

AUDIT OF MGNREGS

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It is stated that performance audit is conducted by the Comptroller & Auditor General of India to assess the outcome of the implementation of the scheme.

The Internal Audit Wing (IAW) under the Office of the Chief Controller of Accounts (CCA) has been conducting Risk-Based Internal Audits of MGNREGS implementation in states since FY 2013-14. These audits are carried out at the district level and are designed to assess risk areas based on likelihood and impact. They evaluate the robustness of internal controls, procedural compliance, fund flows, and other operational aspects to suggest for strengthening of scheme governance. Risk Based Internal audits of Mahatma Gandhi NREGS have been conducted in 225 districts of 30 states/UTs since 2013-14.

In addition to this, Social Audit is conducted by the Gram Sabha as mandated under Mahatma Gandhi NREGA, 2005 in order to ensure transparency and accountability in scheme implementation. To institutionalize a robust framework, the Ministry of Rural Development, in consultation with the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (C&AG), notified the Audit of Scheme Rules, 2011 detailing the methodology, principles, and standards for audits. Further, a Task Force has been constituted jointly by MoRD and C&AG in June 2015, whose recommendations led to formulation of Auditing Standards for Social Audit for effective and community-driven audits.

NITI Aayog had conducted an Evaluation Study of six Centrally Sponsored Schemes, including Mahatma Gandhi NREGS in financial year 2019-20. The study focused on the effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of these schemes, including the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS, to gauge their overall contribution to the national rural economy. Some of the findings of this study are as below:

1. Mahatma Gandhi NREGS has significantly enhanced livelihood security for rural households, acting as a crucial social safety net that protects them against economic and agricultural shocks.
2. A significant reduction has been observed in distress and seasonal migration due to the availability of work opportunities within villages through the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS.
3. Mahatma Gandhi NREGS has contributed to the creation of durable community assets and rural infrastructure, which in turn support sustainable livelihoods and improve living conditions.
4. The scheme has fostered environmental sustainability by creating "green jobs" that contribute to ecosystem protection, climate change mitigation, and adaptation.

Further, Amarjeet Sinha Committee was constituted in 2021 to examine various factors affecting demand for wage employment in the rural sector in different parts of country and to study/analyze the trends of expenditure across States under Mahatma Gandhi NREGS along with reasons for inter-state variations with specific focus on governance issues. The report of the Committee has since been received and some of the recommendations have been identified for appropriate action.

In addition to this, Development, Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEO), NITI Aayog also has recently taken up an Evaluation Study of Mahatma Gandhi NREGS.

The Ministry regularly reviews the performance of the implementation of Mahatma Gandhi in States/UTs through various fora viz., Mid-Term Review, Labour Budget meetings, Labour Budget Revision meetings, Programme Review meetings. Central Employment Guarantee Council and State Employment Guarantee Councils periodically monitor implementation of the programme. Technical Cells have also been constituted at various level in the States to regularly monitor the progress of works.

This information was given by Minister of State for Rural Development Shri Kamlesh Paswan in a written reply in Lok Sabha today.

RC/ KSR/AR

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