

Effectiveness of Social Audit in MGNREGA: A Case Study of Sirsa District of Haryana

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‘Audit’ is a Latin word which is translated as ‘to hear’ in English. Audit is not a recent activity but is a practice that was adopted in the ancient time by emperors to analyze the public judgment towards their rule and policies. The input of masses was then used to alter the policies. Social audit is an important means to achieve good governance by promoting transparency, accountability and participation. On the one hand, it empowers people in general and marginalized people in particular on the other hand; it provides opportunity to implementing authorities to consult stakeholders to improve service delivery and effectiveness of developmental programme.

The Basic Principles of Social Audit

According to the MGNREGA Act, the basic principles of social audit include:

- **Transparency:** Complete transparency in the process of administration and decision-making, with an obligation on the government to give the people full access to all relevant information.
- **Participation:** A right based entitlement for all the affected persons (and not just their representatives) to participate in the process of decision making and validation.
- **Representative Participation:** In those rare cases where options are pre-determined out of necessity, the right of the affected persons to give informed consent, as a group or as individuals, as appropriate.
- **Accountability:** Immediate public answerability of elected representatives and government functionaries, to all the concerned and affected people, on relevant actions or inactions.

EFFECTIVENESS OF SOCIAL AUDIT

Status of Social Audit in Sirsa Districts of Haryana: Total number of Social Audits and Issues raised and action taken in MGNREGA in last three years in respective districts has been given in the table 1.

Table 1: Status of Social Audit in Sirsa District

Year	Total Gram Panchayats	No. of Gram Panchayats covered under social audit	Total No. of Social Audits	Issues Raised and Action Taken
2011-12	334	334 (100)	668	369
2012-13	334	334 (100)	668	605
2013-14	334	334 (100)	668	670

Source: www.nrega.nic.in

Note: Figures in the parentheses denote percentages

Data presented in table 1 revealed that in district Sirsa 100 percent gram panchayats had been covered under social audit during the last three years. During the three years total numbers of social audits were 668 in each year in the district Sirsa. This showed the good performance of Sirsa district in conducting the social audit. Sirsa district had conducted two social audits in a year in every gram panchayat. The issues raised and action taken were highest i.e. 369, 605 and 670 in the Sirsa district during the last three years.

Status of Social Audit in selected Gram Panchayats of Sirsa District

Table 2: Status of Social Audit in Selected Gram Panchayats of Sirsa District

Year	Gram Panchayats	Total No. of Social Audit	Issues Raised and Action Taken
2011-12	Chautala	02	02
	Ganga	02	02
2012-13	Chautala	02	02
	Ganga	02	02
2013-14	Chautala	02	02
	Ganga	02	02

Source: www.nrega.nic.in

Data presented in the table 2 revealed that in the gram panchayats Chautala and Ganga of district Sirsa, two social audits were conducted during the three years as mentioned in the Act at least one social audit in every six months. The gram panchayats Chautala and Ganga had found only two issues every year in the social audits and were only related to delay in payment of wages. No other issues were found in any gram panchayats during the three years.

Awareness level of beneficiaries

Awareness is the major factors that determine successful implementation of poverty alleviating schemes. However, majority of the rural population in developing countries have low levels of literacy. Thus, creating awareness among the rural masses about any of these development programmes has been a major concern among the policy makers in these countries. One of the most demanding challenges for any anti poverty scheme to succeed is the task of generating awareness about the scheme among the targeted population. Without awareness about these schemes, there is always a possibility that full benefits may not accrue to the intended beneficiaries. Also, some segments of the targeted population which are unaware of the implemented scheme may be left out. As a result, the impact of the implemented welfare programme, howsoever well laid, will be marginal and can lead to inequalities.

In order to know the effectiveness about awareness about MGNREGA among beneficiaries a question regarding the knowledge about the MGNREGA were asked from all the selected beneficiaries of the both sampled gram panchayats. The responses of the beneficiaries have been given in the table 3. Data presented in table 3 showed that all the selected beneficiaries were aware about the MGNREGA.

Table 3: Beneficiaries' Response to Awareness about MGNREGA

District	Gram Panchayats	Yes	No
Sirsa	Chautala	60 (100)	-
	Ganga	60 (100)	-

Source: Field Survey, Note: Figures in the parentheses denote percentages

Awareness about Gram Sabha among Beneficiaries of MGNREGA: The Gram Sabha provides a platform to all villagers to seek and obtain all information regarding the implementation of MGNREGA. It provides a platform to any person who wants any information about MGNREGA. In order to know the awareness about MGNREGA among beneficiaries, a

question regarding the knowledge about Gram Sabha were asked from all the selected beneficiaries of the sampled gram panchayats. The responses of the beneficiaries have been given in the table 4.

