



**A DOCUMENTATION
ON THE PILOT SOCIAL
AUDITS UNDER MEGHALAYA
COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION
AND PUBLIC SERVICE SOCIAL AUDIT
ACT, 2017**

**Meghalaya Society for Social Audit and
Transparency (MSSAT),
Social Audit Unit, Meghalaya**

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Participation and Public Service Social Audit Act, 2017*



(September-December 2017)

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The pilot social audits undertaken in Meghalaya from October-December 2017 have been an experience that has contributed to the deeper understanding of the social audit process in itself. It has given an opportunity to reflect on the social audit mechanism evolved thus far under MGNREGA, and how it can be creatively re-imagined to adapt itself to a wider scope in a way that it can best meet the priorities of those who participate in it.

The launch of Social Audits under the Meghalaya Community Participation and Public Services Social Audit Act, 2017 was made possible only with the invaluable help of a range of individuals and citizen collectives. Nodal Officers identified for each Department, along with their team of committed officers played a critical role in providing information and completing the range of preparatory activities required before the social audits began, within difficult deadlines.

Representatives from Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), campaigns and State Social Audit Units gave their vital time at each stage of the preparatory process and lent their insight and ground experience to make the process more credible. We record our appreciation to *Amrita Johri, Deepshikha Sharma, Gireesh Bhugra, Gurjeet Singh, Hari Om Soni, Himan, Inayat Anaita Sabhikhi, Kamal Tank, Kamayani Swami, Karuna Mutiah, Nikhil Dey, Nirmala Tammineni, Nitin Jadhav, Paras Banjara, Rajendran Narayanan, Sai Gnanender, Sachin Jain, Seema Upadhyay, Shankar Singh, Shashwati Misra, Shilpa Pandit, Ujjwal Pahurkar, Vineet Bhambhu* and the organizations and collectives they are affiliated to, for agreeing to contribute to the initiative so willingly, and spare their guidance and wisdom for this emerging initiative.

The dedicated commitment and hard work of each member of the MSSAT who worked with utmost sincerity and dedication to make sure that social audit public hearings were a credible platform for citizens to participate in, must be placed on record as being the driving force of the successful conclusion of the pilot social audits.

We thank Mr. KN Kumar, IAS, Principal Secretary, Programme Implementation and Evaluation Department, Mr. Sampath Kumar, IAS Commissioner and Secretary, Community and Rural Development Department, Mr. Bhalang Dhar, IAS (retd), Director, MSSAT for their consistent guidance and unconditional support right from the stage of conceptualization up till the hearings concluded.

Last but not the least, we are grateful to the citizens of Meghalaya, particularly in the 18 (eighteen) pilot villages for their generosity, warmth and compassion and being a source of inspiration for our collective efforts.

Smt. Rashita Swamy,
(Consultant for the roll out implementation of the MCPSSA Act, 2017)

I. Context: Government of Meghalaya passed the '*Meghalaya Community Participation and Public Services Social Audit Act, 2017*' (MCP&PSSA) in April 2017. By doing so it became the first State in the country to pass a law that extends social audit to 21 social and welfare schemes implemented by 14 departments of the State. The law puts in place an administrative framework that will allow citizens participation in the planning of development, selection of beneficiaries, concurrent monitoring of programmes, the redress of grievances, and audit of works, services, and programmes on an annual basis.

The objectives of the Law as stated in Section 3 of the Act include:

- Facilitate concurrent audit of schemes and programmes
- Monitor effectiveness and efficiency in implementation
- Increase transparency in programmes and institutions
- Educate citizens, make them aware of rights
- Enhance citizen ownership in development initiatives
- Fact finding at field level
- Seek feedback from people on implementation
- Provide a platform for registering grievances and redressal within stipulated time frame

The Law includes within its scope the following programmes, as listed in Schedule I of the Act:

- Education (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Midday Meal)
- Health (immunization, services of Sub Center, Primary Health Center, Community Health Center)
- Forest & Environment (Joint Forest Management Committee)
- Power (Village Power Committees, services of MoECL)
- Water & Sanitation (Quality and quantity of water supply, services of Public Health Engineering Dept, Swachh Bharat Mission)
- Employment & Skilling
- Roads & Transport (Public Works Department, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana)
- Agriculture & Allied activities
- Community and Rural Development (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, Indira Awaas Yojana, National Social Assistance Programme)
- Security (local police, village defence parties)
- Food & Civil Supplies (Public Distribution System under National Food Security Act)
- Social Welfare Department (Integrated Child Development Scheme under National Food Security Act)
- Border Area Development Programmes

The Act provides for the constitution of a State Social Audit Council to oversee the implementation and monitoring of this Act. Nodal officers for Social Audit are required to be identified in all Departments at the State, District and Block level who would be responsible for providing records 15 (fifteen) days prior to the audit and follow up on timely action on social audit findings. 'Social Audit Committees' are to be constituted in every village who shall be the primary agents for facilitating social audits in the villages.

The Law essentially down an administrative framework for facilitating social audits in programmes, disclosure of information required prior to an audit and norms for follow up action.

II. Need for Pilots

Given that facilitating social audits in 21 schemes at one go has never been attempted before, there was no practical precedent to work with. In addition, this was the first time that social audits of multiple programmes were being attempted simultaneously in a Sixth Schedule Area.

As a result, the Government of Meghalaya took a decision to operationalize provisions of the Law through a pilot that was conceptualized, implemented and monitored in a mission mode from October-December 2017. The operationalization of the pilot was coordinated through the Meghalaya Society for Social Audit and Transparency (MSSAT), Social Audit Unit, Meghalaya and the Programme Implementation and Evaluation Department (PI&ED) served as the Nodal Department within the Government for the exercise.

It is pertinent to note right at the outset that the launch of the MCP&PSSA Act through pilot social audits was possible only due to the dedicated contribution of a broad collective of supporters. Conceptualizing and completing the entire exercise within a short time frame of 3 (three) months materialized only due to the willing participation and cooperation of officers from Government, staff of MSSAT and practitioners of social audit from different States and CSOs.

