

Charter on People's
Expectations on
Budgetary Priorities
from the New Union
Government

People's
Budget
Initiative

2014

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EDUCATION

- There is a need to increase the spending on education significantly to meet the recommendations of the Kothari Commission (1966) for **6 % of Gross National Product (as combined budgetary spending on education by Union and state Governments) as public expenditure on education**. The estimate was made long ago based on growth in enrolment, per student expenditure and other parameters. Nevertheless, it assumes importance as the benchmark has remained unmet so far.
- At present, the Central government bears only one fourth of the total government spending on education, while the remaining spending comes from the state governments. As education is on the Concurrent list, the Central government needs to take a larger responsibility towards provisioning of financial resources for education.
- Enrolment and attainment data shows India's secondary and higher secondary education continues to remain underdeveloped and neglected. Between 2004 and 2011, government expenditure on secondary and higher education have increased only by a meager 0.1 per cent and 0.5 per cent of GDP respectively. It is high time that government **steps up investments in secondary and higher education**.
- At present, a major concern is the poor quality of education reflected in the learning outcomes at every level of education. The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), 2012 report shows more than 58 percent children enrolled in government schools in standard V are unable to read standard II level texts. Government's education policy is still geared towards increasing enrolment rather than improving learning outcomes. There is a need to focus on focus **on the quality of education** and policies should be designed to improve the quality of education.
- The data on prices of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI) shows that education spending by households has increased at a faster rate as compared to food items in rural India. This indicates a preference of rural households for private schools over public schools. As per ASER data, private school enrolment in rural India was increasing at an annual rate of 10 percent. This trend of private school enrollment will go on increasing unless the **quality of education in government schools improves substantially**.
- The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE), requires private schools to strictly adhere to the rules and regulations of the Act. Continuous monitoring of private schools is necessary to **regulate profiteering by private schools**. Regulating the growing role of private players in provisioning of education is a cross-cutting demand across various sub-sectors within education: elementary, secondary, higher, technical and professional.
- There is **a need of rationalization of duality** within the State supported schools as the government spends substantially more on special category schools like *Navodaya*

Vidyalaya, Indira Gandhi Residential School etc as compared to other government-run schools. This, in a way, is leading to the government itself sowing the seeds of inequality within the education system.

- Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 (RTE) has a provision of maintaining the teacher student ratio of 1:30 for primary schools and 1:35 for upper primary schools. However, the shortage of teachers is a serious constraint as about 11 lakh vacancies still exist at the elementary level. What is needed is **immediate recruitment of teachers to meet the provisions of RTE Act 2009** across the country.
- There is a large lack of trained teachers. Even existing trained teachers are not always available due to their engagement in different non-teaching activities. This is a major hurdle in providing quality education in government / government aided schools. To improve the quality of education, government should focus **on thorough training of existing teachers and appointment of trained teachers**. This requires enhanced allocations and sustained provision towards teacher training in Central and state budgets.
- **Better quality Teaching Learning Material (TLM), text books and other support material** should be prepared in the local/regional languages, so that children across regions find it useful and are interested in such TLM and books. The material and books may also include various important life skills, saving habits, financial education etc. The allocations under this head in the Union Budget should be increased.
- **Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE)** is well intended but in most cases it is not conducted on a regular basis. As annual exams are no longer mandatory, CCE is very important to ensure quality of education. This also provides scope for identification of weak students and making provisions for separate training for such students and should be made mandatory **for each school**.
- While children with disabilities are the most vulnerable section, inadequate measures have been taken to cater their requirements. It is critical to ensure immediate **barrier free access in all schools for children with disabilities, recruitment of specially trained teachers and training of existing teachers**. Special provisions for ensuring access to classrooms, ramps, toilets, other facilities of schools needs to be made compulsory for each school.
- Issues related to the education of migrant children are still a concern and needs to be supported with mobile education centers to such children. Additionally, there is a need to adopt concrete measures to address the concerns of children in conflict zones, disaster prone areas and those affected by HIV-AIDS.
- Each school under *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA) should be provided staff **for routine work**, like cleaning the school compound, filling water pots for drinking, cleaning of toilets, etc. In many schools in remote areas, these tasks are being done by teachers or students. Besides, there are a number of other administrative tasks for which the services of additional staff could be utilised.

- There should be an **open database in each state** with information on schools and children at district level. The SSA website is the best medium to share such data. This would enhance transparency in policy making.
- School Management Committees (SMC) have a major role in the implementation of RTE Act; however most SMCs are not functioning effectively. There is a provision in the Act mandating SMCs to undertake planning for three years. However, there is a need for clearer guidelines and approval of plan and roles of SMC in its implementation. There needs to be a focused drive for **School Development Plan and its implementation by SMCs**.
- Poor **monitoring and supervision** at every level of administration in the education system is the primary barrier towards effective policy implementation. There should be adequate provisions and allocations with clear expenditure guidelines to strengthen the functioning of SMCs to enable them to play an important role in monitoring and proper functioning of schools. This is an important area and needs to be focused on with operational guidelines in the state plans.
- Despite the substantial progress by India in the field of education, it continues to have the maximum number of illiterate adults in the world-a staggering 287 million, a number that is nearly four times the population of France. The incidence of illiteracy is more severe for women as one in every three women in India is illiterate. There is a need to focus on women's education to reduce the gender gap in the field of education. Such measures need to be backed by adequate budgetary outlays.

HEALTH

- Despite several recommendations and acknowledgement by the government, universal access to healthcare remains a critical challenge in the country. In this regard, there is an urgent need to enact a legislation that ensures right to universal quality healthcare.
- There is a long-pending recommendation for stepping up public spending on health (Union and State governments combined) to 3% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP); however, the present government spending on health is a mere 1% of the GDP. An increase in public spending on health to the tune of 3% of GDP would help address the shortage in physical and human resources. A related demand is to set up new health centres as well as upgrade all health institutions following the Indian Public Health Standards (IPHS).
- There is a need to reduce current out of pocket expenditure in health care which is at present 69% of the total expenditure to less than 30%.
- There has been a mention of separate allocations for free medicines in the 12th Five Year Plan. In keeping with the plan provisions, availability of essential drugs and medicines should be notified at all health centres (rural and urban) with adequate budgetary provisions. Provisions should be made to ensure availability of necessary drugs/medicines at block Primary Health Centres (PHCs) and regular Outpatient Departments (OPDs.)
- While the Government speaks of extending the National Rural Health Mission(NRHM) to include the urban spaces as well, urban PHCs, also called dispensaries or government health centres across cities, need to be upgraded to meet the norms of a Primary Urban Health Centre (PUHC). These Centres should have basic laboratory facilities, offering a range of preventive and curative services as well as referral services to secondary and tertiary facilities. Functioning primary care facilities need to be adequately staffed, with the services of qualified physicians (available round the clock), nurses, health workers and technicians. The facilities should stock all essential medicines appropriate for that level of care and should provide all basic diagnostic tests. All these services should be free to all patients. The facilities should also have provision for in-patient care in line with the rural PHCs.
- Separate fund allocations are required for setting up health centres at Panchayat/Village Council Development Committee (VCDC) level with adequate health facilities, staff, medicines etc. Community monitoring must be emphasized upon with additional budgetary provisions.
- Special budgetary provision for Alternative Vaccine Delivery System and its implementation needs to be worked out effectively. Special units for cold chain points and vaccine distribution, especially in remote areas must be ensured. Adequate

budgetary allocations should be made for maintenance of refrigerating equipment in cold chain.

- Given that nutritional intake is declining in several parts of the country, as revealed by National Sample Surveys on consumption expenditure, allocations for establishment and functioning of Nutritional Rehabilitation Centres (NRCs) in districts with high malnutrition should be made separately. Significant strengthening of the Public Distribution System (PDS) and the Supplementary Nutrition Programme (SNP) within Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) is called for, as these provide crucial support to vulnerable women and their families. The Mid-Day Meal (MDM) scheme is also essential for ensuring that women do not sacrifice their own nutritional needs for that of hungry children in the household.
- There has been an increased recognition of growing mental illness/ disorders across regions in the country. In order to tackle these, adoption of a comprehensive Mental Health Policy by the Department of Health & Family Welfare is required. Specialised human resources (psychiatrists and psychologists) need to be placed at district and block levels for the treatment of such patients. Special incentives must be given for human resources working in remote places and special packages for basic infrastructure facilities. Allocations should be made in the Union Budget to ensure availability of skilled human resources e.g., physiotherapist, speech therapist etc. Allocations should also be earmarked for training of human resources on a regular basis.
- The huge shortage of human resources in the health care sector is reflected even in premier institutions such as All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS). One of the reasons for such shortages is that the private sector, promoted and subsidized by the government, under the model of public-private partnership, draws away human resources from the under resourced public sector. The problem is further accentuated by poor working conditions in public hospitals. There is a need to significantly augment human resources in public hospitals, to improve working conditions, and to work towards strengthening public facilities rather than subsidizing private hospitals. Strict regulation for health services provided by private agencies need to be drafted and strictly followed for ensuring accountability.
- There is an urgent need to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to timely and adequate healthcare services. Government should spend its resources in improving the quality of *Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO)* products and also on imparting training to the users of the devices for its effective usage and maintenance.
- Separate healthcare packages should be created in order to take care of the needs of the marginalised and vulnerable sections of society. Funds need to be allocated for providing rehabilitative services to abandoned children, women and elderly people

with disabilities. Special health facilities should to be provided in Juvenile Homes for health care of children.

