

ANNUAL
REPORT
2016-17





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Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability

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President's Message

The fiscal architecture of the country has witnessed a number of changes since 2015-16, most notably through the recommendations of the Fourteenth Finance Commission (FFC) on sharing of resources between the Union and State Governments and the steps towards restructuring of Centrally Sponsored Schemes. CBGA, through its work in 2016-17, strove to unpack these developments and inform the public discourse on such issues. It has, at the same time, systematically stepped up training and capacity building efforts with civil society actors focusing on the emerging issues in fiscal federalism in the country.

In the year 2016-17, CBGA also conducted in-depth research and analysis in a number of social sectors like education, nutrition, drinking water and sanitation, gender responsive budgeting, taxation and transparency in the global financial system, among others. Through its work, CBGA has been striving to bridge the gap between policymakers and civil society organisations at the sub-national, national and global levels.

CBGA has been working for enhancing budget transparency at several levels of governance and promoting engagement of common people with government budgets. Towards this objective, CBGA has developed and launched an Open Data Portal on Budgets in India (www.openbudgetsindia.org). The Portal showcases CBGA's vision of making India's Budgets open, usable and easy to comprehend; our effort aims to enable people across the country to access government budget data in a user-friendly and timely fashion, thereby encouraging meaningful participation in discussions on government budgets.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I congratulate and commend the entire team for their contributions to the organisation and its vision. At the same time, I would also urge CBGA to continue to strive towards expanding the scope of its work, deepening its analyses, interrogating policies and informing debates along the way.

Praveen Jha

President of Board of Trustees
Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability

Foreword

CBGA's work in 2016-17 has contributed significantly towards the organisation's vision of promoting transparent and accountable governance, people's participation in the discourse and processes of governance, and a pro-people and rights-based policy environment, equity and social justice.

CBGA continues to be one of the very few policy research organisations in the country, which analyses fiscal policy and budgetary processes with a strong focus on the implications for the underprivileged sections of the population (such as women, children, Dalits, Adivasis, religious minorities and persons with disabilities). Its research in the year 2016-17 has provided useful evidence and perspectives for the CSOs, civil society coalitions and social activists working in different social sectors and helped in strengthening their policy advocacy efforts.

Policy and programme design, budgeting, and implementation are the three important stages which all government programmes/schemes go through in terms of a programme/scheme translating into actual interventions and services on the ground. Hence, deficiencies in any of these stages can constrain the effectiveness of government interventions and limit their results. In the policy research landscape in India, a large number of organisations and individual researchers are focusing on the gaps in the first and the third stage, but little attention is paid to the second stage despite its significance. Deficiencies in budgeting can distort any government policy/programme and reduce its effectiveness on the ground. In this context, CBGA's work last year, by highlighting the deficiencies as well better practices in the intermediate stage of budgeting, has complemented strongly the research done on policy design and implementation issues in a number of important sectors like, School Education, Nutrition, WASH, and interventions meant for curbing Violence Against Women. The evidence and insights generated by CBGA have added a lot of value to the policy discourse in these sectors.

CBGA also strives for fostering people's participation in public policy debates by demystifying / unpacking the technicalities underlying important policy and budgetary measures taken by the government. For instance, in the last two years, CBGA's analysis of Fourteenth Finance Commission's recommendations and their impact on budgetary priorities of the Union and State Governments has helped enhance the engagement of the larger civil society in the country with these issues and the policy debates. Likewise, many people have used CBGA's publication on GST to better understand the technical nuances of this major tax reform being pursued by the government.

Increasingly, people across the country are keen to understand and participate meaningfully in discussions on government budgets. But, the limited availability of relevant and accessible information on budgets in India at different levels has been a hindrance in this regard. In this context, CBGA's endeavour is to strengthen the discourse and demand for availability of all budget information in public domain in a timely and accessible manner, at all levels of government in the

country. As part of the efforts in this sphere, CBGA has developed and launched an open data portal on budgets in India (called Open Budgets India), www.openbudgetsindia.org, in January 2017. It is meant to be a comprehensive and user-friendly open data portal that can facilitate free, easy and timely access to relevant data on government budgets in India. The portal provides budget information of different tiers of government in India (Union Budget, State Budgets, and Budgets of several Municipal Corporations across the country) in accessible and open (non-proprietary) formats. Through this portal, CBGA is developing and promoting ways in which India's budget data can be made open, usable and easy to comprehend.

Nonetheless, CBGA needs to pay more attention to a number of areas such as, effective communication and dissemination of its research findings and opinions, consistent engagement both with the larger civil society in the country as well as with the policymakers, and linkages / collaborations with universities.

We are planning to strengthen our work in a number of areas over the coming years, viz. building a robust body of evidence on implementation of government programmes and schemes through field survey based research studies; comparative analysis of State Budgets in the context of the developments in fiscal federalism in the country; using ICT to improve governance and budget processes in the country; and developing and promoting ways in which India's budget data can be made 'open', usable and easy to comprehend. The growth and development of CBGA over the next few years would depend on how effectively we can pursue these priorities, which are very relevant in the contemporary policy environment in the country.

Subrat Das

Executive Director

Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability

Vision and Objectives

CBGA's efforts are directed towards promoting

- ◆ Transparent and accountable governance
- ◆ People's participation in the discourse and processes of governance
- ◆ A pro-people and rights-based policy environment, equity and social justice

Given the need for greater transparency and people's participation in the governance processes in the country, CBGA focuses on transparency in government budgets, spaces for people's participation in the processes that determine budgetary priorities, and the effectiveness of accountability mechanisms in this domain. However, in some cases, even a reasonably transparent and accountable system of governance might adopt an approach towards 'fiscal policy' that is not quite responsive to the needs and rights of the underprivileged sections. A significant part of CBGA's efforts, therefore, falls in the domain of in depth analysis of India's fiscal policy and related practices.

◆ **Young Scholars' Conference on 'Government Finance and Public Policy Issues'**

With governance and public policy debates getting more intense over the years, CBGA organised a Young Scholars' Conference on 'Government Finance and Public Policy Issues', on 23 July, 2016. The objective of the conference was to showcase some of the research on government finance and public policy issues being carried out by young scholars in universities, think tanks and civil society organisations across the country. It also sought ideas and suggestions from academics and civil society leaders for deepening and enriching research in these areas.

◆ **Overview paper titled 'Public Auditing and Accounting: A Catalyst for Good Governance' for the Symposium by the Office of C&AG, Government of India**

CBGA wrote the overview paper titled 'Public Auditing and Accounting: A Catalyst for Good Governance' for the symposium by the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India, Government of India which was held in October 2016. The symposium was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Prime Minister. The paper gives an overview of the role of the C&AG in promoting good governance and throws light on improving accounts and audit effectiveness, emerging areas in audits, C&AG's engagement with citizens and the impact of e-governance on auditing and accounting.

◆ **Roundtable with Asian Tax Administrators**

In November 2016, CBGA convened a Roundtable with Asian tax administrators from several countries, along with civil society organisations and academics, titled 'Reforms in International Taxation and Financial Transparency: Towards a Regional Agenda for Asia'. The roundtable endeavoured to further the discourse on the role of regional and global cooperation on tax matters. The meeting set the foundation for advocacy between tax administrators from varied Asian countries - emerging economies, Least Developed Countries, Small Island Developing States - and civil society organisations.

◆ **Study on 'Analysis of Government Financing of School Education in India'**

CBGA in partnership with Child Rights and You (CRY) produced a research study unravelled the structure and composition of budgetary spending on school education in the country. It aimed to inform the policy discourse on issues relating to education, focusing especially on how different states have designed their resource envelope for school education over the last four years. After the release of the report in New Delhi, multiple regional consultations and press conferences have been held in Mumbai, Jaipur and Patna discussing the key findings and further scope of the study.

◆ **JSA-PBI National Consultation on Strengthening Public Provisioning of Healthcare in India**

In January 2017, CBGA organised a National Consultation as part of the on-going work under the *Jan Swasthya Abhiyan* (JSA) and People's Budget Initiative (PBI) on 'Strengthening Public Provisioning of Healthcare in India' with a focus on six States. The consultation included the presentation of the work done in the States by the members of the State Working Groups in each State. A number of experts - both practitioners and academicians - deliberated on the critical issues in the health sector, being raised through the campaign. The panel discussions also had representation from media and Members of Parliament who have been working relentlessly on health issues in the country.

◆ **Launch of 'Open Budgets India' - the beta version of an open data portal on government budgets in India**

In January 2017, CBGA had organised a consultation titled 'Opening up Access to Budget Data in India' to launch the beta version of the open data portal, Open Budgets India. The launch was followed by a panel discussion with experts from varied backgrounds – senior government officials, civil society representatives and sector experts from the office of Comptroller and Auditor General of India. The panel discussion brought forth different perspectives on the role of government authorities and civil society organisations, in creating an enabling environment for ensuring free, easy and timely access to relevant budget data at various levels of government. The portal also facilitates comparison of aggregate budget indicators across different states and financial years through the tool named 'Story Generator'.

◆ **Study on 'Safety of Women in Public Spaces in Delhi: Governance and Budgetary Challenges'**

CBGA, in collaboration with Jagori undertook a study that examined the gaps in the policy framework for enhancing women's safety in public spaces and addressing the incidence of violence in Delhi- from a multi-dimensional lens of governance and budgets. The study also analysed important sectors that have a bearing on women's safety, institutional measures for the support for survivors of violence and the fiscal architecture of Delhi, to identify some of the underlying causes for the weak implementation of these interventions. A consultation was organised on January 20, 2017 for sharing insights and key findings of the study.

◆ **Four Working Papers on 'India's Investment in Nutrition: States' Role and Response'**

CBGA along with UNICEF India studied State Budget outlays for nutrition interventions in India's policy framework, for select states in recent years. Based on this research, four Working Papers have been developed with a comprehensive mapping of nutrition interventions financed by the Union Budget and the budget of select states, the methodology developed for tracking budget outlays for these states, and assessed the budget outlays for these interventions in the most recent years. A panel discussion was organised to initiate a conversation around the priorities of the State Budgets and identify the gaps and bottlenecks in public financing of nutrition.

◆ **Inputs towards the Gender and Child Budgeting Statement, Kerala, 2017-18**

The Government of Kerala re-introduced the 'Gender and Child Budgeting Statement' in the Budget presented in 2017-18. CBGA provided technical inputs and recommendations towards this process, which has been acknowledged in the Statement. The Statement, presented after a gap of several years includes important elements that CBGA has been advocating for over the past several years, which is an important step in the direction of a more substantive interpretation and implementation of the strategy.

◆ **Orientation Workshop on 'Fault Lines in the International Tax System and Illicit Financial Flows'**

CBGA conducted a two day capacity building workshop in March 2017 in New Delhi. A total of 44 participants from thirteen South and South-East Asian countries participated in the workshop, which brought many civil society groups working on gender, human rights, and other developmental issues, academics and technical experts together for the very first time. The workshop included sessions on domestic resource mobilisation, illicit financial flows, financial secrecy, tax transparency measures, the impact of abusive transfer pricing and trade misinvoicing and the politics of international financial architecture.

