

## **Baseline Survey I Report**

The baseline survey I was carried on in five districts of Uttar Pradesh as part of project to ensure Dalit women's participation in NREGS.

This survey had two objectives:-

- a) To know the village profile where this experiment is taking place in terms of status of its population for both general and dalit community in terms of numbers of household, availability of resources such as roads, water, electricity, land holding pattern and their access to social security schemes.
- b) To know the status of dalit women in terms of their participation in NREGS and they accessing the benefits of the programme especially in quantitative terms.

The villages were chosen by project partners where future intervention to ensure and increase dalit women's participation in NREGS is to take place.

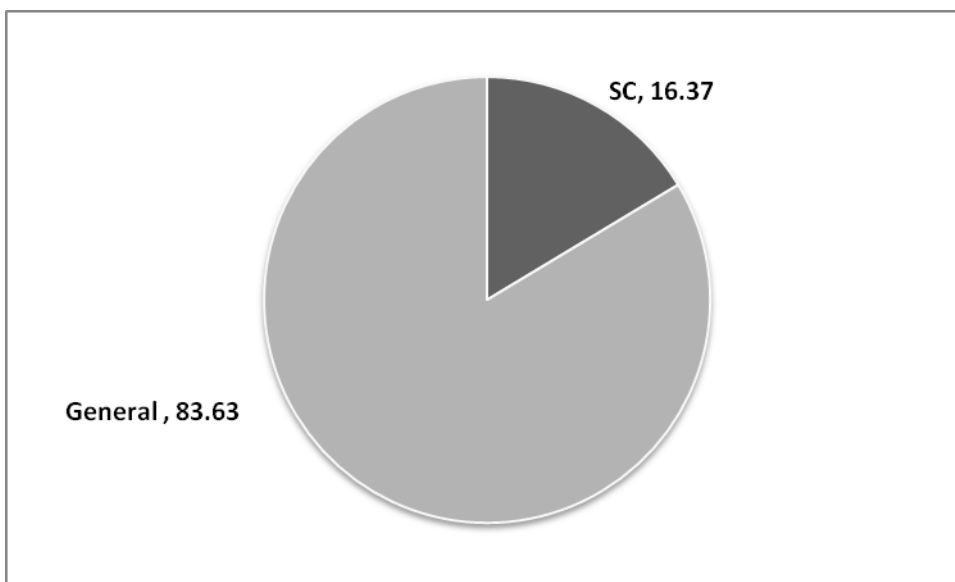
60 villages from 5 blocks from 5 districts were chosen as the focus area. The survey was conducted in 4 villages from block Narhaini from dist Banda, 8 villages from block Manikpur from dist Chitrakoot, 8 villages from block Kuthoundh from dist Jaloun, 11 villages from block Mehroni from dist Lalitpur and 30 villages from blocks Arajiline and Kashividhyapith from dist Varanasi.

A survey (Annexure No 1) of these villages was conducted through FGD (focus group discussion) and secondary data from records of village pradhan were checked to ascertain the facts.

## Profile of the surveyed villages and women labourers and their households

### Number of households and Scheduled castes and Scheduled tribe population

The focus area of project predominantly has general population followed by Scheduled castes. For the purpose of this project our concern is 16.37 % of scheduled castes population.



District	
Number of Households (in	

	numbers)			
	GEN	SC	ST	Total
Banda	2841	734	0	3575
Chitrakoot	3486	1637	0	5123
Jalaun	2287	906	0	3193
Lalitpur	5943	764	0	6707
Varanasi	29541	4590	0	34131

### **Configuration of castes among the Scheduled castes population**

An effort was also made to list out the sub castes. Total 21 main castes and sub castes are present in these districts. General castes such as Pandits i.e. Brahmins, and Thakurs are present in all the district though except in Jaloun (Brahmins 10% and Thakur 13%) presence of Brahmins and Thakurs is minimal. Muslims are also present in all the districts but are highest in district Varanasi (23%). The predominant scheduled castes in all the districts are Chamar (SC), Kori (SC) and Dhobi (SC). The marginalised sub castes from Scheduled castes such as Valmiki (SC) and

Dhanuk (SC) are also common but their presence is average. The Kol (SC) community is present in districts Chitrakoot. The main sub castes within Other backward castes are Kurmi (OBC) followed by Teli (OBC), Luhar (OBC), Prajapati (OBC) and Pal/Garedia (OBC). (Annexure No 2)

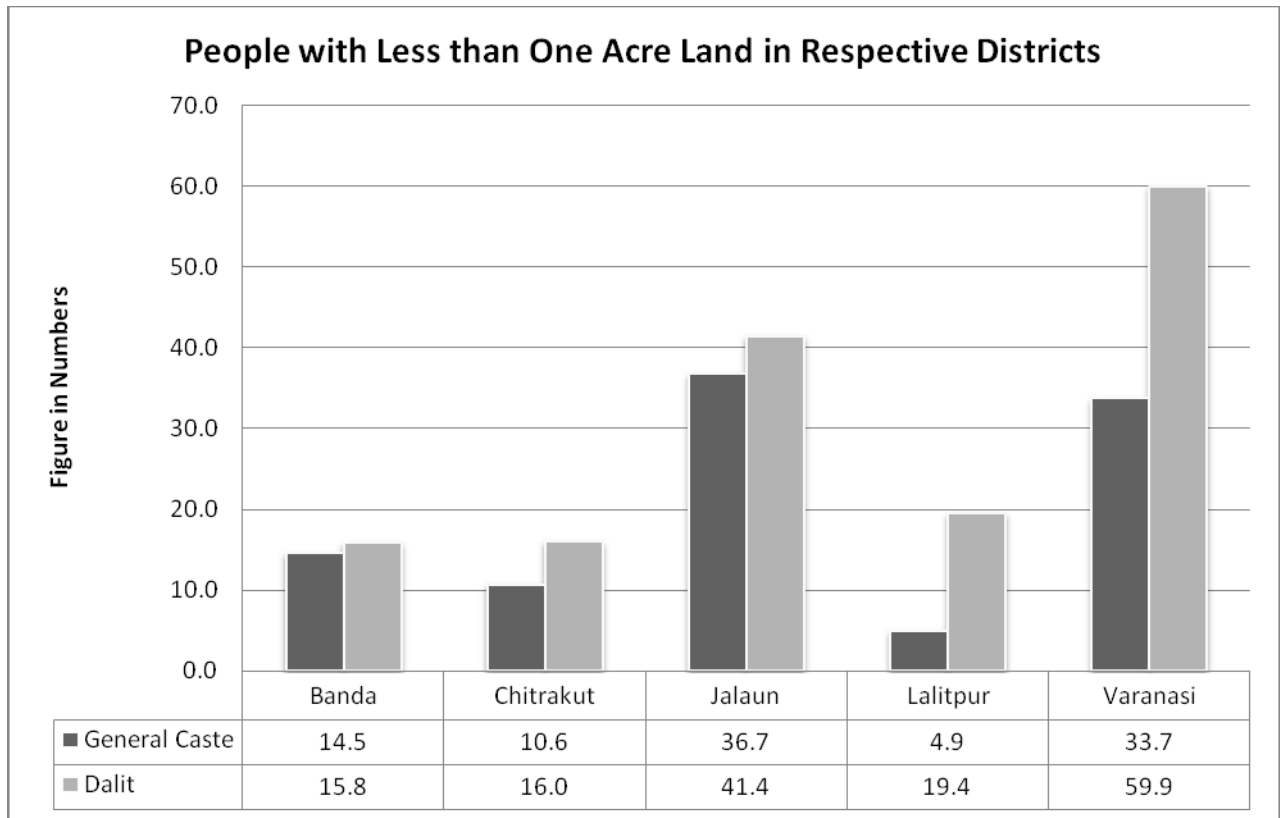
These are the 21 castes and sub castes present in project area of all 5 districts.

