

## CAC- Project Completion Report

**Name of the CSO:** RURAL LITIGATION & ENTITLEMENT KENDRA

**Address:** 68/1, SURYA LOK COLONY, RAJPUR ROAD, DEHRADUN, UTTARAKHAND

**Project name:** "Transparency in National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in Uttarakhand Phase-I".

### PTF code:

- Project Goal:** To achieve transparent and corruption-free implementation of NREGA in two blocks of two districts of Uttarakhand
- Project location:** Jaunpur block of Tehri district and Mori block of Uttarkashi district, Uttarakhand
- Project period:** 15<sup>th</sup> March, 2009 to 16<sup>th</sup> March 2010
- Project objectives:**
  - To increase awareness and understanding of NREGA and RTI
  - To develop community institutions and procedures for monitoring implementation of NREGA
  - To promote participation of marginalized communities and women in NREGA
  - To curb irregularities and corruption in NREGA through the use of Right to Information Act
- Major activities** *(Please compare the planned v/s actual activities)*

Activities planned	Status of achievement
Baseline Survey	Complete
15 Community Mobilisation Camps (CMCs) in 1 <sup>st</sup> year	Complete
Formation of 12 Rozgaar Adhikar Satarkta Samiti (RASS) in 1 <sup>st</sup> year	Complete
6 Jan Sunwai in 1 <sup>st</sup> year	Complete
RTI Applications planned 1500	Filed nearly 80
Printing IEC material	Complete
Exposure Visit	Incomplete

6. **Project results** (Please describe what difference the project has made)

<p><i>a) corruption free delivery of targeted services to the citizens in the project area</i></p>	<p>1<sup>st</sup> phase of the project concentrated on sensitizing target population. Community is now gearing up to demand more job cards and work without payment of bribe. More concrete results are expected in the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase.</p>
<p><i>b) enhancing the capacity of your organization for mobilizing citizens against corruption and controlling corruption</i></p>	<p>The project team immensely benefited by learning to motivate people to report against corruption. The team also learnt to constructively engage with government officials and media in reducing the forms of corruption prevalent in the project area vis-à-vis implementation of MGNREGA.</p>
<p><i>c) enhancing the capacity of the community to control corruption</i></p>	<p>Rozgaar Adhikar Satarkta Samiti (RASS) have been formed amongst community people to act as watch dog and report against any form of corruption pursuant to the implementation of MGNREGA. RASS members have been filing RTI applications due to which MGNREGA work has started in some Gram Panchayats now. RASS is also facilitating community people to obtain job cards and demand work without paying bribe. Interaction between RASS and Rozgaar Sahayak for better facilitation of work under MGNREGA.</p>
<p><i>d) advocating and impacting actions taken by authorities to control corruption</i></p>	<p>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. Work allocation in next phase was then regulated pursuant to an inquiry.</p>

<p>e) <i>Peer learning experiences:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>With other CSOs</i></li> <li>• <i>With other communities</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>With other CSOs:</b></p> <p>RTI helpline initiated by CUTS, Jaipur has been a learning experience;</p> <p>RTI campaign needs to be strengthened</p> <p><b>With other communities:</b></p> <p>RASS formed as community mechanisms/institutions and other CBOs need handholding for some more time to register their voice against corruption in the implementation of MGNERGA.</p>
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## 7. Major Learning

<p>a) Constructive engagement – Working with government and other stakeholders like media</p>	<p>Constructive engagement with Panchayat Development officer, BDOs, other Panchayat functionaries and media through dialogue helped the project team in understanding administrative challenges. The area of jurisdiction of government officials is hilly terrain and the area is very vast. Thus, they are not able to pay full attention to their due t shortage of human capital.</p>
<p>b) Community mobilization</p>	<p>Initially people were filing RTI applications earlier lack of awareness and low literacy rate. Therefore, the project team began to conduct camps for exclusive training on RTI applications. Primary school teachers were also engaged to disseminate knowledge and help community write RTI and various grievance letters.</p>
<p>c) Peer learning</p>	<p>Creating RTI helpline as done by CUTS, Jaipur.</p>
<p>d) Knowledge generation</p>	<p>Knowledge about bitter issues of corruption with regard to MGNREGA has increased in the project team. It has also generated motivation to take on other issues of</p>