Unpacking Complex Debates and Building Evidence

- ▶ Analysing Union Budget
- ▶ Fiscal Architecture and Federalism
- ▶ Fiscal Policy and Taxation
- ▶ Gender Responsive Budgeting
- ▶ Fiscal Policy Priorities for Social Sectors
- ▶ Enhancing Accessibility and Timeliness of Budget Data for Citizens
- ▶ Presentations at Conferences
- ▶ Publications
- ▶ Contributions to External Publications

Analysing Union Budget

Analysing social sector financing and its implications on the poorer and marginalised sections of the population is at the core of CBGA's work. With the implementation of Fourteenth Finance Commission's recommendations, resource sharing between the Centre and the States has undergone a major change. Subsequently, there has been an increase in the allocation of untied funds to states, implying that the states have more flexibility in deciding their funding priorities. Although, some states have witnessed a hike in budgetary allocations for sectors like Education and Health, a few other states in fact experienced decline in budgets for all social sectors. Furthermore, women and child development as a sector suffered a cut across all states. An overhaul in several other aspects of public expenditure management has also been announced in phases. For example, the funds for Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSSs) necessarily being routed through the state treasury, the merger of Plan and Non-Plan classifications of expenditure, advancement of budget presentation and other policy decisions. There was a lack of clarity among civil society groups with regard to these decisions, and also their impact on different schemes, programmes and the policy strategies.

In the light of these developments, CBGA carried out a rigorous analysis of allocations for major social sectors in the Union Budget 2017-18, to study the implications for the poorer sections of population. The analysis also examined the revenue projections and other important decisions of the government on the tax front, like the revenue foregone estimates. After much deliberation, we brought out our annual flagship publication, 'What Do the Numbers Tell?' which highlighted the shift in funding allocations for crucial sectors and was helpful in generating a wider public debate on the adequacy of government spending towards addressing the needs for social sectors, along with the limitations in the public financial management system. The document was widely circulated and has since been referred by a large number of civil society groups, activists, journalists, researchers, and academics in different colleges and universities to gain clarity about funding issues in specific sectors. The findings of the analysis formed the basis of many events held in different parts of the country to discuss the cuts suffered by different social sectors; a large number of journalists have also cited the report in their media reports on related issues. Additionally, several online users have also appreciated and acknowledged the nuanced reflections present in the publication. CBGA is in the process of bringing out an abridged Hindi version of the document as part of its strategy to widen dissemination of budget related information and bring it closer to people.

Fiscal Architecture and Federalism

The issue of fiscal federalism in India has been in the public policy discourse, especially in the context of restructuring of Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSSs) and the recommendations of the Fourteenth Finance Commission (FFC) on Centre-state resource sharing patterns. Since 2014, the current government's attempt to introduce several steps in order to boost the spirit of fiscal federalism with more autonomy and untied resources to the states were manifested in the following measures:

- ◆ Abolition of the Planning Commission and setting up of a think-tank, the NITI Aayog, a significantly different institution compared to the erstwhile Planning Commission;
- ◆ Implementing specific recommendations made by the sub-committee of Chief Ministers on rationalization of the CSS;
- ◆ Implementing the recommendation of the FFC on devolving 42 percent of the central taxes to the states.

In this backdrop, CBGA's work over the past year has revolved around demystifying the complexities and informing the larger audience about the changes in the governance processes. CBGA's contribution in the policy discourse has focused on informing the civil society networks about the changes in the fiscal architecture explain its possible consequences and thus empower the rights-based discourse on governance and accountability.

CBGA's research focused on unravelling the Union-State sharing of resources and tracking the budgetary priorities of state governments, especially in social sectors after increased tax devolution. It has contributed in terms of putting forth important estimates on expenditures by state governments and documenting them in the form of working papers and by contributing a chapter titled 'Recent Changes in India's Fiscal Architecture: Implications for Public Provisioning in Social Sector' to the India Exclusion Report, 2016. The chapter gives a detailed analysis about the impact on social sector expenditure by the states after the recommendations of the FFC and the consequent restructuring of the Union Budget since 2015-16. The analysis was carried out for 13 key sectors (including Health, Education, Social Welfare, Rural Development, Agriculture, Drinking Water and Sanitation) covering 10 major states.

Fiscal Policy and Taxation

CBGA is one of the few CSOs in the country that work on issues of taxation. CBGA's work on issues related to taxation is based on the understanding that analysing fiscal policy of a country, requires studying both sides of government budgets – resource mobilisation as well as expenditure. Through our research on taxation we have tried to underscore the point that while adequacy of resources is crucial for public provisioning of essential services, even the process and nature of resource mobilisation has implications for inequality and social exclusion. Since there has been a dearth of research on tax issues in the country from the perspective of equity and social justice, CBGA's endeavours in this area is filling a major gap in the policy discourse in India.

CBGA's research capacity on taxation issues has developed a holistic narrative on budgets in India, which has enhanced the relevance of its work for the larger civil society in the country. Our work in the domain of taxation includes research, capacity building as well as active engagement with policy makers. Our research credibility has helped us forge alliances with several organisations and networks such as International Budget Partnership (IBP), Christian Aid, Oxfam, and Financial Transparency Coalition (FTC) etc. working on issues such as taxation, black money and illicit financial flows.

CBGA has been working on a two year research study titled 'Commitment to Equity for India', in collaboration with Prof. Nora Lustig of University of Tulane. The study focuses on the impact of fiscal policies on poverty and inequality in India. The study also takes into account indirect taxes, indirect subsidies, and direct benefit transfers such as pension and cash transfers under MGNREGA, along with spending on education and health and personal income tax. The study is at its concluding stage and the report is to be submitted in October, 2017 to the Commitment to Equity Institute and the World Bank.

As a Coordinating Committee member of the Financial Transparency Coalition (FTC) based in the Global South, CBGA works on demystifying and enhancing public understanding of international tax related issues like illicit financial flows, financial transparency and promoting tax justice as a narrative. In the past couple of years, CBGA has focused on building and maintaining the capacity of our network of civil society groups in Asia by generating literature, dissemination of resources, providing training etc. on these issues. Over the years, we have also constantly engaged with the media, policy makers, Members of Parliament, academicians, civil society groups and tax administrators through the FTC Asia Network.

In this respect, CBGA published a working paper on the various initiatives undertaken by the Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes and analysed them from the perspective of developing countries. CBGA adopts an evidence-based research position on these issues, while simultaneously engaging in evidence-based policy submissions to authorities in India and global norm setting bodies such as OECD, G20, BRICS, ESCAP, UN etc. CBGA has joined the G77 and civil society groups demanding an intergovernmental tax body under the auspices of United Nations.



Gender Responsive Budgeting

CBGA's work on Gender Responsive Budgeting focuses on the design and implementation of the strategy at the level of the Union Government, states and local governments. CBGA works extensively with government officials and civil society organisations across the country towards deepening of Gender Responsive Budgeting at the national and subnational levels. We recognise that public policies and programmes may reinforce patriarchal social norms and biases against women. Such a situation may lead to women receiving lesser benefits as compared to men and often being left disadvantaged. We work towards developing roadmaps for adoption of the GRB strategy across different sectors and tiers of governance. In its work on GRB, CBGA also emphasizes on the need to scrutinise domestic taxation policies from a gender lens.

In 2016-17, CBGA's work on Gender Responsive Budgeting focused on a research study on 'Safety of Women in Public Spaces in Delhi: Governance and Budgetary Challenges'. The study, carried out in collaboration with Jagori highlights the gaps in the policy framework for enhancing women's safety in public spaces and addressing the incidence of violence in Delhi- from the lens of governance and budgets. It analyses the key measures instituted for the support of women victims/survivors of violence and looks into some important sectors that have a bearing on women's safety viz., policing, public bus service, and night shelters. The study raises concerns regarding the access and provision of redressal mechanisms and analyses the governance and fiscal architecture of Delhi, to identify some of the underlying causes for the weak implementation of these interventions. The report of the study was released in January 2017 along with a panel discussion. A number of civil society organizations working on various dimensions of women's safety in Delhi attended the event. It has also been widely shared with policy makers, government officials and media personnel. A series of dialogues with concerned stakeholders have also been planned to share the insights and key research findings emerging from the study.

The Government of Kerala re-introduced the 'Gender and Child Budgeting Statement' in the Budget presented in 2017-18. CBGA provided technical inputs and recommendations towards this process, which has been acknowledged in the Statement. The Statement, presented after a gap of several years includes important elements that CBGA has been advocating for over the past several years, which is an important step in the direction of a more substantive interpretation and implementation of the strategy.

Fiscal Policy Priorities for Social Sectors



Health

A robust health system is critical to the development of any country. In the past couple of years, a lot of debate has been generated around important issues in the sector by the recent National Health Policy 2017. CBGA has been looking at the budgetary priorities for health both at the level of Union Government and also the States. As in the post Fourteenth Finance Commission (FFC) period, the focus has shifted to States; CBGA has also started to look at the State budgets in detail. We are now studying the State level issues of public provisioning and patterns of fund utilisation in the health sector, adequacy of overall public spending in the sector, access to free generic medicines, and the availability of human resources for public provisioning of healthcare.

In order to strengthen our work in this area and to articulate the needs and demands of the people, CBGA initiated a Campaign on 'Strengthening Public Provisioning of Healthcare in India' in 2015-16. The Campaign is a collaborative effort between Jan Swasthya Abhiyan (JSA) and People's Budget Initiative (PBI) and covers six States, namely, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Odisha and Rajasthan. The primary objective of this campaign is to facilitate progressive changes in policies and processes pertaining to healthcare financing by the government, particularly at the State level.

In the year 2016-17, we completed the first phase of the JSA-PBI Health Campaign. This Phase focused on building the partnership between JSA and PBI at the national level as well as within the six select States and on generating evidence. The sharing of the experience was done through a National Consultation held in January 2017 where we had representation from various grassroots level organisations, activists, academicians, Members of Parliament and the media.

CBGA has collaborated with another network of grassroots organisations - the White Ribbon Alliance, India (WRAI) and Centre for Catalysing Change (C3) - to work on the project, 'Advocacy for Quality of Care in Maternal, Newborn and Child Health'. Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (MNH) forms an important category under the National Health Mission and the issue of quality of care has been a major concern. In order to assess the quality of care aspect under MNH, CBGA in collaboration with WRAI is studying budget allocation, utilisation and bottlenecks in three States - Jharkhand, Rajasthan and West Bengal. Under this project, we organised a National Consultation in August 2016 where experts and activists deliberated upon the issues in this area and formed a charter of demands. Earlier, CBGA had conducted capacity building exercise of WRAI in three States for work on budgetary allocation and spending for maternal and child health. As part of this work, we also co-organised a roundtable with Members of Parliament in February 2017 where CBGA presented the work done as part of the project.



Education

Public provisioning of education has been an important area of government intervention in the country as it plays a crucial role in accelerating socio-economic development. The RTE Act, 2009 imposes a duty on the Indian states to fulfil every child's right to elementary education. Education is also a stand-alone goal among SDGs, which India is one of the signatories. As education is in "concurrent list", both Centre and State Governments have responsibility to achieve the goal of universalisation of elementary education. CBGA examines the extent and quality of fund utilisation in some of the major central schemes for school education, and the aspects of equity and inclusion in the domain of public provisioning of education. Along with many other factors, financing of education is an important factor for provisioning of quality education in school. It has long been argued that public provisioning of school education is imperative and it needs more resources. However, there has been a counter argument from policy makers over time that the government provides enough resources for school education; and so the challenges do not lie in allocation; rather the problem is under-utilisation.