- 1.Kewant--OBC
- 2.Teli-----OBC
- 3.Muslim ----Religion
- 4.Chamar ---SC
5. Dhanuk---SC
- 6.Valmiki----SC
- 7.Dhobi-----SC
- 8.Pandit-----General
- 9.Prajapati---OBC
- 10.Luhar--OBC
- 11.Thakur ---General
- 12.Kori ---SC
- 13.Kurmi--OBC
- 14.Kayashth--General

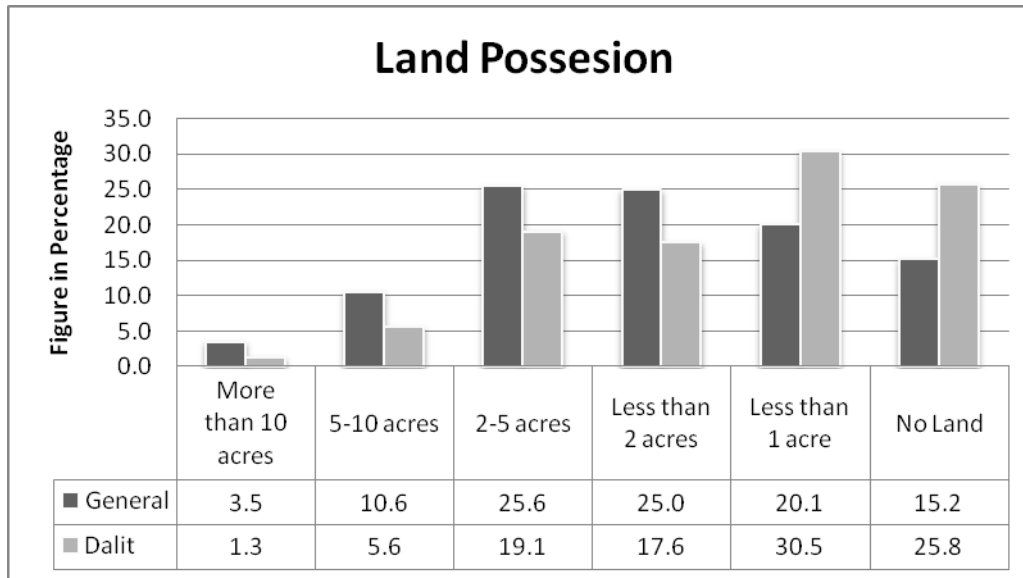
- 15.Pal/Garedia---OBC
- 16.Nai---OBC
- 17.Yadav---OBC
- 18.Kumahar---OBC
- 19.Arav--SC
- 20.Vishvakarma---OBC
- 21.Kol-----SC

### Land holding pattern in project area

As it emerges from survey more number of dalits have land less than 1 acre in all the districts.



As we look at land holding pattern further it clearly emerges dalits own less land than general community as seen from the following chart.

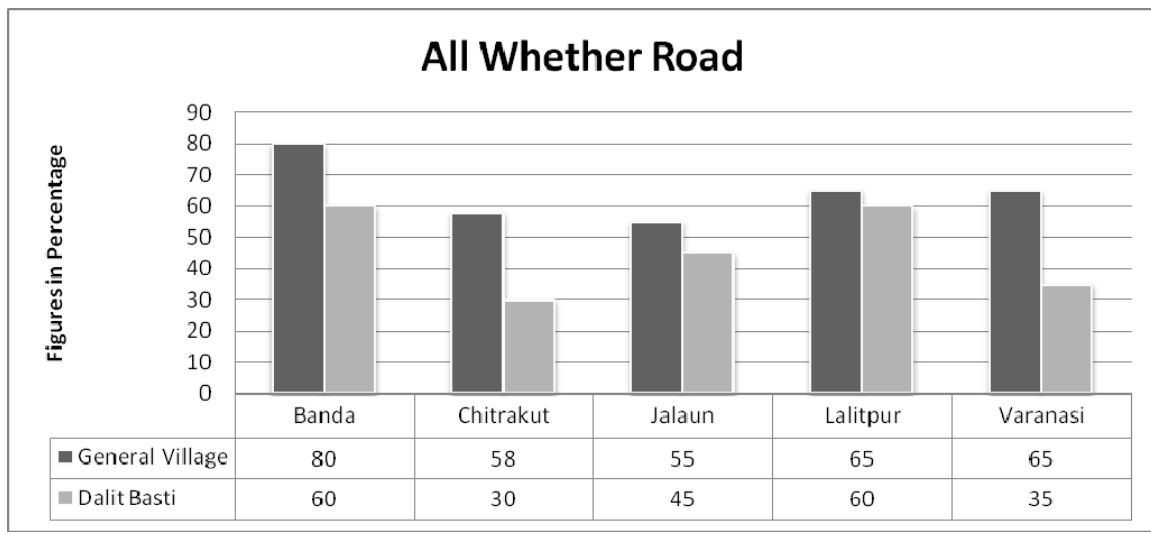


Most of the dalits in project area of all five districts own land less than 1 acre (30.5%) but large percentage of dalits (25.8%) are land less compare to 15.2 % of general community. As the land holding increases it is clear very few dalits (5.6%) own land between 5 to 10 acres and only 1.3% dalits own more than 10 acres in comparison to 3.5% from general community.