A summary of the sequence of events preceding and following the pilots is described below:

S.No	Development	When
1.	Passage of the Meghalaya Community Participation and Public Services Social Audit Law, 2017	March 2017
2.	Appointment of Nodal Officers	September 2017
3.	Workshop with department & Nodal Officer,	7 th October 2017,
4.	Sensitization of Nodal Officers	10 th -12 th October 2017
5.	Identification of information required prior to audit	October 2017
6.	Selection of villages for launch of social audit	21 st October 2017
7.	Departments assimilate information as per formats prescribed	21 st -30 th October 2017
8	Verification of records provided by the Departments to ensure that all information needed prior to a social audit was indeed in hand	30 th October-9 th November 2017
9	Development of Draft Social Audit Protocol	30 th October-9 th November 2017
10-	Meeting with CSOs	9 th November 2017
11	Meeting with Deputy Commissioner cum District Social Audit Coordinators	9 th November 2017
12	Identification of Social Audit Facilitators	9 th -12 th November 2017
13.	Training of Social Audit Facilitators	12 th -15 th November 2017
14.	Social Audits in 18 villages	17 th -24 th November 2017
15.	Debriefing on Social Audit exercise	26 th November 2017
16.	Preparation of Social Audit reports	26 th November-1 st December 2017
17.	Follow up by Departments on Social Audit Findings	1 st -15 th December 2017
18.	National Convention on Social Audit	15 th – 16 th December 2017
19.	Preparation of Draft Rules for Meghalaya Community Participation and Public Services Social Audit Act, 2017	15 th December 2017

III. Preparatory activities:

1. Appointment of Nodal Officers

The process began with the appointment of ‘Nodal Officers’ in every Department. The Nodal Officer appointed was not below the rank of a Director so that their involvement could lend credibility and seriousness to the process.

An orientation was conducted for all the Nodal Officers in October to sensitize them on the provisions of the Law, and their responsibilities to meet the requirements of the framework. The orientations helped establish a working relationship with the officers’ right at the beginning. It also served as an open platform for officers to clarify their queries and make suggestions.



2. Identification of information required prior a social audit

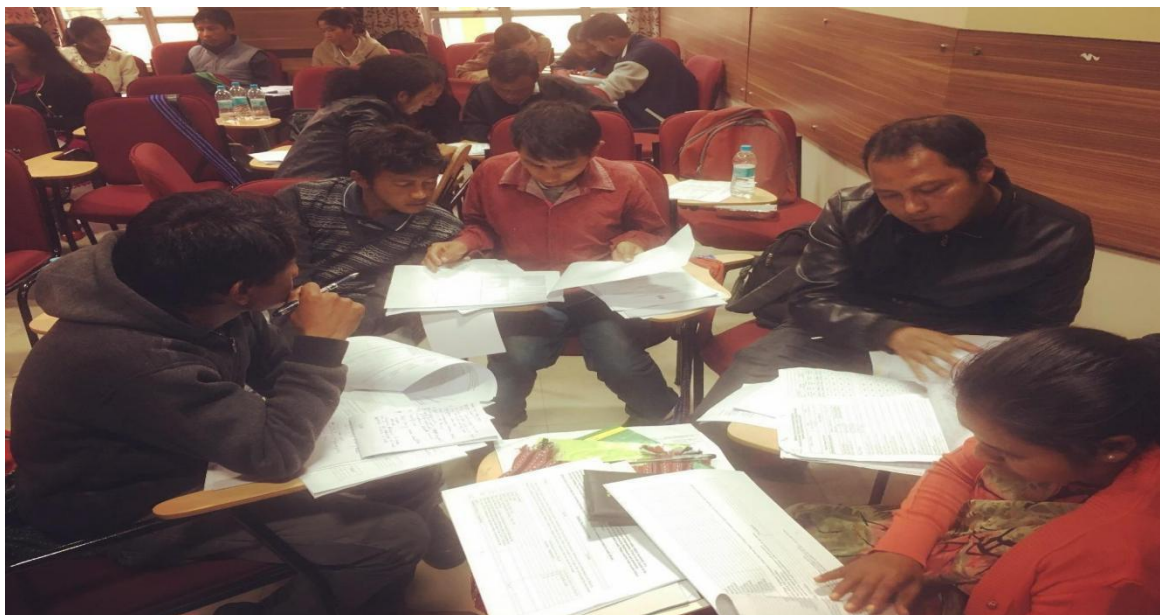
Access to information is a fundamental prerequisite to facilitating the participation of the community in planning and evaluation of programmes. Therefore, identifying and having access to the information required for social audits from 14 Departments became the priority. Before the social audits began, it was imperative to know the following for each programme:

- Key entitlements that the programme seeks to deliver
- Steps involved in the delivery of the service and job chart of officers involved in each step
- List of records maintained and where they are found
- Governance structure of the programme- at the village, block, district and State level
- Mechanism of flow of funds from the State to the village, the events that trigger the fund release and the documents that substantiate release of funds and the purpose for which it was spent
- Committees constituted under the programme, its composition and records of its functioning

Building this body of information for each scheme was something that had not been attempted before. It was acknowledged that all this information was known to the Government officers in the helm of implementation. However, this information was not in the public domain in a format and mode that lends itself to simple comprehension.

A workshop was organized from 10th-12th October 2017 to develop templates in which Departments should share the above information related to the implementation of their respective programmes. Representatives from NGOs, campaigns and networks having substantial experience with the implementation of these individual programmes were requested to participate in the workshop as “External Resource Persons”. Each External Resource Person worked with one Department over the course of the three days to

arrive at final templates for each scheme. The participation from the side of Government Departments for these workshops included a State level Programme Officer, Accounts Officer, District level implementing officer and Block level implementing officer to ensure that all aspects of programme implementation were covered in preparing the final templates. The workshop served as a collaborative exercise where both CSO representatives and Government officials could together arrive at the nodes of information that were required to be in the public domain, based on their area of expertise.



The formats prepared through the workshop were finalized in agreement with the Government, and were presented as the format in which each Department has to populate information relevant to the scheme being audited, and submit to the Social Audit teams prior to the audit.

