

## **Poverty alleviation and employment generation programmes**

10.7 To accelerate the reduction in poverty and increase in employment, a number of poverty alleviation, employment generation and basic services programmes are being implemented at present (Box 10.2). Fully recognising the centrality of the panchayats in effectively implementing poverty alleviation and most other social sector programmes, Government has set

up the Ministry of Panchayati Raj to carry forward the process of empowerment of panchayati raj institutions (PRIs). A number of steps have been taken to devolve functions to PRIs in line with the Constitutional mandate. The annual outlay for this sector for 2006-07(BE) of Rs.3,825 crore includes Rs.3,750 crore for the newly created Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF) for the 250 most backward districts of the country.

**Box 10.2 : Poverty alleviation, employment generation and basic services programmes:  
current Status**

**(a) Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)**

Launched on December 25, 2000 as a 100 per cent Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS), the primary objective of PMGSY is to provide all-weather connectivity to all the eligible unconnected habitations in the rural areas. Up to December 2006, with cumulative expenditure of Rs. 18,281 crore about 107,569 km of road works has been completed.

**(b) Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY)**

IAY is a CSS funded on cost-sharing basis between the Centre and the States in the ratio of 75:25. In the case of UTs, the entire funds are provided by Centre. The target groups for housing under IAY are households below poverty line living in rural areas, particularly those belonging to SC/ST and freed bonded labourers. Up to December 2006, with cumulative expenditure of Rs. 29,246.27 crore, 153 lakh houses have been constructed/ upgraded.

**(c) Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY)**

SGSY, a holistic self-employment generation programme, was launched from April 1, 1999 by restructuring the earlier Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) and allied programmes. The emphasis of SGSY is on a focused approach to poverty alleviation, capitalising advantages of group lending and overcoming the problems associated with a multiplicity of programmes. SGSY is funded on the same sharing basis as IAY. Up to December 31, 2006, 24.38 lakh self-help groups (SHGs) have been formed and 73.25 lakh swarozgaris have been assisted with a total outlay of Rs.16,443.66 crore.

**(d) Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY)**

SGRY, launched on September 25, 2001 to provide additional wage employment in the rural areas, has a cash and food grains component. The cash-component of SGRY is funded on the same sharing basis as IAY and SGSY, while foodgrains are provided free of cost to the States and UTs. In 2005-06, 82.18 crore person-days of employment were generated with the Centre releasing Rs. 5497.43 crore as cash component and about 37.30 lakh tonnes of food grains to the States/UTs. Besides, under the special component of the SGRY, with the States/UTs meeting the cash components, Centre released 15.64 lakh tonnes of food grains to the 11 calamity affected States. In 2006-07 up to October 31, 2006, the number of person-days of employment generated under SGRY was 18.41 crore while the Centre's contributions in terms of cash and food grains component up to December 31, 2006 were Rs. 2,762 crore and 16.67 lakh tonnes, respectively. Under the special component, about 4.44 lakh tonnes of food grains have been released to calamity-hit States in the current year up to December 2006.

**(e) DPAP, DDP and IWDP**

Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP) was launched in 1973-74 to tackle the special problems faced by areas constantly affected by severe drought conditions. While Desert Development Programme (DDP) was launched in 1977-78 to mitigate the adverse effects of desertification, the Integrated Wasteland Development Programme (IWDP) has been under implementation since 1989-90 for the development of wastelands/ degraded lands. The basis of implementation of all three programmes has been shifted from sectoral to watershed basis from April 1995. So far, in 2006-07 up to January 31, 2007, 3,076 new projects covering 15.38 lakh ha, 2,270 new projects covering 11.35 lakh ha and 463 new projects covering 21.08 lakh ha have been sanctioned under DPAP, DDP and IWDP, respectively.

**(f) Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY)**

In December 1997, the Urban Self-Employment Programme (USEP) and the Urban Wage Employment Programme (UWEP), which are the two special components of the SJSRY, substituted for various programmes operated earlier for urban poverty alleviation. The SJSRY is funded on the same sharing basis as IAY and SGSY. The number of urban poor assisted for setting up micro/group enterprises in 2005-06 was 0.98 lakh against a target of 0.80 lakh; while in the current year, against a target of 1.20 lakh, 0.53 lakh was achieved by December 31, 2006. The number of urban poor imparted skill training in 2005-06 was 1.42 lakh against a target of 1 lakh. In the current year, against a target of 1.50 lakh, 0.72 lakh was achieved by December 31, 2006. Under UWEP, the mandays of employment generated was 43.48 lakh in 2005-06 and 1.78 lakh in the current year till now. Coverage of beneficiaries under the community structure component was 337.4 lakh both in 2005-06 and the current year up to December 31, 2006.

**(g) Valmiki Ambedkar Awas Yojana (VAMBAY)**

VAMBAY, launched in December 2001, facilitates construction and upgradation of dwelling units for slum dwellers, and provides a healthy and enabling environment through community toilets under Nirmal Bharat

Abhiyan, a component of the scheme. The Central Government provides a subsidy of 50 per cent, with the balance provided by the State Governments/Union Territories. Cumulatively, up to March 2006, Rs. 936.63 crore had been released as Central subsidy for the construction/upgradation of 4,58,630 dwelling units and 65,331 toilets seats. For 2006-07, Central allocation of Rs. 75 crore has been made for meeting the committed liabilities for on-going projects. VAMBAY has been subsumed in Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programme (IHSDP) launched along with Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) on December 3, 2005.

**(h) Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM)**

JNNURM, which is for a seven year period from 2005-06, has two main components – Basic Services to the Urban Poor (BSUP) Programme and Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programme (IHSDP). BSUP was launched to assist cities and towns in taking up housing and infrastructural facilities for the urban poor in 63 selected cities in the country. IHSDP for taking up housing and slum upgradation programmes in non-BSUP cities was launched along with BSUP in December 2005. The allocation for JNNURM in 2006-07 (BE) is Rs. 4,900 crore.

**(i) National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS)**

With the NREG Act being passed in September, 2005, the NREGS was implemented from February 2, 2006 in 200 identified districts of the country with the objective of providing 100 days of guaranteed unskilled wage employment to each rural household opting for it. The ongoing programmes of SGRY and National Food for Work Programme (NFFWP) have been subsumed under NREGS in these districts. NREGS will cover all districts of the country within five years. The NREGS, a demand-driven scheme, has its focus on works relating to water conservation, drought proofing (including afforestation/tree plantation), land development, flood-control/protection (including drainage in waterlogged areas) and rural connectivity in terms of all-weather roads. Of the Rs. 11,300 crore allocated for NREGS in 2006-07(BE), Rs. 6,714.98 crore was released up to January 31, 2007. Till January 31, 3.47 crore job cards have been issued; and of the 1.50 crore households who have demanded employment, 1.47 crore households have been provided employment. Under the scheme, up to December 2006, of the 53.65 crore person-days of employment generated, 21.13 crore were for women; and of about 5.81 lakh works taken up, 2.34 lakh were completed.