Hence it is clear that dalits mostly fall in the bracket of land less or owning land less than 1 acre.



## Condition of roads



Dalit community is again on losing side when it comes to physical access to resources in terms of roads. As the chart show dalit

bastis have lesser number of roads which are functional in all weather conditions in all the districts.

### **Social Security Benefits**

The effort was also made to find out and do a comparative analysis between general community and dalit community in terms of accessing the benefits of social security schemes. These are Public distribution scheme for food grains, National Old Age Pension, Widow Pension, Pension for Disability and Indira Awas Yojana.

### **Public distribution scheme-PDS**

The major criticism against the present methodology of categorization by which people are divided in different categories such as below poverty line (BPL), Antodaya scheme(AAY) and above poverty line(APL) that it is highly skewed and has large exclusion and inclusion errors leaving the

truly deserving being excluded from receiving the benefits.

As seen earlier though dalits have less than 1 acre land holding or are land less when we come to compare their access to food security scheme which will give them grains at low prices it is clear they seem to be out of the below poverty line and antodaya (meant for the most marginalized and poor people) category as seen from following table.

In all the categories of viz BPL, AAY and APL dalits have less access than general community. Only in district Lalitpur in case of AAY cards they are doing better than general community.

This categorization is extremely important as it determines access to most of the other social security benefits. And as it is clearly seen dalits are excluded from below poverty line category virtually excluding them from other social security benefits.

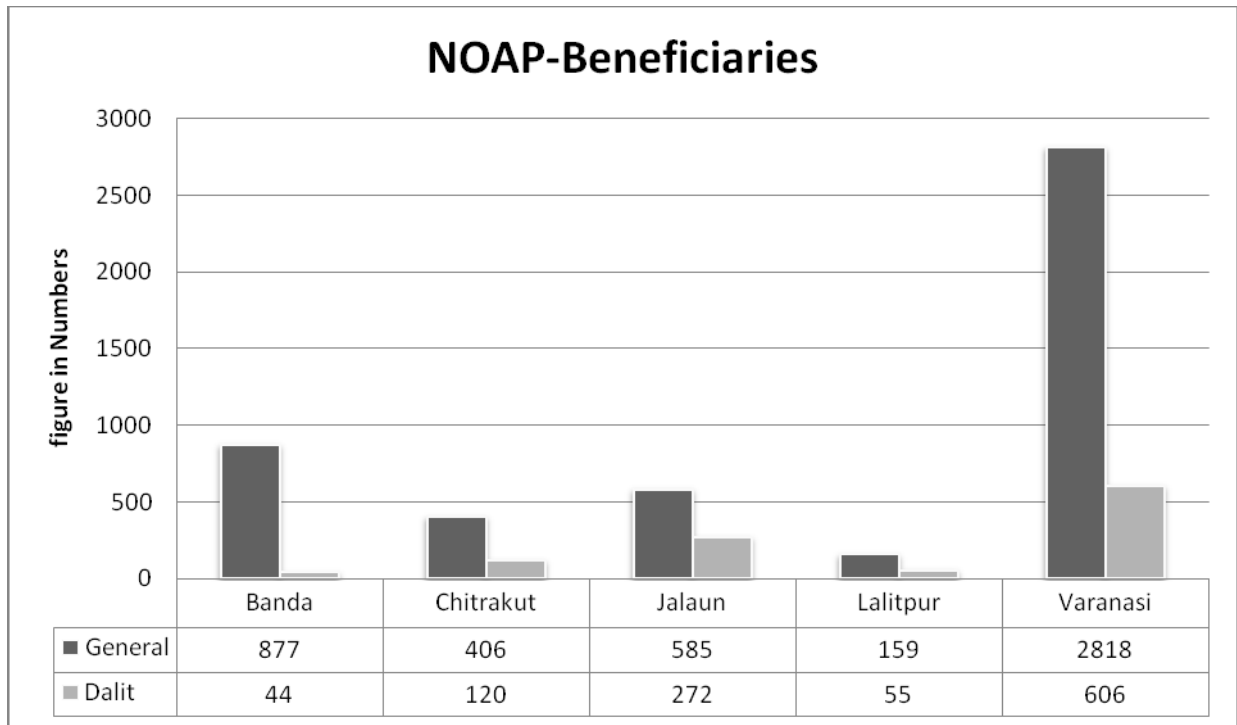
<b>Districts</b>	<b>General</b>				<b>Dalit</b>			
	<b>BPL</b>	<b>AAV</b>	<b>APL</b>	<b>No Card</b>	<b>BPL</b>	<b>AAV</b>	<b>APL</b>	<b>No Card</b>
Banda	1147	459	1894	0	102	63	74	104
Chitrakut	1032	466	1212	152	126	80	255	22
Jalaun	849	545	1233	69	428	305	171	67
Lalitpur	644	340	2936	391	372	1434	766	114
Varanasi	1936	1019	25380	0	414	248	2661	20

### National Old Age Pension Scheme

All the persons above 65 years of age and who are included in BPL (Below Poverty Line) category are entitled to receive the benefits of NOAPS. (Rs 200/- from Central government and Rs 200/- from State government).

The following picture emerges out of survey of project areas.