In CBGA, we focus on the budgetary priorities for school education overall and for various components within school education that are considered relevant for enhancing quality of learning. The main objective of CBGA's research on education is to unpack the structure and components of budgetary spending on education in the country. By analysing both Union and State budgets, we aim to inform the policy discourse on issues relating to education, focusing especially on how different states are designing their resource envelope for school education. We also examine the issues of equity and inclusion in the domain of public provisioning of education. Recently CBGA has started an exercise to estimate how much resource is adequate for quality elementary education. After the launch of the study titled 'Analysis of Government Financing of School Education in India' in December, 2016 in New Delhi, CBGA and CRY collectively organised three regional consultations and press conferences in Mumbai, Jaipur and Patna respectively.



Nutrition

India's policy framework included many proven nutrition interventions but challenges in the domain of public financing of these interventions have affected their coverage. CBGA focuses on public financing for nutrition in India both at the level of the Union and State governments. The problem of undernutrition in the country is a result of multiple causes and requires simultaneous investment in a number of sectors. Using a multi-sectoral approach, we analyse separately the budgets for the nutrition-specific (interventions that address immediate causes of undernutrition) and nutrition-sensitive (schemes that have indirect impact on nutrition, and address intermediate and basic causes of undernutrition) interventions. As a part of expanding our grassroots efforts, CBGA held a two day workshop in Purnea, Bihar in September, 2016 to understand the local context on implementation of existing nutrition interventions for pregnant women.

We also examine the policy framework for nutrition and comment on the budget outlays and adequacy of funds for the schemes. CBGA documents the gaps in data availability for assessing nutrition budgets. We have started deepening our work on nutrition by analysing budgets for nutrition at the district level.

In 2016-17, CBGA in collaboration with UNICEF India, studied State budget outlays for nutrition interventions, included in India's policy framework, for select states for the most recent years. CBGA produced four working papers, which have a comprehensive mapping of nutrition interventions financed by the Union Budget and budgets of select states, present the methodology developed for tracking budget outlays for those, and assess the budget outlays for these interventions in the most recent financial years.



Water and Sanitation

CBGA continued its engagement with the issue of drinking water, sanitation and hygiene, with further research on tracking water and sanitation budgets at the state level to address issues such as drinking water quality and sustainability, gender and health implications of absence or inadequacy of sanitation facilities, social exclusion etc. CBGA strove to analyse not only the adequacy of public resources for drinking water and sanitation but also their effectiveness i.e. whether or not the budget outlays were translating into better outcomes on the ground.

Following the previous year's work, the findings of the Study Report 'Tracking Policy and Budgetary Commitments for Drinking Water and Sanitation: A Study of Select States', published in January 2016 were disseminated widely in 2016-17 and budget data for 2016-17 was updated.

CBGA met with the UN Special Rapporteur on Housing and provided inputs on water and sanitation budgets for urban poor as well as housing towards the UN Report on Housing. We built inroads in the sector by making new connections with IRC International Water & Sanitation Centre, Netherlands and got the opportunity to present at the National Seminar on Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM): Implications for Public Health and Sanitation sponsored by the Indian Council of Social Science Research, New Delhi and Indian Institute of Public Administration.



Climate Change and Renewable Energy

Several effects of climate change, including steady sea level rise, increased cyclonic activity, and changes in ambient temperature and precipitation patterns, have affected or are projected to affect the Indian sub-continent leading to vulnerability for its population. India's effort to combat climate change is governed by two international agreements that are, post 2030 agenda defining Sustainable Development Goals and Paris Agreement on climate change. Although source of climate finance will be from both international and domestic private and public sources however, much of the climate change efforts will need to be managed by national and subnational governments through their domestic budgeting systems. CBGA's work in this domain is driven by the perspective that strategies for dealing with climate change risks need to be supported by appropriate public finance policies.

Through the Paris Agreement, adopted in December 2015 by the parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), 195 countries committed to dramatically reducing greenhouse gas emissions (referred to as 'mitigation') and protecting communities and vulnerable people from the impacts of climate change through 'adaptation' actions. The amount of funds allocated to tackle climate change both in the form of international assistance and domestic resources is huge and effective utilization of these funds can be ensured only through a transparent and accountable public budgetary system. CBGA's work in this domain is driven by the perspective that strategies for dealing with climate change risks need to be supported by appropriate public finance policies.

CBGA in collaboration with UNDP and International Budget Partnership (IBP), carried out a cross country research study titled "Climate Change Finance Accountability Ecosystem in India". The study focuses on the climate finance accountability landscape in four countries, one of which is India. It seeks to investigate how the climate funds (domestic and international) are managed through the government budgets, the role of various state and non-state actors in the financial management of climate resources, the opportunities available to non-state actors such as the CSOs and media to participate and intervene in the process, and lastly their capacity to be able to do so. The study report is under draft stage and under peer review.

Social Security for Unorganised Workers

Over the years, CBGA has been engaged in scrutinising policies and budgetary priorities for the vulnerable sections of population, including workers in the unorganised sector. Despite of a major contribution made by the section of population in India's economic progress, it is ironical that they do not receive adequate social security benefits. CBGA has been raising and sharing these concerns with the government and also providing evidence-based research support to other civil society organisations, networks and campaigns in order to strengthen their policy asks.

CBGA has closely followed various policy developments that have taken place in this area; recent changes in some of the major laws like Draft Labour Code on Social Security & Welfare, Payment of Wages (Amendment) Act, 2017 and also the impact of GST. CBGA estimated the resource requirement for some of the basic demands for the workers in the unorganised sector like pension, health & maternity benefits and compensation in case of injury or death, along with the potential sources from which the required funds can be raised.

Marginalised Sections of the Population

CBGA has consistently been vocal on the issue of marginalised sections of the population, such as Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Religious Minorities, Persons with Disabilities, women and children - who continue to confront significant development deficits and have not benefited from decades of economic growth. While the most visible gaps are reflected in the poor socio-economic indicators, there are no quantifiable parameters to measure the less visible forms of deficits, such as discrimination, social exclusion and lack of voice and agency.

Over the years, CBGA has critiqued the policy framework for budgeting for the marginalised and focused on enumerating the fund flow from the Union and state budgets towards the upliftment of these sections of the population. CBGA also tries to build on public understanding of these strategies and is involved with other CSOs by providing technical support as well as support in their advocacy efforts for marginalised groups.

CBGA has also been steady in its response to developments in the planning and budgeting processes of the government, such as the abolition of the Planning Commission, merger of Plan and Non Plan heads of expenditure, restructuring of CSS, etc. These developments also posed specific challenges for the implementation strategies such as the SCSP and TSP. At the same time, with the recommendations of the 14th Finance Commission, and the increased role of the states in public investment, CBGA strove to meet the demand for understanding how states are responding to the needs of these sections of the population. During 2016-17, CBGA tracked Union Government and states' budgets for these groups to assess the impact of fiscal changes on total funds allocated for them.

Enhancing Accessibility and Timeliness of Budget Data for Citizens

In January 2017, CBGA launched the beta version of 'Open Budgets India' - an open data portal on government budgets in India that aims to make budgets open, usable and easy to comprehend. Presently, the portal is the only platform that integrates budget data from multiple tiers of government - Union, State and Municipal Corporations - and presents the same in a timely and accessible manner.

Open Budgets India (OBI) addresses the limited availability of relevant and accessible information on government budgets in India, which are scattered across different government sources in varied formats - or are not available online - and are therefore hard to use. In a first, the portal features original budget documents, machine readable data sets, data visualisation and budget basics - all towards facilitating accessibility of budget information by various stakeholders.

One of the most important endeavours of the data portal has been to make available the budgets of 23 Municipal Corporations digitally, most of which were not available online. The portal has also created summary budget sheets, representing the overall fiscal position of each Municipal Corporation in order to present them in a standardised format. This has encouraged several Municipal Corporations, especially those in Gujarat, to publish their budget data online, thereby taking forward CBGA's vision of enhancing transparency of public finance data.

The portal has created and integrated machine readable files for Karnataka and Sikkim from the available PDF and Excel documents of detailed budget books. This facilitates accessibility and usability of state budget information when most states publish their documents in formats which cannot be consumed by machines.

As a step forward, the portal will include locally relevant budget data from several districts across the country. Open Budgets India will serve as a comprehensive database for inter-state comparison of budget indicators by way of a tool named 'Story Generator', which will incorporate comparable aggregate data from the expenditure and receipts side of states budgets. The portal will also make available a searchable database of disaggregated state budget data. In the near future, CBGA will focus on consultations with State Finance Departments with recommendations laying out best practices with regard to publishing state budgets in machine-readable formats.

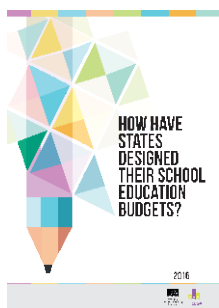
Presentations at Conferences

1. Presentation on public investment for young children in Asia at the National Workshop organised by Forum for Crèche and Child Care Services Network (FORCES) in April 2016.
2. Presentation on influencing public investment for nutrition in India at the Workshop on Public Finance for Nutrition in Asia organised by Scaling Up Nutrition movement with UNICEF, EAPRO in Bangkok, Thailand in April 2016.
3. Presentations (three) in a workshop of experts held in April at NIRD Hyderabad, to develop the module for (National Institute for Rural Development) NIRD's course on 'Social Accountability Tools for Good Governance'. CBGA was invited to be on the Committee of experts for designing the certificate programme.
 - ◆ Budget Analysis- a tool for Social Accountability,
 - ◆ Participatory Budgeting- a tool for Social Accountability
 - ◆ Funds for Development Schemes-Utilisation Issues
4. Presentation on development of Muslims at a conference titled 'Policy Priorities for Development of Muslims in Uttar Pradesh' organised by ActionAid in Lucknow in April 2016.
5. Presentation on role of fiscal decentralisation towards achieving SDGs in India at the 8th Sino-US International Conference organised by the School of Public Administration and Policy, Renmin University of China in Beijing in June 2016.
6. Presentation on implementation of a five-year programme focused on delivering improvements in the governance and management of water, sanitation and hygiene services at a workshop organised by Wetlands International South Asia, IRC and Akvo in July 2016.
7. Presentation of a paper at 'International Conference on Social Statistics in India', organised in June 2016 by Asian Development Research Institute. Academicians and policy researchers from across the globe attended the conference.
8. Presentation on 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan: Budgetary and Design Challenges in Addressing Gender Concerns' in July 2016 at the 20th ISST-HBF Gender and Economic Policy Discussion Forum. Various civil society organizations in Delhi attended the discussion.
9. Presentation on tracking policy and budgetary commitments for drinking water and sanitation in the new fiscal architecture in India at 'Wash Dialogues' organised by IRC and Taru Leading Edge in July 2016.
10. Presentation on advocacy dialogue on maternal health issues of tribals at a consultation organised by NAMHHR titled 'Assessing Healthcare in India: A Focus on Maternal and Child Healthcare' in August, 2016.