- There has been a detailed discussion on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD) in the 12th Five Year Plan document. NRHM in some states has incorporated NCD as one of the major components. Separate budgetary provisions for NCDs need to be made. PHCs and Sub Centres should have necessary human and physical resources for diagnosis of NCDs.
- Specific occupational diseases such as Japanese Encephalitis, Silicosis, Asbestosis etc. should have special fund allocations for treatment of patients. Funds are also needed for early identification and treatment of these diseases..
- The Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY), the health insurance cover for the Below Poverty Line (BPL) population, has been upheld as one of the major drivers of universalisation of healthcare facilities. However the functioning of the scheme requires a deeper scrutiny. A number of concerns have been reported from several states referring to improper enrolment, unethical practices by private providers accredited under the scheme, etc. The existing scheme, run by private insurance companies and largely provisioned by private providers raises doubts about its sustainability. Universal health care demands an expanded and reformed public health system, if at all insurance based, should have a well drafted policy to regulate private players within the health sector.
- Health budget should provide for separate funds for Research and Development (R&D) in order to promote local or indigenous knowledge by incentivising community members. Research and promotion of local medicines needs to be focussed upon.
- Strengthening the capacities of frontline workers through training and capacity building of traditional mid-wives/*Sahiya*/Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANM), as well as incentivising and training and capacity building of Accredited social health activists (ASHAs) need to be institutionalised for better delivery of outputs / services under NRHM. Well defined roles and responsibilities including sensitisation of *Mitanins* /ASHAs and the Village Water, Health and Sanitation Committee (VHSCs) is required. The functioning of VHSCs need to be strengthened through various training programmes and the intervention of district/block level officials, NGOs and the village level health workers.
- Maternal health constitutes an important component of the NRHM (RCH I and II) and several schemes such as Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) c. to take care of institutionalised delivery systems, pre and ante natal care, has been working well in many districts. However immediate strengthening of services for home-delivery including training, mentoring and support for Traditional Birth Attendants (TBA) and access to skilled birth attendants at home are existing lacunas to be plugged.

- Universal maternity benefits need to be institutionalised as incidence of home-births is still rampant in both backward as well as other regions. Budgetary provisions for the same needs to be ensured .
 - Given that one third of all maternal deaths occur due to excessive bleeding and that levels of anaemia continue to be high among Indian women and girls, blood storage units should be operationalized at every First Referral Unit (FRU).
 - Special budget component is required to enhance awareness on menstrual hygiene for adolescent girls/women on the use and disposal of Napkins. Regular health check-ups to be institutionalised for menopausal women.
 - On the supply side, there is a need to increase government investments to build new medical colleges, para-medical institutions, nurse training centres, etc in order to cater to the increased demands.
 - Grievance redressal mechanisms need to be effective and accessible for the poor. It is also important to strengthen reporting and monitoring mechanisms by including the civil society, Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and independent technical experts.
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WATER AND SANITATION

- Though the Constitution of India does not recognise Right to Water as a fundamental right, Article 21 of the Constitution (Right to Life) has been interpreted to include Right to Water. Hence, **water and sanitation services need to be recognised as a right and legislation for the same needs to be carried out in order to make it justiciable.** Water and sanitation should be the responsibility of the government and not privatised in any form (full scale or private contracting for operations and maintenance).
- Union Government expenditure on rural drinking water and sanitation has remained less than 1 percent of the total budgetary spending by the Central Government. The allocations towards rural water and sanitation have also been substantially lower than the requirements stated by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation. In view of the targets with regard to these services set in the 12th Five Year Plan, there is a need **to step up allocations towards rural drinking water and sanitation significantly.**
- **High unspent balances** in the National Rural Drinking Water Programme and Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan have been a concern. In the context of inadequate funding for both programmes, there is a need to ensure that the funds allocated are utilised optimally.
- In order to make drinking water accessible to all, **out of pocket expenditure in the form of capital cost sharing and operation and maintenance (O&M) costs must be discouraged.** Accordingly, O&M costs for piped drinking water schemes in rural areas should be stepped up to ensure availability of more funds at the gram panchayat level.
- Additionally, increased O&M funds are required to take care of dead assets and help panchayats maintain Open Defecation Free (ODF) status.
- In acknowledgment of the gender-based disadvantages faced by women in accessing water supply and sanitation facilities, the Union Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation must report its **gender-responsive budgetary outlays in the Gender Budget Statement.**
- Public toilets, toilets in schools, anganwadis and government offices should also be accessible for persons with disabilities. In this regard, budgetary allocations should be made to ensure that modification in design of toilets and the additional costs incurred in including features such as ramps and grab bars are provided for.
- Special attention needs to be paid to meet the Supreme Court order issued in October 2012 to have toilets and drinking water in all government and private schools within a period of six months. A number of schools across the country still do

not have drinking water and toilet facilities; budgetary allocations to address this gap are required.

- To ensure usage of toilets in schools, **budgets for maintenance of toilets** should be enhanced.
- Data on availability of toilets to SC and ST households and households with persons with disabilities should be maintained and shared in the public domain by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation.
- Census 2011 indicates that there are continue to be a large number of households where night soil is removed by humans. For the Complete removal of manual scavenging, the act very recently passed (The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013) should be implemented with immediate effect, the Union government should devise a separate mechanism with community participation to oversee the implementation of the act.
- Additionally, sub-contracting of sanitary services to private contractors needs to be checked; **all menial sanitary services should also be mechanised.**
- A number of sanctioned posts in the implementing agencies at all levels (Union, State and District level) are vacant. Human resource shortage hampers the effective implementation of water and sanitation programmes. Efforts need to be made to ensure that vacancies in all sanctioned posts should be filled. The Standing Committee on Rural Development (Twenty Seventh Report, 2011-12) , has recommended that the **Ministry of Drinking water and Sanitation should carry out a manpower study to assess the requirements and take follow-up action to upgrade the human resources of the Ministry.**
- Monitoring mechanisms for drinking water and sanitation programmes need to be strengthened. In this regard, **social audit in all water and sanitation programmes should be institutionalised.**

RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND PRIS

- **Devolution of funds, functions, and functionaries is necessary for effective rural governance.** Devolution of financial powers to Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) must be made on the basis of the principle of subsidiarity (which suggests that what is best done at the lower levels of government should not be centralised at higher levels). A well thought out activity mapping is critical to ensure that functions are devolved to the appropriate level of local self-government.
- Tied funds under Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSSs) sometimes impede the autonomous functioning of PRIs and hence reduce the flexibility of schemes to suit local needs. **More untied funds should be granted to PRIs** to ensure flexibility and local decision making leading to better governance.
- Owing to inadequate and relevant training and capacity building, the ability of PRIs to perform even their limited responsibilities is often hampered. Additionally, the lack of technical capacity and shortage of administrative staff is another major challenge faced by PRIs. **Capacity building** of elected and non-elected members of PRIs and **hiring more administrative staff** are critical measures required to ensure effective implementation of programmes and schemes. Above all, mechanisms for **greater transparency and accountability** should be instituted at the local level.
- **Abolition of parallel bodies like District Rural Development Agencies (DRDA) and other CSS line departments and strengthening District Planning Committees(DPCs)** as well as the state level planning bodies may help create a more streamlined structure for the articulation of local plans and synergy across Panchayat and District plans which is critical for effective implementation of schemes and programmes.
- With regard to making the implementation of programmes and schemes more effective, it is essential to provide for **greater flexibility (on the basis of regions / local specificities) in the financial norms and guidelines** of rural development programmes especially, with regard to the hill states/regions.
- Lack of convergence among different government agencies and different schemes for rural development is a major constraint in the effective implementation of programmes. A **'single window' system for coordination between different implementing bodies** and making adequate budgetary provisions for facilitating such systems and processes is a pre requisite for sustainable rural development.
- The benefits of most government programmes do not reach the intended sections of society due to the lack of a proper database to identify the right beneficiaries. **Identification of appropriate beneficiaries** should be done in a transparent and accountable manner by the *Gram Sabha*.