3. Selection of villages for launch of social audits

18 (eighteen) villages were identified for the launch of social audits in the State. It was made sure that the villages equally represented the three regions of the State- Khasi Hills, Jaintia Hills and Garo Hills so that at the conclusion of the pilots we could have a comprehensive understanding of the texture of social audits in different regions of the State. The villages were selected on a random basis from a sample that met the following two conditions:

- Having a population of more than 250 households
- Having all schemes to be audited, actually implemented in the village

The villages selected were:

Name of District	Name of Block	Name of Village
West Khasi District	Mairang Block	1. Kynrud Village 2. Mawlyntriang Village 3. Mawnai Village
East Khasi District	Khatarshnong Block Laitkroh	4. 12 Mer Village 5. Iew Shillong Village 6. Mawkma Village
West Jaintia Hills	Amlarem Block	7. Bakur Village 8. Darrang Village 9. Jarain Village
Ri Bhoi District	Umling Block	10. Diwon Village 11. Khanapara Village 12. Mawsmal Jorabad Village
East Garo Hills	Songsak Block	13. Dobu Bazar Village 14. Anchengbok Village 15. Koki Nengsat Village
North Garo Hills	Kharkutta Block	16. Chotcholjia Village 17. Kharkutta Songittal, Village 18. Megom Akong Village

4. Interaction of the Chief Minister with CSOs

A meeting was organized between the Chief Minister and representatives of CSOs and campaigns working on issues related to transparency and accountability. The meeting included a brief presentation by the Government on the intended plan for rolling out of pilot social audits and the specific areas in which the Government sought the support of the community of activists in making the audit credible. It was then followed by an open discussion which included raising of clarifications and concerns related to the method and objective of the pilot social audits, followed by a response to the same from the Chief Minister.

The interaction between the Chief Minister and the local CSOs was important as it acknowledged the role of the multiple stakeholders that need to engage with each other i.e. citizens, traditional institutions, CSOs, the independent Social Audit Unit and Government to make social audits a truly democratic and participatory process.

5. Accessing required information from Departments

Once the formats in which information was required to be assimilated, and the list of villages in which social audits would be launched, was finalized- the Departments were requested to provide the required information within a period of 15 days.

A team within MSSAT was tasked with following up with Departments on a daily basis and clarifying all queries at the earliest, so that the information could be made available within

the time frame requested. Therefore, a proactive approach was undertaken in order to work with Departments and pull the relevant information out.

6. Test run of document assimilation

In the endeavor of working with Departments to collate the required information, the MSSAT team camped in a village for 2 (two) days to understand for itself how this information would have to be organized from the Department in order to submit it in the formats requested. Once the MSSAT team was successful in organizing all the information requested for as per the format for 1 village within 48 hours, it could negotiate the replication of the same with the State level Departments. **7. Verification of information submitted**

Once the information was assimilated and produced by the Departments, MSSAT verified whether all the formats were indeed filled up with all the information requested for. Through this process, MSSAT and Line Departments had a continual dialogue to clarify each other's requirements.



That the formats were indeed populated with the required information was certified by MSSAT and only then were the social audits allowed to begin on the field.

8. Identification of Social Audit Facilitators

It was decided that there would be one social audit support team allocated to each village. The Support Team would comprise of the following:

- 1 External Resource Person: Reputed External Resource Persons having experience and knowledge in social audit exercises on the ground were invited to participate in the pilot social audits underway. The intention behind this was so that they could lend support to the exercise. In addition, it was intended that they benefit from this experience and incorporate lessons that emanated from here to their respective states.
- 1 State/District Resource Person, MSSAT
- 3-4 Representatives of NGO's of the State that have undertaken social audits in the past: It was intended that the social audit team consist of local CSO representatives, to facilitate a wider participation and engagement with CSOs of the State
- An Extension Officer appointed by the District Administration to support the team: Since it was the first time that social audits would be rolled out in this fashion, it was

decided to have a Government Officer (not from the village being audited and not involved in the implementation of any of the programmes being audited)

- Members of the Social Audit Committee (SAC) that the General Body of the Village Employment Council is supposed to nominate
- Representatives of the Seng Kynthei (Village Women's Group) and Seng Samla (Village Youth Group) to ensure that local organized communities participate in the social audit of the village

Members of the social audit facilitators were identified based on request for volunteers and official communication seeking participation.

9. Training of Social Audit Facilitators

Once the pool of facilitators was identified, two simultaneous trainings were organized. Teams that would facilitate social audits in Garo Hills were trained in Resubelpara, Garo Hills District and the teams facilitating social audits in Khasi and Jaintia Hills were trained in Shillong, East Khasi Hills District.

A day-long training was imparted by MSSAT to the facilitators. A special request was also made to the Block Development Officers of the Blocks in which the pilot social audit would take place to attend the training.

The training consisted of the following components:

- Breakup of the 5 (five) day schedule of the social audit
- Steps to be followed in the social audit process, and norms of record keeping and documentation
- Code of Conduct to be followed by the Social Audit Facilitators through the audit period
- Division of responsibilities between administration and social audit facilitators

The facilitators were allocated to their respective teams, and introduced to their MSSAT counterparts. Each team was handed over the documents submitted by multiple Departments for that village, and a kit consisting of all essential items required by the team for the audit such as stationary, important numbers, measuring tape, etc.

IV. Social Audits

The core focus of the social audits in Meghalaya was on the following four elements:

- Sharing information about schemes and its manner of utilization with citizens
- Recording irregularities between actual reality and official records
- Recording grievances that people are facing in accessing entitlements
- Identifying list of eligible beneficiaries for individual schemes who are not currently accessing entitlements due to them for any reason

The objective of placing the focus of the social audits on the above 4 elements was to ensure that social audits were understood as a platform for grievance redress and community monitoring. Social Audits for far too long have been incorrectly understood as a post facto analysis of "what went wrong". Whereas, a social audit is an ongoing process through which the potential beneficiaries and other stakeholders of an activity or project are involved at

every stage: from the planning to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation. This process helps in ensuring that the activity or project is designed and implemented in a manner that is most suited to the prevailing (local) conditions, appropriately reflects the priorities and preferences of those affected by it, and most effectively serves public interest. Social audits were therefore deliberately positioned as a platform by which citizens can not only question and hold the administration accountable for what was its mandate, but also actively participate in planning and enabling course correction in implementation.