	<p>corruption as well. This is due to the fact that most of the corruption issues and interdependent.</p> <p>It was also learnt that unless community especially women will take on corruption head on, ground realities will not change. Hence, community motivation becomes cornerstone of the project.</p>
e) Documentation	Documentation in terms of quarterly progress reports have been produced.

8. **Project Budget:** US\$ 32,000.00 (United States Dollars Thirty two thousand)
9. **Budget utilized as on (date):** US\$ 32,000.00 (United States Dollars Thirty two thousand)
10. **Date of report submission:** 10<sup>th</sup> July, 2010
11. **Signature of the Chief Functionary:** Duly signed hard copy is being sent by post

## 1. Executive Summary:

The project to bring in transparency in the implementation of MGNREGA in Uttarakhand embarked on its first year of journey in June 2009 by conducting baseline survey. Baseline survey indicated low awareness level of the target population vis-à-vis MGNREGA. Building upon information collected, community mobilization camps (CMCs) were organized in two blocks of two districts of Uttarakhand. Sensitization of the target population towards issues of corruption in the implementation of MGNREGA was the cornerstone of Phase-I. It essentially included reaching out to the villages which are not connected by roads. At the end of Phase-I, the project team could conduct 15 CMCs for community people from far- fetched villages located on hill tops of Uttarkashi and Tehri districts. To further, infuse sustainability in the process, Rozgaar Adhikar Satarkta Samiti (RASS) were formed in 12 Gram Panchayats. RASS comprise of community people who are enterprising, both literate and non literate but who can register protest against corruption in the implementation of MGNREGA in their area. RASS was also constituted to act as repository of knowledge in the community post training camps. RASS also helps the community people in filing Right to Information applications and the project team supports them in all such efforts to check corruption in the service delivery system under MGNREGA. Six Jan Sunwai (Public Hearings) were organized across project intervention area to increase community participation towards ensuring more transparent implementation of MGNREGS. Media also highlighted the issue during Jan Sunwai (Public Hearing) organized and it created pressure on the concerned government officials. There has also been decline in the demand for bribe for making job cards.

Community awareness for demanding work under MGNREGA and using RTI as a mechanism to curb corruption has increased. Consequently, MGNREGA work has begun in some Gram Panchayats like Doni, Bhitri, Masri, Jakhol of Mori Block of Uttarkashi district where it was not provided earlier. In Jaunpur block of Tehri district work was done by people but payment was not given. RLEK, then, facilitated community to write a letter to CDO, Tehri on behalf of all aggrieved persons. This is due to the reason no one wanted to be targeted by filing RTI separately. As a result, inquiry was set up which was followed up with administrative staff of CDO office. As a result, payment of wages began in the area and work allocation for next phase started properly. Now Gram Vikas Adhikari is receiving applications for work and applicants are also issued acknowledgement. Records are now being maintained. Gram sabha meetings are now conducted where scheme is being developed with the help of Junior Engineer and community people.

**Main obstacles:** Topography of the project area being a hilly terrain has always stood as a challenge for the project. Extreme cold weather conditions in winter also came up as an obstacle. Both these natural reasons have made intervention in the area difficult. Nonetheless, the project team successfully reached out to the community by undertaking trek of 6-7 hours in the hilly terrain and stayed there sometimes for 10 days without electricity, first-aid facility, primary health care, telephone and mobile networks. The project team, nevertheless, reached out to community in such adversarial conditions and educated them about MGNREGA and various issues of corruption therein.