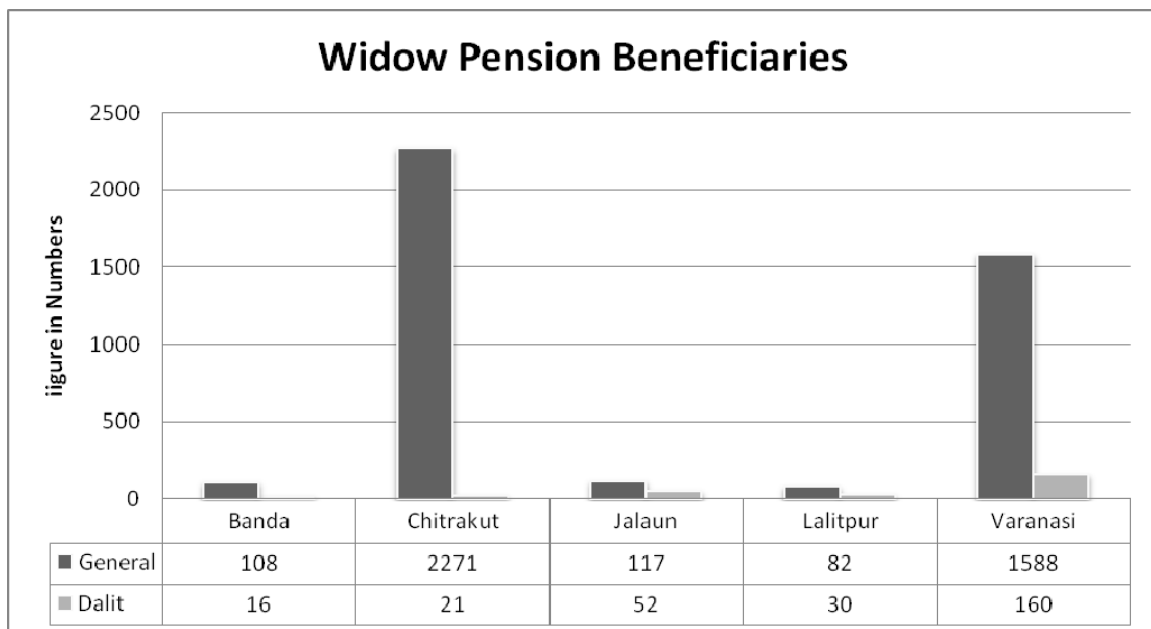
## Indira Gandhi NOAPS beneficiaries



As seen from the common chart dalits are in minority in receiving benefits in all the districts. In fact they do not even amount to half of the beneficiaries. Banda and Chitrakut present the worse picture and Jaloun is comparatively better off.

## Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme-

Widows belonging to BPL category aged 40 - 64 years are eligible for widow pension. As seen from the following chart



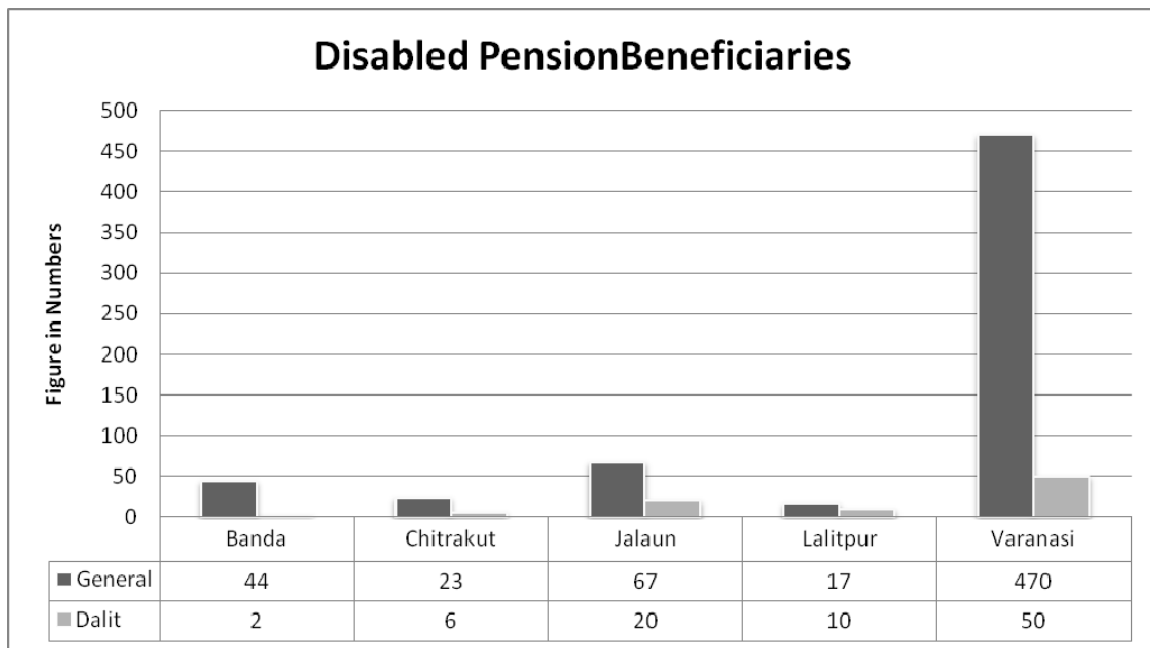
here again widows from dalit community are least benefited. District Chitrakut and Varanasi show alarming disparity in two communities.

Here again district Jaloun is comparatively better. Bundelkhand region comprises 7 districts in U.P. Bundelkhand is one of the less developed region of UP and has recently received national attention due to severe continuous drought. The project area has 4 out of 5 districts from Bundelkhand except varanasi which falls into Purvanchal (eastern) region. The reason for better situation in district Jaloun are two fold. Compare to other districts from Bundelkhand Jaloun has better irrigation facilities, it is linked to two canal branches and also has well spread out network of tubewells. Secondly it has large industrial area in Orai. The benefits of both these factors have percolated down and dalits have benefited marginally than in other districts. As an important district which has more budgetary allocation than any other

districts of Bundelkhand it has also seen better administrative systems.

## Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme

Any persons belonging to BPL category aged 18-64 years with severe and multiple disabilities are eligible for pension under IGNDPS.



