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## Job opportunities for migrant workers, landless and marginal farmers during COVID-19 Pandemic

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**Abstract**

During COVID-19 pandemic and job crisis, migrant workers, landless and marginal farmers may get job opportunities with the adoption of new enterprises. We can provide job opportunities as well as means of income generation to the landless and marginal farmers/laboures during the situation of lockdown period. Most of the workers are landless and marginal farmers and they are searching job opportunities and make solution of the financial crisis so that they may fulfill the basic needs of the family. That is why landless and marginal farmers need such job opportunities which make them self-reliable in term of income and employment oriented. In such a way, these laboures may be able to get self-reliance (on short term and long term basis) after adopting new enterprises and may help the family members during this COVID-19 outbreak. Job oriented enterprises like Kadaknath poultry rearing, goat farming, vermicomposting; MANREGA, farm operations, azola production, collection of non-timber forest production etc. may trigger the life of migrant landless workers and the family members in terms of income and employment generation.

**Keywords:** Job opportunities, Kadaknath poultry rearing, goat farming, vermicomposting, Manrega, NTFP

**Introduction**

India is the second largest populated country in the world. A large part of the population in India is suffering from unemployment. In Covid 19 virus attack, it may have spread and thus the sudden reduction of income is triggered by job losses of those who had migrated to cities, is taking its toll. Millions of migrant workers left jobless by India's coronavirus lockdown. In such situation, many migrant workers are coming back to the villages from various states of the country. Now they are facing financial and employment problems. Most of the workers are landless and marginal farmers and they are urgently required job opportunities and make solution of the financial crisis. Even as the nationwide lockdown is yet to end and the wounds of migrant labourers are still fresh, the workers have started to come back to the job market. Financial uncertainty and the poor living conditions amid coronavirus lockdown have forced the labourers to start hunting for jobs at earliest. That is why landless and marginal farmers need such job opportunities which make them self reliable in term of income and employment oriented. Central and State government are trying to improve the conditions of migrant workers by adopting few measures or schemes to encourage lakhs of migrant workers, but it is very difficult to provide work opportunities to every migrant laboures Therefore it is need a plan to make self reliance of these labourers by providing economic, social and administrative support with sustainable manner.

### Job opportunities for migrant workers, landless and marginal farmers during COVID-19 Pandemic

#### Government Schemes for income and employment generation

##### 1. MGNREGA

MGNREGA is a scheme sponsored by Center Government who provides the job/ work opportunities for 100 days of village workers/ peoples. Migrant workers need cash for their day-to-day needs that why MGNREGA may play important role for employment generation but its job period and work listed must be extended. Under the MGNREGA, the following works are includes.

- MGNREGA: Labour rate @ 190/day
- Water conservation structures like ponds & bund formation
- Digging of Nalas for water conservation
- Construction of Contour and trenching

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- Stone pitching for water & soil conservation
- Well deepening under Kapil dhara scheme
- Engagement of migrant labour in plantation (MIYAWAKI technology)
- Contour tencing
- Boulder check dam

- Construction of vermicompost & NADEP pit
- Nala trenching


**Agricultural and livestock enterprises for income and employment generation**

**Table 1:** There are various enterprises are found profitable in different regions which can be adopted in rural as well as nearby cities as per areas specific requirement.


Name of enterprises	Details of Technology
Small scale poultry farming	Kadaknath poultry rearing in semi intensive system (10 X 15 feet house), 100 chicks; Net Profit Rs. 34050/ unit/ cycle (3.5 months) and Avg. income/ month/ farmer is Rs. 8512
Goatery	10+1 Desi goat rearing; Net profit Rs. 105140/ year/ unit and Avg. income/ month/ farmer is Rs. 8761/-
Vermicomposting	Heap system (10'x3'x2'); income started after two months, production 4 q x 3= 12 q/year. Income is Rs. 12000
Farming	Land preparation and FYM application
Dairy and SHGs	Engagement in dairy societies and women self-help groups
Nursery	Engagement in nursery for preparing of seedlings and saplings
Collection of Mahua through net and storage for shelf life	Pro bags to tribal farmers under NTFP for shelf life of Mahua. Farmers may get rate of Rs. 40/ kg & 50% more income as compared to before intervention.
Online Trainings	Online Trainings on Poultry, goatery, vermicomposting, hi-tech horticulture, GAP etc.

