

**EVALUATION OF THE FOOD FOR WORK
PROGRAMME IN KARNATAKA STATE**

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The present study was undertaken at the instance of the Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, Government of India. The interest in the current topic of generation of additional gainful employment in rural areas has arisen mainly because the condition of rural poor continues to remain unsatisfactory and worsening despite several Five Year Plans and specific schemes aimed at rural development. The number of registered unemployed has been mounting up, for instance, it has risen from 5.19 million in 1971-72 to 11.0 million in 1977. In rural areas, the problem of unemployment and especially the under-employment is very acute and quite widespread. The backlog has been increasing in spite of generation of employment in successive Five Year Plans. It is well recognised that the problem is one of under-employment rather than mass unemployment, primarily agricultural than industrial, chronic rather than cyclical and incidence spreads widely over the bulk of population.

In the light of massive problems on the rural front, the economic rehabilitation of rural poor has become a formidable task. Various programmes have been introduced since last 30 years, especially in the last decade several schemes have been launched to tackle general as well as specific problems in the rural areas. Notable among these are SFDA and MFAL, Crash Scheme for Rural Employment, Integral Rural Development, Employment Guarantee Scheme and Antyodaya. Even these beneficiary oriented schemes have still not been able to achieve the desired results expected of them.

The Food for Work Programme (FWP) which has come in the wake of some of the above-mentioned schemes, conceived sometime during the year 1976-77, has several interesting aspects to its genesis and thus differs considerably from many other crash programmes. The national scene had shown a comfortable position on the food front with surplus buffer stocks posing storage problems. At the same time, the problem of under-nourishment of unemployed and under-employed rural poor for want of adequate purchasing power continued to cause anxiety. Added to this, the much needed infrastructure facilities and long awaited developmental works in rural areas remained to be tackled for want of financial resources. Apparently, it was a paradoxical situation wherein reserve foodgrain stocks started growing for want of demand, the idle human resources requiring gainful employment without which it could not adequately feed itself and the need for accelerated rural development still persisting.

The manifold problem called for organizing a massive programme for generating full time employment to the needy in rural areas to improve thereby their incomes and nutritional level and in the process creating durable community assets to improve their socio-economic life. There was this huge foodgrain reserves of nearly 20 million tonnes, readily available for the deployment of idle manpower to create productive assets by undertaking schemes of infrastructure development in rural areas. As it costs a good deal to keep this buffer stock in good condition the Government thought of utilizing part of this reserve for paying wages in kind to the rural unemployed. This could not only ease pressure on godown space and create more employment, but also save the exchequer huge storage

expenses. Thus the Food for Work Programme was conceived during 1976-77 and came into operation since 1st April, 1977.

The basic objectives of the Programme are:

- (i) to generate additional gainful employment to large number of unemployed and under-employed men and women in the rural areas which will improve their incomes and consequently their nutritional levels;
- (ii) to generate durable community assets and strengthen the rural infrastructure, which will result in higher production and better living standard in rural areas; and
- (iii) utilization of surplus foodgrains for development of human resources.

It is also claimed that the implementation of the Programme would result in several secondary benefits.

Notable among these are as mentioned below:

- (a) Price stabilizing effect on the staple grains.
- (b) Ensuring of minimum wages and regular work and thereby improving incomes.
- (b) Cheaper assets at quicker pace.
- (d) No starvation deaths for want of foodgrains during drought conditions.
- (e) Reducing the exodus of landless labour from rural to urban areas.
- (f) Improving the nutritional levels of the rural poor.

The information pertaining to salient features of the programme, the detailed guidelines issued to the States and Union Territories regarding the various facets of the terms and conditions of programme implementation are dealt at length in the succeeding chapter.

Since its inception, the FWP has been credited with having made considerable strides towards the realization of its major objectives. Despite the teething troubles, it has been growing in size year after year as may be seen from the brief account of utilization of foodgrains and employment generated in terms of mandays at the consolidated national level. During the first year (1977-78) of its limited scope of activities, the Programme is credited with having utilized 1.27 lakh tonnes of grains out of total allotment of 2.04 lakh tonnes with the total employment generated being over 40 million mandays. During its second year (1978-79) the Department of Rural Development, the parent body in charge of the Programme, planned it in a larger way and released 14 lakh tonnes of grains. Almost all the States and Union Territories participated in the programme and eventually reported utilizing 12.5 lakh tonnes. The total cost of the grains itself was more than Rs. 1750 million and the cash component and other expenses of the State Governments added to this worked out to an overall investment exceeding Rs. 3000 million. The total employment generated was estimated to be around 373 million mandays.

For the current year (1979-80) the Programme has planned a huge outlay, taking into consideration the prevailing drought conditions in several parts of the country. In all a total quantity of 35 lakh tonnes was set apart for normal as well as special FWP to tackle drought affected areas. It was expected to generate total additional employment to the tune of 1400-1500 million mandays.

As per the plan of the F.W. Programme, the arrangement of free supply of food grains should help improve the

resource position of the participant State Governments to the extent they take advantage of it. There is no limit to the expansion of the Programme since the grains provide additional resource over and above the budgetary outlays of the State Governments. The immense potentiality of the FWP is expected to impart a new dimension to the development effort in the rural areas.

Presently, almost all the States and Union Territories are participating in the Food for Work Programme. The State of Karnataka with which the present study is concerned, has been a participant since the very beginning of the Programme. It is one of the States where the problem of unemployment is quite widespread and particularly in several areas which are drought prone the problem is rather acute. The share of Karnataka in the national unemployment is estimated to be 6.36 per cent. The rate of unemployment is 9.20 per cent as compared to 8.34 per cent for all-India.

In broad terms, the present study makes an attempt to evaluate 'inter alia' the various aspects of functioning and performance of the Food for Work Programme in Karnataka State, the impact of the programme, if any, on the beneficiaries and the reactions of the people exposed to the Programme as also of those concerned with the implementation at various levels.

The secondary source of material for the study has been obtained from official records made available to us by the Office of the Project Coordinator, Department of Rural Development and Cooperation, Government of Karnataka. It is used for bringing out the salient features of the project formulation, organizational set up, arrangements for implementation of the Scheme and official version of the performance of the Project. It may also be briefly indicated here, by way of constraints faced by the study, the inadequacy of

the statistical data and other particulars available from the official sources. At the Headquarters the Coordinating Section is rather under-staffed and moreover, the Department itself is not able to obtain all the relevant information in the required form from the implementing officers. The Government itself is aware of the fact and despite reminders it has not been able to receive adequate data feedback from the field, repeatedly mentioned the fact in proceedings of the various meetings. Besides, the note prepared by the Deputy Accountant General has taken cognizance of the inconsistent and inadequate nature of statistical information pertaining to F.W.P.

On the other hand, the data directly obtained from the selected participant labourers, through the field investigation conducted during the year 1980, provide the primary source of material for the present study. Even the selection of blocks and villages, where work would be in progress to facilitate the collection of empirical data, was not all that smooth as the work spots were too scattered and the operation of the scheme was not fairly continuous in most of the districts. Furthermore, in a number of places the operation of the Scheme appeared to have been somewhat held up in view of unfavourable public reaction, adverse press comments and placing of several block level officials under suspension, pending departmental or police inquiry into the alleged charges of misutilization. Perhaps, because of this atmosphere some officials might not have inclined to push the programme to the desirable extent. Nevertheless, we have eventually succeeded in selecting two blocks and interviewing one hundred participant labour households to study several aspects of impact of the Programme and problems associated with the implementation at the field level.

The report consists of five chapters in all. The present Introductory chapter is followed by the one dealing with the Salient features and organizational arrangements for implementation of the Programme. Chapter III brings out various aspects like administrative set up, official version of the performance and problems encountered and review of the working of Food for Work Programme in Karnataka State. The results of the field level investigation covering participant labourers, their opinions and the problems of implementation experienced by the implementing officials at the block and village levels are dealt in Chapter IV. Lastly, the Chapter V concludes the study by summarizing broad observations and offering some suggestions based on major conclusions.

CHAPTER II

SALIENT FEATURES AND ORGANIZATIONAL SET UP

The Food for Work Programme was started by the Centre originally as a non-plan scheme with the objective of generating additional gainful employment in rural areas, creating durable community assets and strengthening rural infrastructure, ultimately raising the standards of living. The Programme did not make much headway in the beginning due to certain constraints inherent in the scheme itself. On review of its progress and the difficulties experienced by the State Governments, the scheme was liberalised in December 1977 to include all on-going plan and non-plan works and new items of public and community works. However, the basic objectives of the scheme have remained unchanged.

Basic Objectives

The Food for Work Programme has got the following basic objectives:

- (i) To generate additional gainful employment to large number of unemployed and the under-employed persons, both men and women, in the rural areas which will improve their incomes and consequently their nutritional levels;
- (ii) To create durable community assets and strengthen the rural infrastructure, which will result in higher production and better living standard in the rural areas;
- (iii) Utilization of surplus foodgrains for development of human resource.

Works Recommended Under the Programme

Having set forth the three-fold objectives, as stated above, the Scheme proceeds to detail out the works that are permitted to be taken up under the programme.

These are as follows:

- (i) Major, medium and minor irrigation works.
- (ii) Flood protection, drainage and anti-water logging works.
- (iii) Soil and water conservation and land reclamation.
- (iv) Afforestation and social forestry works on Government and Community lands including lands belonging to local bodies, roadside plantation, plantations along canal banks and on waste lands on the sides of railway lines, etc.
- (v) Construction of intermediate and main drains, field channels, land levelling, etc., in the command areas of irrigation projects; cleaning and desilting of water courses, etc.
- (vi) Roads including state highways; widening and strengthening of forest roads and canal service roads for throwing them for the public use.
- (vii) School buildings, panchayat houses, community centres, drinking water wells belonging to Government and local bodies or the community in rural areas provided provision for such expenditure on such schemes is reflected in the State budget.
- (viii) Any other work not covered under the above items but which will result in creation of

durable community assets for the benefit of the rural poor, such as, providing a village pond, renovation of existing tank for providing water for human use or for cattle or fish breeding, etc., which can augment the income of the Panchayat.

Location specific works such as cleaning of irrigation reservoirs and channels and fishery tanks of water hyacinth and turning it into organic manures, etc.

The list of works mentioned above is fairly exhaustive and the Scheme has a very wide scope, not being restricted to any particular item of work. Besides listing the type of works permitted to be taken up, the Scheme specifically stresses the point that only such works should be taken up which are productive in nature and create durable community assets that strengthen the rural infrastructure. Creation of private or individual assets is, however, not permissible under the Scheme.

Creation of Durable Community Assets

Since the nature of works to be undertaken must strictly adhere to the criterion of creation of durable community assets, it requires to be spelt out as to what can be regarded as a durable community asset. According to the Ministry's guidelines, any work which will benefit not an individual but either the community at large or a considerably large section of the community who deserves to be helped, and which will last for a few years at least will be a durable community asset. For the purpose of illustration, a purely kachha village road which has no culverts or bridges, even though required, will not be a durable community asset unless proper culverts, etc., are

provided and some minimum top soiling is done on it so that it can last at least for a few years.

Additionality of Resource to the State

One of the basic conditions for execution under the programme is that the State Governments have to show additionality in their expenditure over and above the amount provided in their budget for the respective items of works, at least to the extent of value of foodgrains utilized. In other words, since the State Governments do not have to pay anything for the foodgrains made available to them, it is purely an additional resource to them over and above their budgetary allocation. In no case, however, the State Governments will be permitted to sell the foodgrains obtained under the Scheme in the open market.

Cash Component of the Scheme

Apart from the foodgrains made available for execution of works to be taken up under FWP, it will require cash component which has to be met by State or Union Territory Governments. Firstly, it may not always be possible to pay full wage in kind as the labour would require some cash for purchase of their daily requirements. Secondly, most of the works will require material inputs like cement, bricks, etc. Thirdly, there will be the cost on tools and implements and other overheads on staff and vehicles, etc. Likewise, the State or the executing agencies will have to bear the cost of transport. Since the Central Government provides only the foodgrains, free of cost, as an additional resource, the State Governments will have to bear all other expenses incidental to the implementation of the Scheme.

Among other salient features of the Programme,

mention may be made of the stipulation by Central Government that the foodgrains allocated shall be utilized for the payment of a part or whole of the wages of the labour engaged on the execution of specified works taken up under the scheme. However, there is no ratio fixed for payment of wages to labour in cash and kind. Actually, it is left to the discretion of the State Governments to adjust the same keeping in view the local conditions.

That the works coming within the purview of the Scheme shall be taken up only in rural areas. The project works can be implemented throughout the year and need not be confined to the agriculturally slack seasons.

