measures are intended to secure for the citizens adequate means of livelihood and raise the standard of living. In order to secure dignified life to all such vulnerable people, Social security pension scheme is envisaged. But, the earlier structure for implementation of social security scheme was flawed and was replete with operational difficulties. There were several examples of pension not reaching the target group. The ground reality was not captured in the monitoring format. The entire allocated amount was accounted as disbursed even though there were several death vacancies or temporary migrations. For months together the pension amount was not released for distribution and even when released was not distributed as per a schedule. The pensioners were put to hardship not knowing when the pensions would be distributed. Thus, lack of information resulted in the pensioners running around the offices, thus, adding to their plight. The middlemen took advantage of the situation and misled the pensioners. The names of the pensioners were not known widely. So, there was every chance of an ineligible person getting the benefit without others knowing about it. There was also scope for adding fictitious names and middlemen benefiting out of it. Leakages, lack of transparency, limits of the supervision and enforcement capacity of the authorities have all contributed to the sub-optimal implementation of the social security scheme. Major challenges faced by the Government has been lack of transparency and the resulting non-accountability in managing the massive social protection scheme. The focus has been to create an enabling environment to facilitate transparent disbursal of pensions. The ICT solution seeks to overcome the flaws and provide quality service to the pensioners. ICT solution has brought in the transparency and accountability which was missed earlier when the social security scheme was implemented manually. The generation of sanction proceedings and aquittances has led to prompt payment of pensions which was shrouded in uncertainty. Tracking of undisbursed funds through the software has improved the financial health. The receipt of pension can be checked as payment details are available in the web. The vacancies are listed enabling any eligible person to apply. The pensioners now get paid on 1st of every month which was not the case when the data base was manual and scattered.

Smart Cards Project: For the payment through Smart cards, proper resource planning and innovative financing mechanisms are evolved. Here, banks are roped in, to fund the smart cards as part of total financial inclusion and the banks are seeing this as a long-term business opportunity.

EGMM software: All trainings are free of cost to benefit the rural unemployed youth, as an initiative of the government. As the database of the trainees is maintained, the same person will not be trained twice in the same sector, thus preventing the wastage of resources. At the same time, his skillsets are adequately mapped with employment opportunities.

AABY software: The Zilla Samakhyas CBO federations promoted by SERP have shouldered the responsibility of conducting awareness, enrolment of members, data entry and claim settlements. The responsibility of Bima Mithras is to visit and handover an amount of Rs.5000 as a solatium to meet the exigencies, to the bereaved families within 24 hours of the demise of an 'Aam-admi'. This intervention is the first of its kind in the entire State. The remaining Claim amount is processed within 10-20 days through online/ electronic submission of the documents. Social Audit: The villagers themselves are empowered to audit the works carried out in their village. This has increased their confidence in questioning the performance of a programme if it is not implemented in the right way.

HRMS software: For administering the RD schemes over a period of time, the staff drawn from the Government departments and as well the open market has been exponentially increasing. To ensure quality service delivery and achieve the programme objectives, these personnel are required to be attracted, retained and managed in professional ways on contemporary standards. In this context, the department designed and developed HR systems for all the contract staff through web-enabled system. The MOUs with the contract employees are generated through the software.

FAS software: This software has ensured complete record of Financial Transactions with arithmetical Accuracy, showing trial Balance and Financial Statements at anytime. Control over expenditure is established within one month of deployment.

7. Policy & Strategy

The Department is committed to computerise all the backend processes in a phased manner to provide e-governance. A proper regulatory framework is put in place to enable secure information exchanges within and between government, and citizens. All business processes have been engineered in such a way that delivery of every service is through the software and based on actual transaction.

The information available in the websites is exhaustive and if the stakeholders need any further information, they mail the requirement to the data center, wherein specific queries are run and reply is got. The software has been developed using the most commonly and popularly used technologies. Proper documentation of requirement specifications, design and code has been made available for easy maintenance of the software. The business strategy is prioritized to build on strengths, resolve weaknesses, exploit opportunities and avoid threats.

8. Infrastructure

RAGAS software: At the Mandal Level the following hardware is set up—

- Standard desktop configuration: Intel Pentium IV or equivalent with 512 MB RAM and 40GB Hard disk

- Laser printer

- UPS

- LAN with 4-port hub

- Wireless mobile card or NET ONE (BSNL) connectivity... At the state level data center – ProLiant DL380G4, 2CPU boxes, 4GB RAM/ 600 GB HD.

The server hosting RAGAS application with NREGS-AP, watersheds and CLDP, also has HRMS websites placed on it. The SHG software will also be shortly hosted on this server. The Department servers kept within APSWAN hosts RD, AABY, SSP and Social audit websites. The web version of FAS software will shortly be hosted in NIC server.