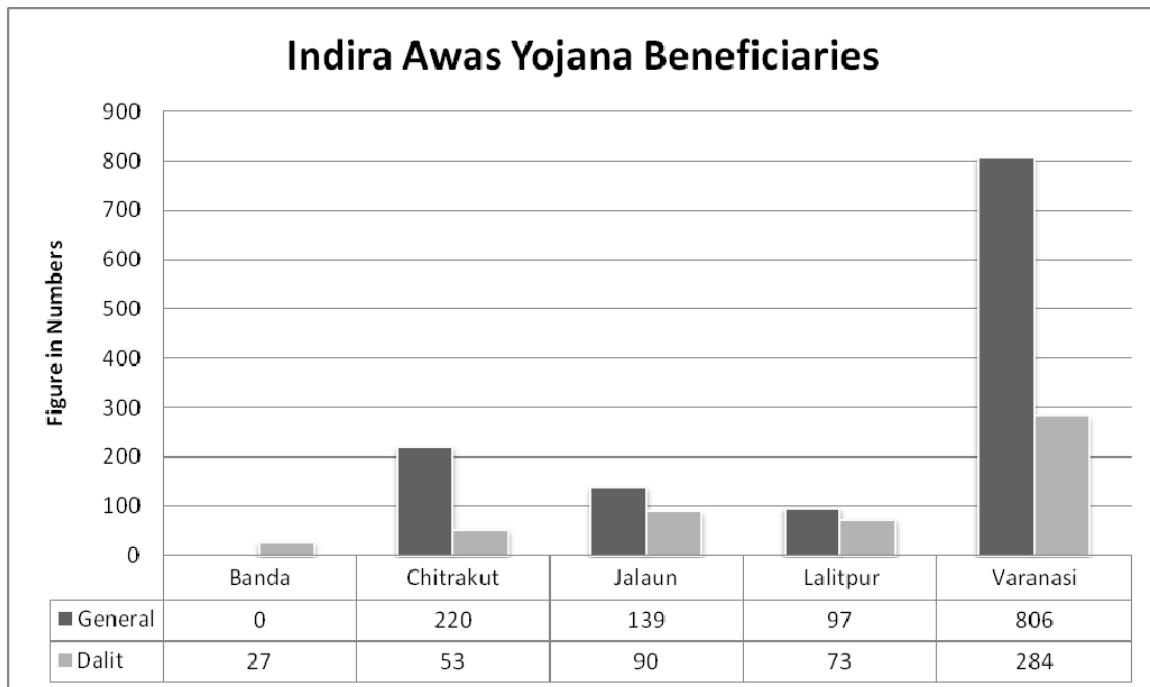
Here again the similar picture emerges where dalits in all the districts have benefited less



than the general category and districts Banda, Chitrakut and Varanasi are showing the worse results.

### **Indira Awas Yojana**

BPL rural households of Scheduled castes, Scheduled tribes, non-scheduled castes and non-scheduled tribes, ex-servicemen of the armed and paramilitary forces killed in action, physically and mentally challenged persons, freed labourers and Minorities are eligible to get assistance of Rs 35,000/- to construct the house.



The similar picture emerges where dalit community has been benefited less than the general community and district Chitrakut and Varanasi are showing more disparity.

### Profile in nutshell

The profile of a project area which clearly emerges from the above data is there are mainly 22 castes and subcastes, and chamars among scheduled castes are predominant, followed by Kori and Dhobi. Marginalised sub

castes Valmiki and Dhanuk are less in number and Kol are concentrated only in district Chitrakut. Dalits are more numerically than general castes in project area.

Dalits are mostly landless ( 25.8% ) or own land less than 1 acre ( 30.5% ). Only 1.3 % dalits own land more than 10 acres. Dalits have limited access to roads which are functional in all weather conditions.

In all the categories of ration cards dalits are benefited less than general communities. Dalits are excluded from below poverty line category virtually excluding them from other social security benefits.

Dalit community have benefited less than general community in accessing benefits of all other social security schemes.

The profile which clearly emerges is of a dalit community which is landless or with marginal landholding, and hence dependent on casual labour for survival and is

excluded from food and social security  
benefits.

## Mahatama Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act-MNREGA at a glance in project area

National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 (No 420 F 2005) (5th September'2005) "An Act to provide for the enhancement of livelihood security of the households in rural areas of the country by providing at least one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in every financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work."

The NREGA act guarantees 100 days of employment to all adults staying in rural areas irrespective of their gender, religion, caste.

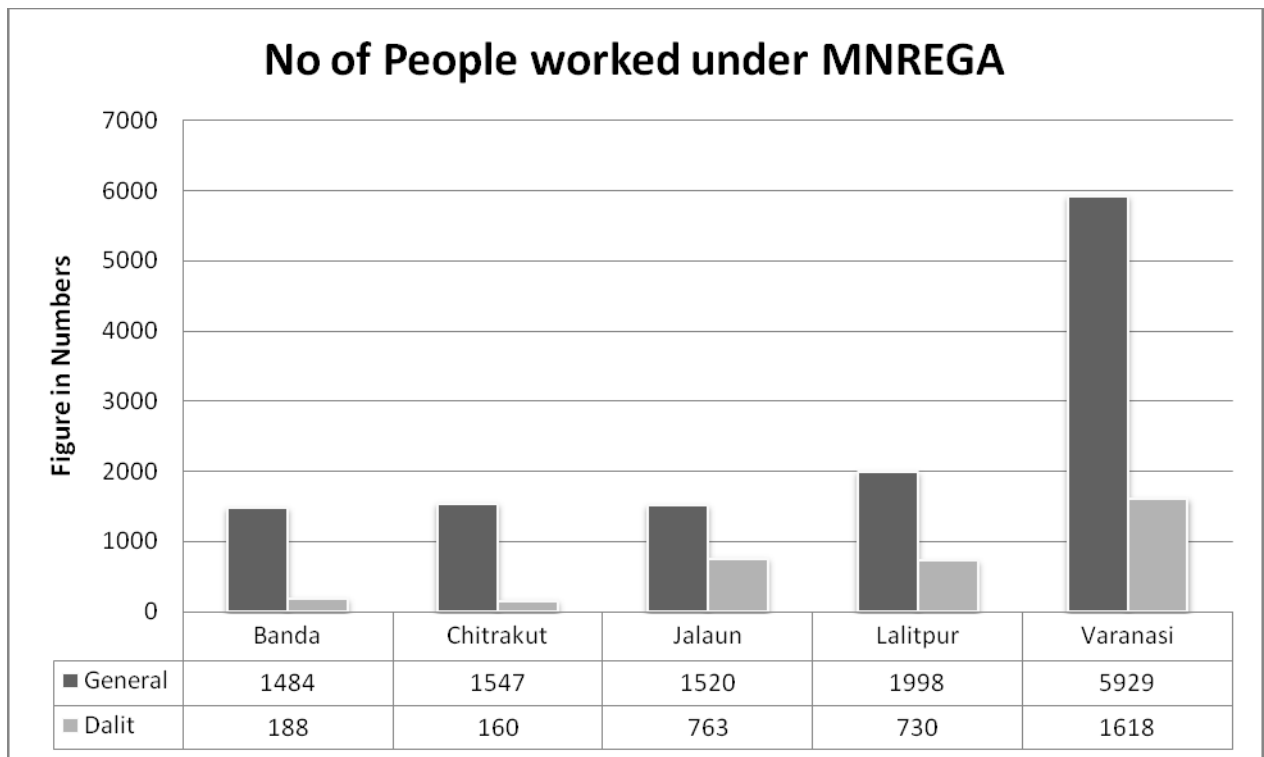
NREGA with its rights based framework is a paradigm shift from all earlier programmes. As per government this act is "people's act"

