Concept Note

Workshop on the Peoples’ Priorities for Rajasthan State Budget 2024-25

Participatory budgeting allows citizens to identify, discuss, and prioritise public spending towards local needs. In the last decade, the pre-budget consultations, both by the Union and Rajasthan State Government has witnessed a positive shift, expanding consultations to Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), allowing for a more inclusive process.

Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability (CBGA) and Budget Analysis and Research Centre Trust (BARC), since their inception, has been working towards strengthening public engagement with the discourse on fiscal policy priorities in the country. One of the collaborative interventions by CBGA and BARC, has been the Pre- and Post-Union Budget Panel Discussion, witnessing participation from people from different walks of life including eminent economists, social activists, policy experts and CSO members.

Taking the initiative forward, the session aims to understand and deliberate on the budget priorities for agriculture and social sectors like health, education among others in the state of Rajasthan.

Agriculture is one of the crucial economic sectors and mainstays of people in Rajasthan as around 62 percent of the total workforce engaged in agriculture and allied activities for their livelihood (Census, 2011). Understanding and prioritising issues faced by the people in the agriculture sector is imperative for sound budgetary policy. On the other hand, spending on social sectors like education, health and nutrition is equally significant given the positive externalities associated with such spending. It helps to build a more equitable and socially just society, uplifting individuals fostering growth and development of the state.

Broadly focussing the discussions around these sectors, the sessions will have following objectives:

* Articulating the priorities of the public for the forthcoming state budget.
* Establishing a platform to foster the active involvement of community-based organisations, including SHGs (Self-Help Groups), FPOs (Farmers Producer Organizations), Farmers Organisations and Panchayati Raj Institutions.
* Facilitating discussions to identify the diverse needs and aspirations of various segments of society, such as women, children, landless farmers/sharecroppers, small and marginal farmers, women farmers, labourers, migrants, among others.

Eventually, these collective insights and inputs will be consolidated and presented to the Finance Department of the Government of Rajasthan as a comprehensive memorandum representing the aspirations and recommendations of the people. This document will encapsulate the consolidated perspectives.

The pre-budget consultation is proposed to be a two day programme inviting 40-50 CSO members and other participants from across the state and discussing the priorities for upcoming state budget on agriculture and other sectors like health and nutrition, education, water and sanitation and issues of marginalised groups like dalits, tribals, DNTs, women and children, minorities etc. The Pre-budget consultation will be organised at IDS on January 16-17, 2024.

Budget Analysis and Research Centre, Jaipur

Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability, New Delhi

Institute of Development Studies, Jaipur