9. Technologies

1. RAGAS software

   - Web Application using J2EE, JSP

   - Database: Oracle 10 g

   - Application Server: Oracle 10g

2. Social Security Pensions

   - Web-based application

- Windows 2003

- ASP.net

- SQL Server

3. EGMM software

- Web-based application

- Windows 2003

- ASP.net

- SQL Server

4. Aam Admi Bhima Yojana (AABY)

- Web-based application § Windows 2003

- ASP.net, Csharp

- SQL Server

5. Financial Accounting System (FAS)

- Web-based application

- Windows 2003

- Java

- SQL Server

10. People & Leadership

In deploying the varied software applications in the Department, the genuine commitment from political leaders, the private sector and civic organizations is garnered. For over more than a year, a strong political will has seen through the transformation process in its internal operations as well as with regard to its interaction with the society. Frequent stakeholders meetings and workshops have led to knowledge-sharing and removal of any apprehensions that may scuttle the projects. Positive attitude is built through periodic motivation and orientation from the ministry and higher-ups. Knowledge and skills are periodically upgraded to all the stakeholders whenever there is version change or a change in implementation processes. General resistance to change and

information-sharing is overcome in the initial stages through formal, informal interactions and by making use of software compulsory in service delivery. The personnel at the cutting edge level are selected with diligence and trained through class room, field and immersion modules to enhance their competence and sensitize them to customer-orientation and overall commitment. The evolutionary change of the institutional arrangements is handled before implementing the software applications. All the employees responsible for programme implementation have also been trained/oriented in operationalising business processes and using outputs for efficient delivery of services as well as championing change management. To guide this transformation process, appropriate management and co-ordination mechanisms are put in place. An officer, trained by IIM- A, India, in handling e-governance projects, is made in charge of major ICT solutions to coordinate at all levels and also to guide the other e-governance initiatives taken up in the Department.

The team at various levels includes

Dr. G Chinna Reddy, Hon'ble Minister for Rural Development

Mr. K Raju, IAS, Prl Secretary, RD

Mr. T Vijay Kumar, IAS, CEO, SERP

Ms. A Santhi Kumari, IAS, Commissioner, RD

Dr. M Padma, Joint Commissioner, (IT, M&E)—Advisory and co-ordinating role in all e-governance projects in the Department besides being the officer in charge of the RAGAS software initiative and in charge of the NREGS part of the smart card initiative.

RAGAS software

Mr A Samuel Kumar, i/c Director, EGS

Mr Venkat Rami Reddy, Joint Commissioner, CLDP

Ms K Nirmala, Joint Commissioner, Horticulture & Plantations

Mr Kishan Das, Joint Commissioner, Watersheds

Software provider: Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)

SSP software and Smart Card

Ms Anita Ramchandran, Director, SHGs, i/c of SSP & Smart Card Projects

Mr S S Raj, Special Officer (SSP)

Mr Ganti Srinivas, Officer I/c of SSP software

Mr M Satyananda Kumar, Team Leader, SSP software

Ms T Ramalakshmi, Asst, SSP

Mr A. Rajendra Prasad, Retd. Banker as Smart card Project Consultant

Ms A Madhavi Rani, Team member, Smart cards

Mr M Rajesh Babu, Asst., Smart cards

Service provider for SSP: M/s Binary Software Solutions

Service providers for smart cards: M/s Little World

   M/s. FINO Limited

M/s Integra Micro Software Services (P)

EGMM software

Ms Meera Shenoy, Executive Director,

Ms Lakshmi, Addl. CEO, EGMM

Service Provider: M/S Binary Software Solutions

AABY software

P.Chinna Tataiah, RPD, SERP, I/c of AABY

Service Provider: Progment Software Technologies Pvt. Ltd.

Social Audit

Ms V Karuna, Director, SPIU, i/c of social audit project

Service Provider: Byrraju Foundation

HRMS software

Dr K Tirupathaiah, IFS, Spl. Comissioner, RD

Mr R Madhav Rao, Joint Commissioner (Admin)

Ms Ch Shashi Kiran, Asst. Project Coordinator HR

Ms. D Kalpana, Asst. Project Coordinator IB,CB

Ms S Nirmala Sr.Consultant – ASCENT

Ms Shraddha Dhavle Associate Consultant – ASCENT

Mr G Prabhanjan Rao DD Admin – AMR APARD

Mr M S Sastri CDS – APARD

Service Provider: Tata Consultancy Services

FAS software

Ms Lalita, CAO, RD

Mr Subrahmanyam, AO, RD

Ms Kiramnayi, CFM, NREGS-AP

Service Provider: National Informatics Center (NIC)

11. Self Assessment

Department of Rural Development believes that access to avail relevant and timely Government information is a basic right for each citizen. Hence, the RD website projects the latest happenings in the Department to have a balanced knowledgeable citizenship as well as an efficient and effective system of governance. Further the series of e-governance initiatives taken up in the Department once again prove its commitment to provide accountable, reliable and transparent governance that is totally citizen-centric.

RAGAS: RAGAS is a wage seeker centric and solution-focused initiative which seeks to empower people, particularly the disadvantaged when the NREGS was launched, Government's major challenge was how to ensure that the programme reaches every needy citizen who ekes out his/her daily bread through that the day's manual work. So, an effective ICT system is designed. Since the scheme is launched with the ICT solution in place, there were no manual overrides. All processes required to provide wage employment to the poorest of the poor, including timely wage payments are computer enabled through RAGAS software, that facilitates capturing of data as transaction occurs and the data is uploaded to the web daily. Thus, the information seen in the website is not only authentic but also the most up to date information.