In order to ensure that the benefit of the Scheme reaches the individual workers, it is necessary that the agencies responsible for the execution of the works directly reach the foodgrains to the workers. The execution of works through the contractors, though permitted in the beginning, has now been completely banned. However, it is left to the discretion of the State Governments to entrust the works, if necessary, to reputable voluntary social service organizations. Besides, the local Sel-Governments like Village Panchayats, Zilla Parishads are also authorized to execute the works under the Scheme. Foodgrains upto 10 M.T. can be allocated to them for execution of works by the District Collector under his own discretion.

Allocation Procedure and Issue of Foodgrains

The procedure for allocation of foodgrains as per the Ministry's guidelines is that the State Governments must plan for their requirements for a full year on a realistic basis and indicate the quantity they would need

during the year. Simultaneously, they should intimate their requirements for each month or quarter in advance and give all the necessary details in prescribed proforma. The Union Department of Rural Development, would consider all such requests immediately on their receipt. After deciding the quantity for allocation and release of foodgrains to each State, a sanction order will be issued and copies endorsed simultaneously to State Governments concerned, the Food Department and the Food Corporation of India (FCI). Instructions regarding release of foodgrains regarding will be sent wherever necessary. The Department of Food, Government of India will issue release instruction to FCI with a copy to State Government concerned immediately on receipt of the sanction order from the Department of Rural Development. In case of urgency, the Regional Managers, FCI, will also intimate by telegram their District Managers concerned to release the foodgrains without waiting for the formal receipt of the copy of the sanction order and the instructions from their Head Office. Within the allocations made to State Governments under the scheme, the stocks of foodgrains will be released to them according to their indents from the nearest godown of the FCI. It shall be the responsibility of State Government officers concerned to see the foodgrains conform to the standard prescribed for the public distribution system and that only FAQ (fair average quality) grain is accepted by them. Instructions have been issued by the Union Food Department to the FCI in this regard not to issue sub-standard quality foodgrains under any circumstances.

Prices of Foodgrains for Purpose of Calculating
Additionality and as Wages for Workers

The value of foodgrains released to the State Government is charged by the FCI to the Union Department of Rural Development at the current issue price of Rs. 130/- (with effect from 1-12-1978), for wheat and Rs. 150/- per quintal for medium variety of rice. However, the additionality may be calculated at the rate the State Governments distribute the foodgrains to workers but subject to the minimum of Rs. 120/- and Rs. 140/- per quintal for wheat and rice respectively. The State Governments have been advised to fix the sale price (as part of kind wages to workers) at a rate which is Rs. 10/- per quintal less than even the issue price of FCI.

Organizational Arrangements for Efficient
Implementation of the Scheme

For execution of any scheme, it is necessary that there should be a proper organizational set up, as otherwise any scheme, however laudable its aims, is likely to run into difficulties. The Union Department of the Rural Development has thought it fit to allow each State Government to develop a suitable machinery of its own for implementation according to the dimensions of programme requirements and the local conditions. Nevertheless, the Department, through its 'guidelines', has stipulated certain administrative arrangements especially in regard to monitoring for efficient implementation of the Programme.

According to the guidelines, at the State level, there shall be a Steering Committee headed by the Chief Secretary or Development Commissioner or any other Senior Secretary. Secretaries and Heads of Departments operating the Scheme or having potentialities of

participation should be represented in the Committee. A representative of the Department of Rural Development, Government of India and the Senior Regional Manager, FCI, would also be members of the State Steering Committee.

Likewise, at the district level, there shall be a District Steering Committee headed by the Collector/Deputy Commissioner which should include all the departmental heads concerned with the works taken up in the district under 'Food for Work Programme'. The seniormost FCI officer in the District should be a member of the District Level Steering Committee. It should have a representative of the Zilla Parishad, if such an elected body is functioning in the district. The voluntary agencies, if any, participating in the scheme should also be represented. The main task of the Steering Committee shall be to plan the works to be taken up under the scheme and see that the progress of these works is not allowed to suffer for any reason.

The Union Department of Rural Development also insists that in order to enable the Central Government to determine the quantum of foodgrains to be made available to State Governments under the Scheme, it is necessary that in the beginning of every year, the information regarding existing provision in the State Government budget for on-going plan and non-plan schemes, new items of capital works as well as maintenance of public works should be furnished in the prescribed proforma. Besides, the State Governments are also required to prepare monthly and quarterly progress reports. The progress reports will not only serve the needs of planning and administration of the Scheme but also enable authorities, both at the Centre and State levels, to keep a close watch on trends

and to apply corrective steps. Besides, the progress reports will also form the basis for further release of foodgrains under the Scheme.

CHAPTER III

THE WORKING OF THE PROGRAMME IN KARNATAKA

The present chapter deals with the relevant aspects pertaining to the organizational set up and approach to the operation of the scheme at the State and district levels; performance and problems in the initial years of the programme; reorientation of the programme and dovetailing of the State's own employment scheme; the progress in the year 1979-80 and other related matters of the Programme.

In Karnataka, Food for Work Programme (FWP) was originally started in April, 1977 to augment the funds of the State Government for maintenance of public works on which large investment had been made in the past. The objectives of the Programme adopted by the State Government remain the same as the three-fold objectives drawn up by the Central Scheme.

Administrative Set up

The FWP in Karnataka was initially handled by the Department of Planning and Development. Since no progress could be achieved, it was transferred to the Department of Rural Development and Cooperation, which managed the programme through an Under Secretary by entrusting the allotment of foodgrains to chief engineers and Forest Department. Subsequently, it was entrusted to the Coordinator, Special Economic Programmes, Department of Rural Development and Cooperation. The Development Commissioner and Secretary to Government of the same department is in overall charge of the Programme.

It may be noted that no separate cell or administrative agency was created for the exclusive purpose of coordinating and monitoring the Food for Work Programme at the State as well as other levels. In point of fact, the Coordinator, in charge of FWP at the Secretariat level had already been looking after Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE), Applied Nutrition Programme and World Food Programme among other things. The Food for Work Programme is one more scheme that has been added to his charge of coordination of special economic programmes at the State level. The Chief Coordinator is drawn from the cadre of District Development Assistants (DDA). At the Headquarters, he is assisted by a very small skeleton staff.

State Level Steering Committee

The functions of monitoring for efficient implementation, policy orientation and such other matters, however, are generally guided by the State Level Steering Committee. The Development Commissioner-cum-Secretary to Government, Department of Rural Development and Cooperation (BDC) is the Chairman of this Committee. The other members of the Committee are Secretaries, Planning and Finance Departments; Deputy Secretaries, F.D.C., Finance, Food and Forest, Planning and P.W.D. and Electricity Departments; the Director, Food and Civil Supplies; the Managing Director, Karnataka Food and Civil Supplies Corporation (KFCSC); Under Secretary, Planning Department; and the Coordinator of the SITE and other Projects. The Regional Manager, Food Corporation of India, is also on the Committee as a regular invitee. Besides, the Chief Secretary to the Government and some

other officials are also invited to attend the meetings of the Steering Committee. The Committee is to meet at least once in a quarter or as often as necessary.

At the District level too the Steering Committees have been formed in the recent past. The Deputy Commissioner who is the administrative head in charge of the district, and responsible for the implementation of the FWP within his jurisdiction, is the chairman of the district level Steering Committee. The Committee in each district consists of about 20 members and it includes all the heads of the development departments at district and taluk levels like agriculture, forestry, horticulture, Public Works and so on; the assistant commissioners; the District Development Assistant who is the coordinator at the district level and some non-official members, one from the Taluk Development Boards and the others being an M.P. and M.L.As.

The Deputy Commissioner is given full powers and with the assistance of the Steering Committee, he has to plan, implement and monitor the programme. The District Level Steering Committees are supposed to meet once every month but it is not the case in all the districts. However, whenever the meetings are convened, all the members generally attend the meetings.

At the district level too, there is no separate staff wholly or mainly in charge of the F.W.P. The thinking on the part of the Government is that since the Programme is not a full project by itself and on-going schemes are pushed through the help of the foodgrains, the existing machinery is to be utilized for supervising and implementing the works connected with it. Thus we find the higher level decision making, direction and

monitoring are at the secretariat level; the Chief Engineers of various operational divisions, the Conservators of Forests, the deputy commissioners of the districts are generally in charge of the supervision and execution of the schemes and; at the vitally lower levels, the existing engineering staff of the various public works departments, B.D.O.s and junior engineers with the Taluk Development Boards are entrusted with the actual implementation of the approved schemes.

Nature of Works to be Undertaken

By and large, the major categories of works permitted to be undertaken in Karnataka are similar to those recommended by the Central Government. The following are the six broad heads of works which can be taken up under FWP in Karnataka.

1. Major, medium and minor irrigation works.
2. Flood protection, drainage and anti-water logging works.
3. Soil and water conservation and afforestation on Government and community lands.
4. All kinds of roads including high ways.
5. Construction of intermediate and main drains, field channels, land levelling, etc., in irrigation command areas.
6. School buildings, community centres of Government and local bodies provided provision for expenditure on such schemes is reflected conventionally in the State budgets.

Performance in the Initial Years

Although the Food for Work Programme formally came into being from April 1, 1977, the Government of Karnataka

could take some positive steps only after June 1977.

During its very first year (1977-78) the Programme could be pushed through with the help of only the Public Works and Forest Departments. The following were the implementing authorities to whom the foodgrains were allotted by the State Government.

1. The Chief Engineer (C & B)
2. The Chief Engineer (Irrigation) North
3. The Chief Engineer (Irrigation) South
4. The Chief Engineer (Minor Irrigation) North
5. The Chief Engineer (Minor Irrigation) South
6. The Chief Engineer, Tungabhadra Project (TBP)
7. The Chief Engineer, National Highways.
8. The Chief Conservator of Forests.

In the initial period, the abovementioned implementing agencies were asked to lift the foodgrains from the FCI depots and utilize the same toward the kind component of wages to the workers. They were required to pay the grains upto the value Rs. 4/- per head per day and the rest in cash as per the minimum wages in force.

In order to prevent the contractors from misusing the cheap grains, the departmental staff was asked to supervise the distribution of grains directly to the beneficiary workers and later on adjust the value of the same while settling the bills of the contractors.

The nature of work carried out under the programme was mainly the routine maintenance of canals, roads and minor irrigation works by the public works departments and maintenance of old plantations by the forest department.

The State was allotted 1000 M.T. of wheat and 545 M.T. of milo for the year 1977-78. However, the quota of milo was not actually released by the Food Corporation

of India until August 1978. During the year 1978-79, the Government of India allotted 15,000 M.T. of wheat and no mile as the entire quota meant for the previous year was actually available for the current year.

In the first year (1977-78) the State Government allotted all the wheat to seven implementing authorities, six being chief engineers of public works departments and one that of Chief of Conservator of Forests. The allotment varied from as low as 20 tonnes in the case of C.E. Irrigation South to 535 tonnes to that of C.E. (C & B). The F.C.I., Bangalore released the same as per the instructions from State and Central Governments. However, during the year, the implementing authorities utilized the grains to the extent of only 54 per cent at the State level. By and large, the northern circles have fared relatively better than the southern ones.

During the second year, that is, 1978-79, the Centre allotted 15,000 tonnes of wheat and 545 tonnes of mile which was actually allotted in the previous year but was not available before August 1978. The wheat was allotted by the State Government to all the implementing authorities excepting the two Irrigation Circles. The mile was allotted to four of the eight implementing departments. However, the implementing authorities could lift only 8,940 tonnes of wheat from F.C.I. The available data point out that in the first six months a very meagre proportion of both wheat and mile could be utilized in the State. The details of foodgrains allotted to and utilized by the implementing agencies during the years 1977-78 and 1978-79 are shown in Table 3.1.

The information culled from the official files made available to us regarding various facets of the

programme are summarised here. The cost of foodgrains in the initial years was worked out to Rs. 1.25 for wheat and Rs. 0.70 per kg for mile. However, the cost of grains distributed to labourers in lieu of wages was fixed at Rs. 1.15 and Rs. 0.60 per kg. of wheat and mile respectively. The departments of State Government were to bear the price differential, the transport costs, costs involved on account of tools and plant, etc.