Table 4: Beneficiaries' Response to Awareness about Gram Sabha

.District	Gram Panchayats	Yes	No
Sirsa	Chautala	46 (77)	14 (23)
	Ganga	32 (53)	28 (47)

Source: Field Survey, Note: Figures in the parentheses denote percentages; per cent are in round figure

Data presented in table 4 revealed that in gram panchayat Chautala 77 per cent and in gram panchayat Ganga only 53 per cent beneficiaries were aware about the Gram Sabha. Since all the decisions regarding the work under MGNREGA have been taken in the Gram Sabha, lack of awareness about the Gram Sabha was a big loop-hole in the implementation of MGNREGA. There was a need of awareness about the Gram Sabha among the rural people. Proper and regular announcement should be made in the villages regarding the Gram Sabha meeting.

Awareness about Social Audit System among Beneficiaries of MGNREGA: In order to know the awareness about MGNREGA among beneficiaries a question regarding the knowledge about Social Audit System were asked from all the selected beneficiaries of the sampled gram panchayats. The responses of the beneficiaries have been given in the table 5.

Table 5: Beneficiaries' Response to Awareness about Social Audit System

District	Gram Panchayats	Yes	No
Sirsa	Chautala	33(55.00)	27 (45.00)
	Ganga	11(18)	49(82)

Source: Field Survey

Note: Figures in the parentheses denote percentages

Note: per cent are in round figure.

Data presented in table 5 showed that in gram panchayat Chautala only 55 per cent and in gram panchayat Ganga only 18 per cent beneficiaries were aware about the about the Social Since all the records pertaining to the works and payments under MGNREGA have been taken in the Social Audit System, lack of awareness about the Social Audit system was a big loop-hole in the implementation of MGNREGA. There was a need of awareness about the Social Audit system

among the rural people. Proper and regular announcement should be made in the villages regarding the Social Audit System meeting.

Awareness about Monitoring and Vigilance Committee: In order to know the awareness about MGNREGA among beneficiaries a question regarding the knowledge about Monitoring and vigilance committee were asked from all the selected beneficiaries of the sampled gram panchayats. The responses of the beneficiaries have been given in the table 6.

Table 6: Awareness about Monitoring and Vigilance Committee among Beneficiaries of MGNREGA

District	Gram Panchayats	Yes	No
Sirsa	Chautala	09 (15)	51 (85)
	Ganga	00	60 (100)

Source: Field Survey

Note: Figures in the parentheses denote percentages; per cent are in round figure.

Data presented in table 6 revealed that only 15 per cent beneficiaries of gram panchayat Chautala were aware about Monitoring and vigilance committee, whereas the beneficiaries of the gram panchayats Ganga not aware about the monitoring and vigilance committee under MGNREGA. Since all the activities and works carried out under MGNREGA could be checked by the monitoring and vigilance committee, lack of awareness about the Monitoring and vigilance committee was a big loop-hole in the implementation of MGNREGA. There was a great need of awareness about the monitoring and vigilance committee among the rural people.

Regular Visit of Monitoring and Vigilance Committee to the Worksite: According to MGNREGA monitoring and vigilance committee should visit regularly at the worksite. In order to know the visit of monitoring and vigilance committee at worksite in the selected gram panchayats, following data have been obtained and presented in the table 7.

Table 7: Beneficiaries' Response related Regular Visit of Monitoring and Vigilance Committee to the Worksite

District	Gram Panchayats	Yes	No
Sirsa	Chautala	00	60 (100)
	Ganga	00	60 (100)

Source: Field Survey

Note: Figures in the parentheses denote percentages

Data presented in table 7 shows that monitoring and vigilance committee have not visited at worksite in the selected gram panchayats. It is suggested that monitoring and vigilance committee should visit regularly the worksite so that MGNREGA can be implemented effectively.

Wages Paid within Seven Days: According to MGNREGA wages of the worker should be paid within a week. In order to know the wages paid within seven days in the selected gram panchayats, following data has been obtained and presented in the table 8.

Table 8: Beneficiaries' Response related Wages Paid within Seven Days

District	Gram Panchayats	Yes	No
Sirsa	Chautala	00	60 (100)
	Ganga	00	60 (100)

Source: Field Survey, Note: % are in round figure.

