

CAC South Asia – RLEK Project
PTF Review of Completion Report

Key Project Data (From Completion report)

Title of Project	Transparency in National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) in Uttaraphand		
Project Code	IND(2009)DGF4(RLEK)	Project Location	Mori block in Uttarakashi district and Jaunpur block in Tehri district, Uttarakhand state in India.
Corruption Problem being addressed	Corruption in implementation of NREGS in Uttarakhand		
Project Objectives	1. To increase awareness and understanding of NREGS and RT 2. To develop community institutions and procedures for monitoring implementation of NREGS 3. To promote participation of marginalized communities and women in NREGS. 4. To curb irregularities and corruption in NREGS through the use of Right to Information Act.		
	<u>Planned</u>	<u>Actual</u>	
Implementation period	15 March 2009- 15 March 2010	15 March 2009-(?) 2010	
Total Budget	Rs.1,568,775 (US\$ 34,861)	INR 1,489,311 (\$35,459 ¹)	
PTF Contribution	\$32,000	\$26,000 (as of 13 August 2010)	
Top Three Results (actual). 3 is minimum and may be exceeded as needed.	1. Community sensitized of rights through 15 Community Mobilization Camps and now demanding more job cards and work without payment of bribe. For example: (a) RLEK facilitated community in Bhatwari Gram Panchayat of Jaunpur Block of Tehri district to write a letter to CDO to initiate action for non-payment of wages. Records were also not known like how many people worked and how many people possess job cards. Taking cognizance of the letter signed by many community people CDO initiated inquiry in the matter. Gradually disbursement of payment of wages began; and (b) NREGS work has begun in some Gram Panchayats like Doni, Bhitri, Masri, Jakhol of Mori Block of Uttarkashi district where it was not provided earlier (how many persons benefitting? Any survey of these people to see if they got corruption free payments in stipulated amounts and in a timely manner?) 2. 12 Rozgar Adhikar Satarkta Samiti (RASS) have been formed amongst community people to act as watch dog and report against		

¹ Assumed exchange rate at approval 1\$=45INR. Average rate during implementation 1\$=42.

	<p>any form of corruption in NREGS. RASS members have filed 80 RTI applications due to which NREGS work has started in some Gram Panchayats now. RASS is also facilitating community people to obtain job cards and demand work without paying bribe.</p> <p>3. The project team is motivating people to report against corruption (any data on such complaints and their resolution? The team also learnt to constructively engage with government officials and media (6 public hearings –Jansunwai done so far) in reducing the forms of corruption prevalent in the project area vis-à-vis implementation of NREGS.</p>
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Completion Assessment²

1. The Implementation Performance

- a. Extent to which the planned project activities and outputs were completed. 2
- b. Adequacy of financial reporting.³ 4
- c. Adequacy of documentation posted⁴ on the website. 6
- d. Constructive engagement during implementation 3

Comments and suggestions for improvement

- a. All planned activities were completed except for number of RTI applications. Reasons for this underachievement are reasonable and acceptable.
- b. Audit report of RLEK 2009 accounts is needed. Also the certified accounts for the PTF grant cover only the period March 15 to September 15, 2009. We need certified accounts for period ending June 30, 2010 and the 2009 audit report. PAC should obtain these, review if these are qualified in any way, and share their findings with PTF. Please also send a PDF copy of the audit report and certified accounts.
- c. The RLEK website has no mention of the project.
- d. Good dialogue with Block level authorities so far.

The project results have not been assessed so far. The original proposal had planned a beneficiary assessment in year 2.

² Ratings Scale: 1 = Highly Satisfactory/Likely; 2 = Satisfactory/Likely; 3 = Moderately Satisfactory/Likely; 4 = Moderately unsatisfactory/Unlikely; 5 = Unsatisfactory/Unlikely; 6 = Highly Unsatisfactory/Unlikely; NA = Not Applicable

³ The Grant agreements require that the accounts of project related expenditures be audited and certified as true and accurate by the Auditor of the CSO.

⁴ The PTF Grant Agreement stipulates that the Grant Applicant will “post the Grant Agreement, the Project Proposal, the final Project report, and statement of expenditures on its website and/or the PTF website”.

2. The Results:

- a. Accomplishments of the results specified in the logframe and/or project proposal. 3
- b. Quantified and demonstrable results 4
- c. Robustness of the evidence for the results narrated in the completion reports. 5
- d. Responsiveness of authorities to constructive engagement. 3
- e. Value added of peer learning activities and events. 3
- f. Project contribution to CSO partner capacity to carry out anti-corruption work. 3

PTF Comments and suggestions for improvement.

The logframe and results framework in the proposal had 6 project impact indicators. The completion report provides baseline values for 4 of these indicators. No data has yet been collected to assess the changes from baseline values as a result of the year 1 activities. The report cites various results but the supporting evidence is missing. In view of these, this aspect is currently rated at Moderately Satisfactory (3). It can be revised once more information is available on results and the data/sources that are the basis for claiming results.