The following was the social audit process that was followed over the course of 5 days

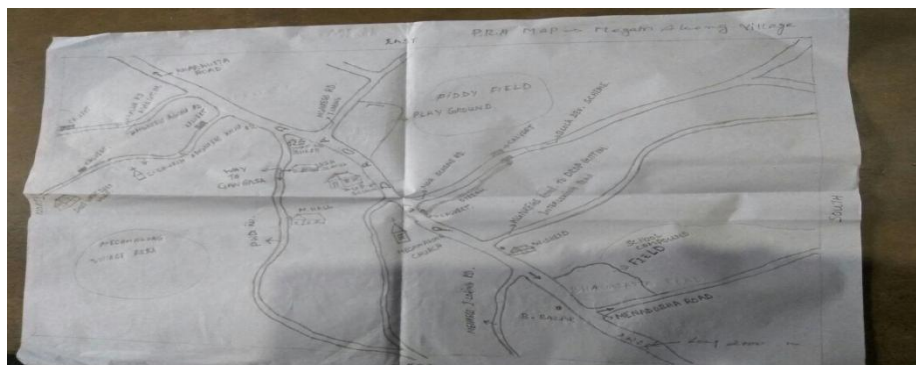
1. Meeting with the Village Headman

The Social Audit Support Team was asked to conduct an “entry meeting” with the Village Headman to explain the purpose of the social audit exercise and the activities that it will include. It was important to begin the process with an interaction with the Headman so that the latter had ample opportunity to clarify doubts if any. It was also symbolically relevant to begin the exercise in the village subsequent to an interaction with the Headman as he is considered as the most respected elder in the village and it was important for him to be seen as extending support to the initiative.



2. Locality meetings

Since the Social Audit Support Team had to complete a social audit of more than 10 programmes over a span of 5 days, door to door verification was understood to be impractical in the given context. Audit teams were advised to map localities that formed the village.



They were then advised to proceed with locality visits one by one and do the following in each locality visit:

- Distribute pamphlets on social audit, its importance and what are the activities that are expected to roll out in the next few days
- Request people to assemble at a common area in the locality. Mics were at the disposal of the Social Audit Team and the team was asked to think of creative ways of mobilizing people to attend a meeting.
- Read out the accounts and records of schemes implemented in the scheme for the locality. Amongst the social audit team pairs were formed for each scheme. The pairs allocated for different schemes should sit separately, so that people wanting to know more information about a particular scheme would go towards the concerned pair.
- Read out beneficiary lists, item wise expenditure and note down findings as per the formats. In case people wanted to apply for schemes, the Social Audit Support Team was asked to help them fill out application forms. In case there were grievances, teams were asked to help fill out grievance forms.
- Pairs within the Social Audit Support Team were asked to visit institutions, works and points of service delivery and fill out the social audit formats.



The Social Audit Support Team had a very important and responsible role to play in ensuring that the process of social audit maintained a high standard of integrity and ethics. The team was entrusted with a task of supporting people in accessing their rights and entitlements and bringing into public gaze any shortcomings there might be in implementation. Because this often involves asking uncomfortable questions and bringing out irregularities and even cases of corruption, the team members themselves and their behavior were going to be under constant focus and attention. They were asked to follow a particularly high standard of ethics and mature behavior to maintain the credibility of the entire social audit process. For this reason, all social audit support team members had to sign a code of conduct and ethics and follow it sincerely while they are assisting this process.

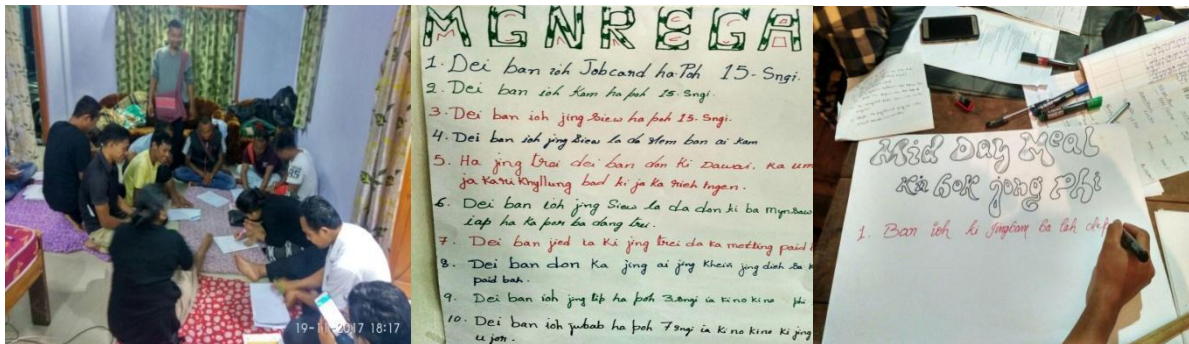
The code of conduct included:

- Team members will maintain all accounts of expenditure for the social audit and be ready to share this in a transparent manner
- Team members will take care to respect local cultural norms and customs and not speak rudely with anyone. They will be particularly careful not to respond to provocation but report any untoward incident to the group leader.
- There will be no consumption of alcohol or other addictive substances by any team member during the course of the audit. No team member will discriminate on the basis of gender.
- Team members will pay for their own food and accommodation will be organized by MSSAT following a simple lifestyle
- Hospitality will be avoided from any member of any implementing agency
- Team members will understand that they must live in the village and a social audit process continues round the clock. Any person in distress who comes and asks for assistance will be heard and supported as per the protocol of the social audit
- Team members will be courteous with each other and any difference of opinion will be discussed and sorted out in a daily team meeting.
- It will be the duty of every team member to try and ensure that unheard voices reach the social audit public hearing. People, particularly vulnerable individuals and local groups, can speak out free of fear. Team members are only playing a supportive role. Team members are not the auditors. The people are the auditors. Response and redressal shall come from the Government. Therefore the team should not provide any false assurance. Team members must make sure that whatever they say is backed by evidence and documents. Any questions that people ask must be responded to in the full spirit of transparency
- Team members will record their observations and findings (as per the formats) and will attempt to make sure that the concerned people attend the social audit public meeting, and their issue is discussed.
- Team members will avoid any situation where they might be seen to have a personal interest for or against any matter.
- The independence of the social audit process must be maintained at all times.

