

Weekly Livelihoods Update

22 January 2019

- ✚ **No more stigma: Why retirement communities are finally growing in India** – India currently has a relatively young population, with more than 50% of its citizens under the age of 25, but the demographics will shift. A report by the Confederation of Indian Industry projects that India's senior population will treble to 300 million by 2050, highlighting the need for more infrastructure and services to support this significant section of society. The report points to the current gap between supply and demand for urban senior housing: there are approximately 20,000 units currently operational, under construction, or in the planning phase, while the urban demand is for 2.4 lakh houses. [For further reading: <https://scroll.in/magazine/902402/no-more-stigma-why-retirement-communities-are-finally-growing-in-india>]
- ✚ **In India's Poorest State, A Pilot Project Succeeds In Reducing Malnourishment Among Children** – Jharkhand is among the top five Indian states with malnourished--including stunted, wasted and underweight--children, according to an IndiaSpend analysis of data from the ministry of health and family welfare's National Family Health Survey, 2015-16 (NFHS-4). Almost half (45.3%) of Jharkhand's children below the age of five are stunted, compared to the national average of 38.4%. Again, almost half (47.8%) of Jharkhand's children are underweight, placing Jharkhand behind only Bihar and Madhya Pradesh in child malnutrition levels, our analysis shows. The infant mortality rate in Jharkhand is 44 deaths per 1,000 live births and under-five mortality rate is 54 deaths per 1,000 live births, compared to national averages of 41 and 50, respectively, according to the NFHS. [For further reading: <https://healthcheck.indiaspend.com/in-indias-poorest-state-a-pilot-project-succeeds-in-reducing-malnourishment-among-children/>]
- ✚ **How Gender-sensitive Are India's Energy Policies?** – In agriculture and allied rural livelihoods, there is a clear gendered division of labour (Contzen and Forney 2017). Women are largely engaged in labour-intensive activities like sowing, transplanting, weeding, and harvesting (Behera and Behera 2013). However, women face barriers in accessing clean energy-based drudgery-reducing implements/machineries due to restrictive gender norms that limit their ownership of productive assets and recognition as farmers (Mokyr 2017; Kelkar and Krishnaraj 2013). Furthermore, women's role in energy supply and value chain is seldom recognised in policies. Their contribution to energy supply is estimated in the range of 10% to 80% of the total energy in developing countries (Parikh 1995). [For further reading:

<https://www.epw.in/journal/2019/3/commentary/how-gender-sensitive-are-indias-energy.html>]

- ✚ **The Constitutional Case against the Citizenship Amendment Bill** – The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led Lok Sabha passed the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 under the shadow of immense opposition and protest.¹ The proposed amendment seeks to make non-Muslim illegal migrants from Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Bangladesh eligible for citizenship. While its fate in the Rajya Sabha may be uncertain, there is a lurking possibility of it coming into effect as an ordinance. [For further reading: <https://www.epw.in/journal/2019/3/commentary/constitutional-case-against-citizenship.html>]
- ✚ **Changing Task Content of Jobs in India** – The world has been experiencing a digital revolution. Since the early 1970s, digital technology has invaded all aspects of human life—from communications to finance to manufacturing to social interaction. The use of digital technology is visible everywhere, and this enormous increase in its use has coincided with an occupational upgrading and a sharp increase in wage disparity. Since the mid-1980s, there has been an increase in wage disparities between skilled and unskilled workers in countries across the globe. [For further reading: <https://www.epw.in/journal/2019/3/special-articles/changing-task-content-jobs-india.html>]
- ✚ **Financing the Micro and Small Enterprises in India** – The mandate to provide financial support to the micro and small enterprises (MSEs) has been wedded to the social banking priorities in India since the 1960s. The National Credit Council in the late 1960s had identified small-scale industries (SSIs) as a priority sector for lending, along with agriculture. As the country moved into the liberalisation phase in the early 1990s, these priorities have been reset and redefined to match the objectives of developing a primarily profit-oriented, efficient and competitive banking sector. [For further reading: <https://www.epw.in/journal/2019/3/special-articles/financing-micro-and-small-enterprises.html>]
- ✚ **The 10% Reservation Is a Cynical Fraud on the Constitution** – Barely two days after it sprang the Constitution (124th Amendment) Bill on an unsuspecting Indian nation, the government managed to get it passed, virtually unanimously, in both houses of parliament. Days later, it was signed into constitutional law. We now have the Union minister of human resource development announcing that “the 10% quota for forward castes”, which is how the Act is being described by the government and media alike, will be implemented in all colleges and universities in the country from the academic year beginning June 2019. [For further reading:

<https://thewire.in/government/the-10-reservation-is-a-cynical-fraud-on-the-constitution>]

✚ **World Bank's global report has something positive to say about India** – The World Bank, in its recently released Global Economic Prospects Report - January 2019, has sketched a gloomy outlook for the global economic growth in the coming years, reiterating the fears of global slowdown, however, it expects India to remain the fastest growing emerging market economy. Worries over trade war, weak global growth and financial stress in the developing economies are likely to weigh on global growth outlook. For 2018, the global growth estimate has been revised downwards by 0.1 percentage point from 3.1 per cent as per June 2018 report to 3 per cent in January 2019 report. [For further reading: <https://www.businesstoday.in/current/economy-politics/world-bank-global-report-has-something-positive-to-say-about-india/story/308990.html>]