

Weekly Livelihoods Update

05 December 2018

- ✚ **Work space safety matters** – Gender parity alone can boost the GDP by 27% according to an estimate by International Monetary Fund. On the contrary, India is one among the countries with least female labour force participation, standing at 27%. Though, the status in 2018 seems progressive when compared to 2005 with number of working age women currently at 470 Million. The expanding economy impedes the need for inclusive growth. Provision of infrastructure facilities, prompt grievance redressal mechanism for sexual harassment is considered essential instruments to impart gender balance. Survey shows that 31% of the stay-at-home women show their willingness to work in a job if given an opportunity. [For further reading: <https://thewire.in/women/to-reverse-decline-of-women-in-labour-force-india-must-make-its-working-spaces-safe>]
- ✚ **Status of NRDWP** – In the scenario where 163 Million Indians has no access to safe drinking water; National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP), one of the flagship programmes led by Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation, aimed at provisioning 35% of rural households, with water connections & 40 liters about two buckets of water per person per day as the first phase. On the status of the progress Government's auditor report for August 2018 identifies that the programme under-performed in relativity to the set targets, despite of spending 90% for the stipulated works. [For further reading: <https://www.indiaspend.com/national-rural-drinking-water-programme-failed-to-achieve-targets-government-auditor-heres-why/>]
- ✚ **MP: Highest Average Agriculture Growth** – Madhya Pradesh with 72% of its population residing in rural areas and 55% practicing agriculture of the 72.6 Million population record the highest average agriculture GDP growth (10.9% per annum) for 2007-2015. MP also replaced Punjab to become the Food Bowl of the country. However the report highlights that, this is by far not reflected in the incomes of the farmers leading to mass unrest. [For further reading: <https://www.indiaspend.com/indias-best-agriculture-growth-over-8-years-but-madhya-pradesh-is-still-bimaru/>]
- ✚ **Classification of Manual Scavenging** – Understanding the sanitation ecosystem of India as such and manual scavenging in specific. The protection of Manual scavengers act was institutionalized from 1993 as Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act which proceeded, until 2013 when Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation act preceded. However, the definition of a Manual scavenger is under question for its narrow applicability despite of huge numbers not being included for the various

categorized works performed. A study called Sanitation Workers Projected estimates that nearly 5 Million people are engaged in sanitation works across India, essentially can be aggregated under 9 categories for better reachout of programmes. [For further reading: <https://thewire.in/labour/manual-scavenging-sanitation-workers>]

✚ **Death Is Getting Cheaper** – Adding to the number 3 more youth chose to die, from Alwar Rajasthan giving up, to the race to Civils. They felt lost their self-worth. With the increase in enrolment for higher education the skill acquisition factor is reducing which make youth less employable. This is the effect of the government drawing fake pictures for formal employment and gimmicks like Job melas etc. Failing to speak the truth, gives rise in false hope leading to such incidents. [For further reading: https://www.epw.in/system/files/pdf/2018_53/47/ED_LIII_47_011218_Death%20Is%20Getting%20Cheaper_1.pdf]

✚ **Beneficiaries of Loan Waivers** – National Sample Survey Office's 2013 situation assessment survey off-farm household, Government of India clearly show the 78.9% of more than 10 hectare of land holders has accessed to formal institutional loans where as low as 14.9% of the marginal farmers having less than 0.01 hectare of land has accessed to institutional loans. This may be due to various reasons like lack of awareness etc; whereas marginal land holders claim the largest proportion of the land owners. Thus, loan waiver would not be as effective as claimed to the marginal land holders who face more critical issues like lack of market, lower MSPs etc. Rather intervention in the supply chain holds better potential to solve the situation. [For further reading: https://www.epw.in/system/files/pdf/2018_53/47/CM_LIII_011218_Nilanjana%20Banik.pdf]

✚ **Policy rate Revision & Reflection** – The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) hiked the policy rate by 25 basis points from 6.25% to 6.5% in August 2018 (RBI 2018a). Two such consecutive policy rate hikes have happened for the first time since 2013. The reverse repo rate, marginal standing facility rate and the bank rate have also been hiked along with the increase in policy rates. The MPC has justified the hike in repo rate by stating that an inflationary spiral had been on the anvil, and therefore, it was essential to contain the retail inflation rate within the desired range of 4±2%. Although the MPC deliberated on a handful of domestic and international factors likely to trigger inflation, in its press conference held immediately after the announcement of the repo rate hike on 1 August 2018, the committee, however, overemphasised the impending impact of the recently announced minimum support price (MSP) for kharif crops as the primary driver for the price spiral. This article examines the role of MSP in pushing up inflation in the economy. [For further reading: <https://www.epw.in/journal/2018/47/commentary/minimum-support-price-and-inflation.html>]