3. Writing of the Draft Social Audit Report

After wrapping up locality visits and completing the tasks above, the teams were asked to spend a day preparing the draft Social Audit Report which has to minimally contain: i. Findings of the social audit verification exercise scheme wise and locality wise ii. Collation

of list of applications and grievance scheme wise and locality wise iii. Preparation of charts that will be used to disclose information on the day of the Public Hearing iv. Preparing an agenda for the Public Hearing consisting of key findings and issues – scheme wise and locality wise



V. Social Audit Public Hearing

Right from the beginning, the social audit public hearing was designed to be one that was a social audit cum grievance redress public hearing. The Social Audit Public Hearing was declared to be a general body meeting of the village open to all residents (men and women) and members of the Durbar.

The Public Hearing had a Single Help Desk to accept all applications and grievances brought forward by people. The Desk had to provide two copies of dated acknowledgement receipts for every application and hand it over to the applicant and direct him/her to the appropriate department Desk. At the Department Desk, the applicant was required to retain one copy of the receipt and hand over the second copy of the receipt along with the application form to the Department. The Desk was asked to retain a third copy of each individual receipt for the record.

Every Department was asked to set up a desk/counter at the Public Hearing. The counter was responsible for: i. Processing applications/grievances/petitions received ii. Study each application/grievance/petition as per Departmental norms and make its recommendation. If necessary, it would seek clarification from the applicant and obtain required information/approvals from other Departments if necessary. For all applications seeking individual/collective benefits, if the applicant qualifies, the applicant was either to be awarded sanction on the day of the Public Hearing itself. In the case that sufficient resources were not available to accord sanction to all those who applied, a priority based waiting list was to be created which had to be announced in the Public Hearing. iv. Place all the registers and files pertaining to the schemes implemented by the Department on the desk so that it can be viewed by citizens





After the citizens had completed their interaction with the Single Help Desk and Departmental Counters, the Public Hearing would commence. The Public Hearing was to be presided by a panel consisting of the following:

- Village Head
- Deputy Commissioner/ nominee
- Block Level Implementation Officers of the various schemes being audited
- NGO/CSO Representative who is not from the Block
- Representative of MSSAT
- Representative of the Autonomous District Council

The Social Audit Team would begin reading out the findings of social audit for individual Departments. Summary of the information pertaining to the scheme and its expenditure was read out. This included a summary of the applications filed on the day of the Public Hearing and the response of the Department on the same. Applicant/Complainants were given a chance to comment on the response of the Department in front of the panel. The Panel was asked to take a decision/make recommendation on each finding which would be announced and recorded in the minutes.



Social Audit Public Hearings were successfully organized in all 18 villages. More than 1000 applications and grievances have been received across 18 villages with a focus on availing benefits under various schemes and reporting violation of entitlements. More than 5000 people participated in the Social Audit Public Hearings that took place on the 22nd and 23rd November to hear social audit findings and give their feedback. 180 local youth got trained in social audits and Village Monitoring Committees of 15 schemes were made to get familiarized with their mandate and roles.

VI. Social Audit Reports

Final Social Audit Reports that incorporated the decisions taken on the day of the public hearing were prepared and uploaded in the public domain –

https://mssat.nic.in/social_audit_report/Pilot_Social_Audit_Report_MCPPSSA_Act_2017_A.pdf

The Reports were forwarded to the concerned Deputy Commissioners for taking action and filing “Action Taken Reports” within 15 days.

The pilot social audits thereby resulted in the creation of a rich body of content which includes:

- Code of Conduct
- Pamphlet
- Social Audit Workbook
- Formats in which Departments are to share information prior to a Social Audit
- Social Audit Reporting Formats
- Draft Rules
- Draft Manual

VII. Social Audits – Evidence Based Policy The pilot social audits undertaken brought to the surface irregularities in the implementation of programmes. Some of the irregularities required redress and correction at the local level. Whereas, some of the irregularities clearly pointed to systemic issues of policy that need changes at the State level.

Section 3 of the MCP&PSSA Act emphasizes course correction in policy based on evidence generated through the social audit, as one of its core objectives:

“3. The objectives of the MCP&PSSA are:

b) To monitor the effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation of the development programmes and public services in a time bound manner and initiate course correction measures wherever necessary

f) Social Audits shall be used for the purposes of finding the facts at the field level in the implementation of the programme and improve upon them

g) Seek suggestions from the people on ways and means of improving implementation of development programmes and public programmes

h) Provide a platform for airing of public grievances and ensure a time bound redress of the same”

The following were the required policy changes that were identified through the pilot social audits in 18 villages, but needed be introduced in the schemes for proceeding towards systematic course correction across the State :

Policy finding	Policy suggestion
Name of scheme : Mid- Day Meal Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Public Distribution System	
1. There is a discrepancy between the number of children consuming the mid day meal in schools and the number of children cost for at the time of budgets being sanctioned. Since the former is more than the latter, the budget sanctioned for mid day meals in a school is not adequate to feed all children coming.	1. Department should carry out a survey of all children consuming the mid day meal in schools and identify the real number of children such that budgets are allocated to each school as per real estimates.
2. Food is not provided on a daily basis under Mid Day Meal. Upon verification, it was found that was because the sanctioned cooking cost per unit is inadequate for providing a hot cooked meal on a daily basis and therefore meals are provided some days a week/month.	2. The State Government may consider increasing the state share towards payment for the cooking cost per unit such that the cooking cost per unit is adequate for providing a hot cooked meal on a daily basis.
3. The cook responsible for preparing mid day meals does not report to work on a daily basis owing to the low monthly honorarium (Rs 1000 per month). As a result children do not get a hot cooked meal on a daily basis.	3. The State Government may consider increasing the state share towards payment of the monthly honorarium to the mid day meal cook.
4. Absence of disclosure of information at the point of service delivery	4. Department must ensure that every school mandatorily discloses the following information: a. Name of Mid Day Meal Cook b. List of children enrolled in Mid Day Meal Scheme c. Daily menu of Mid Day Meal
5. Schools do not have a boundary wall with proper fencing	5. Each VEC should take up construction of school boundary wall in the MGNREGA shelf of projects and complete it within a stipulated time frame
6. It is not possible for parents to buy two sets of uniform within the financial entitlement of Rs 400 per year	6. The State Government may consider increasing the state share towards payment for uniform
7. Absence of disclosure of information at the point of service delivery	7. Department should ensure that the following information is disclosed at the school: a. Composition of the School Management Committee b. Budget sanctioned to the SMC c. Expenditure of the funds allocated to the SMC including listing of the items on which expenditure was undertaken d. List of teachers teaching in the school