11. Presentation on the Goods and Services Tax at a seminar on understanding GST and its implications at IDS, Jaipur in September, 2016.
12. Presentation on 'Shelter Homes for Women: An Overview' at a "Consultation on Violence against Women and Shelter Homes" by Jagori in September 2016. The consultation was attended by civil society organizations working on various dimensions of women's safety across the country.
13. Presentation on human rights with regard to minorities in India and the UN at a National Consultation on Universal Periodic Review III CSO Stakeholder Report in September 2016.
14. Presentation on 'India's Budget: Investing in Women's Rights, Democracy and Diversity in India' at a Roundtable in September 2016 by Control Arms Foundation of India. The roundtable aimed to deliberate on understanding and finding ways of building sustainable peace in the country.
15. Presentation of a Paper 'Public Investment in Young Children in India' at National Conference on School Readiness titled "Ensuring Foundation, Enhancing Learning" organized by Centre for Early Childhood Education and Development, Ambedkar University, New Delhi in October, 2016.
16. Presentation on 'Scope for Deliberation in Budgetary Processes: An analysis of the Delhi Budget' in October 2016 at a conference on Deliberative Democracy, Institutions, Law & People organized by Jindal Global University in collaboration with Stanford University.
17. Presentation on ensuring quality in maternal health and family planning services in India at a conference organised by WRAI and C3 in October 2016.
18. Presentation on financing for development from the perspective of international tax and illicit financial flows at a *Wada Na Todo Abhiyan* National Multi-Stakeholder Consultation on the Post-2015 Development Agenda in November, 2016.
19. Presentation in the International Conference on Extraterritorial Investments in Agricultural Land from China, India and South Africa, organised by the University of International Business and Economics (UIBE), Beijing and FAO in November, 2016.
20. Presentation on fiscal decentralisation to local governments and assessment of cases of India and China at the International Conference on Marginalisation, Poverty and Decentralisation organised by Kerala Institute of Local Administration and International Sociological Association in November, 2016.
21. Presentation on 'Budgets for Drinking Water and Sanitation from the Lens of Social Inclusion', December 2016 at the 2nd Annual National Summit on Sustainable Water and Sanitation', New Delhi. The Summit was attended by civil society organizations, government officials and academicians from various states as well as from other countries.
22. Presentation on health at the pre-budget consultation organised by Sanket and PHRN (*Jan Swasthya Abhiyan*) in Chattisgarh in December 2016.

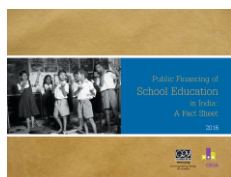
23. Presented on 'Living Condition of Young Slum Children in India: Role of the Central Government' in a workshop on 'Urbanisation in Asia: Economics and Social Consequences' organised by Asian Development Bank Institute (ADB) and Sogang University in Seoul in December, 2016.
24. Presentation on 'how to increase the accountability quotient in Governance', in a roundtable organized by ASSOCHAM on 'Reforms and Governance in India' in December 2016, in Delhi.
25. Presentation of a Paper "Government financing for school education in India" at One-Day National Consultative Workshop on Inche on Declaration: Education (SDG-4) Sustainable Development Goals-2030 by Group of Adult Education (JNU) and National Coalition for Education, New Delhi in December, 2016
26. Presentation on best practices regarding working with budgets at Lives of Data Workshop held in January 2017.
27. Presentation on Open Budgets India portal during the annual conference of South Odisha Economic Association, Odisha in February, 2017. At the same conference, presented a paper on the impact of Demonetisation on Economy, Employment and Livelihood.
28. Presentation on Open Budgets India and technical changes in Union Budget 2017-18 at a webinar titled 'Open Budgets Discussion with Data Meet' in February 2017.
29. Presentation on *Swachh Bharat Mission* and institutional and fund flow mechanisms in the context of the new federal fiscal architecture in India at the National Seminar on *Swachh Bharat Mission* organised by Indian Council of Social Science Research, held at the Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi in March, 2017.
30. Sessions on various issues of Union Budget 2017-18 during March, 2017 on the event, "Budget Session 2017" organised by the My Parliament group.
31. Presentation on tax incentives, financial secrecy and international financial architecture at the Asia Pacific Civil Society Forum on Sustainable Development in March 2017 in Bangkok, Thailand.

Publications



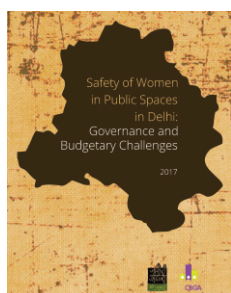
1. Study Report on 'How have States Designed their School Education Budgets?' (December 2016)

CBGA in collaboration with Child Rights and You (CRY) undertook this study, in an effort to understand and unpack the structure and composition of budgetary spending on school education in the country. The report analyses the priorities for different components / interventions within the school education budget for 10 selected States, over a four year period (2012-13 to 2015-16). It flags a number of areas that require greater attention from State Governments in budgeting for school education. It aims to inform the policy discourse on issues relating to discrepancies in financing for school education.



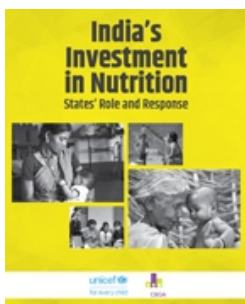
2. Fact Sheet on 'Public Financing of School Education in India' (December 2016)

This fact sheet accompanies the study report on 'How have States Designed their School Education Budgets?'. It presents macro level analysis of public financing for school education covering all the States.



3. Study Report on 'Safety of Women in Public Spaces in Delhi: Governance and Budgetary Challenges' (January 2017)

CBGA in partnership with Jagori carried out a study to understand the gaps in the policy framework for enhancing women's safety in public spaces and addressing the incidence of violence in Delhi- from the lens of governance and budgets. The report analyses the key measures instituted for the support of women victims/survivors of violence. It also looks into some important sectors that have a bearing on women's safety viz., policing, public bus service, and night shelters. It also analyses the governance and fiscal architecture of Delhi, to identify some of the underlying causes for the weak implementation of these interventions.



4. A series of four Working Papers and four Policy Brief on 'India's Investment in Nutrition: States' Role and Response'

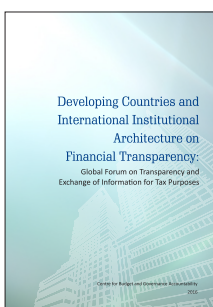
CBGA in collaboration with UNICEF India has studied State Budget outlays for nutrition interventions, included in India's policy framework, for select States for the most recent year. It also seeks to examine how the nutrition interventions are being prioritised in State Budgets in the most recent years. Based on this research, four working papers and four policy briefs have been developed.

The papers have a comprehensive mapping of nutrition interventions financed by the Union Budget and budgets of select states, present the methodology developed for tracking budget outlays for those, and assess the budget outlays for these interventions in the most recent financial years.



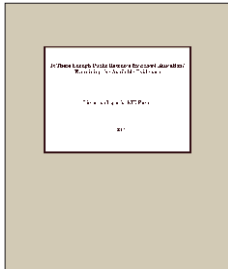
5. Policy Brief on 'Illicit Financial Flows: Perspectives from Developing Asian Countries'

This policy brief delves in the modalities of illicit financial flows, tax injustice and their impact on domestic mobilisation of resources in five specific developing Asian country contexts: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, India and the Philippines. It further sheds light on how issues pertaining to taxation and financial transparency vary regionally and discusses policy recommendations specific to those countries. The current international institutional architecture on taxation is skewed in favour of rich, developed countries and has unfairly allocated taxation rights towards developing countries. This brief comments on setting a political regional and global agenda on tax matters in the context of Asia-Pacific.



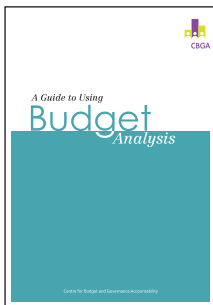
6. Working paper on 'Developing Countries and International Institutional Architecture on Financial Transparency: Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes'

The current international standard for exchange of information has been decided by the Global Forum on transparency and exchange of information for taxation purposes that was established by the OECD and endorsed by the G20, a group of 34 (then) developed countries. This working paper studies the various initiatives taken by the Global Forum and analyse them from the perspective of developing countries with the aim to suggest reform in the Global Forum, if and where needed.



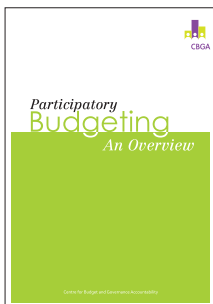
7. Working paper on 'Is There Enough Public Resource for School Education?: Examining the Available Evidences'

The paper has tried to generate evidences from various lenses to establish inadequacy of government's financing of school education, citing examples from existing education policies and pattern of budgetary allocation for the school education and its different components. It concludes stating that there is under-funding for school education and there is an immediate need to increase the resource envelope for education in general and school education in particular to realize the right to education in letter and spirit.



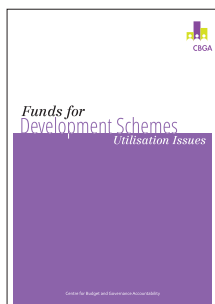
8. Primer titled 'A Guide to using Budget Analysis'

The primer provides an overview of Budget analysis as a tool used to build public accountability into budget processes. It was originally developed as a chapter of the module for certificate programme on 'Social Accountability Tools for Good Governance' launched by National Institute for Rural Development (NIRD).



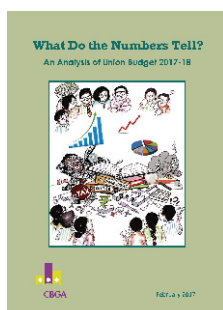
9. Primer titled 'Participatory Budgeting- An Overview'

The primer provides an overview of Participatory Budgeting as a tool used to build public accountability into budget processes, and discusses the conducive factors, gains and challenges, and some successful models of implementing participatory budgeting. The primer was originally developed as a chapter in the module for National Institute for Rural Development's certificate programme on 'Social Accountability Tools for Good Governance'.



10. Funds for Development Schemes - Utilisation Issues

The primer discusses the channels of fund flow in development schemes, the bottlenecks associated with smooth flow of funds, and measures to deal with the problem. It was originally developed as a chapter of the module for National Institute for Rural Development's certificate programme on 'Social Accountability Tools for Good Governance'.



11. What Do the Numbers Tell? An Analysis of Union Budget 2017-18

'Analysis of Union Budget' is our annual flagship publication following the presentation of the Union Budget in Parliament. 'What Do the Numbers Tell?' is an analysis of the priorities/ trends in Union Budget 2017-18, in the wake of significant changes in the country's public finance system. It examines social sectors, such as health, education, water & sanitation, food security, and some of the economic sectors, such as agriculture and rural development, to assess the implications of outlays made for disadvantaged sections of the population.

Contributions to External Publications

- ◆ Devolution of Functions, Functionaries and Funds to PRIs: An Assessment, In Democratic Decentralisation in India: Experiences, Issues and Challenges, Edited Volume, June 2016- Routledge&HCU, Hyderabad
- ◆ India's Tax System: Towards Progressivity, Yojana Journal, November, 2016: the article provides a brief overview of the tax system in India, arguing about the need to increase progressivity of taxes.
- ◆ "Recent Changes in India's Fiscal Architecture: Implications for Public Provisioning in Social Sectors" in India Exclusion Report 2016, Yoda Press (New Delhi)
- ◆ Revenue Mobilisation Efforts and Budget 2017-18, Yojana Journal, March, 2017: the article aims to understand how feasible are the Union government's projections of revenue mobilisation for the financial year 2017-18.
- ◆ Paper submission in October'16 'Swachh Bharat Mission: Institutional and Fund flow mechanisms in the context of the new Federal Fiscal Architecture in India' for the National Seminar on Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM): Implications for Public Health and Sanitation (March, 2017) sponsored by Indian Council of Social Science Research held at Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi. The aim and focus of the Paper was to highlight the changes which have taken place in the SBM programme for seven States in the context of the 14th Finance Recommendations and the funding pattern changes in the Centrally Sponsored Schemes.
- ◆ "Tightened purse strings curb growth" in the Citizen's Report on 2nd Year of the NDA Government - 2016: Promises & Reality, a civil society initiated review of the government's performance, coordinated by Wada Na Todo Abhiyaan. The CBGA piece focused on the budget commitments of the government, and pointed that the Union Budget for the financial year 2016-17 provided no impetus for increasing the funding in crucial sectors like health, drinking water, education to address the stress faced by the sectors; it did not display the intention of expanding the fiscal space either.
- ◆ "Curtailling Illicit Financial Flows in Asia" in Engagement of Indian CSOs in South-South Cooperation, a report - PRIA
- ◆ "Ensuring Good Governance and Effective Institutions: Can We Afford to Ignore Capacity Issues?" in Southern Perspectives on the Post - 2015 International Development Agenda, edited by Debapriya Bhattacharya and Andrea Ordonez Llanos, Routledge
- ◆ Blog by Open Budgets India team on Creative Commons platform: Balancing the budget: How a commons-based project is revolutionizing budget reporting in India. The blog describes the journey of building the data portal with specific focus on the importance of open budgets and the crucial role it plays to ensure accessibility and usability of government finances in India.