## 2. Accomplishment of Activities:

Project Activities	Results	Description of any major change in the activity with reason
Base Line Survey	Conducted and completed. Filled in survey forms are available. Survey <b>Questionnaire and Survey report</b> has been <b>shared with PAC</b> along with quarterly progress report.	NA
Community mobilization camps	15 completed- <b>Photo documentation</b> proof is available and same has also been documented and <b>shared with PAC along with quarterly progress reports.</b>	NA
Formation of Rozgaar Adhikar Satarkta Samiti (RASS)	12 completed- Documentation is available for verification. <b>PAC monitoring review team visited</b> the field area and also <b>interacted with the RASS members</b> in the community.	NA
RTI applications	Nearly 80 filed, follow up under process.	High target of filing 1500 RTI applications was proposed. However, it was realized that given the level of awareness of the community and the hilly terrain for reaching out to target population and sensitizing them was a herculean task. Therefore, target of filing RTI applications was decreased to a realistic figure of 100 in Phase-I.
Jan Sunwai	6 completed- <b>Photo documentation</b> proof is available and same has also been documented and <b>shared with PAC along with quarterly progress reports.</b>	

### 3. Project Outcomes/Impact:

Project Impact Indicators	Baseline Value	End of project Value	Sources and evidence to verify the results
80% household of the Project Intervention Area {PIA} are thoroughly aware of important procedures/Authorities of NREGA	76% of the respondents barely heard about MGNREGA but are not conversant with the scheme	Will be ascertained after beneficiary assessment survey	Filled in baseline survey data available
X % Village Panchayats forms their Shelf of project with maximum community participation	Community participation 56% but concrete contribution minimum	This is yet to be ascertained	Filled in baseline survey data available
Every Household willing to work gets Job Card		More households are filing application for job card. More jobs cards are also being issued by the government officials, yet the exact number can be ascertained only after beneficiary assessment survey	Filled in baseline survey data available
90 % of Job Card Holders, who apply for work would get work and receive regular payments within stipulated time	60% respondents said they do have not been allotted work within stipulated time  54.3% respondents not paid regularly	This cannot be ascertained before final beneficiary assessment survey that will be done at the end of the project duration	Filled in baseline survey data available
Regular payment of Unemployment allowance to Job card holder, as per the	Unemployment allowance not paid to anyone	Still not paid to anyone (Payment of unemployment allowance is a	Filled in baseline survey data available

provisions of the Scheme		slippery area which still needs to be addressed with new strategy in the upcoming Phase-II)	
60% Panchayats regularly conduct Social Audits with maximum community participation		This has not been achieved yet	Filled in baseline survey data available

#### 4. Lessons learnt and their replicability:

##### **Difficulties faced:-**

Project area is a very difficult terrain for reaching out to the target population; weather conditions are not favorable during monsoon as it leads to landslide and roads get blocked with heavy snowfall during winter.

##### **Successes met:-**

Community has started filing RTI applications and demanding work under MGNREGA. Consequently, work under MGNREGA has begun in some Gram Panchayats where no work was allocated earlier. Jan Sunwai was held in some villages in the presence of Panchayat Development Officer and Development Planning Officer, MGNREGA in the project area. As a result, community could share their grievances with the official. This is indicative of positive action in the field.

##### **Operational issues within the organisation:- NIL**

##### **Operational issues with other stakeholders like government, community, Panchayat/municipality etc.:-**

Government officials not always available for dialogues. Community becomes agitated when brought face to face with the government official during Jan Sunwai.

##### **Explain where and how your experiences can be replicated:-**

Our experience of forming RASS as community organisation can be replicated in other areas of intervention. This is primarily because when we talk about checking unbridled growth of corruption, creating citizen's ownership model is essential. This not only brings in an element of sustainability in the project model but also creates sense of responsibility within the community. Besides, RLEK has been facilitating Jan Sunwai in the presence of government official at block level. This helps in bringing

aggrieved community people face to face with the government functionaries for a solution finding.