Regarding the data on works undertaken, the physical achievement attributable to F.W.P. and employment generated, which could be attributed to the F.W. Programme in terms of distinctive mandays, are very scanty, incomplete and not systematic at all. This state of affairs has arisen mainly because the implementing authorities could not furnish statistical and other information in many respects and in the required form. Nevertheless, the available data indicate that the works undertaken under the Scheme related to repairs and routine maintenance. Regarding the physical achievements attributable to the programme, five of the eight implementing authorities have not been able to report anything for the period ending March 1978 and half year ending September 1979. The Chief Engineer, Minor Irrigation, South Circle has reported repairs to 32 minor tanks upto March 1978 and repairs to 44 minor irrigation tanks under execution upto the period ending September 1978, generating 37,400 and 33,250 mandays respectively. The Chief Engineer (C & B) has reported that foodgrains have been utilized on maintenance of P.W.D. roads for both the periods, with employment figure of 47,650 for the latter period of reference. The Chief Engineer (T.B. Project) has reported having undertaken some works in the command area, without giving any

details. The Chief Conservator of Forests has not reported on physical achievement but claims employment under F.W.P. at 4,59,507 mandays for the year ending March 1978 and 778 mandays for the period ending September 1978. The Chief Engineer (National Highways) of Central Sector has ^{not} not been any question of extra employment generation since the regular labour forces under contractors and department have been paid their wages in terms of foodgrains. Furthermore, no work was carried out entirely under F.W.P. and as a result assessment of physical progress has not been practicable.

However, it has been claimed that Karnataka State has achieved the creation of physical assets and generation of additional employment as given below.

	1977-78	1978-79
(1) Creation of Physical Assets		
(a) Area Covered under Plantation (Hect.)	2313	693
(b) New Roads (Kms.)	-	80
(c) Other Works (Nos.)	32	1905

(2) Generation of Additional Employment

- (a) 1977-78 - 5.02 (lakh mandays)
 (b) 1978-79 - 44.71 (do)

Source: Paper presented by Shri N.P. Singh, Director, F.W.P., Ministry of Rural Reconstruction, Government of India, at the Seminar of IFPRI, held in Delhi on February 13, 1980.

The non-fulfilment of the condition of additionality, as required by the Centre's Guidelines, has created some confusion in regard to performance of the Programme in the initial period. It has been pointed out by the Centre that, against the budget provision of Rs. 59.60 crores for

the year 1977-78, the State Government could utilize only Rs. 57.69 crores and utilize only 544 tonnes of wheat valued at Rs. 62.56 lakhs. Thus, in accordance with the condition of additionality, the State Government should have shown the additionality of Rs. 52.56 lakhs over and above the budget provision of Rs. 59.60 crores.

According to Government of Karnataka, the lukewarm response which resulted in under-utilisation of foodgrains allotted to various implementing agencies, was due mainly to non-acceptance of wheat and milo as kind wage by the labourers. The rural people in southern parts normally prefer ragi and rice while those in northern districts of the State use jowar as their staple diet. The Government authorities, therefore, felt that the wheat in 1977-78 and wheat and milo in 1978-79 failed to attract the labourers even though these grains were supplied at prices well below the prevailing market rates. However, the situation was remedied in the subsequent years.

Reorientation of FWP

In the initial two year period, the pace of the Programme in the State had left much to be desired on account of sole reliance on Forest and Public Works Departments. In order to make the Programme more vigorous and comprehensive, the State Department of Rural Development and Cooperation has reorganized the F.W.P. set up for the year 1979-80. As a first step in this direction, the Deputy Commissioners of the 19 districts in the State have been entrusted with the task of planning and implementing the Programme in their respective jurisdictions. Furthermore, each Deputy Commissioner is to be assisted by the District Level Steering Committee, comprising all the departmental heads in charge of developmental activities

in the district and some representatives from among the M.P.s, M.L.A.s and Taluk Development Boards. Apart from involving the developmental departments at the district level and local self Governments at the Taluk level, the State Government, however, has decided to continue the participation by the various public Works Departments.

Dovetailing of Employment Affirmation Scheme to F.W.P.

Another significant development in the implementation of the Programme is the State Government's own Crash Programme styled as Employment Affirmation Scheme (E.A.S.), being dovetailed to the F.W.P. The new Scheme has come into being with effect from 1979-80. Apparently, it has been done with the prior approval of the Central Government, since the Scheme would utilize part of the quota of grains allotted for F.W.P. Besides, E.A.S. does not have its own cadre or separate establishment and the Scheme is to be implemented by the authorities in charge of F.W.P. However, E.A.S. is not a duplicate programme and in several respects it differs considerably from F.W.P. This can be seen from the salient features and scope of the Scheme.

Salient Features and Scope of E.A.S.

The E.A.S. has been drawn up by the Department of Planning and Development of the State Government. The same Department is in overall charge of planning, direction and financing the cash component of the Scheme. The Deputy Commissioners of the districts have been entrusted with the task of implementing the Scheme in selected taluks within their jurisdiction and maintain separate accounts as distinct from the regular F.W.P. The E.A.S. is in force only in 45 selected taluks of the State.

Under the Employment Affirmation Scheme, the employment is to be provided to all the adults (aged 18 years and over) in rural areas of the selected taluks, up to a maximum of 100 days during the slack season i.e., from March to first week of June every year. It is restricted only to rural residents who give notice of demand for unskilled and manual work. The participants will have no choice of area or place of work and they are required to work anywhere in the taluk. The Scheme is to be executed in such a way that normal agricultural and other operations are not adversely affected.

The works coming under the Scheme should create productive assets and contribute to improvement in rural environment. Only technically and economically feasible labour intensive works of productive nature are to be included. The first preference is to be given to such works as minor irrigation, desilting, soil conservation, canals, afforestation and fisheries. The second preference is to be given to rural roads, housing for poor, school buildings, village sanitation, improvement to Harijan colonies.

The wage rate for unskilled labour is fixed at Rs. 4/- for an eight hour work day. The payment is made weekly with two-thirds in kind (rice or other foodgrain supplied under F.W.P.) and the remaining third in cash. The work under the Scheme can be taken up only if there are 50 or more persons available. If less than 50 persons available, they are to be absorbed in work already in progress or other E.A.S. works in neighbouring locations. Another condition requires that E.A.S. can be taken up only after exhausting other works under various Schemes like SFDA, DPAP, IRDS, etc. It is also stipulated that

all works under E.A.S. should be executed departmentally and not through contractors. The implementing officers in selected taluks are required to maintain separate account of foodgrain utilized and the same sent to K.D.C. Department which is in charge of F.W.P.

During March 1979, the Government of Karnataka allotted 5000 tonnes of wheat and 8000 tonnes of rice for E.A.S., out of foodgrains sanctioned to F.W.P. by Central Government. For the months of April and May 1979, the State Government allotted 600 tonnes of rice and 200 tonnes of either ragi or jowar to each of the 45 selected taluks, dispersed in most of the districts. The total quantity thus diverted for exclusive use of E.A.S. from out of the F.W.P. quota amounted to 27,000 tonnes of rice and 9,000 tonnes of ragi/jowar during the year 1979-80. In order to make a success of the State's own Scheme, the Planning Department even relaxed the condition of minimum 50 persons per work spot.

The E.A.S. which came into being from March 1979, could not show much progress in the initial period of its existence. The reason for poor progress, as stated by the Planning Secretary was that the foodgrains released to the State did not actually reach the State as the F.C.I. did not supply the grains.

Performance in the Recent Years

The State Government's revamped Programme with E.A.S. tagged on to it, though restrictive in its scope, has made an attempt to show good performance beginning from the year 1979-80. As a first step, the State has not only succeeded in getting the Centre to allocate rice instead of wheat but also permit it to purchase ragi and jowar from the

Karnataka Food and Civil Supplies Corporation (KFCSC), Bangalore, the cost of such purchase being reimbursable by the Centre.

On the other hand, the Joint Secretary to the Government of India, Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, expressed the opinion that the past achievement in the State has not been satisfactory and that the earnest efforts should be made to show good progress in the utilization of foodgrains at least during the current year (1979-80). On the part of the Government of India, he assured that funds would not be a constraint for this programme, provided good progress is shown by the Government. He also stated that allotment of foodgrains to the State for 1979-80 would be in the order of 46,000 tonnes and by October, 1979, the Centre will review the position and would consider release of more foodgrains for the F.W.P. depending on the pace of utilization.¹

Towards the food component under the Food for Work Programme during the year 1979-80, a quota of 46,000 M. tonnes of foodgrains was allotted by Government of India. Out of this quota, 31,000 tonnes of rice was to be supplied through F.C.I. and 10,000 tonnes of ragi as well as 5,000 tonnes of jowar through Karnataka Food and Civil Supplies Corporation. It was also arranged that the foodgrains would be distributed to labourers either partly or fully as wages. The transportation expenditure was to be charged to the concerned head of account of the departments. The sale proceeds of empty gunny bags were required to be adjusted to the concerned departmental funds.

¹ See, Proceedings of the Steering Steering Committee Meeting on F.W.P., held on 30-6-1979, Bangalore.

Despite reorientation of approach and enlargement of scope of activities, the Programme has not shown expected progress in the current year. At the end of first half year of 1979-80, that is, by September 1979, the bottlenecks in the release of foodgrains have presented some problems. The note put up before the Chief Minister has revealed the fact that the Centre released only 13,000 tonnes of rice and 10,000 tonnes of coarse grains out of total allocation of 46,000 tonnes. In addition to this, a carry over quantity of 5,000 tonnes of rice from the previous year, i.e., 1978-79, which could not be utilized under E.A.S., has also been taken into account. However, the total quantity utilized in the first six months of the current year (1979-80) has amounted to only 20,000 tonnes of rice and 2,000 tonnes of coarse grain. In point of fact, out of 28,000 tonnes of foodgrains released by the Centre, the State could utilize only 12,000 tonnes during April-September of 1979, just about 43 per cent of the actual quota released. This performance by the State provoked the Chief Minister to remark that he has not been satisfied with the Programme, that the State must utilize in full the allotted foodgrains, and the bottlenecks, if any, must be removed.

The Department in charge of F.W.P., on the other hand, appears to stress the bottlenecks in the supply line as the major reason for lack of good progress. In a note prepared sometime during August 1979, it is maintained that out of 18,000 tonnes of rice allotted to State, only 3,761 tonnes has been issued to the Deputy Commissioners from the F.C.I., Bangalore. It is claimed that F.C.I. itself reported this fact. The note continues to record the fact that the stock position with the F.C.I., Bangalore

is only 3,020 tonnes of rice and the balance released by F.C.I., Bangalore but not issued is 11,209 tonnes. The note concludes by saying that due to non-supply of foodgrains from the F.C.I., Bangalore, the works under F.W.P. are suffering and it is very difficult to show good progress in the State.

However, by the end of March 1980, the pace of utilization of foodgrains appears to have picked up considerably and has shown much greater rate of utilization in the second half than the first half of the year. The available records show that during the year 1979-80, the total quantity of foodgrains utilized for F.W.P. is 33,786 M.Tonnes, of which only 12,000 tonnes being the quantity utilized in the first six months. The total quantity of 33,786 tonnes is inclusive of 9,360 tonnes utilized for E.A.S. (Employment Affirmation Scheme) of the State Government. The data pertaining to implementing agencywise (19 districts and six departments) distribution of various kinds of foodgrains allotted, lifted and utilized during the year 1979-80 for E.A.S. and F.W.P. are presented in Table 3.2.

It may be seen that at the overall State level, the total allotment of foodgrains through F.C.I. and K.F.C.S.C. amounts to 52,413 tonnes, of which 12,274 tonnes, forming 23.4 per cent, being the component specifically meant for E.A.S. The total allotment actually exceeds by a little more than 6,000 tonnes initially planned. However, the difference is due largely to wheat quota of over 12,000 tonnes which is absent in the initial allotment plan. It is in the case of rice and coarse grains (ragi and jowar) that we find shortage in the final allotment to a tune of 6,000 tonnes. The break-up of the final allotment is as shown below:

Wheat	12,446 M.T.	(23.8 per cent)
Rice	27,996 " "	(53.4 " ")
Ragi	8,921 " "	(17.0 " ")
Jowar	3,050 " "	(5.8 " ")
Total grains	52,413 M.T.	(100.0 per cent)

Despite adequate allotment, the total quantity lifted by the implementing authorities amounts to only 34,503 tonnes, accounting for 65.8 per cent of the total allotment. In the case of wheat and rice about three-fourths of the allotment is shown as lifted. Just half of the jowar quota and only about a quarter of the allotted ragi could be lifted by the various implementing authorities.

However, almost the entire quantity lifted is shown to be utilized by the implementing officers. The balance after the utilisation forms a mere 2.1 per cent of the total quantity lifted. Nevertheless, wide gap exists between allotment and final utilisation of foodgrains during the year 1979-80. In all, 33,786 tonnes is shown to be utilized, forming 64.5 per cent of the total allotment. It is inclusive of E.A.S., which is dovetailed to F.W.P. and the quantity (9,360 tonnes) shown to be exclusively utilized for the E.A.S. forms just 27.7 per cent of the total.

