



# drishti

## Social Audit of Social Sector Schemes

---

 [drishtias.com/printpdf/social-audit-of-social-sector-schemes](https://drishtias.com/printpdf/social-audit-of-social-sector-schemes)

### Why in News

---

The **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** has formulated a scheme, namely **Information-Monitoring, Evaluation and Social Audit (I-MESA)** in FY 2021-22.

### Key Points

---

- **About the I-MESA Scheme:**
  - Under this scheme, Social Audits are to be conducted for all the schemes of the Department starting FY 2021-22.
  - These social audits are done through **Social Audit Units (SAU)** of the **States** and **National Institute for Rural Development and Panchayati Raj**.
- **Important Schemes of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment:**
  - **Schemes for Economic Development:**
    - Credit Enhancement Guarantee Scheme for the Scheduled Castes (SCs)
    - **National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC)**
    - **National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC)**
    - Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Caste Sub Plan (SCA to SCSP)
    - Scheme of Assistance to Scheduled Castes Development Corporations (SCDCs)
  - **Self Employment:**
    - **Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers (SRMS)**
    - **Venture Capital Fund For Scheduled Castes**
  - **Schemes for Social Empowerment:**
    - Centrally Sponsored Scheme for implementation of the **Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955** and the **Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989**
    - **Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY)**

### Social Audit

- 
- **About:**
    - **Meaning:** Social Audit is the **audit of a scheme jointly by the Government and the people**, especially by those who are affected by the scheme or its beneficiaries.
    - **Benefits:** It is a powerful tool **to promote transparency, accountability and people's participation** in the schemes meant for them.
      - A social audit helps to **narrow gaps between vision/goal and reality, between efficiency and effectiveness.**
    - **Status:**
      - **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) was the first Act to mandate Social Audit** by the **Gram Sabha** of all the projects taken up in the Gram Panchayat.
      - Most States have set up an independent **Social Audit Unit (SAU)** and some have even begun to facilitate Social Audit in other programmes, including **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, National Social Assistance Programme, Midday Meal Scheme** and **Public Distribution System.**
  - **Challenges:**
    - The **lack of adequate administrative and political will** in institutionalising social audits to deter corruption has meant that social audits in many parts of the country are not independent of the influence of implementing agencies.
    - Social audit units, including village social audit facilitators, **continue to face resistance and intimidation** and find it difficult to even access primary records for verification.
    - **People's participation has been minuscule** due to the lack of education, awareness and capacity building among the common masses.
    - There is **an absence of an independent agency** to investigate and act on social audit findings.
  - **Suggestions:**
    - Citizens groups need to **campaign for strengthening social audits** and make real progress in holding the political executive and implementing agencies accountable.
    - **Team of social audit experts should be established** in each district who are responsible for training social audit committee members (stakeholders).
    - **Training programmes should be created on social auditing methods** such as conducting and preparing social audit reports, and presentation at Gram Sabha.
    - The **system of social audits needs a synergetic endorsement** and a push by multiple authorities to establish an institutionalised framework which cannot be undermined by any vested interests.

**Source: PIB**