- The Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Bill was enacted in September 2013. However, there are many **loopholes in this new bill which need to be addressed**. The bill deals with land distribution to the poor but does not address the dismal state of land records. It also does not protect the land rights of *Dalits, Adivasis*, landless workers and farmers or deal with the historic injustice perpetrated against them in the name of development.
- Additional resources are sought for Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) and Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF) to create rural infrastructure for storage of agricultural produce and cold chains.
- Investment in rural infrastructure which includes roads, electricity, drinking water supply, telecommunication, irrigation and housing is currently 0.5 per cent of GDP and in the 11th Plan, only 30 per cent of total infrastructure investment was targeted towards rural infrastructure. The Government should increase its **spending in rural infrastructure** as it an important means of rural development.
- *Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana* (RGGVY) and the Remote Village Electrification Programme (RVEP) failed to provide regular electricity supply. Interventions are needed to improve the quality of supply, innovative alternatives to grid expansion and the use of site specific renewable energy. **An increase in subsidy for rural electrification** and its effective redistribution is critical to ensure quality delivery of electricity to all rural households.
- In *Indira Awas Yojana* (IAY), the unit cost of dwellings should be increased by at least 100% in keeping with the rise in the cost of material; the support provided under this scheme may be varied based on regional variations in construction costs and housing design. The cost of toilets should also be added to the same.
- A study by Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) (2012) found, a 10 percent increase in mobile penetration increases the state GDP by 1.5 percent. **The government should allocate more funds for developing rural communication** so that it can be used as a key instrument to achieve inclusion, better governance and improved human development.
- *Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme* (MGNREGS), the country's largest public works programme to enhance the livelihood security of rural households has been only able to often provide 40-50 days of employment per year to 25 percent of all rural households, which is far below the provision of 100 days a year, as envisaged in the scheme. **Addressing delays in granting work and receiving payments, revision of schedule of rates, addressing gender concerns and concerns of the elderly and persons with disabilities , agro-climatic conditions and above all increase in man-days of work are some necessary policy asks** to ensure better functioning of the programme.

- The role of PRIs in implementation, monitoring and training of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) needs to be clearly defined in the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), also known as *Aajeevika*. In this programme, adequate budgetary provisions should be made to meet the collateral needs of farmers' / primary producers' cooperatives and companies for leveraging funds from mainstream financial institutions, including the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD). The scope for Public Private Partnership (PPP) in this context needs to be reviewed.
- A key barrier to a large section of the rural population is financial exclusion. There is a need to extend formal banking institutions to bring more people under the formal financial system.

AGRICULTURE

- To make agriculture, as a profession, sustainable and profitable there is a need to **establish a Farmers Income Commission** which would ensure a guaranteed income to farmers. Based on the recommendations of Farmers Income Commission, the Union government needs to make budgetary provisions to secure a guaranteed income for farmers whose incomes fall below a threshold limit.
- **Rainfed agriculture, in spite of its high potential for growth, has remained neglected for long.** It needs a different framework for development than mere extension of support through provision of seeds, fertilizer and pesticides. Development investments for rainfed agriculture must be decentralized, location specific and should take 'Block' as a unit of development, as envisaged in the 12th Five Year Plan, under National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture.
- Free/ subsidised electricity for irrigation, heavy subsidy for micro-irrigation, drips and sprinklers in particular, are fuelling heavy groundwater extraction by a few who have related infrastructure to access groundwater. Several areas have already reached the status of 'over exploited'; even while the large majority of farmers are without access to irrigation and subject to climate risks. A special program on securing rainfed crops of larger number of farmers through extension of protective irrigation in rainy season, promoting sharing and/or pooling groundwater resources need to be piloted under NMSA-micro irrigation, especially in rainfed areas.
- **Present public research and extension system is not adequately prioritizing research for the supply of quality seeds,** resulting in substantial corporatization of seed supply. Seed production and distribution (which includes improving indigenous seeds and conserving agro-biodiversity), need to be part of the mandate of public research and extension system in collaboration with farmers' institutions. Community Seed Banks need to be institutionalized and supported as mainstream institutions of the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation in the Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India with adequate budgetary allocation in the forthcoming budgets of the Union government.
- **Further, lack of systems ensuring supply of quality seeds of diverse crops in time for sowing at affordable prices have been adversely affecting rainfed agriculture.** The Seed Village Programs and the seed subsidies need to be merged to fund evolution of local seed-institutional systems managed by farmers' organisations within a Block. Such local farmer managed seed systems should be evolved, particularly in rainfed areas supported by Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA) and Krishi Vigyan Kendras(KVK) at the district level. Seed subsidy is best routed through these institutions that manage both production and distribution

of quality seeds with support from the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation. These initiatives should be backed by adequate budgetary outlays.

- Special **incentives should be provided to farmers practicing organic farming**. In this regard, budgetary provisions should be made to create a dedicated cell within ATMA at the district level to promote and monitor growth of organic farming in the district.
- Declining farmers' incomes is compelling farmers to reduce application of organic matter to soil resulting in heavy depletion of soils and soil degradation. **Preparation and application of organic matter, particularly in rainfed areas, need to be incentivized**; such support must be extended in addition to supporting compost pits, vermicomposting units on a per acre basis, directly paid to farmers to restore soil fertility. Such supplementary scheme must be included within the Soil Health program of Ministry of Agriculture in convergence with MGNREGS.
- Budgetary provisions should be made to establish necessary infrastructure and to promote value addition industries at the Gram Panchayat level. This will allow farmers to get competitive remuneration through efficient and effective value addition of their produce in addition to increasing local employment opportunities. Entrepreneurs and farmers' groups need to be sufficiently incentivized to set up such value addition industries.
- Farmers in general and small and marginal farmers in particular, are deprived of getting fair prices of their produce due to weak market linkages. Therefore, budgetary allocations should be made to develop proper market linkages and to set up a Special Marketing & Transportation Corporation to link each village (or cluster of villages) with urban markets, which would ensure maximum returns to farmers and make agriculture as a profession, viable and profitable.
- Minimum Support Price (MSP) for agricultural commodities should be based on the formula suggested by the National Commission on Farmers (NCF), which recommends the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for rice, wheat, millets and other commodities. The MSP should be one and a half times the total cost of production as suggested by the Swaminathan Commission. MSP should be declared on time (much before the harvesting season) and budgetary provisions should be made to open agricultural Mandies at every Panchayat throughout the year to procure agriculture produce to avoid distress sale and to provide free-of-cost residential facilities to farmers to store their produce.
- Credit is one of the foremost requirements of farmers to enable them to buy adequate and timely agriculture inputs, which could lead to enhanced agricultural productivity and higher returns to farmers. However, access to credit by small and marginal farmers is still very low in the country. Therefore a special drive to link small and marginal farmers to formal sources of credit is imperative and budgetary

provisions should be made for this purpose. Further, special budgetary provisions should be made (under schemes like interest subvention etc.), particularly to small and marginal farmers.

- Risk management in agriculture is an important factor contributing to sustainable agriculture with an assured income to farmers. However, existing crop insurance schemes such as Modified National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (MNAIS) and Weather Based Crop Insurance Schemes (WBCIS) have many limitations and operational problems. These insurance schemes should be expanded to include all crops and risky environments like drought-affected areas etc. Hundred percent premiums should be paid by the government for all crops. Individual farmers (on a case by case basis) should be considered as the unit of insurance coverage.
- Budgetary provisions (grants to be made to States) should be made towards mainstreaming gender concerns in agriculture where each state agriculture department should have a gender desk/gender core team to analyse development interventions in agriculture and strengthen the gender responsiveness of agricultural policies and programmes.

FOOD SECURITY

- The National Food Security Act (NFSA) -2013 has excluded 33 percent of the population from accessing the Public Distribution System (PDS) in continuing with the exclusionary criteria of targeting households such as “priority” and “general” category. Hence, the next Union Government should take immediate steps to universalise the PDS in the country and allocate adequate budgetary resources where each household can access PDS with adequate foodgrains.
- Due to lack of resources, poorer states are not in a position to implement the NFSA provisions. This is likely to result in the Act not being implemented effectively. The Union Government should allocate sufficient resources (as supplementary budget) to the poorer states to ensure adequate resources for the implementation of the Act. Procurement and storage of foodgrains must be decentralised, preferably done at the *Panchayat* levels. Sufficient budgetary provisions should be made towards construction of storage facilities, particularly for perishable agricultural produce in order to address the wastage of foodgrains. For this, sufficient budgetary allocations need to be made to encourage local procurement, storage and distribution to ensure food security at the household level.
- In order to boost production of foodgrains, government should provide higher Minimum Support Price (MSP) as a legal entitlement under the National Food Security Act. At present, the Act does not provide production related entitlements to farmers in spite of the fact that huge quantum of foodgrains to be procured and distributed under the NFSA.
- PDS should be expanded to cover pulses and edible oils and other essential commodities. In this regard, adequate investments should be made towards production of pulses and oilseeds in the country to combat malnutrition. Special provisions are needed to decentralise foodgrain procurements such as millets and pulses, which would ensure higher prices to farmers those who are producing such crops. Hence, the next Union Government should allocate sufficient resources towards encouraging millet based farming and food habits as these grains not only have high nutritional value, but are also extremely crucial to tackle food insecurity and farming crisis in an era of climate change.
- Measures to ensure transparent and accountable implementation of NFS Act should be introduced. These measures should be backed by adequate budgetary outlays. More specifically, **mechanisms like ‘social audit’ should be strengthened** to check misappropriation of foodgrains in the implementation of

the Act. Further, for the Act to be effective, adequate funds should be provided for a strong, decentralised and independent grievance redressal cell both at the Block and Panchayat levels.