and it confers entitlements upon people and put their demands at a center stage.

### **Women employed under NREGA**

It is most imperative to find out whether government has been successful in providing employment to people and if yes, has there been any difference in employment provided to general community and dalit community.

The survey tried to find out the number of people who have worked under NREGA in last one year in villages from project area and then compare between employment given to general and dalit community.



As it emerges from above graph it is clear that more number of people from general community were successful in accessing the benefits of NREGA than dalit community. In all the districts except Jaloun they do not even comprise half the general population.

This chart when compared with the population figures in project area show interesting trends.

District	Number of people
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	Total (in numbers)	General (%)	SC (%)
Banda	1672	88.76	11.24
Chitrakoot	1707	90.63	9.37
Jalaun	2283	66.58	33.42
Lalitpur	2728	73.24	26.76
Varanasi	7547	78.56	21.44

The consistency in difference between general and dalit community being a beneficiary of NREGA is starkly obvious when we compare the percentage of people from both the communities. In all the districts except Jaloun, dalits do not even constitute one fourth of total people who were employed. In Jaloun percentage is 33.42% much better than Banda and Chitrakut but still it has not even reached half of general community.

It needs to be noted here that Jaloun was recognized for it best performance in NREGA on national level in 2009.



So it is stark truth that dalits have benefited less than general category in accessing benefits of NREGA.

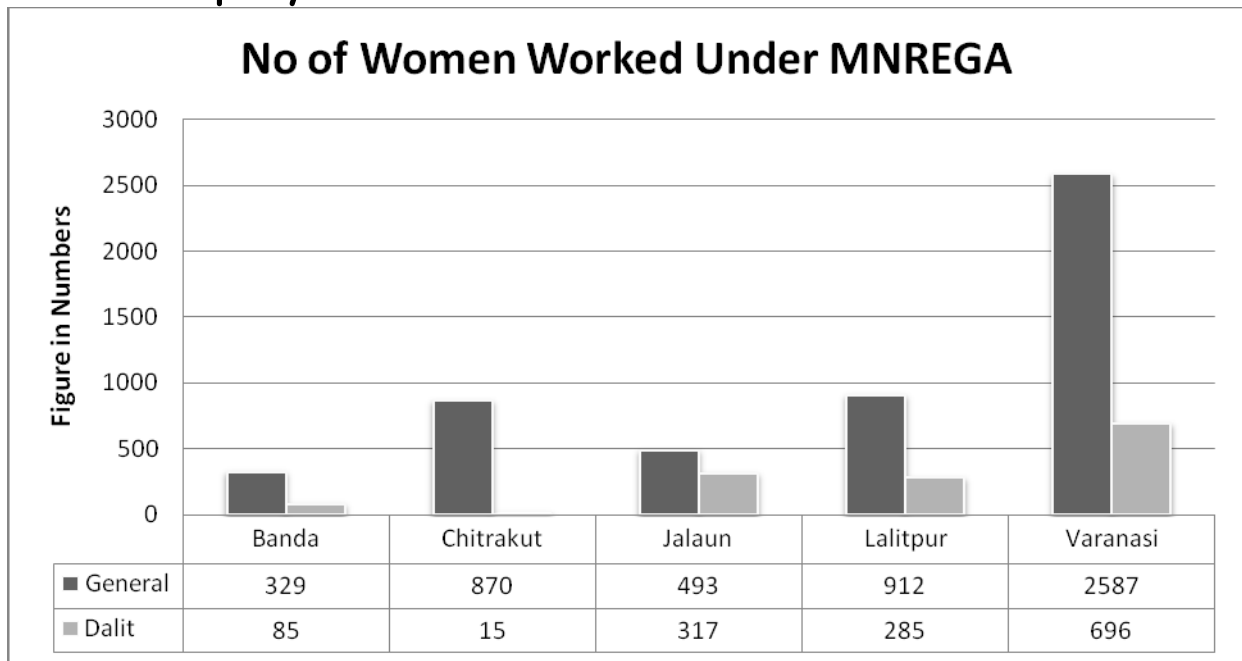
### **Women employed under NREGA**

NREGA 2005, Schedule II, Section 6, states, "While providing employment, priority shall be given to women in such a way that at least one-third of the beneficiaries shall be women who have registered and requested for work under the Scheme."

An effort was made to find out how many women were employed under NREGA in last one year and whether they constitute 33 percentages of people who were benefited under NREGA.

A cursory glance at figures in following graph show that number of women from both general and dalit community who benefited under NREGA is much smaller than total

number (both men and women) of people who were employed.



The above chart is self explanatory. In all the districts Banda, Chitrakut, Jaloun, Lalitpur and Varanasi two things are clear. One, in both the category general and dalit the percentage of women who got the employment under NREGA is much lower. Only in district Chitrakut 50.97% of women from general community were employed. District Banda and Jaloun show worse results but district Lalitpur and Varanasi have just managed to reach 33 percent.