- ◆ CBGA wrote the Overview Paper titled "Public Auditing and Accounting: A Catalyst for Good Governance" for the AG Conference- Symposium by the Office of the C&AG Govt. of India which was held on October 22, 2016.
- ◆ 'Is There Enough Public Resource for School Education? Examining the Available Evidences', a discussion paper was prepared for RTE Forum in 2017.

Communication, Outreach and Policy Engagement

- ▶ Media Coverage
- ▶ Consultations and Panel Discussions
- ▶ People's Budget Initiative
- ▶ Financial Transparency Coalition
- ▶ Engagement with Policy Makers

Media Coverage

Throughout the year, the team wrote several opinion pieces and articles for the print media. This has always been the most engaging medium for our stakeholders to learn about our research findings. In the run up to the Union Budget, we targeted the print, electronic and online media to disseminate our messages. In an effort to increase our online presence, we interacted with multiple users on social media with questions related to the budget.

We had an agreement with **DNA** for running a series of four op-ed pieces covering different aspects of the budget. DNA published a series of four articles focusing on the Union budget, with the series beginning on the eve of the budget.

◆ *Advancing the Union Budget will help expedite fund flow from central ministries to states*

31 January 2017 DNA

The article argues that while advancing the Union Budget can help expedite fund flow from central ministries to states, a host of more fundamental reforms are needed to address the weaknesses in the public finance management system in India.

◆ *Merging plan and non-plan*

1 February 2017 DNA

Discussing the classification of items of expenditure under the Plan and Non-plan system, the op-ed piece highlights that an overemphasis on Plan expenditure in the past had several adverse consequences. It cautions that under the new classification, excessive focus on capital expenditure over revenue expenditure can be problematic.

◆ *Women's safety: More rhetoric than reality*

11 February 2017 DNA

The need to address the high levels of crime against women and the need for policy pronouncements for women's safety to be backed by adequate budgetary outlays, has been underscored in the recent budget speeches of the Union Ministers. The article analyses the Union Budget 2017-18 from the gender lens and argues that despite the recognition of the issue, the budgetary outlays fall short of providing adequate allocations for the various Union Government interventions instituted for this purpose.

◆ *Budgeting for quality education*

11 February 2017 DNA

The article examines Union Government's intervention to ensure quality school education through budgetary lens. Analysing Union budget 2017-18, it highlights the need for a long-term policy on teachers' appointment and teacher's training, backed by increased spending, besides a range of other interventions, to bring about significant improvements in the quality of school education.

With the second year of our tie-up with **Firstpost**, we continued to reach out to the online reader. As part of this agreement we did a special series of four pieces in the run up to the Budget 2017-18:

◆ *How can this Budget give a fillip to states' spending on social sectors?*

31 January 2017 Firstpost

The piece points that while the role of states is important with regard to critical sectors like infrastructure, agriculture and social development, some of the poorer States continue to lag behind regarding public spending on major social sectors, . And hence the need for the Union Government to take a strong stance in favour of social sectors.

◆ *Why Union Budget 2017 proposals fall short of Modi government's commitment towards farmers*

2 February 2017 Firstpost

In the post-demonetisation phase rural India has been severely impacted with the sluggish agricultural activities and other means of livelihood. In fact, the closure of manufacturing and construction industries at the destination huge reverse migration has happened and labourers were dependent heavily on MGNREGA in the rural areas. Given the scenario, it was expected that the Union Budget 2017-18 would have taken care of the need for this sector by increasing allocations for major interventions. However, the budget for this sector did not receive any impressive allocation in the Union Budget as was revealed by looking at relevant numbers.

◆ *Budget 2017: Here are a few black money steps Arun Jaitley did not spell out on Wednesday*

3 February 2017 Firstpost

The Government of India has taken a number of initiatives to curb the menace of tax avoidance, but it is important to address the loopholes that remain in some of the measures adopted so that it cannot be exploited by individuals and entities seeking to avoid taxes.

◆ *Union Budget 2017: Swachh Bharat Abhiyan gets good funds but what about water?*

6 February 2017 Firstpost

The article highlights the budgetary allocation for 2017-18 towards the *Swachh Bharat Abhiyan* (SBA) and comments on the allocations for the sanitation programme i.e. the *Swachh Bharat Mission* and the National Rural Drinking Water Programme. The demand for greater allocation towards the rural water programme is made without which the SBA would not be able to fulfil the dream of Clean India.

To inform the reader about the budget related changes and shape the public discourse, we covered a range of issues and delivered around 16 by-lined articles in different newspapers and magazines in the immediate pre and post phase of presentation of Budget 2017-18. Contributions include:

◆ **स्वास्थ्य और असंगठित क्षेत्र बने प्राथमिकता**

Dainik Jagran, 29 January 2017

The article (translated in Hindi) focused on the needs to be prioritized in budget 2017-18, especially in health, unorganised sector and rural development. It was part of the Dainik Jagran series on expectations from Union Budget 2017-18.

◆ **राजस्व बढ़ाने के साथ ही संसाधनों के प्रबंधन का प्रयोग**

Mudda, 5 February 2017

The article gives an overview of the Union Budget 2017-18, with a special focus on financing for social sectors. The articles also discusses the possible implications of some important changes introduced in this Union Budget, such as merger of plan and non-plan heads of expenditure etc.

◆ *A Mixed Bag For Social Sectors*

Outlook India, 6 February 2017

The article discusses that Union budget 2017-18 can be seen as a mixed bag in terms of the priority accorded to the social sectors; while there are clear indications of attempts to step up government expenditure in rural areas, allocations in several other social sector programmes have either remained stagnant or increased marginally.

◆ *Is the Union budget still relevant?*

Down To Earth, 16 February 2017

The article comments on the recent trend whereby important economic decisions are being taken outside the process of budget formulation. The piece examines whether the role of the Union budget is diminished by these decisions as they have public-expenditure and public-revenue related implications.

◆ *Assessing the Changes in Structure and Processes - Union Budget 2017*

Yojana, March 2017

The piece assesses the changes in the budget processes in the Union Budget 2016-17. Some of the major changes include merging the Rail Budget with the General Budget, discontinuation of the Plan and Non-Plan classification in Union Government's Expenditure Budget, and advanced the date of the Budget presentation by a month.

◆ *Revenue Mobilisation Efforts and the Budget 2017-18*

Yojana, March 2017

The article aims to understand how feasible are the Union government's projections of revenue mobilisation for the financial year 2017-18.

In our effort to continuously engage with the target audience on budget and related issues, we contributed articles in leading journals-

◆ *Public Provisioning for Social Protection and Its Implications for Food Security - An Analysis*

Economic and Political Weekly, April 2016

This article seeks to investigate some of the key issues, particularly the role of public provisioning on social protection in combating hunger using recent evidence for 64 countries in the global South. The article provides relevant data on mapping hunger and malnutrition across selected regions and countries; maps the trends and patterns of public provisioning on social protection and their empirical association with hunger and malnutrition and presents a strong case for the argument that a substantial push in public provisioning towards social protection, along with other policy measures in place, could play a vital role in combating national food insecurity.

◆ *India's Tax System - Increasing Progressivity*

Yojana, November, 2016

This article discusses about the tax system in India and different type of taxes that exist. It deals with the various aspects of taxation including division of taxes between Centre and States, Devolution of resources to States, Progressivity of taxes in India and tax reforms initiated by the government including Goods and Services Tax (GST).

In addition to the above, we published the following pieces under different areas of our work:

◆ *The Panama documents are not the tip of the iceberg, they are a mere speck; here's why*

First Post, 12 April 2016

◆ *Chasing black money: Need for universal information framework to track illicit fund flows*

DNA, 15 June 2016

◆ *Budgetary hurdles and gender equity*

DHNS, 16 June 2016

◆ *Is India close to passing a law to identify true ownership of corporates*

First Post, 27 July 2016

◆ *GST law should ensure benefits of lower prices are passed on to common people*

First Post, 23 August 2016

- ◆ *BRICS Goa: Can the summit drive discourse on international taxation and lead black money chase?*

First Post, 14 October 2016

- ◆ *Long-term Measure or A One-time Move Against Black Money?*

First Post, 10 November 2016

- ◆ *Demonetisation: More important to address deeper problems in war against black money*

First Post, 17 November 2016

- ◆ *Black money hunt: India-Switzerland pact to share details of tax cheats is weak; it's no game-changer*

First Post, 27 December 2016

The CBGA organised Panel Discussion on Union Budget on 2nd February, 2017 was covered by Rajya Sabha TV and aired on the channel six times in the channel's news bulletins of 3rd February.

Social media - To optimise the potential of social media for connecting with the user consuming online information, we are now actively engaging and disseminating our work to our subscribers on Facebook, Twitter and Youtube platforms. This has helped us foster continued linkage with this audience on issues of governance and public finance. At the Panel discussion on Union Budget held in February, our tweets earned a deluge of impressions from followers those who joined the conversation through the web.

Consultations and Panel Discussions

Panel discussion on 'What Do the Numbers Tell? - A Panel Discussion on Union Budget 2017-18' - February 2, 2017, New Delhi

A day after the presentation of the Union Budget 2017-18, a Panel discussion focusing on the government's commitments for the social sectors as reflected in the latest budget, was organized by CBGA with the aim of bringing people's voices into budget conversations. Distinguished panellists like Annie Raja (General Secretary, National Federation of Indian Women), Ashutosh Dikshit (Advisor, BMR Associates), Nitin Desai (Economist and former Chief Economic Advisor to Gol), Praveen Jha (Professor, JNU), Rathin Roy (Director, NIPFP), Renu Kohli (Eminent Economist and formerly worked with RBI and IMF), and Yogendra Yadav (National Working Committee Member *Swaraj Abhiyan*) shared their views on the macroeconomic implications of the budget and the extent to which these met the expectations of different sections of population. The discussion examined repercussions of the budgetary proposals for the poor and underprivileged.

The event provided a platform for debate between a wide range of stakeholders from civil society actors, academia and representatives from the private sector. Attendees included researchers, journalists, international organisations, think tanks and civil society enthusiastically engaging with serious issues of public finance on this occasion.

Young Scholars' Conference on 'Government Finance and Public Policy Issues' - July 23, 2016, New Delhi

CBGA organised a Young Scholars' Conference on 'Government Finance and Public Policy Issues', on 23 July, 2016 in New Delhi. The objective of the conference was to showcase some of the research on government finance and public policy issues being carried out by young scholars in universities, think tanks and civil society organisations across the country. It also sought ideas and suggestions from academics and civil society leaders for deepening and enriching research in these areas.