These initiatives of RLEK can be replicated in other areas also to increase greater community ownership in the drive against corruption free delivery of public services. Initiative like Jan Sunwai is expected to enhance greater transparency as government officials will be made liable to answer plethora of queries of aggrieved people in the public glare along with the presence of media to report the anomalies in the process.

## **5. Constructive engagement:**

*Please include instances of useful interactions and constructive engagements with other stakeholders (government officials, media, CSOs, NGOs including other CAC partners etc.) and how they have helped further project success. Please name specific officials, offices that you have interacted with.*

The project team engaged in Panchayat officials like Panchayat Development Official, Jaunpur Block; Development Planning Officer MGNREGA at Mori block; Block Development Officer (BDO) Mori bloc; Gram Pradhan of various Gram Panchayats in both Jaunpur and Mori block.

## **6. Community Organisation:**

### **Community Organisations Developed or Supported through this Project:**

*Please list and comment on quality of CBO contribution to the objectives of CAC:*

RLEK has been working with CBOs since very long time and is also engaged in developing CBOs for diverse issues of social change. With the technical support provided by the project team CBOs have been actively participating in CAC's objectives. For instance, both pre-existing CBOs and groups like RASS formed by RLEK have been taking up issues of corruption by filing RTI applications.

## **7. Peer learning:**

Please comment on the peer learning experiences in terms of your organisation under review and you reviewing other organisations and comment on the quality of such exercise and contribution to success of CAC project:

Peer learning primarily has helped in ascertaining diverse issues of corruption in different areas of intervention. It also helped in determining common areas of corruption that should be addressed jointly by working out joint strategy. Peer learning also helped in mutual sharing of difficulties experienced in the field area to inculcate a culture of questioning in the community to strengthen the movement against corruption.

RLEK shared its experience of mobilizing women and capacitate them to fight against corruption. RASS formed by RLEK and inter-link between CBOs and government stakeholders was shared. RLEK's experience of working in tough hilly terrain like in Uttarakhand and reaching out to people in adverse climatic and topographic condition was shared. RLEK benefitted from the review process by understanding use of RTI helpline and organizing district and state level interaction meet for all stakeholders.

## 8. Project sustainability:

<p>Technical:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>What measures have been taken to ensure sustainability of project processes like knowledge generation, constructive engagement and community empowerment adopted in the project?</i></b></li> </ul> <p>Follow up trainings will be organized in Phase II. Besides, RASS have been formed consisting of people responsible of the community so that they can act as repository of knowledge once the project duration gets over. RASS is also capacitated to engage in dialogue with the government officials. Through RASS community is able to feel the ownership of the entire campaign against corruption, hence, becomes sustainable movement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>What plans for upcoming initiatives to ensure sustainability of project outcomes?</i></b></li> </ul> <p>Strengthen RASS by providing further handholding in Phase-II</p>
<p>Social:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>How much ownership does the community have of the process?</i></b></li> </ul> <p>The process of reducing corruption in the implementation of MGNREGS is a community driven initiative. The corruption free delivery of services is a community demanding phenomenon. Hence, community enjoys the complete ownership of the process of this social change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>How far the community is independent in dealing with the corruption issues on their own?</i></b></li> </ul> <p>Community is gradually gearing up to be independent in dealing with the corruption issues. Community facilitators formed by way of creating RASS provide timely support to the people who are neo-literates in taking on issues of corruption with government authorities by constructive dialogue or by use of RTI mechanism.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>How far the community can independently organize the road shows or protests for their rights and curbing corruption?</i></b></li> </ul> <p>Community still needs further inputs to independently organize road shows and similar activities to assert their rights and voicing protest against corruption.</p>
Institutional:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>What are the organisational plans to continue the project on your own?</i></b></li> </ul> <p>RLEK has been working with community across Uttarakhand since more than three decades now. RELK is a socially well awakened organisation which is committed to register its protest against any form of violation of rural citizenry including corruption irrespective of the project in progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>How far the CBOs formed/strengthened can work on their own?</i></b></li> </ul> <p>CBOs formed have been provided technical support to act as independent pressure groups. Therefore, they can be seen as emerging independent support systems for the community to take lead in drive against corruption. Such CBOs formed will be provided further follow training in Phase-II of the project.</p>
Financial:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Does the community financially contribute to the project?</i></b></li> </ul> <p>No financial contribution so far has been taken from the community in Phase-I.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>How much financial support can your organisation mobilize on its own from other donors?</i></b></li> </ul> <p>NONE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Have any other donors expressed interest in supporting such initiatives?</i></b></li> </ul> <p>NONE</p>