<b>District</b>		<b>Number of women</b>	
		General (%)	SC (%)
	Total people in project area (in numbers)		
Banda	1672	19.68	5.08
Chitrakoot	1707	50.97	0.88
Jalaun	2283	21.60	13.89
Lalitpur	2728	33.43	10.45
Varanasi	7547	34.28	9.22

BUT when we do further analysis dalits women being left out of NREGA is obvious. In all the districts dalit women have not even crossed one fourth of the percentage. In district Chitrakut where 50 percent of women benefited from general community only miniscule 0.88 percent of dalit women were employed. This is true for all other districts as well as in Banda district only 5.08 percent

of dalit women are employed while in districts Lalitpur they are 10.45 percent and in district Varanasi only 9.22 percent. Even in Jaloun which was recognised for its better performance only 13.89 percent dalit women were benefited.

Dalit women in Uttar Pradesh are marginalized and kept out of this safety net of NREGA employment.

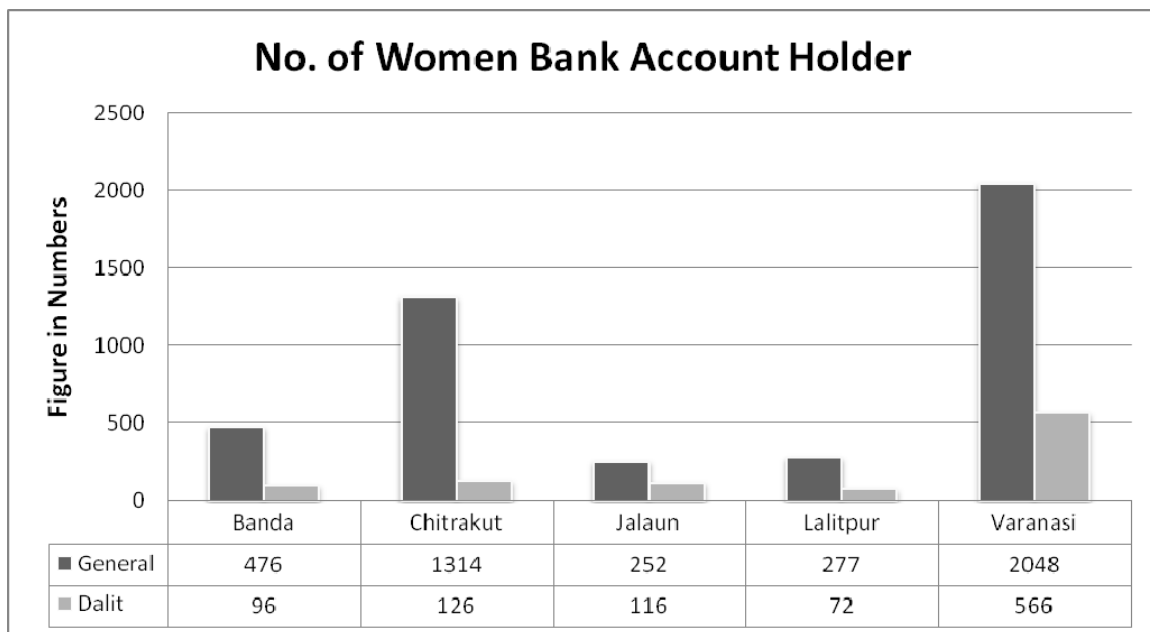
### Dalit women's access to their wages

NREGA provided a strong leveling ground as equal remuneration for both men and women was accepted as basic principle. But it is also critical to analyze whether women has access to those wages.

In the initial stages all over India wages were paid in cash which led to huge pilferage in wage payments to labourers and many cases a mammoth corruption in payment of wages to labourers who were at the receiving end. The

central and state government then made direct payments through banks or post offices obligatory in NREGA works. Though it is highly recommended that there should be separate bank account in the name of women labourers or at least joint account with their family most of the time these norms are not followed.

As we observe in the following graph the number of women who had bank account in their names is low in both general and dalit community.



And as we analyze further it is ver clear that less number of dalit women have bank accounts in their names in all five districts in comparision to women from general community. This is expected as dalit women are deprived of NREGA benefits in general as seen earlier and with their limited access to implementing aothorities at village, block and district level they were left out.