3. Summary of Assessment.

- a. **Overall Achievement Rating⁵** 3
- b. **Commentary on Overall Assessment.**

RLEK have faithfully followed the format provided by PTF-PAC for preparing the completion report. The completion report format seems to have constrained a fuller description of what was done and what the results were. The executive summary and self assessment of project progress provide a good overview of what was done (inputs), to mobilize community, empower them to assert their rights and demand accountability and the outputs (15 CMCs, 12 RASS, 6 Jansunwai, 80 RTI, and IEC materials produced). These sections also describe the outcomes which are noted in the results section of the Key Project Data above.

As noted in our review weaknesses in implementation performance were: disclosure of information and financial reporting. These can easily be fixed and the corresponding ratings would improve.

We would like to see a better description of the results. From the CAC program and PTF perspectives the most important objective in Phase 1 was: To curb irregularities and corruption in NREGA through the use of Right to Information Act. The

⁵ The degree to which the project achieved, or seems likely to achieve, all or most of its objectives.

Completion report needs to do a better job of narrating the progress made in achieving this result. At the moment it focuses heavily on actions taken and processes followed. We believe the true story might be more impressive than comes across in the completion report. We hope that RLEK can revise the Completion Report to add better information on results of the project. For example is it possible to quantify the impact on curbing corruption in Bhatwari gram as a result of organizing and mobilizing of the community. If there similar such stories please narrate them. Elaborate on the extent to which community empowerment efforts actually resulted in benefits to the community and, if so, what are these can these be at least documented anecdotally? How many families receive benefits that had previously not received them?

Overall the project completion report is rated Moderately Satisfactory (3). This rating will be reconsidered when a revised completion report is submitted addressing the suggestions made above.

The third tranche will be released upon submission of audit and certified project account reports.

4. **Next steps**

- a. **Please revise the Completion Report.** According to PTF policies the completion reports are made public by posting them on PTF website (www.PTFund.org) and PTF organizes an independent assessment. We recommend that RLEK revise the completion report to improve presentation of results (suggestions for this are noted above) and eliminate duplication of information as a consequence of flaw in the guidelines provided by us. RLEK should make other revisions that they consider useful before the report becomes public and is subjected to independent assessment.
- b. **Carry out an impact assessment to better judge Phase 1 outcomes and formulate measurable goals for Phase 2.** We appreciate very much the excellent commitment shown by RLEK to project in extremely difficult terrain. We also note that RLEK has laid good foundations of empowered community based organizations in extremely remote areas that are beginning to engage with authorities constructively to get NREGS benefits in a corruption free manner. We note that an impact assessment was envisaged as part of Phase 2. We believe that the planned beneficiary impact assessment should be done and results analyzed and should inform Phase 2 design. For this purpose a supplementary grant may be provided by PTF. Design and approval of phase 2 should be considered after the assessment has been completed and measurable result goals can be set. We would expect the impact assessment to collect and analyze the data on the Project Impact indicators included in the RLEK LFA/ results framework in the Project. We also have several suggestions that may be considered when designing the impact assessment:
 - i. The project was prepared and approved before Mr. Varghese of PTF-PAC prepared NREGS results framework and core indicators (See the attachment Technical Note). It is suggested that, as part of the impact assessment, RLEK try, with help from Mr. Varghese, to retrofit

the results framework to Phase 1 using the information they have and collect the basic information that they do not have. The core indicators should also be part of the Results Framework for Phase 2. We are asking all CAC supported projects for fighting corruption in NREGS to adopt this common results framework and align their results framework (for Phase 1 and Phase 2) with it so that the results can be aggregated at the CAC program level. Technical assistance to help RLEK do this can be arranged by PAC.

- ii. It is noted that the NREGS policy and regulatory framework contains a number of measure to prevent, detect and sanction corruption. Obviously these measures are not fully effective in curbing corruption. In this context, we would like the results assessment to include an analysis of what are these measures. This information could then be used to design Phase 2 activities to assess implementation effectiveness of such measures in the two blocks covered in the project area and recommend improvements in policies and procedures to improve matters.
 - iii. It should be possible to find out (using RTI), and as part of impact assessment, how much public expenditures the government has allocated and spent on NREGS in the two project area blocks in 2009 and/or 2010 and what % (range) is estimated to be lost due to corruption. It would make a powerful results framework if RLEK could estimate the public expenditure savings due project activities aimed at: reduced paying of bribes; the beneficiaries getting the guaranteed days of employment and wages; and eligible families getting job cards without paying bribes.
 - iv. Finally, we wonder what is the political economy situation facing RLEK and communities. We assume that those who were benefiting from past corrupt practices must be unhappy at RELEK's success in mobilizing the local communities. Has there been any backlash? Are the communities vulnerable to retaliation from corrupt officials for trying to hold them to account? How much support is there for initiatives to raise the accountability of the local administration among senior District and State officials? Most importantly, to what extent will the communities continue to depend on RELEK support and what would happen if this was to end? In short what is the sustainability of the actions being taken? These aspects may be addressed in the completion report and/or the Impact assessment.
- c. **Independent Assessment.**, PTF proposes the independent assessment to be carried out by its adviser Mr. Rahul Raturi. Mr. Raturi is currently in Delhi and, subject to PAC and RLEK convenience, could do the assessment in late September or early October 2010.