- The Act should include **special entitlements for the most vulnerable sections of the population** such as the elderly, persons with disabilities, single women, homeless persons etc. Such groups could be covered through community kitchens for which Union government should allocate resources towards proper identification of such individuals and groups to be included under the Act.

RESPONSIVENESS TO CLIMATE CHANGE

- **National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC):** NAPCC was finalized in 2008 through several rounds of stakeholder consultations. However, the 12th Five Year Plan presents a critical review of it. The plan suggests the revamping of the NAPCC by dropping two of its missions – The National Water Mission and The Sustainable Habitat Mission, out of the eight missions proposed. A few missions that have a cross-cutting purpose, have been proposed to be re-designated as policy thrust areas. These suggestions under the 12th plan clearly indicate the dilution of efforts towards climate change. The 12th plan neither gives any clarity on the allocation of missions amongst various ministries nor on the funding mechanisms for all eight missions of NAPCC. It is therefore critical that the next Union Government has **clear financial allocations for all 8 missions of NAPCC**. There is also a need for **time bound targets** under NAPCC. Additionally, it should be made mandatory for all State Action Plan on Climate Change (SAPCC) to be prepared after public consultations.
- **The National Clean Energy Fund (NCEF):** There are significant shortcomings in the operational guidelines and monitoring mechanism of NCEF in its current framework¹. Some of the major demands put forward, for consideration by the next Union Government are as follows:
 - (i) Studies have shown ineffective utilization of funds. Additionally, there is a need to ensure that the next Union Government allocates resources in line with the objectives of such funds which are reserved for mitigating climate change.
 - (ii) Another issue with NCEF has been relating to its monitoring mechanism. There is a need for concurrent monitoring and evaluation mechanisms of such funds with the help of an external agency to enhance transparency in the implementation of such funds.
- **Renewable energy:** In order to double the present installed capacity of renewable energy (which was 25000 MW in year 2012), the 12th Plan has approved an outlay of Rs 33,000 crore, of which the gross budgetary support would be Rs 19,113 crore and the remaining Rs 13,890 crore would be the investments, to be made by public sector undertakings. In this context, the demands for renewable energy sector are as follows:

¹Framework and Performance of National Clean Energy Fund, July 2012, Available at [http://www.cbgaindia.org/files/policy_briefs/Policy%20Brief-framework%20&%20Performance%20of%20National%20Clean%20Energy%20Fund%20\(NCEF\).pdf](http://www.cbgaindia.org/files/policy_briefs/Policy%20Brief-framework%20&%20Performance%20of%20National%20Clean%20Energy%20Fund%20(NCEF).pdf)

- (i) The budgetary outlays proposed by the 12th Plan appear to be insufficient, considering the need to mainstream renewable energy in India's energy roadmap and the kind of public investments that would be required for the same. There is a need to priorities the renewable energy sector and provide adequate budgetary allocations for the same. We urge the Union Government to grant 'priority sector status" to renewable energy projects in order to enable the sector to access priority lending by commercial banks.
 - (ii) The Finance Minister announced support to municipalities that implement waste to energy projects in the last Union budget. There have been public protests in the past against harmful gases which can be released from such projects. It is therefore important that the latest and environmentally safe technology is adopted for these projects.
 - (iii) Related to the above, another concern is, that, implementation of such projects is likely to affect the livelihoods of workers engaged in waste collection. There should be provision for protecting the livelihood of small scale vendors (sweeper associations and rag pickers etc.) involved in waste collection. Waste collectors need to be trained to collect desired quality of waste and market linkage need to be established with small scale vendors.
- **Climate change adaptation measures:** In the context of the impact of climate change, the rural poor are among the most vulnerable as they often depend on natural resources for their livelihoods, ranging from agriculture, fisheries to forestry. Our demands for implementing adaptation measures for climate change are as follows:
 - (i) The next Union government should focus on creating livelihood opportunities for the rural population to deal with the risks posed by climate change.
 - (ii) There should be transfer of budgetary allocations till the Panchayat level under SAPCC, Disaster management Committees and biodiversity conservation cells.
 - (iii) Climate change adaptation measures should be gender sensitive. Specific concerns of women and girl children in the context of climate change should be identified and measures to address the same need to be undertaken by the concerned ministries and departments.
 - (iv) There is a need for higher allocations towards strengthening disaster management at the state level. There is a need for greater focus on disaster

prediction, early warning systems, information dissemination centers particularly in disaster prone states like Uttarakhand and Odisha.

- **Environmental sustainability aspects:** India set the target to reduce Green House Gases emission intensity of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in line with the target of 20 per cent to 25 per cent reduction over 2005 levels by 2020. Various schemes under Ministries, other than Ministry of Environment and Forest (MOEF), have a direct impact on targets set forth on climate change. It is required that the other concerned ministries should collaborate, supplement and enable achieving the targets for addressing climate change and environmental issues. There is a significant need for action from the next Union Government to reform government expenditure to ensure environmental sustainability. The specific measures that could be adopted are as follows:
 - (i) There is a need to introduce a separate budget head on environment and natural resource conservation into budgets of ministries and departments whose mandates have convergence with target set forth on climate change.
 - (ii) There should be a mandatory introduction of a course on environmental education and disaster preparedness under the State Education Boards. This will result in a pool of aware and skilled human resources with requisite skills to deal with the challenges posed by the process of climate change.

DALITS

Schedule Caste Sub Plan (SCSP): The experience of implementation of the SCSP suggests that the Union Government and all the state governments have failed to implement the SCSP in letter and spirit and it has become a mere reporting exercise with national allocations. In this context we demand the following from the new Union Government:

- **Enact Legislation on SCSP** that provides for earmarking of Plan allocations for *Dalits* in proportion to their share in the total population at the National level and at states' level in respective states, to implement the SCSP in an effective manner.
- All the Ministries and Departments should be encouraged to: (i) identify what could be the additional difficulties / challenges confronting SCs in their sectors of concern, (ii) what kind of measures could be taken by them to address those special difficulties / challenges, and (iii) how much additional resources would be required for such special measures. These additional resources devoted for the special measures for SCs should then be reported under SCSP.
- **Concerns of Dalit women should be identified** and accounted for, while planning for schemes and programmes to be reported under SCSP.
- The budgetary outlay under the SCSP should be the **non-lapsable and non-divertible**; un-utilized funds should be carried forward in the subsequent years for utilization for the said purpose. As recommended by the Narendra Jadhav Committee, the funds allocated under SCSP should be progressively utilized through schemes that empower SCs with the provision to use **any lapsed funds as a separate pool of funds** whose interests could accrue to National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation (NSCFDC).
- There should be separate guidelines or framework for making budget outlays for provisions of welfare and civic amenities for Schedule Castes in Municipality Corporations. Many municipality corporation have considerable percentage of Schedule Caste population and almost all Municipality corporations' budget runs over thousand crore, therefore, there should be separate guidelines for **earmarking budget outlays for SCs in the municipality corporation budgets as well.**
- **Audit of SCSP funds** should be made mandatory; a **three-pronged audit mechanism** should include internal (departmental) audit, audit by the office of the C&AG of India, and social audit, the findings and suggestions of which could be published as a report annually.

- **A unit has to be set up in every Ministry/Department for the proper implementation, supervision and monitoring of the strategy.** It should act as the nodal agency within each ministry and department to recognize the specific disadvantages faced by the *Dalits* in their respective sectors and suggest how the policies/ guidelines/ programmes of the ministry/ department can be made more responsive to the specific needs of the *Dalits*.
- SCSP Statement (Statement 21) should be made more comprehensive by **making available additional information on the rationale behind reporting a scheme / programme under the SCSP Statement.** Similar information for all the schemes and programmes, under all the ministries, should be reported in their respective Annual Reports and Outcome Budgets. All relevant information with regard to SCSP and the inclusion of the various schemes and programmes under it should be made available in the public domain and be easily accessible.
- For the complete removal of manual scavenging, the recently passed Act (**The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013**) should be **implemented with immediate effect**; the Union government should devise a separate mechanism with community participation to oversee the implementation of the act. Hence we demand:
 - Requisite budgetary provisions should be earmarked for the implementation of the schemes; with adequate earmarking for different components within the scheme such as construction of toilets, appropriate technical devices (like sucking machines, jetting machines etc.), ensuring safety of the manhole workers, etc. along with systemic monitoring of the implementation of the scheme.
 - Adequate **allocations must be made to ensure rehabilitation of the workers** engaged in manual scavenging, with ample focus on their capacity building, skill training and entrepreneurial development to take up an alternative, economically viable occupation. The government must allocate adequate funds to support the families (of those engaged in manual scavenging) for the period until they find an alternative occupation.
- **Allocation for the effective implementation of the Prevention of Atrocities Act:** The law has largely failed in its ambitious mandate. There is a need to **strengthen the implementation of the Prevention of Atrocities Act 1989**, with fast-track courts in each city for trial of cases registered under this Act, along with periodic training for police officials on the provisions of the act.