The consolidated account of foodgrains allotted, lifted and utilized at the aggregate level, inclusive of E.A.S. component, may be seen from the following figures (as obtained from Table 3.2):

Foodgrain	(Quantity in M.Tonnes)		
	Allotted	Lifted	Utilized
1) Wheat	12,446	9,655	9,655
2) Rice	27,996	20,905	20,348
3) Ragi	8,921	2,423	2,278
4) Jowar	3,050	1,520	1,505
Total	52,413	34,503	33,786

Broadly speaking, at the level of districts and some departments involved in implementing the schemes, we find that F.W.P. is entrusted to the Deputy Commissioners of all the 19 districts in the State and the six departments with E.A.S. part being in the hands of only the farmer. As far as the E.A.S. part of the Programme is concerned, ^{Three} ~~four~~ districts, namely, Mandya, Raichur and Uttara Kannada are quite conspicuous in lifting and utilizing much larger quantity of foodgrains than the initial allotment. Similarly in the case of Belgaum, Bidar and Tumkur districts, we find that the entire quota allotted is not only lifted but also fully utilized. In the remaining 13 districts, we find varying extent of under-utilisation of allotted grains. In the case of Kodagu, no grain is lifted nor utilized and it is followed by Chikmagalur which records utilizing less than eight per cent of allotted grains. Incidentally, these two districts are predominantly coffee growing areas, often experiencing labour shortages.

The pattern available in respect of non-E.A.S. part of the Programme shows that only D.Kannada and Rk Raichur districts utilizing foodgrains in excess of initial allotment. However, three of the six departments have utilized the allotted grains to the full extent. In the case of Tumkur district and the remaining three departments, the rate of utilization is well over 90 per cent of the total allotment. Nevertheless, the fact remains that most of the districts have fallen far short of the targeted quota. In many a case, the quantity lifted is less than half of the initial allotment. There is the most glaring case of Gulbarga which records lifting of 273 out of 1,103 tonnes allotted and to confound it further, it shows utilization

of a meagre quantity of 16 tonnes. The distinction of utilizing the largest quantity during the year 1979-80 goes to Tumkur with 6,594 tonnes and that of lowest quantity to Chikmagalur, a plantation district, with only 15 tonnes (Table 3.2).

Unfortunately, no systematic statistics are available in regard to details of schemes executed under the Programme, amount or value of works completed, the nature and extent of durable community assets created and the extent of additional employment generated by utilizing foodgrains. Whatever data available are incomplete, provisional and inconsistent in several respects for any comments, let alone amenable for meaningful analysis. The Office of the Coordinating Officer, F.W.P. at the Headquarters, has not been able to obtain all the necessary details from the implementing agencies despite repeated reminders. This state of affairs can best be appreciated by perusing the note prepared and circulated by the Department of Rural Development and Cooperation, Government of Karnataka (dated March 25, 1980). The relevant portion reproduced below highlights the problems faced by the Department itself in the course of implementation of Food for Work Programme.

Problems Encountered in the Implementation of Food for Work Programme

a) Some of the implementing agencies particularly Taluk Development Boards have taken up too many works for execution in a large number of different locations. Though the works are required to be sanctioned by the District level Steering Committees works outside the purview of the District level Steering Committees are being taken up. This has resulted in a number of works remaining incomplete.

for want of more additional quantity of foodgrains. They also lack the effective supervision with technical guidance. In many of the Districts in spite of clear instructions to plan the works in such a way that all the works undertaken should be completed and made durable assets only earth works are taken and left incomplete, though the guidelines have been issued to create durable community assets.

b) It has been found that in some of the Districts the District Level Steering Committees are not being called regularly and the programme planning of the works to be undertaken is not being done. The District Level Steering Committees are empowered to plan, to execute and to review the progress of works taken up under the Food for Work Programme. This has not been adhered to in several cases. The District level committees have to exercise stricter supervision over all the implementing Officers as well as in the selection of schemes. The Deputy Commissioners have been instructed to see that the selection of works and execution of works are properly done in strict conformity with the guidelines issued from Government of India.

It is stipulated in the guidelines issued by Government of India that the Audit squad among the District Officers must be appointed by the Deputy Commissioners and such squad should go round the District and pay surprise visits to the works spots and should give report to the Deputy Commissioner about the manner in which the schemes have been implemented, whether the wages are paid in time, whether foodgrains are properly distributed and whether proper muster-rolls of labourers are maintained or not. Most of the Deputy Commissioners have not been complied with these conditions. This has resulted in the

possibility of misuse of foodgrains which had been taken place in a few taluks. Hence the necessity of forming Audit squad is quite essential. Further the Audit Superintendents taken from the staff of the Accountant General are also going round the Districts and auditing the statement of accounts maintained in the Office of the Deputy Commissioners.

Lot of difficulties are being faced in collecting the monthly and quarterly progress reports from the Deputy Commissioners. In spite of repeated reminders the Deputy Commissioners are not sending the progress reports as prescribed in the Government Order. With the result the Government is unable to compile the progress reports and to submit the same to the Government of India. Indeed due to such slackness the allocation of foodgrains from Government of India was also greatly delayed. The Deputy Commissioners are being reminded continuously to ensure sending the progress reports in time.

Bottlenecks in the Supply Arrangements

There has been a feeling among official circles of the State Government that all is not well with the existing set up for smooth supply of foodgrains to implementing officers. It is felt that the way Food Corporation of India handles the situation, it leaves much to be desired. The State Government are inclined to think that much of the shortfall in their performance is due to lack of timely and adequate supply made by F.C.I. They also stress the deficiency with F.C.I. to arrange supply within a week or two. This matter of logistics crops up in many a meeting held in connection with Food for Work Programme. To cite an example, in the proceedings of the meeting held on

14-11-1979, in the Chambers of Chief Secretary, the Deputy Development Commissioner (Special Schemes) has made the following observation:

"The supply of foodgrains from Food Corporation of India is not satisfactory and number of complaints are being received from the Deputy Commissioners stating that there is no sufficient stock of foodgrains in the Food Corporation of India Godowns, for example the Deputy Commissioner, Shimoga has to go to Hubli for lifting the foodgrains as there was no stock of foodgrains at the time of allotment and this makes lot of inconvenience to the implementing authorities who are implementing the Food for Work Programme."

Furthermore, the number of F.C.I. godowns in general and their location in relation to areas to be served in particular, seem to have contributed to the problem of bottlenecks in the smooth supply of foodgrains. The statement showing the location, the districts attached to each depot and stock position of foodgrains as on 1-3-1980 may be seen in Table 3.3.

From the statement it appears that there are 15 points of depot facilities to serve 19 districts of the State. Two points, located in Bangalore City serve only Bangalore District. Several districts are served by the depot facilities located within their respective districts. There are eight districts which do not have facilities located within their jurisdiction. They have to necessarily depend upon the godowns located outside the districts, in some cases, at a considerable distance away. The rationale of locating the depot is not easily discernible. No doubt, the existing points are all having rail-head facilities. It is only in the case of Kodagu and Uttara Kannada

districts railway facilities are lacking. However, Mysore, Shimoga and Dharwar (apart from Bangalore) districts have more than one depot located within their districts and that too in close proximity. The glaring cases are that Bhadravati depot is within 20 km of Shimoga where a depot exists, but the former is supposed to cater to neighbouring Chikmagalur district. The depot for Chikmagalur could have been located either at Kadur or Birur, where main line rail-head facilities are available. Similarly is the case of Gadag depot, which is closer to Hubli, but required to serve far off Bellary and Bijapur districts which do not lack railway and other means of transport.

Whatever may be the original criteria adopted for location of depots, it appears that the dispersal is somewhat wanting in terms of equitable spatial consideration. This aspect assumes some importance especially when foodgrains need to be transported for programmes like E.A.S. and F.W.P., not to mention speedier movement during the drought or scarcity conditions.

It may also be observed that as on March 1, 1980, eight of the 15 depots do not show having any stock of foodgrains (Table 3.3). It is possible that the situation may have improved later on or adequate quota may already have been lifted in the recent past. However, it may be desirable to have stocks in all depots at about the time when E.A.S. is to embark on its hundred day operation and the normal F.W.P. would be striving to achieve the target before the end of the financial year. Some implementing authorities have gone on record saying that they have been unable to obtain foodgrains from the nearest godowns for want of stock and are required to lift the same from far off depots.

Review of F.W.P. at the State Level

The various aspects covered hitherto have been based on information made available to us. Much of the information being scrappy and datawise inadequate for reasons already mentioned, a clear picture could not emerge. However, an attempt is made here to present an overall review of the performance at the State level. What follows in this concluding section is mainly culled from the review note, prepared by the Deputy Accountant-General, on the working of Food for Work Programme at the State Level (dated 23-4-1980).

1) Under the sub-heading 'incorrect and incomplete furnishing of progress reports to Government of India' the note observes that during 1977-78, the total quantity of grains lifted by the implementing officers has not been reported to Government of India. A quantity of 543.646 M.tonnes wheat is reported to have been utilized during 1977-78 but the implementing officers report only 478.190 M.Tonnes as utilized. However, 93 M.Tonnes shown as utilized by Chief Engineer (Minor Irrigation) North but the same Officer claims not yet lifting the wheat allotted (31-7-1978). The physical target achieved (1977-78) was revised and furnished to Government of India in December 1979 contains data in respect of only four out of eight implementing officers. There are discrepancies in monthly progress reports arising out of incorrect tabulation, wrong conversion, wrong adoption of opening balance and non-inclusion of certain reports of implementing officers due to late receipt.

2) Regarding the requirement of furnishing statement in Annexure II (proposed schemes, estimated cost in cash

and grains, estimated physical dimension, mandays to be generated, etc.) nothing of the kind is sent to Government of India for the years 1977-78 and 1978-79. For the year 1979-80, the particulars have been furnished only in respect of 10 districts. In the absence of complete information, Government of India have been releasing foodgrains without knowing exactly whether the works proposed would create durable community assets and whether additional gainful employment would be generated. The progress reports do not reflect the correct picture of the programme implemented in the State.

3) Receipt and Lifting of Foodgrains

The allotment made by Government of India and the quantity lifted by implementing officers as billed by F.C.I., during the first three years are as shown below.

Year	Foodgrain	Allotment by Government of India (in M.T.)	Total lifted by Implementing Officers
1977-78	Wheat	1,000	669 - 974 - 076
1978-79	Wheat	7,000	2646 - 663 - 494
	Milo	-	66 - 750 - 000
	Rice	8,000	Nil
1978-79	Wheat	-	7051 - 076 - 346
1979-80	Rice	46,000	21448 - 875 - 865
Total	Wheat	8,000	10367 - 713 - 916
	Milo	-	66 - 750 - 000
	Rice	54,000	21448 - 875 - 865

Out of 62,000 tonnes of grains allotted upto the end of 1979-80, the State has lifted only 31,883 tonnes (accounting for 51 per cent).

The total quantity lifted as reported by F.C.I. to Government of India as on 15-12-1979 and as furnished by implementing officers as at the end of December 1979 is furnished below.

Grain	As furnished by F.C.I.	As reported by Implementing Officers
Wheat	9655-644 M.T.	5099-257
Rice	15581-110 "	12252-437

The difference may be attributed to the diversion of grains received under F.W.P. to the E.A.S. of the State Government. From the list available with Government, it is seen that about 4823.890 tonnes wheat and 5339.020 tonnes rice have been diverted to E.A.S.

The receipt and utilization of grains under E.A.S. have not been shown under monthly progress reports furnished to Government of India and in the quarterly progress reports for calculating additionality over budget estimates for the quantity of grains utilized under E.A.S. The cost of grains reportedly used for E.A.S. works out to Rs. 145,99,927/-.

The receipt and utilization of grains and percentage of utilization to the receipt for the years 1977-78, 1978-79 and 1979-80 (upto December 1979) are as shown below.

Year	Total Quantity Lifted as per Departmental Figures	Total Quantity Reported as Utilized	Percentage of Utilization
1977-78	797-130	543-646	58
1978-79	3022-098	2724-464	90
1979-80 (Upto December 1979)	14637-466	11614-814	79

It is observed that the quantity of grains utilized during January 1979 to March 1979 (three months) is more than that for the earlier period of nine months - from April 1978 to December 1978. The figures are as shown below:

<u>Period</u>	<u>Quantity (in M.T.)</u>
Upto December 1978	1070.174
January 1979 to March 1979	1606.386

It is therefore seen that the quantum of work carried out and consequent issue of grains are not fairly evenly distributed throughout the year.

4) Reimbursement of Cost of Coarse Grains

Regarding the utilization of coarse grains (ragi and jowar) which are to be purchased directly from Karnataka Food and Civil Supplies Corporation (K.F.C.S.C.) from out of grants (about Rs. 66 lakhs) from Government of India, for the year 1979-80, the claim for reimbursement amounts to only Rs. 24.16 lakhs towards the cost of 1686 tonnes of ragi and 593 tonnes of jowar. Bills since received for Rs. 3.66 lakhs have still to be preferred to Government of India. Bills from Deputy Commissioners of six districts have not been received and six other districts have reported unutilized grants worth Rs. 10.97 lakhs. Thus the advances afforded by Central Government for the utilization of coarse grains that would be freely used by the rural people has not been completely made use of. From the progress reports (upto 31-12-1979) it is seen the implementing officers lifted 240 tonnes of ragi, 795 tonnes of jowar and utilized 240 and 365.8 tonnes respectively.