**Interventions for income and employment generation**

**Table 2:** Rearing of Kadaknath & Narmadanidhi poultry


Work opportunity	Avg. Size of unit	Per unit cost of production	Sale value of the produce in the market /year	Profit from the units (Rs/ year)	Employment generation (Avg. Man days/ unit/ year)
Rearing of Kadaknath & Narmadanidhi poultry	10'X15' (50 birds unit)	72900	600/ bird	102150	210
					
Rearing of Kadaknath & Narmadanidhi poultry at Village level					

**Table 3:** Goat rearing for livelihood and employment generation


Work opportunity	Avg. Size of unit	Per unit cost of production	Sale value of the produce in the market /year	Profit from the units (Rs/year)	Employment generation (Avg. Man days/ unit/year)
Goat rearing	10'X15' (10 goats unit)	33860	10000/ goat	105140	195
					
Goat rearing for livelihood and employment generation at Village level					



**Table 4:** Nursery management

Work opportunity	Avg. Size of unit	Per unit cost of production	Sale value of the produce in the market /year	Profit from the units (Rs/year)	Employment generation (Avg. Man days/ unit/year)
Nursery management	25mX10 m= 250 m <sup>2</sup>	65000	Rs.1.25/seedling and Rs. 10/sapling of cucurbits	112500	132
					
<b>Nursery management for employment and income generation</b>					

**Table 5:** Collection, storage and value addition of non-timber forest produce (NTFP)

Work opportunity	Avg. Size of unit	Cost of flower collection/tree	Sale value of the produce in the market /year	Net Profit (Rs/tree)	Employment generation (Avg. Man days/ unit/year)
Non timber forest produce	Collection of mahua flower on green net and storage in probag for remunerative price	4500	Rs.30/kg	14500	90
					
<b>Non-timber forest produce collection by tribals for employment and income generation</b>					

**Table 6:** Establishment of Vermicompost unit

No. of Vermi Unit/ Pit	Area of each unit / Pit	Production per unit (q)	Per year production (q)
12	Size 10'x3'x2'= 60 Cu. feet	24 q/pit/year (4 q x 6 cycle in a year)	24x12 pits=288 q

S. No.	Particulars	Economics
1.	Sale Rate	Compost-Rs. 5/ kg & Worm – Rs.500/kg
2.	Expenditure	Labour: Rs.1000x12=12,000/- Fixed cost: 60000 (First year) Total cost for 12 pits= 72000
3.	Income	Compost Rs. 1,44,000 & Worm Rs. 18,000/- Total= Rs 1,62,000/-
4.	Net Income	Rs. 90,000/-
5.	Employment generation (Avg. Man days/ unit/year)	210



**Establishment of Vermicompost unit for employment and income generation**

**Engagement of labourers in Dairy and SHGs:** During lockdown period, Government has given permission to many dairy managers and SHG groups to supply of essential commodities like milk, vegetables, fruits and other grocery items to the door steps of common people. Many dairy and SHG groups are required unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled workers to provide facilities. These groups may provide quick employment and income generation to migrant workers at the earliest.

**Farming works:** During lock period, many farm activities are going on at farmer's fields. Farmers may engage migrant labourers at their fields for application of FYM, cleaning of bunds, fencing, bund formation, soil and water conservation measures. Migrant labours may get job opportunities for employment and income generation.

**Online trainings on Poultry, goatery, vermicomposting, hi-tech horticulture, GAP etc.:** Many KVKs, Government organizations and NGOs are running online trainings to aware and get motivate the farmers and migrant workers towards job opportunities at the earliest and theses institutions are trying to make them self sufficient and reliable on government schemes and measures taken during lockdown period. Much online training on poultry, goatery, vermicomposting, hi-tech horticulture, good agricultural practices (GAP) are running and providing facilities to get jobs and employment at village level at the earliest.

### Conclusion

During COVID-19 pandemic and job crisis, landless and marginal farmers/laboures may get job opportunities with the adoption of above enterprises. We can provide job opportunities as well as means of income generation to the landless and marginal farmers/laboures during the situation of lockdown period. These labours may be able to get self-reliance (on short term and long term basis) after adopting above enterprises and may help the family members during this COVID-19 outbreak.

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