Demands for *Dalit* Women:

- *Dalit* women should be recognised as a distinct category when formulating policies and plans for *Dalits* or Women in general. Their **specific concerns should be identified and addressed** in planning, designing of schemes, budgeting & implementation at all levels. **Violence against Dalit women** needs special attention. Specific steps need to be taken to address this problem, wherein requisite budgetary outlays should be earmarked to implement these proposals.
- **All the schemes and programmes** (both preventive as well as rehabilitative) implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development and other ministries should **recognize Dalit women as a priority group** and make specific provisions for them, with adequate flexibility to modify the schemes to address the specific issues faced by this group.
- There is a need to ensure both **gender as well as caste-sensitization for all stakeholders**, both within and outside the Government; and requisite budgetary allocations should be made for the same.
- In recognition of the fact that there is a high incidence of violence against *Dalit* women Panchayat leaders when they assert their political rights and contest elections, **free legal aid should be given to Dalit women representatives** who seek judicial redressal.
- There is a need to ensure the **overall development of Dalit women in all sectors** (education, health, water and sanitation, livelihood, agriculture, etc.) by designing specific provisions to **make public services in all the realms more accessible to Dalit women** as well as to introduce new interventions for their development in different sectors wherever needed (e.g. good quality residential schools and scholarships under education; Vocational training for women, not restricted to traditional sectors and occupations; creating avenues for their employment and entrepreneurial development; recognize *Dalit* women headed households as a priority category under schemes; nutritional support through separate provision for opening Anganwadi and ICDS Centre in SC hamlets etc.).
- There should be **convergence** between the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and the Ministry of Women and Child Development in planning, designing of schemes, budgeting & implementation of various schemes and programmes for *Dalit* women.

- **Collection of sex and caste disaggregated data** on all socio-economic indicators as well as conducting a benefit-incidence analysis in programmes/schemes reaching out to women from marginalized social groups should be carried out.
- It is essential that **occupational opportunities are created for Dalits**. This can be done through formal education that includes components of general and technical/vocational education, which needs to be strengthened considerably.
- **Ensuring Land Rights for Dalits:** Land and agriculture are the predominant livelihood options for *Dalits* in rural areas. It would not be very effective to ensure certain provisions for *Dalits* under the agricultural sector, without ensuring basic land ownership for them. Hence, **land procurement and land development for the rural Dalits** should be given priority by the new Union government. Providing land to the landless SC agricultural labourers and SC share croppers with **loan assistance** to land development, agricultural input and facilitation of marketing networks to sell their products, should be a priority.

ADIVASIS

- In order to ensure that the Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) is effectively implemented, it is necessary to change the mechanism from being merely a recommendatory provision to a legal entitlement. The Central Government should accord legal status to TSP by enacting it as legislation on the lines of the draft bill for enactment of Scheduled Caste Sub Plan (SCSP) prepared by the Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- For effective implementation of TSP, earmarking of plan outlays for Adivasis should take place in proportion to their share in the total population at national level and respective state levels. Notional expenditure in the name of development of infrastructure for Scheduled Tribes (ST) should be stopped as this expenditure gets diverted to general purposes. All Ministries and Departments should be encouraged to: (i) identify the additional difficulties / challenges confronting STs in their sectors of concern, (ii) measures that could be taken by them to address those special difficulties / challenges, and (iii) additional resources would be required for such special measures. These additional resources devoted for the special measures and projects for STs should then be reported under TSP.
- There is a need to check the diversion of funds from TSP at the Union level. A similar mechanism also needs to be established at the state and district level level. Accordingly, there is a need for a statutory body at the Union, state and District levels which have a large Adivasi representation to oversee the implementation of TSP.
- Audit of TSP funds should be made mandatory at all levels. A three-pronged audit mechanism should include internal (departmental) audit, audit by the office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) of India and social audit. The findings and suggestions of which could be published as a report annually.
- Since Adivasis comprise of a vast number of tribes/communities, therefore, there is a need to allocate exclusive and sufficient budget for the holistic growth and development of each and every Adivasi tribe/community including Primitive Tribal Groups. The budget for each Adivasi tribe should be justified based on their size of population and level of backwardness.
- There is a need to initiate measures for preservation and promotion of respective language, culture, tradition, religion, practices, beliefs, ethics, values and history

of each Adivasi tribes. These measures need to be backed by adequate budgetary outlays.

- There should be special funds for the implementation of provisions of Forest Right Act, (FRA) for individual cultivators and community cultivators. Adivasis, who have received forest land, should be provided assistance for development of land for better yield, better quality of seeds, fertilizers and micro irrigation for developing forest land for sustainable existence.
- Centrally sponsored schemes should be implemented through PESA provisions in tribal areas. This will ensure more active participation of tribal populations and effective implementation of these schemes and programmes.
- Heavy taxes should be levied on existing natural resource based industries. The revenue from mining should be utilized for tribal development and welfare and there should be a Moratorium on the natural-resource based new industrial activities, including mining and megacity projects in Adivasi Areas.
- To strengthen the access to education by adivasi children, the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan should address the specific challenges confronting tribal populations in access to education (such as distance from schools, availability of trained teachers, language barrier etc.)
- It is seen that the Adivasi community is inter-generationally malnourished. Hence, special attention needs to be paid to ensure accessibility of tribal communities to nutrition related programmes (ICDS, MDM, and PDS). Budget allocations for formulation of a Hunger Monitoring Commission comprising experts from health, education and legal departments is required.
- There is a need to introduce programmes that integrate the traditional skills of management of forest resources of Adivasis to create economic opportunities.
- There is also a need to promote traditional micro enterprises in tribal areas. Accordingly, it is necessary to provide loans and subsidies to strengthen entrepreneurship skills to safeguard tribal livelihoods
- To ensure improved road connectivity in remote and inaccessible tribal areas there is a need to strengthen the rural road connectivity to such areas and ensure public transportation facilities.
- There is a need for tribal grievance and dispute settlement centers at the District, Block and Gram Panchayat and budget allocations for such activities are required.
- There is a need to allocate funds to conduct regular impact surveys survey to assess the effective implementation mechanisms and transfer of benefits from the earmarked funds for STs.

MUSLIMS

- There should be separate budgetary provisions in the Union Budget for upliftment of Muslims on the lines of the Tribal Sub Plan and Scheduled Caste Sub Plan. Allocations should be made in proportion to the Muslim population. As of now, there is no separate budgetary provision for Muslims.
- The Union Budget should introduce a separate statement (in Expenditure Budget Vol. I) on financial allocations schemes and programmes related to Muslims. A separate minor head can be opened for Muslims in budget on the line of SCs and STs.
- Budgetary outlays for Muslims must be made non-lapsable; additionally, there is a need to develop and strengthen mechanisms to check diversion of funds from the Multi Sectoral Development Programme (MSDP) and Prime Minister's 15 Point Programme these schemes for general purpose expenditures.
- It is also critical to ensure that the programmes are implemented effectively and the services are delivered to the intended beneficiaries through exclusive project and community based need assessment.
- MSDP and the PM's New 15-Point Programme should adopt a village / hamlet level approach in identification of potential beneficiaries, planning and taking up the activities.
- Also, the PM's New 15-Point Programme should not be limited only to the ministries dealing with basic / essential services, rather it should be extended to all those sectors that are critical for long term development of Muslims.
- Specific to health, there is a need to prioritise for setting up hospitals in Muslim concentrated districts with adequate staff and medicine. Within health, greater attention needs to be paid to women and child health.
- Muslim women remain doubly disadvantaged and their development needs to be prioritised in the budget outlays. Specific attention also needs to be paid to Muslim women accessing education and health services.
- There is a need to increase budgetary outlays for scholarships for students belonging to religious minorities to increase the coverage of such scholarships, particularly for Muslims students. Current allocations are not adequate to meet the present demand from the Muslim community
- There is a need for special budgetary provision for improving quality education to Muslims by supporting Muslim education institutions. Hostel facilities are also required for girls.
- The existing schemes such as Maulana Azad Education Foundation and Infrastructure Development for Minority Institutions are not helping Muslim

Community for their educational betterment due to the rigid guidelines. The guidelines for these programmes need to be made more flexible.