The accounting of utilization of foodgrains for various schemes taken up under F.W.P. is still to be finally adjusted due to non-receipt of statements of utilization.

5) Calculation of Additionality Over Budget Estimates

According to Guideline issued by Government of India, the total expenditure incurred on the schemes taken up should include the cost of grains utilized on the schemes and the additionality over the budget estimates in respect of each head of account should be worked out.

Also stipulated by Government of India that in case the total expenditure during the particular year is only equal to or less than the provision already exists, the value of grains released will be recoverable from the State Government. As the cost of grains utilized during 1977-78 and 1978-79 has not been debited to the final heads of accounts, the additionality is yet to be ascertained. Nevertheless, the cost of grains used and the amount of additionality that the State Government would get is as indicated below.

Year	Foodgrain Distributed (M.T.)	Cost of Foodgrain (Rs.)	Amount of Additionality (Rs.)
1977-78	Wheat 478.190	5,02,067.00	3,99,109.00
1978-79	Milo 47.904 Wheat 2676.560	28,67,719.76	25,81,128.15

It may also be noted that during 1977-78 and 1978-79 the total expenditure including cost of grains utilized by Chief Engineer (TBP) and Chief Conservator of Forests is less than the amount provided in the budget estimates and consequently those departments are not entitled to additionality. The cost of grains utilized by them during 1977-78 (Rs. 1,02,958) and 1978-79 (Rs. 2,86,592) working out to Rs. 3,89,550 has to be met by the State Government.

6) Achievement of Physical Targets

Two of the basic objectives of the Programme are:

(a) to generate additional gainful employment to large number of unemployed and under-employed persons and (b) to create durable community assets. From a review of the quarterly reports forwarded to Government of India for the years 1977-78 and 1978-79, it is observed that both the objectives are not fully achieved as indicated below.

a) Non-Generation of Additional Employment

The following implementing officers utilized the foodgrains without creating additional employment during 1977-78, 1978-79 and 1979-80 (upto September 1979).

Name of the Implementing Officer	Grain Utilized (M.Tonnes)		
	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80 (upto Sept. 1979)
1) Chief Engineer (C & B) Bangalore	313	768-300	-
2) Chief Engineer (Irrigation) North	-	12-494	6-400
3) Chief Engineer (T.B. Project)	-	33-020	-
4) Chief Engineer, National Highways	-	53-675	13-700
5) Deputy Commissioner, Tumkur	-	-	999-000 (wheat) 1274-000 (Rice)

b) Regarding the utilization of foodgrains on works which are not durable community assets, the following implementing officers have reported not creating such assets but utilized varying quantity of grains.

a) Chief Engineer (Irrigation) South in 1977-78	7.000 M.T.Wheat
b) Chief Engineer (T.B. Project) in 1977-78	68.410 " "
c) Chief Engineer, National Highways in 1978-79	53.635 " "

It is clarified by Government that purely katcha roads without providing minimum top soiling or culverts wherever necessary may not be classified under durable community assets. But the list of works approved by a few District Steering Committees or Deputy Commissioners, it is observed that formation of link roads without providing top soiling has been approved by them. The estimates of such works approved by Block Development Officers include only jungle clearance and earth-work excavation. The number of such works and cost in each district which will be brought under durable community assets are as indicated below.

District	No. of Road Works	Estimated Cost (Rs.)
1) Tumkur	146	16,11,480
2) Shimoga	201	14,96,460
3) Mandya	N.A.	20,52,000
4) Raichur	N.A.	4,13,174
5) Mysore	163	6,92,872
6) S. Kanar	7	36,500
7) Gulbarga	36	Not furnished
Total	553	63,02,486

Table 3.2 : Statement showing the Foodgrains Allotted, Lifted and Utilized under Food for Work and B.

Sl. No.	Name of the District	Allotted			Lifted	
		Wheat	Rice	Total	Wheat	Rice
1.	Bangalore	300	835	1135	300	688
2.	Belgaum	300	643	943	300	643
3.	Bidar	150	116	266	150	116
4.	Bellary	200	348	548	197	271
5.	Bijapur	200	-	200	150	-
6.	Chikmagalur	200	116	316	25	-
7.	Chitradurga	300	681	981	-	507
8.	Dakshina Kannada	150	232	382	16	-
9.	Dharwad	800	348	1148	578	254
10.	Gulbarga	800	200	1000	694	-
11.	Hassan	100	528	628	54	519
12.	Kodagu	200	116	316	-	-
13.	Kolar	462	538	1000	258	501
14.	Mandya	200	235	435	160	298
15.	Mysore	300	600	900	298	411
16.	Raichur	200	348	548	391	276
17.	Shimoga	200	348	548	200	91
18.	Tumkur	200	348	548	200	348
19.	Uttara Kannada	200	232	432	170	421
20.	Chief Engineer, Munirabad	-	-	-	-	-
21.	Chief Engineer, (I)(N), Belgaum	-	-	-	-	-
22.	Chief Conservator of Forests, Bangalore	-	-	-	-	-
23.	Chief Engineer (N.H.), Bangalore	-	-	-	-	-
24.	Chief Engineer (C&B), Bangalore	-	-	-	-	-
25.	Chief Engineer, MI&PHE, Bangalore	-	-	-	-	-
Total		5462	6812	12274	4141	5344

Note: Figures are rounded up to the nearest tonne.

Table 3.2 : Statement showing the Foodgrains Allotted, Lifted and Utilized under Food for Work and P.A.S. (1979-80)

Sl. No.	Name of the District	P. A. S.								
		Allotted			Lifted			Utilized		
		Wheat	Rice	Total	Wheat	Rice	Total	Wheat	Rice	Total
		300	835	1135	300	688	988	300	563	863
1. Bangalore		300	643	943	300	643	943	300	643	943
2. Belgaum		150	116	266	150	116	266	150	116	266
3. Bidar		200	348	548	197	271	468	197	271	468
4. Bellary		200	-	200	150	-	150	150	-	150
5. Bijapur		200	-	200	25	-	25	25	-	25
6. Chikmagalur		200	116	316	-	507	507	-	507	507
7. Chitradurga		300	681	981	-	-	16	16	-	16
8. Dakshina Kannada		150	232	382	16	-	16	578	254	832
9. Dharwad		800	348	1148	578	254	832	578	-	578
10. Gulbarga		800	200	1000	694	-	694	694	-	694
11. Hassan		800	200	1000	54	519	573	54	519	573
12. Kodagu		100	528	628	-	-	-	-	-	-
13. Kolar		200	116	316	-	-	-	258	501	759
14. Mandya		462	538	1000	258	501	759	258	501	759
15. Mysore		200	235	435	160	298	458	160	298	458
16. Raichur		300	600	900	298	411	709	298	411	709
17. Shimoga		200	348	548	391	276	667	391	276	667
18. Tumkur		200	348	548	200	91	291	200	91	291
19. Uttara Kannada		200	348	548	200	348	548	200	348	548
20. Chief Engineer, Munirabad		200	348	548	200	348	548	200	348	548
21. Chief Engineer, (I)(N), Belgaum		200	348	548	170	421	591	170	421	591
22. Chief Conservator of Forests, Bangalore		200	232	432	-	-	-	-	-	-
23. Chief Engineer (M.H.), Bangalore		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
24. Chief Engineer (C&B), Bangalore		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
25. Chief Engineer, MI&PHE, Bangalore		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total		5462	6812	12274	4141	5344	9485	4141	5219	9360

(continued)

Note: Figures are rounded up to the nearest tonne.

Table 3.2 : (continued)

Food for Work Programme

Sl. No.	Name of the District	Allotted					Lifted					Utilized				
		Wheat	Rice	Ragi	Jowar	Total	Wheat	Rice	Ragi	Jowar	Total	Wheat	Rice	Ragi	Jowar	Total
1.	Bangalore	-	900	1000	-	1900	-	407	420	-	827	-	218	420	-	638
2.	Belgaum	-	700	-	200	900	-	168	-	200	368	-	167	-	200	367
3.	Bidar	-	212	-	400	612	-	136	-	200	336	-	136	-	200	336
4.	Bellary	-	1200	1000	250	2450	-	578	160	205	943	-	578	15	205	798
5.	Bijapur	410	800	-	450	1660	119	408	-	274	801	119	408	-	274	801
6.	Chikmagalur	-	-	30	-	30	15	-	-	-	15	15	-	-	-	15
7.	Chitradurga	-	955	1500	-	2455	-	334	112	-	446	-	334	112	-	446
8.	Dakshina Kannada	-	790	-	-	790	-	1080	-	-	1080	-	1080	-	-	1080
9.	Dharwad	-	400	-	650	1050	-	46	-	360	406	-	46	-	360	406
10.	Gulbarga	-	653	-	450	1103	-	258	-	15	273	-	16	-	-	16
11.	Hassan	-	1000	500	-	1500	-	429	61	-	480	-	429	61	-	490
12.	Kodagu	-	60	-	-	60	-	40	-	-	40	-	40	-	-	40
13.	Kolar	1367	2000	1500	-	4867	905	1876	379	-	3160	905	1876	379	-	3160
14.	Mandya	778	1611	421	-	2810	70	1200	310	-	1580	70	1200	310	-	1580
15.	Mysore	-	1606	1000	-	2606	-	1483	525	-	2008	-	1483	525	-	2008
16.	Raichur	-	-	-	650	650	-	581	-	266	847	-	581	-	266	847
17.	Shimoga	-	2275	470	-	2745	-	1113	-	-	1113	-	1113	-	-	1113
18.	Tumkur	1000	5022	1500	-	7522	1000	5138	456	-	6594	1000	5138	456	-	6594
19.	Uttara Kannada	-	1000	-	-	1000	-	286	-	-	286	-	286	-	-	286
20.	Chief Engineer, Munirabad	200	-	-	-	200	200	-	-	-	200	200	-	-	-	200
21.	Chief Engineer, (I)(N), Belgaum	130	-	-	-	130	130	-	-	-	130	130	-	-	-	130
22.	Chief Conservator of Forests, Bangalore	240	-	-	-	240	229	-	-	-	229	229	-	-	-	229
23.	Chief Engineer (N.H.), Bangalore	67	-	-	-	67	67	-	-	-	67	67	-	-	-	67
24.	Chief Engineer (C & B), Bangalore	1000	-	-	-	1000	994	-	-	-	994	994	-	-	-	994
25.	Chief Engineer, MI&PHE, Bangalore	1792	-	-	-	1792	1785	-	-	-	1785	1785	-	-	-	1785
Total		6984	21184	8921	3050	40139	5514	15561	2423	1820	25018	5514	15129	2278	1505	24426

Note : Figures are rounded up to the nearest tonne.

Table 3.3 : Statement Showing the Location of Depot and Stock Position of Foodgrains as on 1-3-1980 in F.C.I. Godowns

Sl. No.	Name of the Depot	District in which located	District attached	Stock Available (in M.Tonnes)
1.	Yeshwanthapur	Bangalore	Bangalore	-
2.	Krishnarajapura	Bangalore	Bangalore	306
3.	Tumkur	Tumkur	Tumkur	-
4.	Nanjangud	Mysore	Mysore	300
5.	Maddur	Mandya	Mandya	-
6.	K.R. Nagar	Mysore	Kodagu	-
7.	Bhadravathi	Shimoga	Chikmagalur	-
8.	Shimoga	Shimoga	Shimoga	-
9.	Davangere	Chitradurga	Chitradurga	-
10.	Mangalore	Dakshina Kannada	Dakshina Kannada	500
11.	Belgaum	Belgaum	Belgaum	144
12.	Raichur	Raichur	Raichur, Bidar, Gulbarga	900
13.	Hubli	Dharwar	Dharwar, Uttar Kannada	400
14.	Gadag	Dharwar	Bellary, Bijapur	350
15.	Bangarpet	Kolar	Kolar	-

- CHAPTER - IV -

IMPACT OF THE PROGRAMME AND FIELD LEVEL PROBLEMS

The present chapter deals with the effect of the programme on beneficiary labourers, their response and reactions and the problems faced by the implementing officials at the block and village levels. The empirical data and the qualitative information are obtained from interviewing one hundred selected participant labourer households from selected blocks as well as the officials in-charge of the implementation at the operational levels.