## 9. Self-Assessment of Project Progress:

Phase-I focused on sensitizing the community about their legal entitlements under MGNREGA and the irregularities therein in the implementation of the same. Many villages visited in the project area are located on far away hill tops. They are not easily accessible by roads. The hill tops are also not connected with regular electricity and telephone or mobile networks. Primary health facility is merely a dream in such places. Many a times, project team had to stay in such tough field for about 10 days without proper sanitation facility. The project team also had to undertake trekking of 6-7 hours in rough weather conditions especially in winters to reach amongst the community people. Nonetheless, the project team including female trainers successfully reached out to the community and educated them about claiming their legal entitlements under MGNREGA. Community was also helped in identifying irregularities in the implementation of MGNREGA in the project area.

RLEK always believes in strong community involvement and participation. Pursuant to the same, RASS were formed in the community to act as watch dog against abnormality in the process for obtaining job card, work allocation within 15 days after submitting application for work, fake entries in muster rolls, irregularity in payment of wages, etc. RASS members were trained in writing RTI applications to obtaining relevant information from the government departments to oversee that the entitlement holders in their village get work under MGNREGA. Jan Sunwai was organized in Jaunpur block of Tehri district in the presence of Panchayat Development Officer. During the Jan Sunwai community people came up with their grievances about various irregularities in the process of implementing MGNREGA. Such grievances were recorded by the Panchayat Development Officer. The project team is following the progress of the same and the actions that the concerned official may take. Similarly, Jan Sunwai was organized in Mori block of Uttarkashi in the presence of Development Planning officer (DPO) MGNREGA. Many women participants were present in the Jan Sunwai despite extreme winter conditions like some hill tops being covered with snow. DPO forwarded applications of aggrieved persons to his subordinates for making job cards of the entitlement holders. Besides, some participants complained about anomaly in payment of wages as against the number of days they have worked. DPO also recorded the same for inquiry and action. One of the challenges understood in Mori block was that the DPO has recently been deputed in Uttarkashi as DPO MGNREGA for Mori block. Therefore, he is not very conversant with the area of his jurisdiction and problems of the people. Due to this the process of regularizing the implementation by curbing irregularities is taking time in the region. However, the project team is constantly pursuing the same. The community is also being constantly encouraged to come forward and claim their benefits under MGNREGA. More so, it has also been learnt that RTI applications filed by the community are creating ripples in the government department at the block level. The government officials are now gearing up to maintain proper records and regularize the scheme under MGNREGA.

Therefore, culture of questioning and holding government officials accountable for any action that may appear to be arbitrary and infringe upon people's rights is being inculcated in the community. It is a well accepted thought that a deep rooted evil practice like corruption cannot be eliminated in a very short span of one or two years. The community is now identifying the irregularities in the implementation of MGNREGA with the handholding provided by the project team. In the upcoming Phase-II, the focus will

be on consolidating the work done in Phase-I. Follow up exercises will also be undertaken in Phase-II to further strengthen the community mechanisms like RASS formed during Phase-I.

## **10. Financial progress:**

**Please see MS Excel worksheet enclosed herewith**

1. Certification of the above by the Financial Officer of your organization- **Hard copy is being sent by post**
2. Please attach the latest available audited statement and certification of accuracy of project accounts from the External Auditor- **Hard copy is being sent by post**