- There is a need for inclusion to undertake construction of Navodaya/Central Schools in Minority concentrated districts and priority must be given to Muslim students at the time of admission in school through implementation of provision of PM New 15 Point Programme.
- Implementation of the recommendations of the Equal Opportunity Commission for removal of Discrimination in admission and public employment of Muslims.
- The Union budget should explore the various livelihood options for Muslims as per their traditional occupations and skills. Swarnajayanti Gram SwarojgarYojana (SGSY)/National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) /National Minorities Development & Finance Corporation (NMDFC) have not been helpful in providing employment opportunities to Muslims. In the context of public employment provision with regard to 15 percent share in employment mentioned in PM New 15 Point Programme should be adhered.
- There is a need to devolve greater financial powers to the National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC) in order to ensure that the policy interventions being planned for the minorities and more specifically the Muslims, in keeping with the concerns/needs of the intended beneficiaries.
- Khadi and carpet weavers are not included in debt relief measures like those available for the handloom sector; this gap needs to be addressed in Union Budget. Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises should adopt guidelines to promote economic opportunities for Muslims.
- Focusing on access to credit, the RBI guidelines to all banks to apportion 15 % of credit to Muslims is not being adhered to; the Union government must make specific recommendations in this regard.
- Budgetary allocation for establishment of a National Data Bank on Minorities should be done with effect from Union Budget 2014-15.
- Adequate policy and financial provisions for sensitizing and training police and security forces to ensure safety and security of Muslims. Toll free number for seeking assistance, safety and security should be created.

CHILDREN

- The Union government should provide resources for a comprehensive mapping of interventions needed for children in different sectors. **Participation of children in the processes of setting up priorities** should be initiated and strengthened (like Bal Panchayats and representation in SMCs). **Child impact indicators** should be developed for ministries and departments dealing with schemes or services, directly and indirectly related to children. Child impact indicators should cover the policy appropriateness, budget adequacy, implementation steps and outcomes.
- Adequate attention should be paid to **upgrading the quality of all child-specific programmes** and schemes, by revising the unit costs of various components or interventions in all child-specific schemes, on the basis of region-specific needs. Additionally, all child-specific programmes and schemes should incorporate robust monitoring mechanisms.
- Focus should also be on **improving the extent and quality of fund utilization in the programmes and schemes meant for children**. For this, the government needs to take steps to tackle i) systemic weaknesses in the government apparatus in the social sectors (in particular, deficits in regular cadre staffing), ii) bottlenecks in mechanisms of fund flow, and weak links in decentralised planning.
- There should be a raise in the budgetary resources for child health (with special focus on 0-5 years). The existing interventions for **child health** should be merged into an umbrella programme to be supported with adequate budgetary funds. It is important to have child-sensitive health facilities specially in remote, tribal and dalit-inhabited areas.
- In order to ensure universal quality **education** for all up to 18 years of age; the Kendriya Vidyalaya standards should guide the financial norms for all government schools. Higher allocation needs to be provided for Primary School Education (PSE) kit for effective education learning at mini Anganwadi centres (AWCs).
- **Education of children** with special needs must be covered under the Ministry of Human Resource Development, for better convergence and effective implementation.
- Specific to **child development**, the restructured ICDS should be properly implemented and allocation for ICDS should be raised. It is vital to increase allocations for constructing pucca buildings for AWCs, improve the unit costs in Supplementary Nutrition Programme, and ensure that Anganwadi Workers and Anganwadi Helpers are developed into a professional cadre. Government should assure that all the SC/ST/OBC and minority habitations have been covered under ICDS.

- Children under six have long been a neglected sector in our country. Current programmes and policies have not yielded results, and have focused on children above six years of age and the problems of young children and families have escalated. Prenatal stage should be included under **Early Childhood Care and Development policy**; the policy should be enacted at the earliest for free and universal access.
- There is a need for a shift in the policy guiding distribution of food at AWCs. Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) should be given the responsibility for deciding the food for giving at Anganwadi Centres (AWCS) based on the regional food pattern.
- Significant stepping up of budget outlays for Rajiv Gandhi National Crèche Scheme for the Children (which already provides very low coverage crèche services) of Working Mothers and Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls (SABLA) is required.
- The government should take immediate steps to address the violence and exploitation that children (missing children) risk. There is an immediate need to not only strengthen **Integrated Child Protection Scheme** and implementation of Juvenile Justice (JJ) Act, 2000, but also for stepping up outlays for both these interventions.
- Measures should be taken to earmark funds for ensuring the formation of **child protection** cell in each school and Village Child Protection Committees in each village to safeguard the overall interest and rights of the children.
- Special attention needs to be paid to specific vulnerabilities of children affected by disasters, displacement, children of prisoners and victims of internal conflict
- **Children living in urban slums** face chronic poverty and marginalization. They lack a secure home, can't afford access to health services or education, and there is nowhere safe for them to play. There is a need to make concerted efforts to ameliorate the living conditions of young children living in urban poverty, by bringing about changes in the **urban development policies as Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) and Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY) and make these child friendly.**

WOMEN

- In order to strengthen the efforts at Gender Responsive Budgeting at the Union level, the budget circular issued by the Ministry of Finance needs to be engendered. The circular should specify that all ministries and departments should necessarily analyse their policies, programmes and budgets from a gender perspective. All Ministries / Departments should make a serious effort to – recognize the specific gender-based challenges confronting women and girl children in their sectors of concern and then **amend the objectives, operational guidelines, financial norms and unit costs** of their schemes / interventions to make those more **gender responsive**.
- The methodology adopted by the Union ministries for reporting in the *Gender Budgeting Statement* needs to be reviewed thoroughly. The assumptions underlying the different proportions of budget allocations for schemes being reported in the GB Statement (i.e. the Part B of the Statement) need to be explained through a *narrative statement*, which should also document the policy measures adopted by each and every Union ministry towards addressing the gender-based disadvantages of women and girl children in their sector(s) of concern.
- To address the rising rate of gender based violence, there is a **need for a broader range of ministries and departments to identify specific interventions for ensuring safety of women in their respective sectors and put in place requisite measures, backed by adequate allocations**. Also, Interventions addressing gender based violence should be backed by adequate budgetary outlays.
- There are a number of concerns with regard to the implementation of some schemes to address gender based violence such as the Scheme for the Implementation of Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act and Relief and Rehabilitation of Rape Victims being implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development. Bottlenecks in the implementation of these schemes need to be identified and addressed on a priority basis.
- Frontline women workers under Integrated Child Development Scheme (Anganwadi workers), National Rural Health Mission (Auxiliary Nurse Midwives) and Mid Day Meal (Cooks) should be recognised **as regular employees and ensure minimum wages and social security** to all, along with regularization of working conditions.
- Addressing concerns of **Internally Displaced Persons (IDP)**: In the absence of a national law on displacement, we urge that the State Governments must adhere to international standards set out in ‘Guiding principles on Internally Displaced Persons’ in planning and implementing **rehabilitation packages and programmes especially addressing the strategic gender needs of women in post conflict situations**.

- In the context of **feminization of agriculture**, there should be due recognition in our agricultural policies that increasingly, the work is being carried out by women agricultural labourers or marginal women farmers, in the absence of the male members of the households (who are increasingly migrating to cities in search of better opportunities). Since the benefits under the agricultural schemes are linked to land rights, women are unable to avail benefits of these schemes as the ownership of land is not in their names. In such a scenario, conferring **tiller rights, encouraging registration of land title in joint names** (by reducing stamp duty for the same), **providing technical agricultural training to women farmers, promoting organic farming, providing extension services to women farmers** etc. are some interventions that need to be taken up.
- There is a need to allocate budgetary resources for gender sensitisation of all relevant stakeholders both within and outside the government at different levels; engendering the curriculum in schools and colleges, training of police and security forces, sensitizing government officials both involved in the policy formulation and implementation of schemes, spreading gender awareness through popular media for sensitizing the general public and so on.
- As a part of the social security provisioning for women, pension for widows should be increased and linked to inflation; also, there is an urgent need for pensions for all single women and women above the age of 55 years from economically weaker sections of the population.
- A number of schemes such as Rajiv Gandhi Scheme For Empowerment Of Adolescent Girls (RGSEAG), *Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana* (IGMSY), Leadership Development of Minority Women etc. have been in a pilot phase for a number of years; the same need to be reviewed and necessary policy measures need to be taken for their proper implementation.
- Given that the participation of women in the workforce (in both urban and rural areas) has declined, there is a need to focus on building women's skills and creating employment for women in non-traditional activities. Special attention needs to be paid to ensure that such opportunities can be accessed by vulnerable women such as women with disabilities, those belonging to women headed households etc.
- There is a need to ensure increased **political participation** of women at all levels .To strengthen the participation of elected women representatives in panchayats, there is a need to provide financial support in the form of honorarium for members, travel allowances, sitting fees etc. Budgetary allocations to support training of elected women representatives should be enhanced.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