The participants are selected from Tunkur and Kadur Blocks of Tunkur and Chikmagalur Districts respectively. The former represents the district which has recorded the highest utilisation and the latter that of the lowest during the years 1979-80. The selected labourer households number 87 from Tunkur and 13 from Kadur. None of them is a migrant household, all being natives of the villages around which works of the schemes have been carried out.

Socio-Economic Background of the Participants

As may be expected, the selected labourer households belong predominantly to socially lower-class groups. The eastwise distribution reveals that 52 per cent belongs to Scheduled Caste group; another nine per cent belongs to other backward caste groups. Those belonging to traditional cultivating caste groups form only 26 per cent. The remaining 13 per cent is made up by various castes in the Hindu Intermediate Group. The broad groupwise distribution is shown below.

Caste Group	No. of selected households
a) Lingayat	7
b) Okkaliga	19
c) Hindu Intermediate	13
d) Other Backward	9
e) Scheduled Castes	52
Total	100

The selected households consist of a total of 427 persons, 231 males and 196 females, the average size of the family being 4.3. The composition of earners is made up of 145 males and 95 females and together form 56.2 per cent of the total persons. The average size of earners per family works out to 2.4. Among the earners, a total of 132 members have participated in the F.W.P. some time or other. This represents roughly 55 per cent of the total earners. The average number that has taken part in the Programme works out to 1.3 per selected family. The particulars are as shown below.

Category	Total No.	Of which earners	Earners taking part in F.W.P.
Male	231	145	117
Female	196	95	15
Total	427	240	132

The pattern of occupations pursued reveals that labour, more specifically, the agricultural labour is the main occupation in all the reporting cases. Actually, in the case of 30 households the agricultural labour is the only occupation pursued in the family. The remaining 70

per cent report pursuing one or more subsidiary occupations. In all, cultivation is reported by 48 households (as very small or marginal farmers). It is followed by firewood cutting by 15 households, construction work by 10 households, salaried and other miscellaneous jobs by nine others.

Those reporting cultivation as a subsidiary occupation are almost entirely operators of dry land holdings. Actually, 46.6 per cent of them are cultivators of holdings upto one acre in size. Those operating size of holdings 1.01-2.00 acres form 27.6 per cent and 2.01 acres and above group accounts for 25.8 per cent. The largest size of cultivated holding is just five acres and there are only four households reporting. The crops grown are predominantly ragi and horse-gram. The livestock of all descriptions, owned by the selected households number 138 in all. Among the selected households only six do not own any residential house at all. All but nine families reside in the mud houses. The average value per residential structure works out to Rs. 1,738.

The pattern of annual household incomes reveals that wages form major source, its share in the total incomes being 81.28 per cent (including wage income from F.W.P.). Incomes from cultivation (10.64 per cent) and animal husbandry comprising dairying, poultry and farm-yard manure (6.23 per cent) though subsidiary, make considerable contribution to households. The average total income per household works out to Rs. 2,192, at the aggregate level. The per earner income works out to just Rs. 913.3 per annum. The sourcewise distribution of incomes accruing to the selected households, during the preceding 12 month period, is given below.

Source	Total Income (Rs.)	As per cent of Total
a) General Agricultural Labour	1,18,990	54.29
b) Food for Work Programme	59,148	26.99
c) Cultivation	23,320	10.64
d) Animal husbandry	13,665	6.23
e) Miscellaneous	4,060	1.85
Total	2,19,183	100.00

Experience of Working in F.W.P.

In Kadur block, the selected workers numbering 13 from the equal number of households have been the part of P.W.D. gang, even before the F.W.P. came into being. The F.W.P. has not provided them with new lease of employment but has enabled them to receive part of the wages in the form of cheaper foodgrains. Incidentally, all the 13 workers are males. The distance commuted from their residence to work spots, depending upon the site of the maintenance work located, varies from one to 18 kms. The nature of work done is entirely the road maintenance involving repairs, drainage and asphaltting.

On the other hand, from Tumkur Block the 87 households with 104 males and 15 females in F.W.P., belong to three villages and all of them being employed by the Taluk Development Board (TDB). The B.D.O. as the executive officer of the T.D.B. is in-charge of the implementation of works within his jurisdiction. The works under F.W.P. are being carried out by the assistance of the two Junior Engineers and the concerned Gram Sevaks. Apparently, no contractor is involved in both the blocks under consideration.

The distance commuted from residence to work spots varies from one to six kms. About 51 per cent of the workers report falling within the distance limit of less than two kms, another 40 per cent between two and four kilometres and only nine per cent have to commute over four kilometres either way. The nature of works undertaken in which the selected workers have had participated include mainly kutchra country road works with roughly 57 per cent participating, repairs to minor tanks (24 per cent), wells (9 per cent) and Gokotta and culvert works with five per cent each.

Employment

The pattern of employment, that is, the number of days worked under the schemes undertaken as part of the F.W.P., reveals that it is only in Kadur Block where the P.W.D. has employed as its regular gangmen that the employment shows fairly long average mandays. Among the 13 men, only two report around 100 days of employment each, whereas the other 11 report as having worked in the range of 250-320 days during the 12 month period. In Kadur the average number of mandays per worker comes to 263.

Obviously, it is exceptionally high as it is the routine maintenance work and the men employed rather belong to permanent gang maintained by the Department.

On the other hand, it is in the case of Tumkur Block that we find varying extent of employment availed of by the casual workers. The selected participant workers, comprising 104 men and 15 women report working for 8,225 days and 1,266 days respectively during the 12 month period. The average employment works out to 79 days for a male, 84.4 days for a female and 80 days at the aggregate level. However, nearly a quarter of the selected workers

are seen employed less than 60 days and another third between 60 and 90 days during the year. Those who report employment between 91 days and 120 days form nearly 43 per cent of the sample from Tumkur Block. As many as 49 out of total 119 workers report employment of exactly 110 days. The following distribution gives a broad idea about the employment (mandays).

Length of Days Employed	Tumkur		Kadur		Both Blocks	
	No. of Workers	%	No. of Workers	%	No. of Workers	%
Upto 30 days	17	14.3	-	-	17	12.9
31 - 60 "	10	8.4	-	-	10	7.6
61 - 90 "	41	34.4	-	-	41	31.1
91 - 120 "	51	42.9	2	15.4	53	40.1
121 - 240 "	-	-	-	-	-	-
240 - 320 "	-	-	11	84.6	11	8.3
Total	119	100.0	13	100.0	132	100.0

In Kadur Block, the reasons for non-working days in F.W.P. are weekly holiday and festival days, working on the own farm or elsewhere, visiting other village, ill-health and only in two cases, not called on to work on account of lack of enough work during rainy days. Nearly 85 per cent of workers (P.W.D.) are employed throughout the year excluding Sundays, festival days and days of sickness. In Kadur, only two workers show relatively shorter duration as they could not work in the scheme in the first two quarters of the year. It is only from July that they have been regularly employed by P.W.D.

In Tumkur Block, the periodicity of employment pattern reveals that in the first two quarters, namely,

January-March and April-June of 1980, hardly about a dozen households reports getting employment on an average 43 days under the programme. The total mandays put in by the sample workers during the first half of the year accounts for a meagre 7.30 per cent of their overall employment under the programme during 1980. The reason for such a low employment, as stated by the participants, being the absence of any scheme or lack of tempo in some stray works executed. Hence employment of a fewer number. It is only in the third quarter the tempo started picking up and in the last quarter, all the selected participants could participate. Nearly two-thirds of their total employment for the year is recorded in this three month period. Even in the last quarter, the average employment works out to about 51 days per participant. Relatively a smaller number of workers report non-working for a shorter duration on account of ill-health, personal work, etc. In point of fact, a large number of participants have stated that the work is not continuously available even though they are willing to work. The relevant data showing employment in each quarter of the year 1980 are presented below.

Period (1980)	No. of workers reporting	Total days employed	As % of Total	Average per reporting worker
KADUR BLOCK				
January-March	11	827	24.16	75
April-June	11	825	24.11	75
July-September	13	852	24.91	66
October-December	13	917	26.82	71
Total in 1980	48	3,421	100.00	263

Period (1980)	No. of workers reporting	Total days employed	As % of Total	Average per reporting worker
<u>TUMKUR BLOCK</u>				
January-March	6	184	1.94	31
April-June	13	509	5.36	39
July-September	68	2,750	28.98	40
October-December	119	6,048	63.72	51
Total in 1980	119	9,491	100.00	80

Wages and Mode of Payment

The wages earned in the form of foodgrains as well as cash, as reported by the informants themselves, and the related aspects like mode of payments, periodicity and the problems faced by the participants while receiving wages are discussed here. The data set in Table 4.1 show the relevant details in respect of cash and kind components of wages received by the sample participants of F.W.P. during the year 1980.

It may be seen that the total wages of both cash and kind components amount to money equivalent of Rs. 59,148 at the aggregate level. This gives an average daily wage rate of Rs. 4.58. Actually, the daily wage rate works out to Rs. 6/- in the case of P.W.D. gang workers of Kadur and Rs. 4/- in the case of casual workers in Tumkur Block. A total quantity of 15,659 kgs of rice is received by the 121 of the 132 participants as kind component of the wages. In addition, 1,584 kgs. of wheat is obtained by only the P.W.D. workers in Kadur Block. The total value of the kind wages amounts to Rs. 3,689 for Kadur workers, and Rs. 21,744 for Tumkur workers and an aggregate of Rs. 25,433 for all

Table 4.1 : Details of Cash and Kind Wages Received by the Selected Participants for Working in F.W.P. during 1980

Block	Workers Reporting									Grand Total	
	Receiving both cash and kind wages						Total Value of Cash and Kind	Receiving only Cash component			Grand Total
	No.	Cash (Rs.)	Kind Wages					No.	Amount (Rs.)		
			Rice (kg.)	Value (Rs.)	Wheat (kg.)	Value (Rs.)					
Kadur	12	16,501	1,466	2,054	1,584	1,635	20,190	1	620	20,810	
Tumkur	109	14,709	14,193	21,744	-	-	36,453	10	1,885	38,338	
Total	121	31,210	15,659	23,798	1,584	1,635	56,643	11	2,505	59,148	

the sample participants. The kind component forms only 43 per cent of the overall total wages. In Kadur it forms only about 17.7 per cent whereas in the case of Tumkur it forms 56.7 per cent. The average quantity of grain per manday works out to .89 kg, valued at Rs.1.08 for the Kadur Block, 1.50 kg. valued at Rs. 2.29 for Tumkur workers and 1.34 kg, worth Rs. 1.97, for the entire sample.

It is obvious from the foregoing that the kind component of the wage being paid is far less than the quantity prescribed under the programme. On the contrary, the wage is to be paid wholly in the form of foodgrains or at least two-thirds or three-fourths of the prescribed wage rate and some cash. The experience of selected participants indicates that the actual practice followed by the implementing authorities is quite wrong and it tends to defeat the very objectives of the Programme. This requires us to examine the various aspects of the mode of wage payment prevailing in the selected blocks.

In Kadur Block, the implementing authority being P.W.D. and the wage rate for the gang men being Rs. 6/-, which is well above the rate prescribed for the casual workers under F.W.P., the workers do not have much to complain. The wages are disbursed once a month promptly and whatever grains at the disposal of the officials are distributed to the workers and adjusted against the cash component. Out of the 13 selected participants, eleven report receiving some grains for eight months, one worker only for a month and the remaining one receiving no grains at all but fully cash wages. Some of the participants express the desire that they may be paid greater proportion of their wages in the form of foodgrains preferably rice or ragi.

It is indeed in Tumkur Block where a number of irregularities are taking place as reported by the participants. Out of the 87 selected households, 52 report as receiving their wages once a week while the remaining 35 once a fortnight. However, it is not always in cash cum kind form but more often than not in the form of only cash. Actually ten of them report not receiving any foodgrains at all. Of the remaining 77 households, 11 report receiving some quantity of grains only once, another 11 receiving only twice, six others receiving three to four times and 16 receiving eight to ten times. Among the remaining 33 households, 23 report receiving 11 to 15 times and the other ten 16 to 20 times during the year. The following gives a broad idea about the number of times the foodgrains received by the participants as part payment of their wages.

Frequency	No. of Households	Percentage
Not received any time	10	11.5
1 - 5 times	28	32.2
6 - 10 times	16	18.4
11 - 15 times	23	26.4
16 - 20 times	10	11.5
Total (Tumkur)	87	100.0

Irregularities in Wage Payment

According to the informants, this state of affairs prevails only because the implementing authorities themselves do not ensure prompt supply of grains at the work site or the nearest village. They are invariably told to wait for several weeks for foodgrains to be transported

from district or block headquarters. Participants, on the other hand, are often asked to bear the transportation charges or accept lesser quantity of grains by way of adjustment toward the alleged freight cost if they insist payment in kind more frequently or sooner than it can be transported by men in charge of the scheme. The participants suspect that this tactics of delay is actually to force them to accept cash in lieu of precious foodgrains. It is also claimed that sometimes the participants themselves offer to get hold of bullock-carts and their own to transport the grains from the block headquarters to their village sites and prevail upon the Gram Sevak or the person in charge to distribute the grains. Even this cannot take place as often or every time they wish in view of much apathy on the part of the authorities and the unofficial contractors.