Consultation on 'Investment in Maternal, Newborn and Child Healthcare: Addressing the Gaps in Budgetary Priorities and Processes to Improve Quality of Care' - August 31, 2016, New Delhi

Given the criticality of MNCH concerns in India, there is a need to ensure that budgetary policies accord adequate priority to investment in MNCH. In this context, The White Ribbon Alliance, India (WRAI) and CBGA jointly organised a Consultation on "Investment in Maternal, Newborn and Child Healthcare: Addressing the Gaps in Budgetary Priorities and Processes to Improve Quality of Care". The Consultation deliberated on issues concerning the policies and budgetary priorities for MNCH care and the constraints in effective utilization of resources.

Workshop on 'Scaling up Essential Nutrition interventions for Improving Nutritional Outcomes for Pregnant Women in Purnea' - September 22-23, 2016, Purnea, Bihar

The workshop was undertaken to understand the local context of Purnea district of Bihar and

gather insights on implementation of existing nutrition interventions for pregnant women. The workshop invited people from various domains (such as district and block level officials, front line functionaries and NGOs) familiar with the issues of maternal care in the district. The two-day workshop was organized in the district headquarters and incorporated sessions on maternal care; safe pregnancy; Food Security, Poverty and Livelihood and Drinking Water and Sanitation.

Roundtable on 'Reforms in International Taxation and Financial Transparency: Towards a Regional Agenda for Asia' - November 21, 2016, New Delhi

CBGA, with the Financial Transparency Coalition, convened a meeting with Tax Administrators, academics, experts and civil society organisations from various Asian countries, titled 'Reforms in International Taxation and Financial Transparency: Towards a Regional Agenda for Asia' on November 21, 2016 in New Delhi. The roundtable facilitated discussions on the national and sub-regional priorities with regard to international taxation and financial transparency in Asia, cooperation on international tax matters between Asian countries, and the loopholes in regional cooperation that need to be addressed through global processes.

Consultation on 'Government Financing of School Education in India' - December 22, 2016, New Delhi

CBGA, in collaboration with Child Rights and You (CRY), carried out a research study on government financing of school education in India. The analysis, covering the budgets of all the states over a four year period (2012-13 to 2015-16), unpacks the structure and composition of budgetary spending on school education in the country. It aims to inform the policy discourse on issues relating to education, focusing especially on how different states have designed their resource envelope for school education over the last four years. In this context, CBGA has organised a consultation on 22nd December 2016 to share the findings of the study.

JSA-PBI National Consultation on 'Strengthening Public Provisioning of Healthcare in India' - January 17-18, 2017, New Delhi

CBGA organised a JSA-PBI National Consultation on "Strengthening Public Provisioning of Healthcare in India" in Delhi. The consultation was organised jointly by *Jan Swasthya Abhiyan* (JSA) and People's Budget Initiative (PBI) to mark the completion of the two-year long joint project focusing on three key issues, namely, increasing overall budgetary allocation for healthcare; improving infrastructure and human resources and ensuring availability of free generic medicines. The coverage of this joint campaign is the following 6 States, viz. Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Odisha and Rajasthan.

Consultation on 'Safety of Women in Public Spaces in Delhi: Governance and Budgetary Challenges' - January 20, 2017, New Delhi

CBGA, in collaboration with Jagori, carried out a research study on 'Safety of Women in Public Spaces in Delhi: Governance and Budgetary Challenges'. The study attempts to assess the policy framework for enhancing women's safety in public spaces and addressing the incidence of violence in Delhi, from the lens of governance and budgets. It analyses some important sectors that have a bearing on women's safety and the key measures instituted for the support of women

survivors of violence. CBGA organised a half-day Consultation on 'Safety of Women in Public Spaces' In Delhi on 20 January 2017, where in findings of the study were shared.

Pre-conference Colloquium on "The Flux in India's Higher Education System" - January 21, 2017, Chennai

CBGA, along with Indian Association for Women's Studies (IAWS), co-coordinated and co-hosted the pre-conference colloquium as part of IAWS XV National Conference on Women's Studies on "Women in a Changing World: Restructured Inequalities, Countercurrents and Sites of Resistance", 22 to 25 January 2017. The objective of the colloquium was to understand the problems in higher education system today in the context of the developments over the last thirty years since when India's higher education system has been in a state of continuous flux. The colloquium was planned as a series of four sessions with a combination of students, teachers, education workers and researchers as participants. The colloquium attempted to go beyond metropolitan locations in ensuring a representation of the unevenness in higher education in the public distribution of resources for higher education and the variations in social context over which the 'flux' of the last thirty years have been playing out.

Consultation on 'Opening Up Access to Budget Data in India' - January 27, 2017, New Delhi

CBGA strives to strengthen the discourse and demand for availability of all budget information in the public domain in a timely and accessible manner, at all levels of government in the country. As part of the efforts in this sphere, CBGA, in collaboration with a number of other organisations, developed Open Budgets India (<https://openbudgetsindia.org/>)- an open data portal on budgets in India. CBGA organised a consultation to launch the beta version of the portal followed by a panel discussion with experts expressing their varied perspectives on what the government authorities and the civil society organisations will pursue, in the coming years, so as to facilitate free, easy and timely access to relevant budget data for different tiers of government.

Panel Discussion on 'India's Investment in Nutrition: States' Role and Response' - February 28, 2017, New Delhi

A Panel Discussion was held for dissemination and to seek feedback on a series of working papers developed jointly by CBGA and UNICEF India on the above mentioned theme. It was attended by policy makers from the study states, as well as nutrition and budget experts working both at the national and state level.

People's Budget Initiative

People's Budget Initiative (PBI) is a coalition of civil society organisations, people's movements and grassroots level NGOs from across the country. Since 2006 the coalition has been working towards strengthening people's voices in policy-making processes with the objective of democratising government budgets and budgetary processes in India. CBGA serves as the secretariat of this coalition.

In November 2016, PBI convened a meeting on Union Budget 2017-18 with CSOs and budget groups from across the country. The Consultation deliberated upon key priorities for social sectors and marginalised sections of population for the Union Budget 2017- 18. Policy asks were prepared through a consultative process and submitted under the banner of PBI to the Finance Minister in a Pre-Budget Consultation with groups working on social sectors organised by the Ministry of Finance.

In recent years, there has been a realization within PBI for the need to revitalize the coalition's functioning in order to make it more effective, especially in view of the recent changes in the governance landscape in the country. The efforts to revamp PBI, so as to strengthen its functioning as a coalition, were initiated in November 2016. On 24th November 2016, member organisations got together and collectively reflected on some of the issues and challenges before PBI at the current juncture. Members collectively deliberated upon issues such as reviewing its governance structure, decision making processes, its agenda, concrete interventions to be pursued and mobilization of resources for the coalition, among others.

On 25th November 2016, PBI organised a discussion on developing an agenda for strengthening civil society engagement on tax issues in the country. In the wake of the recent changes in taxation policies, it was important to develop a strategy to deepen our work on issues such as the lack of progressivity in the Indian taxation system, implications of the Goods and Services Tax and the limited engagement of CSOs on tax issues. The aim of the discussion was to enable the discourse on taxation policies in the country to be informed by a civil society perspective.

From these two discussions, building a strong network of CSOs and budget experts for greater participation in governance processes was articulated as an important goal for the next three years. Collaborating more systematically with member organisations as well as other CSO coalitions and networks emerged as a critical mandate for PBI. There was a consensus on the need to develop a clearly defined agenda for PBI, broaden the scope for agenda setting within the coalition and strengthen the coalition's strategies and interventions at the national and sub-national level. Therefore, it was decided that the core member organisations will get together in 2017 and develop a road map for revamping PBI and consolidate ideas towards developing a strategic framework for PBI in the coming years.

Financial Transparency Coalition

CBGA is the only Asian organisation on the steering committee of the Financial Transparency Coalition, a global network of civil society organisations, governments and experts working to curtail illicit financial flows through the promotion of a transparent, accountable and sustainable financial system that works for everyone. CBGA engages in demystifying and enhancing public understanding of the shadow financial system, international tax norms and standards, and tax justice issues, through generating evidence, disseminating resources, building capacity and engaging with policy makers.

CBGA convenes a network of Asian civil society organisations, researchers, academics and tax administrators spread across several countries in South and South-East Asia, working on issues of financial transparency. The network is a crucial platform for information sharing, fostering regional cooperation and promoting policy engagement.

In October 2016, CBGA published a working paper titled 'Developing Countries and International Institutional Architecture on Financial Transparency: Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes', which examines the flaws in the design of the OECD Global Forum - the body that oversees exchange of tax information between governments. The paper also analyses the initiatives taken by the Global Forum from the perspective of developing countries, and suggests policy reforms to address these concerns.

In November 2016, CBGA convened a Roundtable with Asian Tax Administrators from several Asian countries, along with civil society groups and academics, titled 'Reforms in International Taxation and Financial Transparency: Towards a Regional Agenda for Asia'. The Roundtable set the foundation for advocacy between tax administrators from varied Asian countries - emerging economies, LDCs, SIDS - and civil society organisations.

CBGA was a part of the Civil20 Working Group on 'Reform of the International Financial System', and participated at the Working Groups Meeting held in February, 2017 in Berlin, Germany. CBGA drafted the policy asks for the Civil20 communique on tax, anti-money laundering and corruption.

In March 2017, CBGA organised an Orientation Workshop titled 'Fault Lines in the International Tax System and Illicit Financial Flows', which brought together around 40 representatives from Asian civil society organisations working on diverse and myriad developmental issues including labour, land rights, gender and trade to discuss the centrality of domestic resource mobilisation, progressive tax systems and corrosive impacts of illicit financial flows in development.

Engagement with Policy Makers

- ◆ Overview paper titled 'Public Auditing and Accounting: A Catalyst for Good Governance' for the Symposium by the Office of C&AG, Government of India

CBGA wrote the overview paper titled 'Public Auditing and Accounting: A Catalyst for Good Governance' for the Symposium by the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India, Government of India which was held on October 22, 2016. The symposium was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Prime Minister. The paper gives an overview of the role of the C&AG in promoting good governance and throws light on improving accounts and audit effectiveness, emerging areas in audits, C&AG's engagement with citizens and the impact of e-governance on auditing and accounting.

- ◆ Roundtable with Asian Tax Administrators: 'Reforms in International Taxation and Financial Transparency: Towards a Regional Agenda for Asia' - November 21, 2016

Despite a host of challenges with regard to taxation and public finance faced by Asian countries, there is no Asia-Pacific forum for cooperation on tax matters. CBGA convened this Roundtable to further the discourse on the role of regional and global cooperation with multiple stakeholders including national tax administrators from several Asian countries, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, academics and civil society organisations.

