

Weekly Livelihoods Update

12 February 2019

- ✚ **Fund allocation to Agriculture, enough?** - The allocation of Union Budget for Agriculture stands a 144% rise for the annual year 2018-2019, estimates at Rs. 149764 Crore. Benchmarking a share of 5.2% to the Ministry of Agriculture, its sufficiency is subjected to further queries. While acknowledging the fact of increased proportion, it balancing the decade long subjugation of farmers is being exposed to serious ambiguity. Income security Scheme, replicated from states of Telangana and Odisha is also scrutinized for its lesser coverage unlike the torch bearers; wherein an in detail analysis reveals that the eligible farmers would receive only Rs 500/month meaning Rs 3.5/day. With an agenda to double farmer's income by 2022, productive investments into building irrigation networks, diversifying the livelihood portfolio, strengthening value additions, supply chains, back & forward linkages, suitable infrastructure along with a larger coverage income assistance schemes can be a way through in cutting down the distress of farmers. [For further reading: <https://www.indiaspend.com/144-more-funds-for-agriculture-but-not-enough-to-quell-farm-unrest/>]
- ✚ **Analysis on Budget Allocation for Children-** L With 40% of the population comprising of Children in India, the overall budget allocation for them stands at 3.25% with Rs 90594 Crore earmarked for the annula year 2018-2019. Of which education has bagged 68% with development, health & protection streaming at 26%, 3% &2% respectively. There was no mention of this section in the 10-point vision for 2030 while also a decrease in proportion with respect to education was also evident from 79% in 2015-2016 to 68% in 2018-2019. The accommodation for Post-matric Scholarships also saw a decline in Budget'19. While Health Budget saw a descent, the Fund propensity into ICDS gained propulsion. National Child Labour project is confined to the back seat with the budget allocated to rehabilitation of working children having seen a slash by 17% over the Budget'18. [For further reading: <https://www.indiaspend.com/india-has-10m-working-children-but-budget-2019-has-slashed-outlay-for-key-rehabilitation-project-by-17/>]
- ✚ **The New Era Mid-wives** - _ With a mission to improve the maternal & infant health care, midwifery led care is earmarked the instrument, presenting a new outlook to Health Care Policy of the country. In this regards, Guidelines on Midwife Services including the recommendations of midwifery training & certification was announced in the World Health Organization Forum. An estimate identifies that nearly 83% of maternal & infant deaths can be contained through Midwifery Care. At this juncture,

the Telangana Government launched the first Midwifery Certification programme in Karimnagar as a pilot for support to secondary & tertiary care facilities. 30 members as inductees are soon to be graduated and posted in public hospitals across the state to lead effective role of midwives. A Public Private Partnership programme, the state is to create 126 new posts for midwives passing an incentive of Rs 15000 as a salary towards completion of 18 month training includes a 6 month Clinical Internship. [For further reading: <https://healthcheck.indiaspend.com/>]

✚ **Our Breathing ground stands no better-** India recorded 1.24 Million deaths due to air pollution in 2017 alone. In this respect, the first National Framework was earmarked for abating pollution crisis, namely National Clean Air Programme launched in January'19. As part of the programme Rs 300 Crore were earmarked for 2018-19 & 2019-20 annual years with focus on 102 Polluted Indian cities. The Central Pollution Control Board assessment marked Patiala to be the only Indian city with clean air, of the 74 others in the country. Delhi, the world's most polluted city continued to account for higher than safe limit air quality. Also 38% of the cities were assessed to struggle from poor breathing conditions as per the data recorded. With the targets aiming at reducing the pollution by 20-30%, the current progress shows no positive sign. The scenarios in rural areas stand even worse with a need for greater mitigation plan in place. [For further reading: <https://earthcheck.indiaspend.com/patiala-only-indian-city-with-clean-air-among-74-assessed-as-new-anti-pollution-plan-stumbles-at-start/>]

✚ **The Pollution Subsidies** – Though there 76% decrease in subsidies on fossil fuels, including oil and gas but the subsidies for the coal industry has remained stable as per a study by think-tank International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD). There is an unavoidable requirement of power produced from coal for uninterrupted and reliable power, serving 60 percent of the power requirement of the country at the same times India is putting great efforts to promote power generation from renewable sources where it doubled its capacity of power generation from renewable sources in past 4 years. But the increase in 2% subsidy (Rs.15900 crores) on coal gives a different picture added to it the negligence with the penalisation for not abiding by the Indian environmental norms is equivalent to subsidy worth Rs.981 Crores. There are serious debates about its unavoidability. The arguments on affordability of transmission and distribution of Power Generation by coal being under stress for various reasons of unpreparedness for shifting to renewable sources as well as lower cost of productions by renewable sources are on. [For further reading: <https://earthcheck.indiaspend.com/government-subsidies-for-coal-nearly-400-times-more-than-environment-ministry-budget/>]

+ Bitter truth of sugar industry – | Ahead of general election this year again agriculture crisis is a problem ruling government turning an opportunity for other political parties. Farmers are not getting paid by the sugarcane factories for their crop. The farmers are agitating in the Satara, Sangli, Kolhapur districts of western Maharashtra on 11, 12 and 13 January. The sugar pricing crisis affects about five crore farmers and about five lakh people employed in sugar factories. Raju Shetti, Member of Parliament and leader of the Swabhimani Shetkari Sanghatana, a farmers' union has demanded action against sugarcane factories that had failed to pay farmers for their crop. Whereas sugar mills said that they are hit by decline in the sugar prices and they will be having less margin this time. When it comes to face the price fall, everyone has used farmer to keep themselves safe to keep acceptable margin and left farmer to suffer the loss. [For further reading: <https://frontline.thehindu.com/the-nation/agriculture/article26119650.ece?homepage=true>]