Now this aspect of unofficial contractors operating on the scene adds to another dimension to the mismanagement of the Programme at the operational level. Although the Block Authority claims to operate the Schemes as the departmental operation, the participants report that the influential village leaders operate unofficially as the petty contractors to execute the Scheme. This serious allegation assumes some credence as otherwise it is difficult to explain away the role of cash component as greater proportion of wage when in fact it should be other way round and the implementing authorities invariably account for utilisation of foodgrains for all the schemes. It is also claimed that the situation is inherent in the operational aspect at the field level. It arises mainly because at the lowest level the Gram Sevak is asked to supervise the works within his jurisdiction which extends to over

50 villages. Being overburdened, he cannot or does not directly supervise the works but leaves several of them to the care of local leaders who act as unofficial contractors. These middlemen enrol the workers, get the works done as per the Junior Engineer's instructions, draw the grains on behalf of the workers and with the connivance of some of the officials practically distribute cash and/or kind wages to workers. It is also reported that they get more work done by the wretched workers and show the same being done by some fictitious names. If the workers express their resentment or insist on getting their due share of grains, such workers are not called upon to work at all. In other words, the workers have to accept what is available to them or go without employment.

Some time during the previous year, the matter had gone beyond control with complaints reaching the Deputy Commissioner. As a result, the then B.D.O. had to be suspended pending further inquiries. The Audit Report for the year 1979-80 also notes several lapses and irregularities that have taken place in Tumkur and some other blocks in the district.

Participants' Opinion on F.W.P.

The opinions expressed by the participants by way of their response to several questions put to them are summarized in the present section. These opinions may give us a broad idea about the impact of the programme, if any, in regard to employment, level of wages, improvement in the intake of food, etc.

By and large, our questions have elicited favourable reaction to the Programme despite several irregularities

mentioned elsewhere. At the outset, it may be mentioned that all the respondent households are of the opinion that the Programme, by far, is the best one they are exposed to and they like to participate in it almost throughout the year. An overwhelming majority feels that they cannot get work outside the Schemes and hence the beneficial prospect of F.W.F. Specifically, two-thirds are of the opinion that if it were not for the Programme, they would have faced hunger. Another third says that it has prevented possible migration in search of some employment.

In regard to comparative wage rates prevailing in the area of operations, the F.W.F. does not seem to have made any appreciable dent in the wage level. Actually, during the slack seasons not much farm work is available to a large number of workers and as such the present wage rate under F.W.F. is quite welcome to the participants. However, they are of the opinion that during the busy agricultural seasons, they normally get a meal and Rs.3/- more than the F.W.F. rate. To 98 per cent of the respondents the wage rate has not gone up consequent to F.W.F. To them the expected raise in the wage rates is not seen only because the demand for labour is not there except during the busy seasons.

In so far as any change in the intake of foodgrains is concerned, 69 per cent are of the opinion that the intake level remains the same with them. Another 11 per cent of households have not received any foodgrains as wages and hence the absence of their reaction. To the remaining households, it is just about adequate when supplemented with the grains from their own farms. In the matter of adequacy of foodgrains, 58 households also

state that the kind wages can be adequate for the family needs if more than one able-bodied person gets the employment in the Scheme.

When asked to state whether or not they favour the continuation of the Programme, the participants are quite unanimous in their positive response. Besides, almost all of them express the desire that the kind component must be in larger proportion than it is now and that the Government machinery should be given and the price of such foodgrains must be lower than that of the open market.

Regarding the advantages and disadvantages they find in the F.W.P. operations, the respondent households have reacted variously and the standard answers are mentioned here. Among the advantages mentioned are:

- (a) it is beneficial as long as work is there,
- (b) some work is available in slack season,
- (c) no need to go to far off places in search of work,
- (d) it provides both cash and kind,
- (e) foodgrains are available at a reasonable rate, and
- (f) no need to worry about food whenever grains are distributed as wages.

Among the disadvantages or shortcomings mentioned are:

- (a) that women are denied work in most cases as their output of work does not give scope for manipulation on the part of the unofficial petty contractors,
- (b) work is stopped frequently,
- (c) foodgrains are not made available promptly and thereby it is forcing the workers to accept only cash wages on many occasions,

(d) the wage rate is rather low and grains are not adequate, and

(e) the system of contractual work is not eliminated altogether.

Finally, a few suggestions are offered by the respondents toward their own idea about the improvement in the operation of the Programme. Firstly, they feel that the Government machinery alone must operate and not allow any non-official elements to interfere. Secondly, there must not be any undue delay in the distribution of grains to workers and lastly the foodgrains must be in the form of rice or ragi and not wheat.

Problems of Implementation at the Operational Level

Hitherto we have been discussing mainly the problems from the participants point of view. However, to be fairly objective and to understand the complexities involved in the implementation of the schemes, it is but proper to know the important practical problems faced by the officials at the block and field levels. The following summary version is based on our discussion with officials involved in the Programme and some of them have frankly confided the difficulties they generally encounter in the process of implementation of schemes handed down to them.

Broadly speaking, there are some peculiar problems in handling the highly disorganized rural farm workers in the schemes where output is measured by P.W.D. norms. While P.W.D. carries out work through its regular work force, the gangmen well trained in the road works, culverts, maintenance work, etc., it is rather not easy to get such non-farm work done by the farm workers.

(a) The villagers are given to receive advance wages for the work or at least, paid soon after the day's work is over. Besides, they have day to day living problems. As such it is very difficult to please them with the periodical payment under the F.W.P.

(b) Also there exists considerable wage disparity. The farm work fetches more, often they get free lunch during busy agricultural seasons. The farm workers are used to receive seven to eight rupees per day.

(c) Generally the contractual work is in vogue and the farm workers by working often longer hours collect Rs. 10-15 per day.

(d) Even in general slack seasons, the irrigated farms and garden lands provide some work and wages are invariably higher than that of F.W.P.

In view of the prevailing conditions mentioned above, the officials feel it is very difficult to please the rural farm workers. While F.W.P. insists on man-day basis work and the day's output in terms of P.W.D. rates comes to Rs. 4/- per CMT earthwork, many farm workers cannot achieve this quantum. Besides, in hot seasons the soil is very hard and sometimes the labourer would not be able to produce the minimum work required.

There are several constraints which render the implementing officials into rather awkward position and they are constantly hamstrung as the higher authorities have not done much to remove the obstacles.

1) At the block level the field staff is very limited. There is only one Gram Sevak (VLW) for each revenue circle comprising 60-70 villages on an average. A Gram Sevak can look after only one work site in his

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circle any given day even after overlooking his other routine duties. It becomes very difficult for him to oversee several works in his jurisdiction.

2) Each day's work or each piece of work is to be check measured to find out whether the worker has turned out the required quantity of work. This requires the services of engineers. There are only two engineers available for the entire block. As per the rules, the engineer must check before the wages are settled. Furthermore, the B.D.O. has to check the progress of the work before the bills are prepared. For each work the B.D.O. has to make three trips as it involves assessment of quantum of work, mandays employed, quantity of kind wages to be paid to labourers, checking the muster rolls, etc.

It takes about a fortnight for each work as the works are spread-over throughout the block (Tumkur Block covers nearly 400 villages). The labourers cannot wait till 15 days to receive wages as they are naturally the down-trodden and require daily disbursement of wages.

3) In view of the repeated trips for each work and the total number of works being fairly large and well spread-over, the B.D.O. has to face the constraints of time and petrol for the jeep.

4) There is no adequate provision for the supply of implements required for carrying out the work. Most of the workers do not have own implements and even if some of them manage to bring, those implements are miserably useless.

5) Lack of storage facilities in the nearby villages is also hampering the smooth operation of the schemes. The storage is required for implements as well as foodgrains. Even the village panchayat buildings or

cooperative society premises are not strictly safe from pilferages and thefts. There is no provision to hire private premises.

6) The absence of proper sanction of transport costs (cost of moving foodgrains from block headquarters to work spots) has added another dimension to the proper implementation. The workers get impatient and blame the B.D.O. and the field staff if the foodgrains are not delivered to them as and when they demand. Added to this weighing machines or scales are not provided to the field staff. Sometimes all the labourers do not turn up for receiving the grains and in that event separate trips are to be made even for two or three workers.

7) The block level staff has to put up with irregular supplies of grains from the depots. The bottlenecks in the supply lines cause the frequent breakdown in the operation of works.

8) The undertaking of permanent works has its own problems. The nature of such works requires employment of some skilled workers like masons, carpenters and so on. However, these skilled and specialized workers do not accept grains. The materials required are also diverse and the proper sanction presents difficulties. In the case of permanent works, proper quality of work cannot be turned out by the rural agricultural workers. Hence the difficulty in the creation of durable community assets. It is impossible to undertake permanent works like culverts, buildings, wells, etc., as departmental schemes by the Local Self-Governments like Taluk Development Boards (B.D.O. is the Chief Executive) and Village Panchayats.

9) The auditor's idea of 10 per cent on supervising and five per cent on tools and plant charges in the valuation of work, that is, 15 per cent more turnout of work from the labourers to recover the above expenses, appears to be obnoxious.

10) Usually the unwanted works, already rejected by P.W.D. is thrust on B.D.O.s for execution.

11) The rules and procedures of drawing cash, requiring the signature of Assistant Commissioner and red tapism on the part of Treasury add up to nearly 15 days of delay.

12) Last, but not the least, the officials have to reckon with the non-official members of the Local Self-Governments, namely, Taluk Development Boards and Village Panchayats. Non-officials and the other village leaders always interfere and threaten with complaints, agitations and political pressures.

Some Observations by Auditors

Finally we give some excerpts from the Inspection Report, made by the Auditor General's Office Team, in respect of Tumkur District. This may be taken as a set of observations made by an independent authority, who has had access to files and accounts. The dates of audit being 22-3-1980 to 26-8-1980, it takes into account the situation upto the year 1979-80. Nevertheless, it gives some idea about the irregularities prevalent in the various parts of the district. The following give the highlights of the observations.

(a) The registers of stocks, etc., are not properly maintained. No procedures to weigh the grains

before acceptance. The stock registers have not been reviewed by the District or State level officers.

(b) Some labourers are shown to have been employed on different works simultaneously during same period. Same names repeated at different places in the same muster with signature at one place and thumb impression at other. Since no daily distribution is resorted to and no coupon system is followed, there exists scope for malpractices.

(c) Some excess amount of foodgrains are drawn in road repair case.

(d) The programme suffered due to shortage of foodgrains resulting in not taking up works (approved) that would have resulted in 1,16,100 mandays.

(e) In respect of 53 works already executed resulting in 32,585 mandays, the foodgrains for wages have not so far been distributed—quantity of foodgrains needed was 110 M.T. valued at Rs. 1,64,270/-

(f) Some works are undertaken before the approval by the Steering Committee.

(g) Contrary to Central Government's Guidelines in respect of durable community asset test no top soiling was provided in the case of 123 works executed so far (mandays 49,885). The roads could not be regarded as durable assets.

(h) In respect of estimates of works, they follow P.W.D. schedule of rates which include an element of contractor's profit at 10 per cent. Thus the value of work

should be reduced by 10 per cent as only labour charges are paid.

(i) Gokattas are the last item on priority but in one block 50 per cent of amount is spent on this item.

(j) In several cases there are lapses of 30-160 days in making the kind payment.

(k) In one block, private contractors have done the works under P.W.D.

(l) There are cases of foodgrains being issued to contractors by the P.W.D. and Forest Department. In the case of former heavy dues to be recovered from contractors foodgrains issued, absence of details of manpower created and foodgrains issued to only maintenance and petty works. In the latter's case the grains are distributed for works not covered under the scheme and the details of distribution are not forthcoming.

(m) In Tunkur Block, the Corps of Detectives (C.O.D.) is asked to inquire into the complaints (dated 29-12-1979). The irregularities refer to incomplete registers, mispostings of grains issued, not making assessment of manpower generated as and when works are completed and cases of erasures and overwritings in the preparation of muster rolls.