The solution is deployed in a computer center which caters to about 20 villages. Each center requires two full time operators who are necessarily taken from the local rural area, trained and deployed. Thus the solution has helped in bridging the digital divide by emerging as a driver to impart and employ local rural youth in the IT industry. As on 12.9.08 the transactions carried are— 1,08,53,327 job cards are issued. 6,31,445 number of works worth 5,46,146.355 lakhs are available in shelf. 4,56,612 number of works worth Rs.30,90,92.94 are completed 4,14,043 number of works worth 51,40,89.68 lakhs are in progress 35,17,97.19 amount is paid as wages to 1,18,53,962 wage seekers of 69,56,252 households creating 42,63,18,750 person days. 15,02,078 works worth Rs.1,36,93,04.29 lakhs have got administrative and technical sanction. 1,18,53,962 wage seekers demanded for work and are given work. Equal opportunities and equal wages: 63,89,855 women got employment as against 54,64,107 of men and got equal wages. 73,284 disabled got employment.

SSP software: The social security pension scheme is an important strategy of the Government in alleviation of poverty. It helps the households in managing risk and fighting the shackles of poverty. The dominant theme of the initiative has been transparency, accountability and timely cash disbursements to the pensioners. The key benefits resulting from such initiatives are timely and advance release of funds to the districts, disbursement of pension on specified dates, proper identification and filling up of death vacancies, monitoring of disbursement through web-based portal, while generating aquittances electronically etc. There has been tremendous reduction in the cycle of release, disbursal and sending of utilization certificate with regard to funds management. The main stakeholders are benefited as they get pensions on 1st of every month, thus reducing income vulnerability. The ICT tool has succeeded in demystifying social security pensions.

Smart Cards Project: The smart card Project was initiated to ensure proper targeting and identification of beneficiaries and prompt and accurate payments to the correct beneficiaries. Chip-based smart card with biometric (finger print based) and photograph as proof of identity is used for disbursement. Till now Rs.28,56,42,737 is paid through smart cards.

EGMM software: Based on the impact of the work thoroughly enabled through the software, 191 training institutes have been set up in sectors ranging from services, construction to textiles, with a focus on tribal and remote areas.

80% of the youth trained have been linked to entry level private sector jobs. Annual salaries are ranging from Rs.45,000 upwards in metros and Rs.24,000 upwards in semi-urban areas in Retail, Healthcare, Hospitality, Security, IT Enabled Services like BPOs, Construction and Textiles.

AABY software: In order to achieve transparency, accountability and efficiency in the implementation of AABY, Web-Based MIS and claim settlement system is established. All Call Centers are connected to this website through internet, wherein all claim particulars and claim documents are uploaded on a day-to-day basis. The entire process of service delivery system is totally administered and monitored by SHGs and they collect Rs.10/- from each applicant. The entire operational expenditure and the administrative cost of the Call Centers like meeting the payments of Call Center operators, Bima Mithras, ZS-Sub-Committee members is met from these services charges. 38 lakh policies are available in the web.

Social Audit: Social audit is conducted involving all the stakeholders. SA is done in all the Panchayats over a 10 day period. On a pre-notified date a social audit public, meeting is held, wherein, village wise SA findings are read out, public testifies, officials respond. Corrective measures are taken immediately. So far, SA process was carried out in more than 33,582 Habitations in 13 Districts. During SA Process an amount of Rs.1.33 crores was recovered from different erring officials belonged to all 15 EGS districts.

HRMS: The web-based HR services enable the FTEs, the Unit Reporting Officer, DDO etc., to avail various HR services at their respective work units in/for generating FTE contracts, monthly pay orders, Pay slip, HR analytical Reports etc., all time access to Service register, Roster Register and career advancement list is ensured.

FAS software: FAS Software has led to timely estimation/determination/provision of funds and efficient use of important and scarce resources. Sums expended are properly accounted for. Timely reporting is providing data for formulation of future plans/projections. Reduced dependency on auditors is felt and easy review of financial status is facilitated.

All the above projects have both political and administrative support. An efficient management team is in place and right from the beginning the focus is on business change and the implementation of methods for achieving

and maintaining this. Culture change and process change is integrated with software deployment. Time lines are fixed and monitored. Day-to-day running of the projects is delegated allowing senior management to focus on the big picture and provide input at key decision points or when an exception arises. Right from inception there is clarity of requirements, objectives are realistic and outcomes well-defined. All stakeholders' views are built in. Services are defined not from a departmental viewpoint but from a citizen's perspective. In fact, the stakeholders' views are continuously taken for upgrading the software. GOAP provides financial support from its State budget to maintain the ICT infrastructure. The gains that Government receives by curbing corrupt practices would more than offset the expenditure involved in the maintenance of the ICT. Thus this initiative is not only a business model but also sustainable. Last but not the least, the ICT solutions give transparency, bringing lot of credibility to the Government's image of making the poor, part of the main stream development and thus, making economic growth truly inclusive.

Project Contact Details

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