Society & Social Justice · GS - II

Performance of welfare schemes that are implemented for vulnerable sections is not so effective due to absence of their awareness and active involvement at all stages of policy process – Discuss.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2019	GS - II	Society & Social Justice

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Vulnerable sections; awareness deficits; participatory governance; policy design; last-mile delivery; social audits; grievance redressal; digital exclusion; community institutions; accountability

Model Answer

Introduction

Welfare schemes aim to improve the living conditions of vulnerable groups, including women, children, persons with disabilities, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and economically disadvantaged households. Their effectiveness depends not only on funding and design but also on awareness, participation and accountability.

Why Limited Awareness and Participation Matter

- **Poor scheme awareness:** Eligible beneficiaries may not know the eligibility criteria, entitlements or application procedures.
- **Exclusion errors:** Complex documentation and administrative requirements can prevent deserving people from accessing benefits.

- **Weak policy design:** Programmes designed without community consultation may fail to reflect local needs and social barriers.
- **Digital exclusion:** Online-only processes can disadvantage people without connectivity, devices or digital literacy.
- **Limited monitoring:** Beneficiaries who cannot provide feedback may be unable to report corruption, delays or poor service quality.
- **Social discrimination:** Local power structures can prevent marginalised groups from participating or receiving entitlements.

Measures for Improvement

1. Conduct awareness campaigns in local languages through community institutions.
2. Involve beneficiaries in needs assessment, planning and implementation.
3. Strengthen gram sabhas, social audits and public hearings.
4. Provide accessible grievance-redressal systems and time-bound responses.
5. Use local organisations to identify excluded households.
6. Maintain offline and assisted-service options alongside digital delivery.
7. Monitor outcomes through independent evaluations and beneficiary feedback.

Conclusion

Welfare schemes become more effective when vulnerable citizens are treated as active participants rather than passive recipients. Awareness, participation and accountability can improve targeting, reduce exclusion and ensure that public resources produce meaningful social outcomes.