In the nominal muster rolls, quantity of foodgrains issued is not noted against the names but only the money value. The auction sale proceeds of empty gunny bags are used for transportation charges which needs to be regularised.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The Food for Work Programme is yet one more major national scheme, introduced in recent years, as a remedy for mounting problem of rural unemployment. However, what distinguishes this Programme from the similar other regular and crash programmes is the way it has been conceived to achieve multi-pronged objectives. In addition to the long standing need for tackling the unemployment problem, the Government had been saddled with the storage problem of growing buffer stock of foodgrains while, paradoxically enough, a large segment of rural population remained under-nourished. At the same time, the infrastructure development had remained largely untackled for want of financial resources. The genius of the programme lies in its very genesis, that is, to utilize the surplus stock of food reserves as wage payment in kind to sustain the programme. Thus, on the paper, the F.W.P. is ingeniously formulated as it seeks to relieve the treasury the burden of huge expenses on storage of reserve foodgrains, strive to provide massive employment to rural poor without involving much scarce financial resource since the grains would meet the requirement of wages and in the process the basic food needs of the rural poor is also taken care of and in the bargain, the works undertaken would create durably community assets as also develop much needed infrastructure in the rural areas. The Department of Rural Development, Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, Government of India is the

parent body in overall charge of this massive programme. The States and Union Territories are the operating beneficiaries of the Programme within their jurisdiction as they are to receive the foodgrains free of cost from the Central Government. This attraction made several States to participate in the Programme which came into being in the year 1977. After a modest beginning in the year 1977, the F.W.P. was revised and enlarged, its scope of activities being extended to all on-going plan and non-plan works as also new items of public and community works without altering the basic objectives.

Encouraged by the subsequent greater participation and increased lifting of foodgrains by the States, the Centre envisaged a massive investment for the year 1979-80. It would mean utilization of 3.5 million tonnes of foodgrains (three times that of the quantity utilised in the previous year) to generate additional employment to the tune of 1400-1500 million mandays. It has been visualized that such a massive programme would result in several secondary benefits to the society. The important benefits mentioned are price stabilizing effect on the staple foodgrains, ensuring of minimum wages, cheaper assets at quicker pace, reduction in the exodus of landless rural labour to urban areas and improving nutritional levels of rural poor.

The three-fold objectives and the expected secondary benefits are all truly laudable as they flow from the planning of the Programme. In order to ensure smooth working of the Programme, the Department of the Rural Development at the Centre has drawn up fairly comprehensive instructions, called 'Guideline' for F.W.P.

The revised Guideline, issued in December 1978,

to all the participant States and Union Territories, has stipulations and general guidance for carrying out the Programme. Among other things, it covers the nature and type of works that can be undertaken, vis-a-vis, the criterion of creation of durable community assets; the basic condition of the additionality of resource to the concerned State; the requirement on the part of the State Government to provide for money costs to cover overheads, transport and material costs; allocation procedure and issue of foodgrains, pricing and modality of wage payment and finally the need for organizational arrangements at various levels for monitoring as well as efficient implementation of the Programme.

By and large, the present Programme appears to have been fairly well drawn up in most respects. However, despite the past experiences with similar schemes meant for under-privileged sections, the top level authorities have continued to place their reliance on the same channels for the 'modus operandi' of the present Programme. The Central Government has merely mentioned the need for a suitable administrative set up for the proper implementation and monitoring of the Programme with a suggestion for creating Steering Committees at different levels. Beyond this, no concrete suggestion to evolve a proper machinery to man this massive programme nor any thought regarding the deployment of requisite number of capable personnel at the implementation level is being given. The important aspect of the administration of the economic programme has been left in the hands of State Governments.

In this regard, the set up in Karnataka State provides an example of how a workable scheme could not

become an effective proposition to realize its objectives to a desirable extent. The Government of Karnataka has adopted the objectives, the nature of works to be undertaken and most of the guidelines issued by the Central Government. However, in keeping with the spirit of the guideline toward the effective implementation, nothing has been done by way of innovation in administrative set up except constituting the Steering Committees. To start with, the Programme was initially handed over to the Department of Planning and Development. Later on, it has been in charge of the Department of Rural Development and Cooperation.

The present parent Department of Rural Development and Cooperation in Karnataka has entrusted the F.W.P. to the Special Economic Programmes Cell. The Coordinator who has been looking after various other schemes is also in charge of this new Programme at the State level. He belongs to the cadre of District Development Assistant. Although in keeping with the policy of not creating new posts to man the F.W.P., it is rather strange that what promised to be a massive and important programme, has been left in-charge of a mere Class II officer. The implementing officers being Chief Engineers and Deputy Commissioners, it is not possible for the junior level coordinating officer to function effectively. Also on the ground that the F.W.P. not being a full project by itself, the State Government has not provided for a full complement of the staff. At the State level of coordination there is no technical staff to assist the monitoring of such diverse aspects as engineering, statistics and evaluation of works as per the criterion of creating durable community assets. Besides, the

present strength of the staff is quite inadequate to cope up with the work of coordination and collection of data for monitoring the progress. Since the inception of F.W.P. there have been three different incumbents to man the coordinating Cell. Recently, the State Government's own prestigious programme, namely, the Employment Affirmation Scheme, has also contributed to much of the confusion and burden on the coordination of F.W.P.

Even though the State level Steering Committee, comprising top level officers, has been constituted to give direction and monitor the Programme, it could meet only occasionally and much of day-to-day problems could be attended to only by the Coordinating Cell. However, the non-posting of a fairly senior grade officer to be exclusively in charge of F.W.P. and the lack of technically competent and sufficient complement of the supporting staff at the State Level Coordination Cell have contributed to several inadequacies in the monitoring of the Programme. Despite the repeated reminders and concern expressed by the Steering Committee in the proceedings of almost every meeting, the implementing authorities have not been able to furnish regularly the necessary statistical data. Whatever available is mostly lacking in content in several important aspects and very irregularly compiled. The nature of data being inconsistent, irregular and inadequate, the effective monitoring becomes difficult and no meaningful appraisal or evaluation is possible. Several implementing authorities are merely content with reporting the quantity of foodgrains lifted and utilized and no other details about works for which grains are used,

additionality over budget, nature of durable community assets created and manpower generated. It appears that in a number of cases the stock of grains not held in balance is deemed to have been utilized, appropriately or otherwise, and the estimate of mandays generated is somewhat a matter of arithmetical guess work.

Despite the Centre's Guidelines and periodical instructions, there have been several cases of undertaking works of lower priorities and the role of contractors and other middlemen from F.W.P. operations is not altogether eliminated. The State Government's complacency in its measures to neutralize the possible abuses by contractors is not in evidence everywhere. Besides, the coupon system has also not been introduced in the State.

There is also the matter of bottlenecks in the supply of foodgrains from Food Corporation of India to various implementing officers which, according to the State Government, has caused considerable delay and setback to the smooth progress of the Programme. Much of the blame on under-utilization of foodgrains is placed on Food Corporation of India in not keeping enough stock in the pipeline. Food Corporation of India on its part has laid the blame on breakdown in the wagon movements and delay of expected rice supply from Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. Apart from this, Food Corporation of India is also wanting in the equitable location of their depot facilities. This aspect has caused some problems in the logistics of foodgrain movement.

At the district level too the Programme is not having a proper monitoring on account of the Steering Committees not being able to meet as often as necessary

and the audit squads have not been constituted at all in most of the cases. The problem of understaffing continues at all the levels.

The fact that the things are not going on smoothly with the Programme at various levels is well brought out in the review note submitted by no less a person than the Deputy Accountant General. While reviewing the progress in the first three years, the note backed by facts and figures, clearly mentions the various anomalies and not to speak of inadequacies as well as inaccuracies observed in the maintenance of accounts of progress. Among the several important conclusions contained in the note, mention may be made of the fact that two of the objectives, referring to generation of employment and creation of durable community assets, are not fully achieved. In the first two and a half years five implementing officers have utilized foodgrains (3,470 M. tonnes) without creating additional employment. There are instances of several works undertaken under the Programme which cannot be classified as durable community assets although the district level Steering Committees have approved such works. These are usually in the nature of link roads without culverts and proper top soiling. At best, they just amount to jungle clearance and earth work excavation. It is estimated that such works, numbering 553 in seven districts, amount to well over Rs. 60 lakhs. Also it is observed that in some cases the progress does not meet the test of additionality of resources over the budget estimates.

When we come to the actual problems faced by the participant workers as well as the difficulties encountered by the concerned officials at the vital

level of implementation, the working of the Programme reveals that several aspects are either not anticipated at all or altogether ignored by the authorities at all levels. From the point of view of workers the duration of employment is not considerably long, if anything it is scanty, and women are generally discouraged from participating in the Scheme. The wage payment is largely in the form of cash instead of the stipulated foodgrains and even that is made rather irregularly. That the system of operation of clandestine unofficial contractors is detrimental to the workers' interests. Much of the abuses in the operation of the schemes and misuse of foodgrains may be traced to this system.

Despite these irregularities and hardships, the F.W.P. in general has been welcomed by almost all the workers interviewed. They want the Programme to continue as a permanent scheme and suitably modified to eliminate the irregularities. To them, it provides succour, especially during the lean seasons and eliminates the need for migration in search of work. However, it has not made any impact on the prevailing wage rates nor has it contributed to increased level of food intake. Much of this may be traced to the irregularities, especially the non-payment or under-payment of kind component of wages.

Whatever be the response and reactions of the participant workers, we must also take into consideration some of the obstacles encountered by the implementing staff at the lower levels of operation. In the context of prevailing rural unemployment or under-employment and types of works to be undertaken, especially in the interior parts of any block, it becomes

rather difficult for the existing complement of the staff available at the block and circle level to carry out simultaneously several works. The existing field staff under B.D.O.s cannot be regarded as quite adequate in view of increasing demand for employment especially in the lean seasons. In order to generate additional employment at a fairly large scale a great many number of works need to be undertaken in widely scattered locations. This will naturally result in constraint of time for the limited operational staff. It is thus clear that there exists a need for additional staff either by deployment of surplus personnel from elsewhere or recruitment of educated unemployed preferably from rural area itself. If this constraint of time is not remedied, the problems of day-to-day supervision of workers, check measurement and other procedural formalities connected with the works and more importantly the prompt disbursement of foodgrains as kind wages would prove very difficult. Furthermore, it may give room for some irregularities. Besides, the fact remains that the rural labourers are generally conditioned to receive wages either in advance or the same day. The delay in wage payment in kind has caused a lot of heart-burn to the workers and often resulted in acceptance of cash in lieu of grains from the contractors or middlemen, official or otherwise.

Another important aspect is the lack of storage facilities at the villages nearabout the work sites. The facilities are necessary to store not only the tools and implements but also the foodgrains meant for distribution among the workers. The officials in charge of the Programme do not like to make use of existing

facilities of Cooperatives and Panchayat buildings as they are not free from the pilferages. Lack of the storage facility for foodgrains in particular causes some delay in the issuance of grains to workers, as the grains are stored only at block headquarters.

There is also the problem of logistics, that is, movement of foodgrains from Food Corporation of India depots to district or block headquarters and thence to the villages or work sites. Moreover, the transport costs involved in moving the grains to the places of payment are also causing a lot of problems for want of proper guidance and sanctions. This aspect also contributes to smooth operation of the schemes and also likely to give scope for misutilization.

Among the other difficulties encountered by the officials, mention may be made of inadequate provision for employing skilled workers who do not accept foodgrains as wages; unwanted P.W.D. works being thrust on the B.D.O.s; insistence of P.W.D. norms of work output by the auditors and finally the interference by the non-officials and political leaders. The last mentioned factor, according to some officials, causes some conflicts, sometimes resulting in threats or petitions to higher authorities. In view of these difficulties, many officials are not inclined to push the programme to the desirable extent.

Although many a difficulty may sound genuine and needs to be attended to or remedied, the fact remains that several officials are alleged to have committed irregularities. The allegations noted by audit teams, Governmental inquiry bodies and Steering Committees themselves are significant enough and cannot be ignored

altogether. In some instances, the officials are clearly seen overstepping the limits and committing several abuses. The nature of irregularities and abuses, as pointed out by audit teams, refers to improper maintenance of accounts concerning food stocks, tampering of muster rolls, non-payment of wages in the form of foodgrains, not adhering to the test of durable community assets in respect of certain works undertaken, inordinate delay in the payment of kind wages to workers (30 to 160 days), not assessing manpower generated and continuation of system of contractors and other types of middlemen.

We have seen the views of the workers, some grievances of the officials and the findings of the audit teams. On balance, it may be concluded that despite some operational difficulties, some of the implementing officials are found wanting in dedication and sincerity. It is no wonder a few of them have been suspended by the State Government pending departmental or police inquiries. Nevertheless, it has affected the public confidence and caused some setback to the Programme.

In short, a fairly well drawn up Programme with moderately realistic multi-pronged objectives to realize greater employment and infrastructure development in rural areas, has not been successful to the desirable extent. The impediments, natural and man-made, are not properly anticipated and successfully encountered. Once again, we are faced with the problem whether the present administrative set up at various levels of implementation is adequately geared to handle such vital and massive economic programmes. In view of the enormous