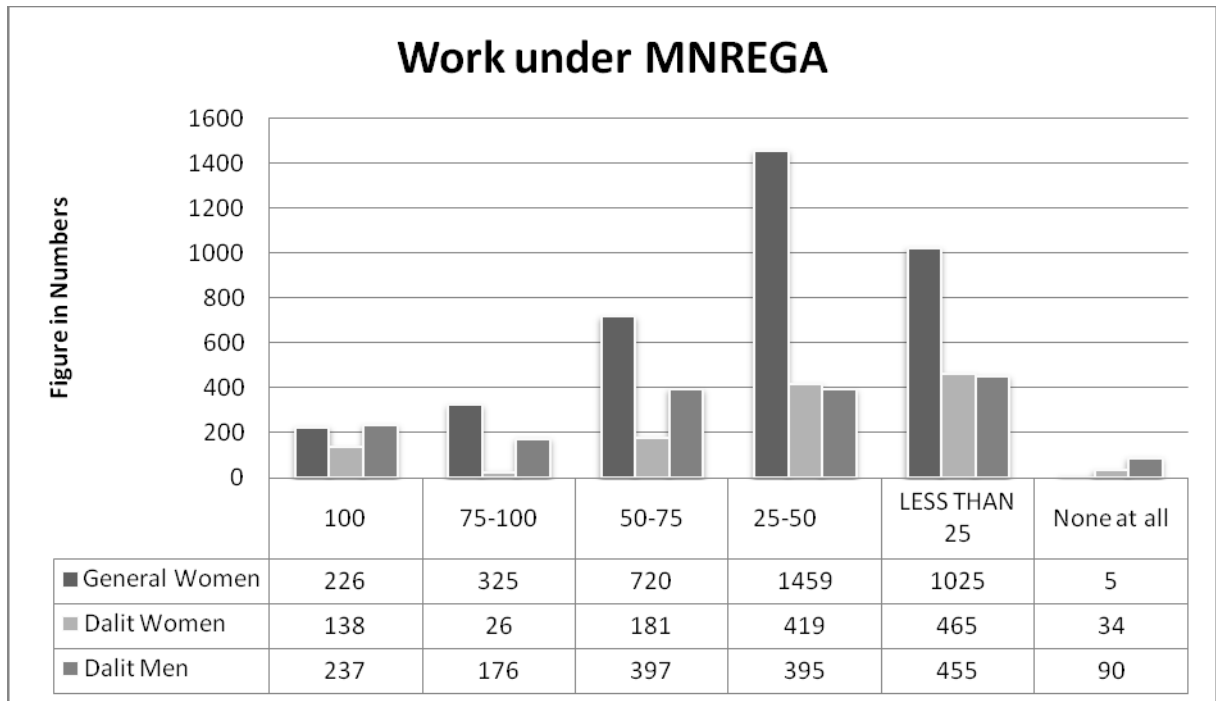
### **Number of work days under NREGA**

Chapter III Section 4 (1) of the NREGA reads " For the purposes of giving effect to the provisions of section 3, every State Government shall, within six months from the date of commencement of this Act, by notification, make a Scheme, for providing not less than one hundred days of guaranteed employment in a financial year to every household in the rural areas covered under the Scheme and whose adult members, by

application, volunteer to do unskilled manual work subject to the conditions laid down by or under this Act and in the Scheme."

The guarantee of 100 days to household is a critical feature in the Act. Though 100 days are not sufficient enough to provide livelihood security to rural poor this 100 days guarantee at least provide some relief to rural poor.

An effort was made to find out number of days completed by women from general community, dalit men and dalit women under NREGA.



As seen from the above graph both dalit men and women have benefited lesser than women from general community to complete not only 100 days but many of them were not employed even for a single day.

It is interesting to note that all i.e. women from general community and men and women from dalit community are concentrated in two brackets-most of them were either employed for less than 25 days or they have worked between 25 to 50 days.



As number of guaranteed work days rises from zero to 100 days we clearly see decline in number of people from all categories in accessing those work days. So it is crystal clear that government has failed to provide guarantee of 100 days to rural poor.

Dalit women being on the last step and are most marginalised in terms of receiving benefits is also clear as number of guaranteed days rises they have benefited lesser than both other categories - women from general community and also from men from dalit community.

The marginalization of dalit women from NREGA is the matter of grave concern and hence intervention.

### **Providing sustainable livelihood**

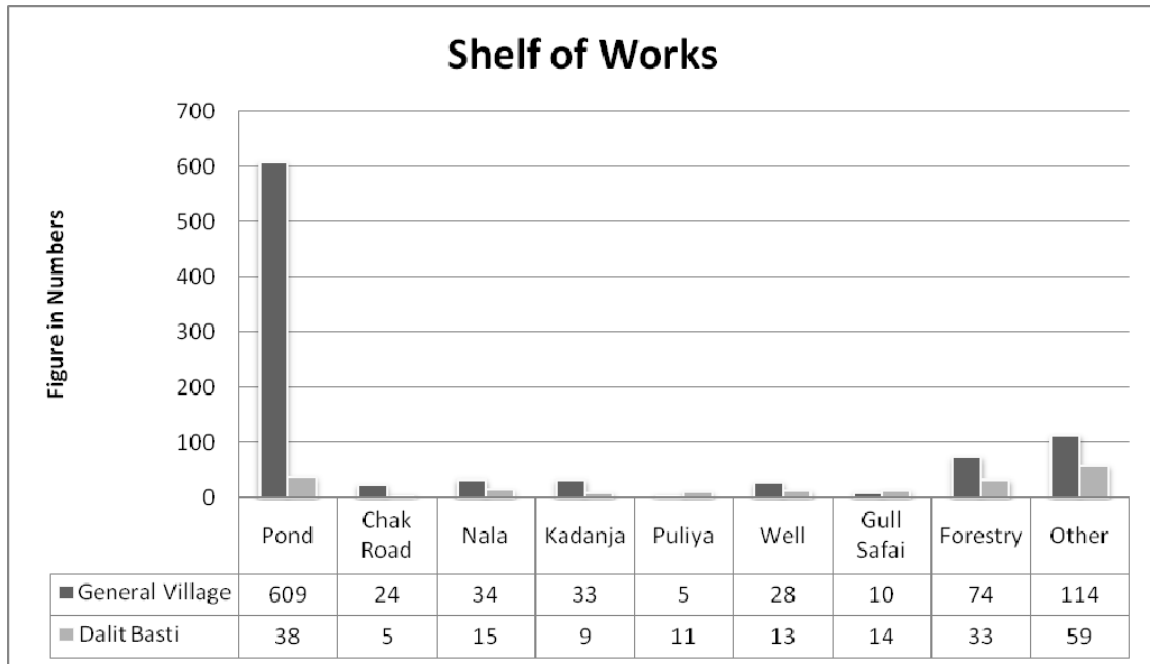
NREGA aims is not only to provide guarantee of employment to rural poor but it aims to

build resources in rural areas which will lead to opportunities for sustainable livelihood for rural poor.

An effort was made to find out number of works which were carried in village as general and in dalit area. An effort was also made to find out the type /shelf of works thus carried.

As per the Act works has to be selected in village panchayats. NREGA has further made provisions to carry works on the land holdings of Scheduled castes and Scheduled tribes and also on land holdings of people belonging to BPL category.

The critical analysis whether these shelf of work has led to providing opportunities for sustainable livelihood will need deeper and longitudinal studies but this is a cursory glance at number of works selected and completed in village and in dalit basti.



As we see clearly from the above graph more number of works were carried on in village where other communities reside than in dalit bastis in all types of categories.

Out of the types of works ponds, forestry related work and wells which are more likely to provide further sustainable livelihood opportunities were built in general village than in dalit bast. 609 ponds in village in comparison to only 38 in dalit basti. Under the specific work which were specified in NREGA for sustainable livelihood creation of

water bodies such as ponds were given utmost importance but here again dalits who could have used this opportunity to strengthen their meagre land holdings are clearly left out of this opportunity.

In conclusion, dalit on whole are marginalised from benefits of NREGA and dalit women are the one who are totally left behind in accessing the benefits of NREGA.