- India, as a signatory to United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), needs to develop and carry out policies, laws and administrative measures for securing the rights recognized in the Convention. **The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Bill**, which is in consonance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, **should be passed with adequate budget provisions.**
- All policies and programmes across ministries and departments should be made responsive towards ensuring the rights of persons with disabilities. There is a need to assess the extent to which the challenges/issues faced by disability sector are being addressed through budgetary allocation.
- **There should be revamping of all the schemes under all departments and Ministries for mainstreaming disability.** All flagship schemes like NREGS, NRHM, NRLM, SSA and RMSA should be accessible to persons with disabilities.
- In the budget of all the Ministries, a **6% allocation should be made for disability** related issues pertaining to that particular Ministry. **Adequate funds should be provided** by the next government for setting up of disability units in all ministries and departments.
- Resource allocation for **provision of adequate, accessible, affordable, adaptable and quality health care** products and services for persons with disabilities. Allocations shall be made to **support the medical, rehabilitation and nutritional needs** of children with disabilities and for persons with demilination and degenerating conditions.
- There should be adequate **allocation of funds towards promoting accessible and accommodative curriculum**, teaching-learning methodologies and evaluation systems, training of human resource towards the same and transition programme from home based education to mainstream to ensure quality inclusive education for all children with disabilities at all levels of education.
- The Inclusive Education for the Disabled at the Secondary School (IEDSS), which got subsumed under the Rashtriya Madyamik Siksha Abhiyan during the current financial year, has to be strengthened and the Union Government should enhance the allocations to the State so that the programme caters to the education of all children with disabilities on an equal basis with other children.
- Adequate allocations should be made towards skill development programmes and higher education of students UGC scheme HEPSN has to be amended in lines with UNCRPD.

- Adequate allocations should be made towards skill development programmes and vocational training of students. All education schemes should be amended in line with UNCRPD.
- Related to Employment, there is **need for earmarking budgetary outlays** for establishing a National Employment Portal for persons with disabilities, a National Labour Institute for Persons with Disabilities, and new Model Vocational Rehabilitation Centres.
- There should be **inter-sectoral and interdepartmental collaboration and coordination** for creating opportunities for persons with disabilities and making provision for at least 6 per cent reservation in the public and private sector (including multinational companies).
- Violence against women with disabilities is an important concern. Funds should be allocated towards evolving a protective mechanism at the state and central level to ensure safety and security for women with disabilities from violence and abuse. All existing protection measures should be made accessible and inclusive for women with disabilities.
- **Habilitation and rehabilitation services** at the community level have to be strengthened and adequate resources shall be allocated for the same which should also facilitate **ramping mechanisms** for moving from institutional living to community living for all persons with disabilities including persons with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities.
- Allocations should be made for setting up of **social monitoring and evaluation committee** with persons with disabilities as members at all levels of implementation and for all schemes.
- Procurement of works, goods and services should follow the universal design standards and should be included in the plan and be mandated at the time of tender. **Procurement of technology and assistive devices for use by persons with disabilities should follow the state-of-the-art design standards.** Allocations should be made for training and procurement of sign language interpreters by all ministries and departments at the Union, State and at the District and sub-district levels. **Allocation should be made towards training and procurement of personal assistants for support of persons with disabilities.**
- **Equal Opportunity Commission should be set up as a statutory body** for monitoring the employment opportunities and accommodations for persons with disabilities in public, private and self employment streams
- The government should work at **evolving effective safety net programmes and pilot alternate social security programmes** with provisions for unemployment allowance, pension for the most vulnerable persons with disabilities like facilities

of educational scholarships, subsidised hostels and health checkups and insurance facilities. Persons with 40% disability should be provided social security pension worth Rs.2000/-per month.

- The **income criteria for accessing the benefits of welfare schemes should be removed** for providing social security coverage to Persons with Disabilities.
- Persons with Disabilities, representing a significant proportion of the total population of India and comprising its valuable human resources, continue to face disparities. The multiple challenges faced by this group deny them access to various government programmes, hence the collection and allocation of public resources should be done in a way that aims at protecting the rights and dignity of these persons.
- The next Government should **disaggregate the expenditure incurred towards protection and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities** under a new minor head so that it gets reflected across ministries and departments at all levels.
- The next Union government should adopt **guidelines towards coming out with a budget statement** on the expenditure incurred towards protection and promotion of rights of persons with disabilities in lines with the gender budget statement.
- Lack of awareness on various aspect leads to non-implementation of the rights for disabled people. There should be **special allocation made within the budget for various departments on awareness creation and sensitization.**
- As a change of perceptions is essential to improve the situation of persons with disabilities, **there is a need to evolve modules for training authorities and officials both at the planning, monitoring and redressing** (including Women's Commission, Child Protection Commission) and at the implementation levels across governance, on the rights of PWD. Adequate budget should be allocated towards implementation of this programme. This could be instituted through the various governmental institutes such as rural development, town planning and designing, health services, planning etc.

UNORGANIZED WORKERS

- There should be a **separate demand head and associated budgetary provisions for the entire unorganised sector** covering all subsectors such as domestic workers, brick kiln workers, auto rickshaw workers, workers in the fisheries sector, building and construction workers, bidi workers etc. All unorganized workers, both in the organized and unorganized sectors, should be inclusive in this budget head.
- **There is a need to make budgetary allocations for the provision of comprehensive social security for workers** of the unorganised sector encompassing living wages, unemployment allowances, old age pension, maternity benefits, health care insurance, housing, assistance for education and child care services at work place.. These also need to be complemented by worker friendly grievance redressal mechanisms for fair and transparent implementation of the various schemes.
- As per the guidelines under the Unorganised Sector Social Security Act 2008, a **Universal and Comprehensive Unorganised Sector Social Security Board should be constituted** for all the subsectors of the unorganised sector. A provision for a Biometric Worker Identity Card should be considered as the first task of such a board. Adequate budgetary provisions should be made for the provision of universal worker identity card and functioning of the committee should be clearly allocated in the forthcoming union budgets.
- All sub-sectors in the unorganized sector such as domestic workers, brick kiln workers, patthar khadan workers, auto rickshaw workers, workers in the fisheries sector and other sub sectors covered under the board should be clearly defined in the budget documents itself in the “key to Budget Documents” and in the form of notes where allocations are made for the specific sub sectors.
- **The definition and categorisation of unorganised workers needs to be broadened** to include domestic and unpaid women workers, rickshaw pullers, agricultural labourers, migrant workers, ASHAs, Anganwadi Workers and workers in the ambit of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS).
- Anganwadi workers, ASHA workers, Mid-Day Meal workers and all such frontline workers in government schemes across different sectors **need to be regularized and they should be given decent wages and other emoluments.**
- The Union Ministry of Labour and Employment needs to ensure that a robust monitoring mechanism is in place to monitor the payment of wages and living conditions of these workers at their worksite. **Funds for effective implementation of provisions of labour laws** for protection of workers’ rights and ensuring of

minimum wage and pension for all the workers irrespective of any gender bias should be allocated.

- There is also a **need to fund a mechanism of proper health insurance for unorganised workers**. Despite an alarmingly high prevalence of occupational diseases like Silicosis in the country, there has been scant attention by the government for provisioning of resources towards improving the occupational health of workers. Allocation of resources is required to allocate resources for strengthening of the National Institutes of Occupational Health, training of doctors and awareness generation on occupational health issues.
- One of the major obstacles for providing social security to workers is the slow registration of workers under social security schemes; the authorities should be equipped with such facilities for efficient registration of workers. **There is a need to introduce a mechanism and time limit for the completion of the process for efficient delivery of social security to the workers.** The workers' union, voluntary organizations and other self-help group's role for registration should be incorporated for efficient registration of workers for social security.
- **Introduce a Social Security Cess on lines of Education Cess for raising resources for universal social security.** In addition, introduce sector specific mechanisms like the present 1% cess on the cost of construction incurred by employers to create a social security fund for the workers in construction sector. However, it should be ensured that that funds generated from same are timely utilized on labour welfare. According to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Labour, out of Rs 4316.94 crore collected by various states from construction cess, only about Rs 736 was utilised till September 2012. The already existent cess for construction and bidi workers should be managed by the Union Government and allocations should be made to states accordingly.
- All committed benefits for the unorganized sector workers may be guaranteed in the budget within the lapse of the financial year and the provisions for them should be clearly articulated in the budget itself.
- Instead of profit making insurance companies, Employee State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) facilities should be provided to all unorganized sector workers issued with identity cards. Accountability mechanism for this should be clearly articulated in the budget documents in a prominent manner.
- A Universal and Non Contributory Old Age Pension System to be established immediately by the government with a minimum amount of monthly pension not less than **50% of minimum wage or Rs 2000/- per month, whichever is higher.**
- The pension to be an individual entitlement for all eligible citizens of India.