<p>8. Beneficiaries are underprovided and overpriced for their legal entitlement of rice, wheat, sugar and kerosene compared to the legal entitlement due to them under the National Food Security Act. The alibi presented universally by all the FPS Dealers was that this was owing to the Dealer compensating for the cost of transportation that he/she had to personally incur.</p>	<p>8. The State Government must ensure that food grains, sugar and kerosene are distributed to the dealer and should incur the costs of transportation. Cost of lifting food grains, sugar and kerosene should not be incurred by the FPS Dealer, as it will inevitably be passed on to the beneficiary.</p>
<p>9. Rate and quantity at which rice, kerosene, sugar and wheat is distributed varies from village to village due to lack of awareness amongst people about norms.</p>	<p>9. Every FPS should have a board listing down the quantum and rate at which food grains, sugar and kerosene are to distributed for each kind of beneficiary (PHH, non NFSA, Annapurna, AAY)</p>
<p>10. Distribution of kerosene is not entered on the Ration Cards nor in the distribution register of the FPS. The kerosene dealer is different from the FPS Dealer and is not subject to the same norms of record keeping as the FPS Dealer is required to</p>	<p>10. The Department must ensure that Ration cards of all beneficiaries are updated and the complete record of off take is entered on it by 30th December 2017.</p>
<p>11. Non NFSA Beneficiaries do not have Ration Cards in their custody.</p>	<p>11. Departments must ensure that all non NFSA beneficiaries are distributed their Ration Cards by 30th December 2017.</p>
<p>12. Discrepancies are reported between stock distributed as per FCI and stock received as per FPS Dealer.</p>	<p>12. Department must ensure the provision of a weighing machine in every FPS and distribution of food grains as per weight and entitlement.</p>
<p>13. Absence of disclosure of information at the point of service delivery</p>	<p>13. Department should ensure that the following information is disclosed at the Fair Price Shop:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Name of Dealer and opening and closing time of the FPS b. List of beneficiaries including the category they belong to (PHH, non NFSA, AAY and Annapurna) and quantum of food grain, sugar and kerosene distributed to them in the last quarter c. Rate and quantity of food grains that each category of beneficiary is entitled to d. Stock of rice, wheat, sugar and kerosene for the quarter e. Composition of the FPS Vigilance and Monitoring Committee
<p>Name of scheme : Swach Bharat Mission</p>	
<p>14. There is confusion about the mode of payment to beneficiaries for construction of IHHLs. Sometimes cash is provided to beneficiaries, whereas sometimes the Village Water Sanitation Committee provides material for construction in kind to beneficiaries. The arrangement was seen to vary from District to District.</p>	<p>14. Department must issue clear instructions about norms of payment for IHHL beneficiaries</p>

Name of scheme : Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana	
15. There are many citizens who deserve/need a pakka house, but whose names are not included in the SECC Priority Waiting List.	15. Department must prepare a list of all those HHs who have made applications for a house under PMAY and forward the same to the Central Government for inclusion.
Name of scheme : National Social Assistance Programme and Chief Ministers Pension Scheme	
16. The beneficiaries of NSAP and CM Pension Scheme are different. Discretion is used by field functionaries in deciding who will be the beneficiaries under these two schemes, as the quantum of benefit varies.	16. The State Government should consider using funds for the CM Pension Scheme as a means of: a. Topping up the monthly pension to NSAP beneficiaries b. Increasing the base of NSAP beneficiaries such that all those eligible are given the benefit
17. The pension amount is debited once a year	17. Department needs to ensure that pension disbursements take place on a monthly basis. State Government may consider constituting a revolving fund to make monthly disbursements, in case the sanction from GoI is delayed. This will ensure that the payments take place on a monthly basis to beneficiaries and State Government's Revolving Fund gets reimbursed as and when funds are released from GoI
Name of scheme : Integrated Child Development Scheme	
18. AWCs do not have dedicated buildings of their own	18. Department must complete a survey of all Anganwadi Centres in the State and identify those AWCs which do not have a dedicated building of its own. The Department must ensure that every AWC in the State has been sanctioned a dedicated building of its own by 30 th December 2017.
19. There is no provision of a hot cooked meal on a daily basis	19. Departments need to ensure that a hot cooked meal is provided to all children on a daily basis. 2. The menu for the hot cooked meal should be displayed at the AWC so that parents and children know the meals that will be provided
20. Provision of THR is not on a daily basis and not as per the quantities mandated. This is particularly because THR distribution is not as per measurement.	20. Department must ensure that every AWC is equipped with adequate measurement tools such that THR is distributed on a daily basis as per norms