- ◆ Pre-budget consultation with the Ministry of Finance for the financial year 2017-18 – 26th November, 2016

For the third consecutive year, CBGA was invited to be a part of the consultation organised by the Ministry of Finance seeking suggestions from civil society groups for the forthcoming Union Budget (2017-18). With the aim of drawing the attention of the Minister and his officials, we made a submission in the meeting to highlight the following critical issues

- Proactive disclosure of the relevant budget information at the district level
- Operationalizing Gender Responsive Budgeting, and address violence against women.
- Strengthening implementation of schemes executed through the ICDS platform, and paying special attention to the nutritional needs of tribal children and pregnant and lactating mother
- Addressing staff and infrastructure shortages in tribal areas, and strengthening implementation of the Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan and Tribal Sub-Plan
- Stepping up investment in quality secondary education and the measures for mainstreaming out of school children; Strengthen the National Health Mission with enhanced budgetary support; special attention needed for the National Rural Drinking Water Programme

- ◆ Meeting with Macroeconomic and Financing for Development Division of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific - March 28, 2017

CBGA met officials from the Macroeconomic Policy and Financing for Development Division of UNESCAP, putting forward policy asks and recommendations on progressive tax systems, tax competition, regional cooperation among Asia-Pacific countries on matters of international tax and financial transparency measures such as Automatic Exchange of Information, Country by Country Reporting and Beneficial Ownership of legal entities.

- ◆ Meetings with India's Competent Authority on International Tax

CBGA conducted three successful meetings with India's then Competent Authority on International Tax, Mr. Akhilesh Ranjan during 2016-17. In our third meeting with Mr. Ranjan, who also serves as the Vice-Chair of the Peer Review Group of the OECD Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes, CBGA presented its research on the Global Forum and its policy recommendations for reforms needed in the international financial architecture from the perspective of developing countries.

- ◆ Meeting with Commissioner of Income Tax, Transfer Pricing Division, CBDT - January 17, 2017

CBGA met with the Commissioner of Income Tax, Transfer Pricing, Mr. Rahul Navin and put forward our concerns regarding Automatic Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes, and exchanged views on transfer pricing norms followed by India.

- ◆ Meeting with Commissioner of Income Tax, Income Tax Department (Bangalore) - July 15, 2016

CBGA met with the Commissioner of Income Tax, Income Tax Department (Bangalore), Ms. Jahanzeb Akhtar, and conducted dialogue on the need for a tax justice narrative in India, with a focus on tax dodging. Discussions also revolved around transfer pricing, unitary taxation as an alternative to abuse of transfer pricing, tax gaps, human resource and capacity constraints in the tax departments.

- ◆ Meeting with Head of Division of G7, G8, G20, Global Economy, Monetary and Currency Issues, German Federal Ministry of Finance - February 17, 2017

During the Civil 20 Working Groups Meeting, held in February 2017 in Berlin, CBGA met with Dr. Holger Fabig, German Federal Ministry of Finance. The meeting was a useful opportunity to learn about Germany's priorities for its presidency of the G20, and a crucial platform for civil society to put their recommendations forward on a number of issues, including financial transparency, international tax, money laundering, corruption and international financial architecture.

- ◆ CBGA made several policy submissions to Indian authorities, and in a first to governments of two Asian countries, Hong Kong and Singapore.

- ◆ A policy submission highlighting aspects of Beneficial Ownership of Companies in India was submitted to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance.

- ◆ A submission was made ahead of the 8th BRICS Summit to the Ministry of External Affairs, highlighting some of the best practices regarding Automatic Exchange of Information, Country-by-Country Reporting by MNCs, Beneficial Ownership and the need for reforms in the international financial architecture.
- ◆ A submission was made ahead of the BRICS Heads of Tax Authorities meeting, highlighting some of the best practices regarding Automatic Exchange of Information, Country-by-Country Reporting by MNCs, Beneficial Ownership and the need for reforms in the international financial architecture.
- ◆ A submission was made to the Ministry of Finance, Singapore, in response to public feedback sought on key clauses of the Companies Amendment Bill (2016).
- ◆ A submission containing best practices on financial transparency measures for curtailing black money and cooperation on international tax matters was shared with the Indian Sherpa for G20 ahead of the G20 Sherpa Meeting.
- ◆ As a southern and only Asian steering committee member of the Financial Transparency Coalition, a submission was drafted and sent as FTC to Financial Services and Treasury Bureau of Hong Kong in response to public feedback sought on a consultation on anti-money laundering and terrorist financing.

Capacity Building

1. Capacity building workshop on understanding budget rights, conducting policy and advocacy from the perspective of Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan, Tribal Sub-Plan and gender for the *Dalit Aarthik Adhikar Andolan* with NCDHR in May 2016.
2. Session in a workshop organized by Common Wealth Human Rights Initiative on Use of RTIs in Budgets, in May 2016.
3. Session on 'Budget analysis and advocacy' in a capacity building workshop on ' Budget Monitoring' focusing on health and WCD budgets held in Lucknow in July, 2016. Participants were senior level activists from the seven states namely Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and New Delhi who are working on the issue of maternal health and rights.
4. Training sessions on financing and implementing water, sanitation and hygiene, and budget and advocacy for Bharat Rural Livelihood Foundation in Ranchi in September 2016.
5. Session on 'Public Financing of School Education in India' in a 5 day Certificate Programme For Officers of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India Organised by Jindal School of Government and Public Policy (JSGP) & Jindal Institute of Leadership Development and Executive Education (JILDEE), October 2016
6. Capacity building workshop with senior officers of Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Government of Uttarakhand, on budget analysis at the Administrative Staff College India, Hyderabad in November 2016.
7. Session on analysis of budgets in the context of SDGs in India at Centre for Social Justice, Ahmedabad in November 2016.
8. Sessions on various issues of Union Budget 2017-18 during March 2017 in an event organised by the My Parliament group titled 'Budget Session 2017'.
9. Sessions (three) on social accountability tools covering themes like budget analysis, fund flow and utilisation and participatory budgeting organised by NIRD in February in Gurgaon.

Challenges and Way Forward

We recognize the need for us to pay a lot more attention to effective communication and dissemination of the organisation's research findings and opinions; in this context, we need to fully utilise the avenues for dissemination resulting from proliferation of social media and news portals. We also need to work towards consistent engagement both with the larger civil society in the country as well as with the policymakers, especially at the subnational level. Moreover, the organisation could benefit significantly from building strategic collaborations with universities.

CBGA's work in the coming years needs to focus a lot more on a number of emerging issues; the most significant among them include the following:

- ◆ Assessing the impact of reforms in budgetary processes initiated by the Union Government, such as advancing of the time of presentation of the Union Budget; merging Plan and Non-Plan in Expenditure Budget, coupled with its implications for SCSP and TSP; and the restructuring of Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS);
- ◆ Assessing the major changes and the priorities for social sectors in State Budgets consequent to 14th Finance Commission led shifts in Union-State fiscal relations, and developing an in-depth understanding of the issues that would be very relevant for the 15th Finance Commission's agenda;
- ◆ Enhancing transparency in budgets at the district and sub-district levels to address the need for locally relevant and usable budget information, taking into account the developments in Public Financial Management System (PFMS) being rolled out across the country right now;
- ◆ Assessing the effectiveness of the Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDP) process and implementation in view of the increased allocations to Panchayats and flexibility in fund utilisation;
- ◆ Assessing the use of technology to improve governance, for instance, e-governance platforms in various spheres;
- ◆ Taking stock of the impact of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) on the economy and different sections of the population; and
- ◆ Engaging with key institutions in the budget accountability ecosystem in the country – for instance, the office of C&AG, to promote greater engagement with citizens, and Parliamentary and Legislative Committees to highlight the concerns pertaining to limited effectiveness of audits.

Taking these emerging issues into account, we are planning to strengthen our work in a number of areas over the coming years, viz. building a robust body of evidence on implementation of government programmes and schemes; comparative analysis of State Budgets in the context of the developments in fiscal federalism in the country; using ICT to improve governance and budget

processes in the country; and developing and promoting ways in which India's budget data can be made 'open', usable and easy to comprehend. Some of the specific plans we have for the next couple of years include the following:

- ◆ Deepening our research towards assessing the impact of the ongoing reforms in budgetary processes/public expenditure management in India;
- ◆ Interventions at the district level for enhancing budget transparency: we aim to expand our research and advocacy efforts on transparency in public expenditure at district and sub-district levels. This will also include deepening of our engagement with the office of the C&AG and the AGs in select states;
- ◆ With the public launch of the open data portal, Open Budgets India and the consequent addition of visualisation tools like the Story Generator on it, we will focus our attention on making budgets more comprehensible for a wider user group. In this regard, our primary objective would be to reach out to different groups of potential stakeholders as part of our efforts to popularize the portal and disseminate our work on this project;
- ◆ Engaging with the e-governance agenda of the government, focusing on tracking fund flow, utilization and delivery of major flagship programmes (Central and State) using technology;
- ◆ Deepening our research on resource mobilization issues, including direct taxes, indirect taxes on consumption like the Goods and Services tax (GST), black money, etc. We aim towards sustain this momentum while focusing on the quality of outputs and encouraging other CSOs to engage with the subject;
- ◆ Revamping our capacity building work so as to build the expertise of budget and governance analysts at the district level, in collaboration with State Partners so as to improve the demand for budget related data and documents;
- ◆ Initiating substantive research to contribute effectively towards the Fifteenth Finance Commission's deliberations in the next two years; and
- ◆ Revamping the PBI coalition towards strengthening the collaborations between budget groups and non-budget CSOs in the country.

Board of Trustees

Members of the Board of Trustees of CBGA, as of 31st March 2017 are:

Amitabh Behar

Secretary, BoT

Executive Director, National Foundation for India, New Delhi

Anil K. Singh

Member, BoT

Secretary General, South Asian Network for Social and Agricultural Development, SANSAD

Jagadananda

Member, BoT

Member Secretary, Centre for Youth and Social Development, CYSD

Praveen Jha

President, BoT

Professor, Centre for Economic Studies and Planning, School of Social Sciences, JNU

Ritu Dewan

Treasurer, BoT

President, Indian Association of Women's Studies

Shantha Sinha

Member, BoT

Former Chairperson NCPCR and Professor, Department of Political Science,
Hyderabad Central University

Yogesh Kumar

Member, BoT

Director, Samarthan - Centre for Development Support

CBGA Team

(As of 31st March 2017)

1. Amar Chanchal	Senior Research Officer
2. Asadullah	Programme Director
3. Bhuwan Chand Nailwal	Additional Coordinator - Finance and Administration
4. Chandrika Singh	Research Consultant
5. Gaurav Singh	Research Officer
6. Happy Pant	Advocacy Coordinator
7. Harsh Singh Rawat	Office Assistant
8. Jawed Alam Khan	Senior Research Officer
9. Jyotsna Goel	Senior Research Officer
10. Kanika Kaul	Additional Coordinator - Research
11. Khwaja Mobeen Ur Rehman	Programme Officer
12. Malini Chakravarty	Additional Coordinator - Research
13. Neeti Biyani	Programme Consultant
14. Nilachala Acharya	Research Coordinator
15. Priyanka Samy	Programme Officer
16. Protiva Kundu	Additional Coordinator - Research
17. Raj Kumar	Office Support Staff
18. Rajalakshmi Nair	Finance and Administration Officer
19. Richa Chintan	Research Consultant
20. Sakshi Rai	Programme Consultant
21. Saumya Shrivastava	Research Officer
22. Shaji T.K.	Coordinator - Finance and Administration
23. Shuchita Rawal	Programme Consultant
24. Simonti Chakraborty	Programme Officer
25. Sona Mitra	Senior Research Consultant
26. Sridhar Kundu	Senior Research Officer
27. Subrat Das	Executive Director
28. Sumita Gupta	Finance and Administration Officer
29. Suraj Jaiswal	Programme Consultant
30. Trisha Agarwala	Senior Research Consultant

Institutional Processes

In order to improve the collective understanding of the team members on prevention, prohibition and redressal of sexual harassment of women at workplace and the key dimensions of a women-friendly workplace, CBGA organised a two-day workshop on the 9th- 10th March, 2017. We invited Ms. Sreekala M. G., a gender expert and former Executive Director of North East Network, to inform and train the team members and enrich our knowledge and awareness on this subject.