- The **monthly pension amount to be indexed to inflation bi-annually and revised every two to three years** in the same manner as is done for salaries/pensions of government servants.
- Any individual 55 years or older to be eligible for the old age pension. For women, **eligibility age** for pensions to be 50 years and for highly vulnerable groups (such as the Primitive Tribal Groups, Transgender, Sex Workers, Persons with Disabilities), the eligibility age to be 45 years or fixed according to their particular circumstances.
- Workers should not be forced to compulsorily retire on attaining the age of eligibility for universal old age pension.
- A **single window system** for Old Age Pensions.
- APL / BPL criteria should not be used for exclusion. However, individuals whose income is higher than the threshold level for payment of income tax and who are receiving pension from any other sources that exceeds the pension amount under the Universal Old Age Pension Programme can be excluded.
- The payment of pension should not to be used to deny any other social security / welfare benefit such as benefit under the Public Distribution System.
- **Universal coverage of RSBY irrespective of income** (BPL or APL) criteria or social criteria.
- **Maternity social security benefits should be provided immediately** after delivery . There should not be any paper work after the delivery for accessing the benefits of maternity benefits.
- The social security scheme in case of death and accident have different entitlements, in case of natural death the amount of social security is very little, whereas in case of accident, the social security amount is little more but the impact of livelihood earner's loss is irreplaceable for the family, therefore, in the **amount of social security** in case of natural death should also be at par with accidental death, whereas in case of accident the social security should cover medical expenses and daily wages till the worker has fully recovered.
- There should be **National Minimum Social Security** for all workers, in no case should it be less in any state, if any state intends to provide more than national average, it should do so, and schemes should be framed to cater the needs of workers in the prevailing social and economic conditions of workers.
- Trade unions and voluntary organizations should also be entrusted with the running of the **workers' facilitation centres**.
- Inter-state migrant workers need to be provided with **identity proof** in order to help them avail of the basic services which are crucial to them.
- There should be a **provision of door step service of social security benefits** if situation demands. Old age, accidents, maternity benefits etc. could be some possible situations for door step services.

TAXATION

- **Concrete plan to increase India's tax-GDP ratio significantly:** The overall scope for government intervention, as compared to the size of the country's economy, is much less in India than in most developed countries and a host of developing countries primarily because of India's low tax-GDP ratio. Though the total tax revenue collected by the Union and state governments (combined) has improved marginally to 17.2 % of GDP (for 2012-13 BE)², it is considerably lower than not just developed countries but some developing countries as well, such as Brazil (25.4 %), Russia (22.9 %), China (18.9 %), South Africa (26.5 %), Argentina (24.7 %) and Turkey (21.1 %). Measures are required to increase the country's tax-GDP ratio based on rigorous analysis, which would enable our government to provide more resources for spending in crucial development sectors.
- **Need to collect more direct taxes, as heavy reliance on indirect taxes is generally regressive:** With Direct Tax share of 37.7% in total taxes, India's tax system lacks progressivity as it relies more on indirect taxes as compared to direct taxes. Indirect Tax on any good or service affects the rich and the poor alike. Unlike Indirect Taxes, Direct Taxes are linked to the tax-payer's ability to pay, and hence are considered to be progressive. The Union government needs to focus on progressive reforms in the direct tax regime instead of increasing its reliance on indirect taxes. Even developing countries like South Africa, Indonesia and Russia have a more progressive tax structure in terms of the contribution of direct taxes to total tax revenue.
- **Wealth Tax and Inheritance Tax:** The Union government needs to make Wealth Tax more broad based and progressive in order to pursue the objectives of reducing inequality and increasing revenue mobilization. Re-introducing the Inheritance Tax is also recommended. The conventional argument for abolishing inheritance and wealth tax in India has been that its revenue potential is very low compared to the cost incurred in collecting it. But as per data for 2011-12, budget expenditure of only Rs. 0.7 was incurred to collect Rs. 100 of Wealth tax.³ This indicates that there is a real opportunity to revisit the application of these taxes and for the government to systematically collect data on private wealth distribution. Necessary reforms are also needed for better targeting and valuation of property for urban Municipal taxes which have not been initiated at the required pace or scale. Wealth, Inheritance and Municipal Property Taxes, though being different taxes with different objectives, are

² Indian Public Finance Statistics 2012-13, p.14, Ministry of Finance, GoI

³ "Property Taxes Across G20 Countries: Can India Get it Right?" by Prashant Prakash, Oxfam India-CBGA publication.

essentially interlinked as they derive their value predominantly from property. Finally, it is important to reiterate that the purpose of Wealth and Inheritance tax was never *only* revenue mobilization, but also to check concentration of wealth in the hands of a few as is enshrined in the Constitution of India.

- **Availability of data to understand indirect tax burden implications for different sections of population:** Since 2001-02, the Union Budget documents have stopped providing information on how much tax revenue is being collected through indirect taxes (like, Customs Duties, Excise Duties, Central Value Added Tax, and Service Tax) from various items or commodities. Such information would facilitate an assessment of the implications of India's indirect taxes on different sections of population (for instance, taxes collected on items of mass consumption vs. taxes collected on luxurious goods). Provision of such information from forthcoming Union Budget documents would help to better analyse and inform policies on these issues.
- **Reduce and rationalise the existing gamut of tax exemptions:** There is a need to reduce and rationalize the existing gamut of tax exemptions, particularly those meant for the corporate sector, and review the rationale for most of the exemptions. In-depth industry-level review is required to assess the extent to which the anticipated benefits of tax exemptions are being fulfilled in certain industries, e.g. software development agencies, power and energy ,petroleum and petrochemicals, pharmaceutical etc. given that the effective tax rates (ETRs) are much lower for them. The policy measures by the government could focus more on infrastructure and communication facilities etc. instead of relying on tax breaks. There is a need for a *White Paper on tax exemptions* providing detailed sectoral break-up of revenue foregone for different industries with a comparative assessment regarding objectives of exemptions fulfilled vis-à-vis magnitude of exemptions.
- **Comprehensive review of India's Double Taxation Avoidance Agreements (DTAAs):** There is an urgent need to plug loopholes in the India-Mauritius Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) and other similar DTAAs, which have been used by investors for 'treaty shopping' and evading taxes. The Union government must review the existing Bilateral Investment Treaties in order to ensure that no undue gains are appropriated by investors through treaty provisions. Clear guidelines are required regarding 'permanent establishment' of offshore companies/companies having numerous subsidiaries/sister companies in different countries/jurisdictions (particularly for 'shell' companies for whom it is often difficult to distinguish having legal and substantial set-up in a particular jurisdiction). There should be a comprehensive database including details of such companies and appropriate technical structure to track such companies.

- **Pollutant taxes can be applied appropriately to deter environment degradation:** Taxation should also be used as a tool to protect the environment and promote alternate non-polluting sources of energy. A *green tax* could be implemented for large hydro-power projects in hilly regions and the revenue generated from the same could be utilised for environmental conservation. In urban areas, a *congestion tax* could be considered to promote the use of public transport.
- **Review royalty payments for extraction of resources in all mineral rich states:** Appropriate taxation policies and revenue-sharing mechanisms are required in mineral-rich states and for extractive industries. In mineral-rich states like Jharkhand and Odisha, payment of royalty for extraction of natural resources need to be reviewed to ensure that such states get greater share of revenue raised from the extractive sector.

BUDGET TRANSPARENCY

- All Union Government Ministries and State Government Departments should upload their ***Detailed Demands for Grants*** (i.e. the detailed budget books) for the last ten financial years on their respective websites and update the same every year.
- ***Outcome Budgets*** for the last five years for all Union Ministries and State Government Departments should be made available in the public domain.
- The Union Government should provide information on ***State-wise break up*** of (Union Budget) allocations and expenditures under various Central Schemes.
- The Union Government should provide information on ***commodity-wise details of revenue collected*** through indirect taxes in the Union Budget.
- Union Budget ***allocations for all Central Schemes should be routed through the State Budgets***; and, such expenditure should be brought under the purview of audits by the office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) of India.
- The State Governments should provide information on ***district-wise break up of allocations and expenditures from the State Budget*** (for both Plan and Non-Plan components of the budget).
- Union Government Ministries and State Government Departments should present information pertaining to the basis on which they are reporting certain proportions of allocations in their Schemes for the development of Scheduled Castes (under ***Scheduled Caste Sub Plan***), Scheduled Tribes (under ***Tribal Sub Plan***), women (under ***Gender Responsive Budgeting***), and religious minorities (under the ***PM's New 15 Point Programme for Minorities***).
- District-level authorities should prepare and make public ***an annual statement on funds received from the Union Government and the State Government***; information on institutions / offices involved in planning, budgeting, implementation and monitoring of programmes should be made public.



People's Budget Initiative

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