Note: Figures in the parentheses denote percentages

Data presented in table 8 shows that in the both selected gram panchayats, wages were not paid within seven days. It is suggested that wages should be paid within time to the beneficiaries so that MGNREGA can be implemented effectively.

Verification of Job Cards of HHs

According to MGNREGA social audit committee should verify the job cards of HHs and cross check them with bank passbook. In order to know whether social audit committee verify job cards of HHs and cross check them with bank passbook following data has been obtained and presented in the table 9.

Table 9: Beneficiaries' Response related Verification of Job cards of HHs and Cross Check them with Bank Passbook

District	Gram Panchayats	Yes	No
Sirsa	Chautala	00	60 (100)
	Ganga	00	60 (100)

Source: Field Survey

Note: Figures in the parentheses denote percentages

Data presented in table 9 shows that in the both villages Social Audit committee have not verified the job cards of HHs and not cross check them with bank passbook. It is suggested that Social Audit committee should verify job cards of HHs and cross check them with the bank passbook so that MGNREGA can be implemented effectively.

Submission of Social Audit Committee's Report in Gram Sabha: According to MGNREGA, Social Audit committee should submit its report in gram sabha at gram panchayat level. In order to know whether Social Audit committee submitted its report in gram sabha data has been obtained from the beneficiaries and presented in the table 10.

Table 10: Beneficiaries' Response about Report submitted by Village level Social Audit Committee in Gram Sabha

District	Gram Panchayats	Yes	No
Sirsa	Chautala	00	60 (100)
	Ganga	00	60 (100)

Source: Field Survey, Note: Figures in the parentheses denote percentages

Data presented in table 10 shows that in both selected gram panchayats'; social audit committee has not submitted its report in gram sabha at gram panchayat level. It is suggested that Social Audit committee should submitted its report in gram sabha at gram panchayat level so that MGNREGA can be implemented effectively.

Summary of Bills, Muster rolls and measurement book read out in Gram Sabha to check for discrepancies: According to MGNREGA, summary of bills, muster rolls and measurement book should be read out in gram sabha to check for discrepancies. In order to know whether summary of bills, muster rolls and measurement book have been read out in gram sabha to check for discrepancies, data has been obtained from the beneficiaries and presented in the table 11.

Table 11: Summary of Bills, Muster Rolls and Measurement Book read out in Gram Sabha to check for Discrepancies

District	Gram Panchayats	Yes	No
Sirsa	Chautala	00	60 (100)
	Ganga	00	60 (100)

Source: Field Survey

Note: Figures in the parentheses denote percentages

Data presented in table 11 shows that in the both gram panchayats, summary of bills, muster rolls and measurement book have not been read out in gram sabha to check for discrepancies at gram panchayat level. It is suggested that summary of mills, muster rolls and measurement book should be read out in gram sabha to check for discrepancies.

Beneficiaries' Response about Audit of Staff in MGNREGS: According to MGNREGA issues of MGNREGS staff (Rojgar Sevak, Mate etc.) should be audited in gram sabha. In order to know whether issues of MGNREGS staff have been audited in gram sabha, the data have been obtained from the beneficiaries and presented in the table 12.

Table 12: Beneficiaries' Response related Audit of Staff in MGNREGS

District	Gram Panchayats	Yes	No
Sirsa	Chautala	00	60 (100)
	Ganga	00	60 (100)

Source: Field Survey

Note: Figures in the parentheses denote percentages

Data presented in table 12 shows that MGNREGS staff has not been audited in gram sabha in the both gram panchayats. It is suggested that MGNREGS staff should be audited in gram sabha, so that MGNREGA can be implemented effectively.

Suggestions:

1. There was a need of awareness about the Gram Sabha and social audit among the rural people so that maximum people's participation can be possible. Proper and regular announcement should be made in the villages regarding the Gram Sabha and social audit meeting.
2. People should be aware about the monitoring and vigilance committee so that people can monitor the works done under MGNREGA.
3. It is suggested that Social Audit committee should verify job cards of HHs and cross check them with the bank passbook so that MGNREGA can be implemented effectively.
4. It is suggested that Social Audit committee should submitted its report in gram sabha at gram panchayat level so that MGNREGA can be implemented effectively.
5. Summary of bills, muster rolls and measurement book must be read out in gram sabha so that rural people can check for discrepancies at gram panchayat level.