As per section 22 of Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 the institution/ employer is required to disclose if any complaints pertaining to sexual harassment in the workplace were filed and their disposal. In compliance with this law, we hereby declare that no complaints of sexual harassment were reported to the Internal Complaints Committee of CBGA in the year 2016-17.

Funders

In the financial year 2016-17, CBGA relied upon the support of the following institutions.

For core / institutional fund support, we are grateful to:

- ◆ International Development Research Centre (IDRC) - Think Tank Initiative
- ◆ Center for International Policy - Financial Transparency Coalition

For fund support tied to research and advocacy efforts in specific areas, we are grateful to:

- ◆ Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
- ◆ Center for International Policy - Financial Transparency Coalition
- ◆ Centre for Catalyzing Change
- ◆ Child Rights and You (CRY), India
- ◆ International Budget Partnership
- ◆ National Foundation for India
- ◆ Omidyar Network
- ◆ UNICEF India

Salary: Slab-wise gender composition of staff (As of March 2017)

Slab of gross monthly salary plus benefits paid to staff (in Rs.)	Male Staff	Female Staff	Total Staff
30,000 - 50,000	1	2	3
50,001 - 70,000	2	5	7
70,001 - 90,000	4	6	10
90,001 - 110,000	3	5	8
110,001 - 150,000	2	0	2
Grand Total	12	18	30

Gross salary of lowest paid employee: Rs. 35,000

Gross salary of highest paid employee: Rs. 1,50,000

Consultancy / Honorarium / Other remuneration paid to any member of the Board of Trustees during FY 2016-17: Nil

Treasurer's Report

Respected Members of the Board of Trustees,

Greetings!

I am delighted to present Treasurer's Report of CBGA for the financial year 2016-17 and bring to your attention the following points.

- CBGA received a total income of Rs. 6,15,83,800 - in 2016-17, with an increase of 25.58 % over the total income of Rs. 4,90,38,396/- in the previous financial year.
- CBGA's total expenditure during the year 2016-17 was Rs. 6,05,96,903/- with an increase of 24.85 % over the total expenditure of Rs. 4,85,35,521/- in the previous financial year.
- During the financial year 2016-17, Rs. 9,86,291/- was received as Interest, as compared to Rs. 7,71,768/- received during the financial year 2015-16.
- Total addition in fixed assets during the F.Y. was of Rs. 3,38,322/-. The net value of Fixed Assets in CBGA has changed from Rs. 20,06,892/- as on 31st March 2016 to Rs. 18,58,860/- as on 31st March 2017. A periodic physical verification of all fixed assets is being undertaken by the Finance and Administration unit of CBGA.
- The financial accounts were prepared according to the standard accounting practices and statutory requirements prevailing in India and as applicable for NGOs.
- All statutory requirements, like, filing of returns to FCRA division of the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, tax returns to the Income Tax Department, and Employees Provident Fund returns to EPFO, were fulfilled during 2016-17.
- I may also add here that in the detailed assessment of CBGA's Income Tax returns for FY 2010-11, FY 2011-12 and 2013-14 carried out by the Income Tax Department, 'no tax liability' on CBGA has been confirmed by the IT authorities.
- 13% of the total expenditure by CBGA in FY 2016-17 was for administrative purposes.

In the year 2016-17, CBGA relied upon the financial support of a number of institutions for working towards its goals and objectives. During 2016-17, CBGA received core / institutional fund support from: *International Development Research Centre (IDRC) - Think Tank Initiative*, and *Centre for International Policy*. During this year, it received fund support tied to research, communications and outreach efforts in specific areas from: *Centre for Catalyzing Change*, *International Budget Partnership*, *Centre for International Policy*, *Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation*, *National Foundation for India*, *Omidyar Network*, *CRY- Child Rights and You* and *UNICEF*.

I wish to thank all donors and funding partners who have contributed financially towards achieving the goals and objectives of CBGA.

I also wish to thank the Executive Director and the Staff of the Finance and Administration Unit of CBGA for assisting me in discharging my responsibility as the Treasurer.

Ritu Dewan

Treasurer
Board of Trustees
Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability

Financial Summary

CENTRE FOR BUDGET AND GOVERNANCE ACCOUNTABILITY
B-7 EXTN./110A (GROUND FLOOR), HARSUKH MARG, SAFDARJUNG ENCLAVE
NEW DELHI - 110029 (INDIA)

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st MARCH 2017

Particulars	SCHEDULE	F.Y. 2016-17	F.Y. 2015-16
SOURCES OF FUND			
I. FUND BALANCES:			
a. General Fund	[01]	4,582,749	3,595,852
b. Asset Fund	[02]	1,817,770	1,960,687
c. Corpus Fund		25,000	25,000
II. LOAN FUNDS:			
a. Secured Loans		-	-
b. Unsecured Loans		-	-
TOTAL	[I + II]	6,425,519	5,581,539
APPLICATION OF FUND			
I. FIXED ASSETS			
Gross Block	[03]	5,876,210	5,537,889
Less: Accumulated Depreciation		4,017,350	3,530,997
Net Block		<u>1,858,860</u>	<u>2,006,892</u>
II. INVESTMENT			
		<u>1,068,751</u>	<u>21,408,986</u>
III. CURRENT ASSETS, LOANS & ADVANCES:			
a. Loans & Advances	[04]	1,133,440	1,170,379
b. Grant Receivable	[05]	7,692,390	4,130,464
c. Cash & Bank Balance	[06]	1,669,750	3,078,070
	A	<u>10,495,580</u>	<u>8,378,913</u>
Less: CURRENT LIABILITIES & PROVISIONS:			
a. Current Liabilities	[07]	4,071,026	3,470,276
b. Unspent Grant Balance	[08]	2,926,646	22,742,976
	B	<u>6,997,672</u>	<u>26,213,252</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS	[A - B]	<u>3,497,908</u>	<u>(17,834,339)</u>
TOTAL	[I+II+III]	6,425,519	5,581,539
Significant Accounting Policies and Notes to Accounts		[44]	-

The schedules referred to above form an integral part of the Balance Sheet.
IN TERMS OF OUR REPORT OF EVEN DATE

For & on behalf :
S.SAHOO & CO.

For & on behalf :
CENTRE FOR BUDGET AND GOVERNANCE ACCOUNTABILITY

[CA Subhjit Sahoo, FCA, LLb]
Partner
 MM No. 057426
 Firm No. 322952E



Praveen Jha
President

Ritu Dewan
Treasurer

Place: New Delhi
 Date: 26.08.2017

Subrat Das
Executive Director

Shaji T.K
Coordinator- Fin. & Admn.

CENTRE FOR BUDGET AND GOVERNANCE ACCOUNTABILITY
B-7 EXTN./110A (GROUND FLOOR), HARSUKH MARG, SAFDARJUNG ENCLAVE
NEW DELHI - 110029 (INDIA)

RECEIPTS & PAYMENT ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2017

	SCHEDULE	F.Y. 2016-17	F.Y. 2015-16
RECEIPTS			
Opening Balance :			
Cash in Hand (In INR)		95,746	40,618
Cash (In FC)		152,505	72,540
Cash at Bank (SBI & Axis)		2,829,818	1,706,790
Grant In Aid	[26]	37,191,108	63,155,766
Bank Interest	[27]	1,268,858	415,121
Other Income		28,146	1,350
Proceeds from Investments		20,057,668	-
Loan and Advances Received		-	595,820
TOTAL Rs.		61,623,849	65,988,005
PAYMENT			
Project Related Expenses			
Budget and Policy Analysis Work and Raising Awareness on Budgets	[28]	-	2,518,942
Empowering CSO Networks in an Unequal Multi Polar World	[29]	-	1,626,328
Research, Training and Outreach Efforts on Financial Transparency Issues.	[30]	12,445,723	12,618,261
IBP- Partnership for Budget Work in India	[31]	2,541,088	5,590,313
Support for Enhancing Research Capacity and Organisational Performance Phase - II	[32]	12,830,312	12,230,649
For Better Understanding and Utilization of data on Health Budgets	[33]	1,099,639	464,828
Develop a Comprehensive and User-Friendly Data Portal on Budgets in India (Gates Foundation)	[34]	8,538,914	1,929,693
Develop a Comprehensive and User-Friendly Data Portal on Budgets in India (Omidyar Network)	[35]	9,526,415	2,836,935
A Study on Government Financing of Healthcare in India.	[36]	135,000	854,099
A Study on Budgetary Provisions for Safety of Women in Public Spaces	[37]	-	500,000
Strengthening Budget Accountability Ecosystem in the Country.	[38]	460,723	-
Fostering and Institutionalizing State and Citizen Engagement- Fellowship Support.		60,000	-
Asia Pacific Civil Society for Sustainable Development		20,797	-
Developing Methodologies for Tracking Budget Information at the District Level.	[39]	335,000	-
Analysis of Budgets for School Education In India.	[40]	1,175,070	-
Strengthening Public Provisioning of Healthcare in India	[41]	1,199,328	743,746
Research, Training and Outreach Efforts on Financial Transparency Issues-TSN	[42]	3,312,238	-
A Study on Drinking Water and Sanitation		-	1,002,275
Analysis of Budgets for School Education In India		-	1,377,500
Assessment of Budgetary Priorities for Low Carbon Economy in India		-	870,286
Influencing Design,Adequacy and effectiveness of public spending on Nutrition in the New Fiscal Architecture in India.	[43A]	4,309,138	1,963,488
Administrative Expenses		22,426	282,452
Investment		-	15,500,000
Loan & Advance		1,861,523	-
Last Year Liability Paid		80,766	-
TDS Receivable		-	142
Closing Balance			
Cash in Hand (In INR)		17,623	95,746
Cash in Hand (In FC)		138,826	152,505
Cash at Bank (SBI & Axis)		1,513,301	2,829,818
TOTAL Rs.		61,623,849	65,988,005

Significant Accounting Policies and Notes to Accounts [44]
The schedules referred to above form an integral part of the Receipts & Payment A/c.

IN TERMS OF OUR REPORT OF EVEN DATE

For & on behalf :
S.SAHOO & CO.

[CA Subhjit Sahoo, FCA, LLB]
Partner
MM No. 057426
Firm No. 322952E

Place: New Delhi
Date: 26.08.2017

For & on behalf :
CENTRE FOR BUDGET AND GOVERNANCE ACCOUNTABILITY

Praveen Jha
President

Subrat Das
Executive Director

Ritu Dewan
Treasurer

Shaji T.K
Coordinator- Fin. & Admn.

CENTRE FOR BUDGET AND GOVERNANCE ACCOUNTABILITY
B-7 EXTN./110A (GROUND FLOOR), HARSUKH MARG, SAFDARJUNG ENCLAVE
NEW DELHI - 110029 (INDIA)

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IN TERMS OF OUR REPORT OF EVEN DATE

For & on behalf :
S.SAHOO & CO.

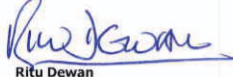

[CA Subhjit Sahoo,FCA,LLB]
Partner
 MM No. 057426
 Firm No. 322952E

Place: New Delhi
 Date: 26.08.2017

For & on behalf :
CENTRE FOR BUDGET AND GOVERNANCE ACCOUNTABILITY



Praveen Jha
President


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Executive Director



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Coordinator- Fin. & Admn.



Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability

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