<p>21. Absence of disclosure of information at the point of service delivery</p>	<p>21. Department should ensure that the following information is disclosed at the AWC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Name of Anganwadi Worker b. Opening and closing time of the Anganwadi c. Quantum of Take Home Ration that the AWC is supposed to distribute to mothers and children d. Menu of the cooked meals that the AWC is supposed to provide e. List of children who attend the AWC f. List of pregnant women who visit the AWC g. Stock of the food grains that the AWC has
<p>Name of scheme : Public Health Education Department</p>	
<p>22. Many public institutions were found to not have dedicated water supply or toilets</p>	<p>22. PHED must survey all AWCs, Schools, Sub Centres in the State and identify those units which do not have dedicated water supply. PHED must ensure that projects for providing dedicated water supply to those AWCs, Sub Centres and Schools which do not have them are sanctioned on a suo-moto basis, without waiting for proposals to emerge from the Administration.</p>
<p>Name of scheme : National Health Mission</p>	
<p>23. The Village Health Nutrition Day does not take place once a week as per a predetermined schedule</p>	<p>23. Department must ensure that the dates for the VHND are publicized properly and people are aware of the date in advance</p> <p>2. Department must ensure that the VHND takes place as per a calendar</p>
<p>Name of scheme : Janani Surakshi Yojana</p>	
<p>24. There were multiple instances of women eligible for JSY, but not availing the benefit. This was largely due to them not being aware of their entitlement as the ASHA had not informed them</p>	<p>24. Department should issue orders which enable hospital authorities to hand over the financial entitlement to the beneficiary at the time of delivery.</p>
<p>Name of scheme : Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act</p>	
<p>25. No proper procedures for tendering, procurement of material, recording purchase and utilization of material was found on the ground. This included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. No date on bills b. No names of suppliers on vouchers c. Payments made in cash to local supplier d. All bills maintained in 'kacha' form e. Firms CST/GST Number not indicated on bills and vouchers f. Bills are not bearing the signature of beneficiaries (in the case of individual works) g. Attendance of skilled workers is not recorded on the Muster Rolls 	<p>25. To put an immediate end to irregularities in material procurement the Department must issue orders on record maintenance of material expenditure. The orders must include the need for preparing 'Citizen Estimates' and/or 'Janta Estimates' of works that illustrate material estimated and material used along with its rates in terminology that is citizen friendly.</p>

All Schemes

26. The various village level monitoring/Vigilance Committees constituted to ensure that beneficiaries oversee and monitor the implementation of the programmes- must not have any individual who is responsible for the implementation of the programme in it.

27. Training needs to be organized for members of village level monitoring and vigilance committees on the roles and responsibilities of its members.

28. Departments must clearly list the following for each scheme:

- a. Quantum and rate of entitlements
- b. Eligibility requirements that the citizen has to meet to qualify as a beneficiary
- c. Documents that need to be submitted by the citizen to apply for benefits
- d. Timelines within which the Department is mandated to respond
- e. Tangible norms of service that a citizen is entitled to
- f. Details of officers to whom grievances can be registered with

The above needs to be produced in the local language (Khasi/Garo) and distributed in all villages.

VIII. National Convention on Social Audit

The Government of Meghalaya organized a launch of the Law and showcased the success of the pilots on 15th- 16th December 2017 in Shillong, Meghalaya through a National Convention on Social Audit. Citizens and Facilitators who participated in the pilot shared their experience with people from other parts of the state in order to spread the message of the law and get their suggestions. Prominent intellectuals, activists, academics, members of the CAG, Central Information Commissioner and journalists were invited to join in revisiting the pilots, and understand its significance. The objective of the Convention was to draw on their suggestions and experience to see how this process can be strengthened.

Based on the evidence thrown up by the pilot social audits, on the occasion of the National Convention the Chief Minister announced a series of policy reforms. These included:

Sl. No	Scheme	Policy announcement	Additional financial implication
1.	Mid Day Meal Scheme	State Government will take up with Govt of India to additional Rs 2 to the per child towards cooking cost to ensure daily provision of hot cooked meal to all children studying in schools across the State	Rs 21.2 crore if prices as per FY 2015-16 are used, and Rs 42.4 crore if prices as per FY 2017-18 are used).
2.	Public Distribution System	Government will issue instructions to the DCs to make sure that transportation costs are provided to the FP Shop dealers. The Govt. shall take steps to bear the cost of transportation of food grains to the doorstep of the Fair Price Shop Dealer to ensure distribution of entitlements as per rates under the National Food Security Act	

3.	Ration Cards for all non-NFSA beneficiaries	Ration Cards of all Non NFSA Beneficiaries will be distributed to them by 30 th December 2017	None
4.	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act	Every school will have a boundary wall built for it under MGNREGA	None. As NREGA funds are demand based
5.	Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS)	All those Anganwadi Centres that do not have dedicated buildings for it will be identified, and work will be undertaken to construct the same under MGNREGA	None. As NREGA funds are demand based
6.	Public Health Engineering Department	The Department will identify all Schools, Anganwadi Centres and Sub Centres in the State that do not have a dedicated water supply and ensure that water supply connections are built	
7.	Pensions	The Government will bring parity between financial benefits available to beneficiaries under NSAP and CM Pension Scheme. A total of 52,000 NSAP beneficiaries will be benefited under this initiative.	Rs 15.6 crore (250*12*52000)
8.	Universal Coverage of pensions	The Government will identify all those citizens eligible for entitlements under NSAP and sanction their applications on a proactive basis	
9.	Monthly disbursement of pensions	The Government will ensure disbursement of pensions to beneficiaries on a monthly basis by building a Revolving Fund in the State	
10.	Mandatory Disclosure	1) The Government will ensure that information related to list of entitlements, list of beneficiaries, item wise record of expenditure, budget sanctioned, composition of village committees are disclosed at every point of service delivery 2) Encourage use of local terminology for quantifying goods and service being delivered	None.

11.	Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY)	The Government will ensure issuing of JSY benefit through cheque to all the eligible mothers immediately after the delivery at the respective institution.	
12.	Draft Rules under Meghalaya Community Participation and Public Services Social Audit Act	Draft Rules under Meghalaya Community Participation and Public Services Social Audit Act will be notified by 30 th January 2018. A High Powered Committee representing all stakeholders will be constituted for ensuring that this be done.	None.
13.	Transparency and Accountability	Every Department will apportion 0.25% of its Annual Budget to financing social audit, grievance redress and mandatory disclosures	None

It is important to note that only Point 7 and 12 were indeed initiated and cleared for implementation (as of 16th February 2018) as far as administrative and budgetary sanctions are concerned.

The Convention also marked the release of Draft Rules to guide the implementation of MCP&PSSA. The Draft Rules were framed on the basis of practical lessons that were learnt through the pilots. The Draft Rules laid down detailed protocols for implementing essential elements of the Law such as roles and responsibilities of the State Social Audit Council, PI&ED and MSSAT; functions of implementation authorities at the State, District and Block level; mandate of village level social audit committees; protocol for social audit; time bound grievance redress; role of CSOs; building of a real time transaction- based web portal and modalities of community participation.

The Draft Rules are currently in the process of being vetted by the Department of Law, subsequent to which they would be notified by the State Government to govern the implementation of the Act for the future.

VIII. Emerging lessons for Social Audit

The concept of “Social Audit” is one that is growing far and wide in terms of its scope. This includes the O/o C&AG defining Auditing Standards for Social Audit and thus being the first ever such exercise of a Supreme Audit Institution detailing standards of disclosure of information and role of citizens in auditing public expenditure; the Supreme Court widening the scope of social audit to include within its purview monitoring of the implementation of the Juvenile Justice Act; introduction of the mandate of social audit within the Persons with Disabilities Act and programmes such as National Social Assistance Programme, Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana, Swachh Bharat Mission and Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana indicates that there is an urgent need to come up with a working protocol for facilitating social audits across a range of interventions. The experience in Meghalaya demonstrated one such working protocol.

Along with demonstrating a practical mechanism for conducting social audits across multiple schemes, the experience also lent insight into some basic principles that can be

helpful in efforts underway elsewhere for strengthening and expanding the scope of social audit. These include:

- The need to work out ways for demystifying information and its dissemination is critical in the roll out of social audits. Identification of the nodes of information that require disclosure prior to an audit is essential, and need to be worked out in consultation with both Government and CSOs. The latter has the knowledge of what information people need and in what form, and the former has knowledge about where that information is stored and how it can be extracted.
- The idea of identifying 'Nodal Officers' in every Department and involving them in planning each stage of the roll out was one that proved strategically helpful. Officials did not feel this was imposed on them all of a sudden, and felt like they were a part of the initiative. Hence, the tendencies of not being able to meet deadlines and resist the quantum of work needed to be completed prior to an audit, were substantially minimized as they knew for themselves its importance.
- There is a need to assert the framework of making social audit a platform for redress, in addition to being a forum for recording irregularities. Social Audits need to be seen as a forum for planning, accessing entitlements, enabling course correction mid implementation, as much as it is understood to be a forum of recording irregularities based on evidence leading to punitive action. Though social audits have always been imagined as a comprehensive public collective platform relevant for all stages of governance, the pilots in Meghalaya lent us an opportunity to demonstrate the same in terms of a concrete protocol
- There is a need to keep the audit of access to entitlements at the center of the social audit process.
- The pilot social audits in Meghalaya taught us a way to work with village leaders and make them understand social audits as a tool that could work to their advantage. By actively seeking their involvement in the exercise, they were oriented into using the platform of the public hearing as a means of explaining their own strengths and limitations in the governance structure. Social Audits were not positioned as a confrontation to their authority, while ensuring that the minimum principles of independence essential to the audit process were respected at all times.

In a 6th schedule area like Meghalaya, the MCP&PSSA potentially provides democratic tribal communities an opportunity to use their traditional strength of community decision making to shape the nature and implementation of development programmes. However, the benefit of lessons that emerged from the exercise are not limited to the State alone. The MCP&PSS Act and the experience accumulated from the pilots showed us the potential to revamp the paradigm of social audit, to provide institutional platforms and means for enabling direct democracy.

Roll out implementation of Meghalaya Community Public Service Social Audit Act – A glimpse in pictures across the State



Workshop with department & Nodal Officer, 7th October 2017, Shillong,



Social Audit Write shop, 10th -12th October 2017



Orientation & Field Visits to the MSSAT Social Audit Resource Persons Team (Khasi & Jaintia Team) – 15th November 2017



Orientation to the External Social Audit Resource Persons Team, Shillong & ESARPs & MSSAT SARPs- Garo Hills Region in TISS, Gurwahati.



Chief Minister, Mukul Sangma during his meeting with some Civil Society Organisations on implementation of Social Audit Act at Yojana Bhavan on Thursday.

Government Meeting with CSOs, Shillong,



Debriefing on Social Audit exercise, 26th November 2017



National Convention, MCPPSSA Act, 2017 & release of the Draft MCPPSSA Rules , 15th -16th December 2017, Shillong, Meghalaya,

East Khasi Hills District,



Interaction and verification by the Social Audit Team at the 12 Shnong Laitkroh C&RD Block



Social Audit in Iew Shyllong Village, 12 Shnong Laitkroh C&RD Block, EKHD,



Social Audits – Marwkma Village, 12 Shnong Laitkroh C&RD Block, EKHD,

Ri Bhoi District,



Social Audit Verification in Dirwon Village,





Social Audits – verifications, locality meetings, institution and beneficiary verifications, public hearing in Khanapara village,

West Khasi Hills District



Social Audits in Kynrud Village, Mairang C&RD Block, WKHD



Social Audits in Mawlyntriang Village, Mairang C&RD Block, WKHD



Social Audits in Mawnai Village, Mairang C&RD Block, WKHD

West Jaintia Hills District,



Social Audits – SAURP & ERP team, Public Hearing in Darrang Village,



Social Audit team in Jarain Village, Amlarem C&RD Block, WJHD,

North Garo Hills District,



Locality meetings and social audit verification, public hearing in Kharkutta Songgittal Village,



Social Audits in Megom Akong Village, Kharkutta C & RD Block, NGHD,



Social Audits in Chotcholja, Village, Songsak C&RD Block, EGH

East Garo Hills District,



Social Audits in Dobu Anchengbok, Songsak C & RD Block, EGHD,



Social Audits – verifications and locality meetings in Koksi Nengsat Village

Reference Documents:-

[Homepage : Meghalaya Society for Social Audit and Transparency \(mssat.nic.in\)](http://mssat.nic.in)

https://mssat.nic.in/rules/Social_Audit_Rules_2019.pdf

https://mssat.nic.in/acts/Social_Audit_Act_2017.pdf

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